

**P&C Association for Sydney Boys High School.
Submission to the 2013 Environment Impact Statement for the proposed
CBD and South East Light Rail (CSELR) – Moore Park Precinct.**

1. Summary:

Sydney Boys High School is a public school within the NSW Department of Education and Communities. It is bounded by Anzac Pde, Cleveland St, Moore Park West and Sydney Girls High School (SGHS) in Moore Park.

Over 2,000 students attend the two adjacent high schools (SBHS, SGHS) that are located opposite the proposed Moore Park tram stop. The P&C believes that these schools will be significantly impacted by the CSELR. Very few of the students live within the CSELR region and so they travel to school on public transport from varied and distant parts of Sydney including the growing western regions of Sydney where educational resources are considered to be at a premium.

While the SBHS P&C acknowledges the potential value of the proposed Light Rail, it cannot come without due consideration to safety for the students as well as the potential for disruption to school activities because of loss of playing fields for the 6 years while construction is underway.

The P&C's submission highlights a number of concerns that must be addressed as part of the planning and development of the CSELR. Although these issues have been raised on many occasions as the School Council met with representatives of the CSELR during the Stage 1 consultations, it is exceedingly worrying that none are specifically identified in the EIS let alone solutions proposed.

2. Concerns related to safety, health, wellbeing and education of students at SBHS (CSELR – Moore Park Precinct).

- a. As a direct result of the CSELR an additional 2,000 students per day will need to cross Anzac Pde to reach the Moore Park Stop. This will represent an exodus of students over a short time period (3.00 -3.30 PM) which is also a peak time for traffic. Put in another way, 10,000 additional crossings over Anzac Pde will be needed per school week by school children. It is difficult to follow how the EIS proposes that no changes will be needed to ensure safety in crossing Anzac Pde under these circumstances. As far as the P&C can assess, no evidence was given for this position in the EIS. As a very minimum we would have expected to see a statement by a traffic engineer confirming that the CSELR would not pose any additional risks for the crossing of Anzac Pde. The numbers quoted above are very conservative as it is more difficult to model what happens during the morning school arrivals since there is no specific peak time as students come to school earlier or even later because of various activities. Overall, the actual numbers of new crossings of Anzac Pde made necessary by the CSELR are likely to be much higher than the ~10,000 per school week quoted above.

- b. We note that the Moore Park Stop is not being placed below ground so it will be visible to students who are crossing Anzac Pde. Inevitably some students will see a tram approaching and not wait until pedestrian crossing lights turn in their favour. While they might be “at fault” should an accident occur, there is also a duty of care by DEC and government since this type of accident can be prevented.
- c. Related to (a, b) is the increase in traffic and disruptions to traffic flow expected on Cleveland St during the construction phase. Presently, a small number of students cross Cleveland St to connect with bus services on the opposite footpath. These crossings are made at various times during the day. This pedestrian crossing is controlled by traffic lights including speed cameras. Nevertheless, students regularly run across the road when they see buses approaching. This represents an increased risk for an accident resulting from the CSELR.
- d. As well as the very busy traffic along Anzac Pde, the P&C notes this road is the major entry into the Prince of Wales Hospital complex and so not surprisingly, emergency vehicles regularly travel along Anzac Pde at high speeds. This fact as well as changes to traffic flow because of the construction zones directly affecting Anzac Pde as well as the roads feeding into Anzac Pde will contribute further to the risk when children cross.
- e. The EIS does not address directly how the proposed CSELR transfer of students will improve or provide a comparable travel time, or even if travel on the light rail will be provided free (which presently happens with the bus transfers from SBHS). Statistics are given how the CSELR will improve overall the movements across the CBD and the South East corridor but since the Moore Park Station serving SBHS (and SGHS) is situated after the UNSW pick up points, there is a significant concern that trams arriving at Moore Park will be full and so not available to students at SBHS. Since we have already indicated that many of these students live in distant parts of Sydney, this will pose a considerable problem with transit times.
- f. The Construction site located adjacent to SBHS at Moore Park West (MPW) will be very busy and it is anticipated that considerable noise, vibration, dust, cigarette smoke and other forms of pollution will be increased. This will occur over at least 6 years and apart from affecting the students, it will impact on the health and wellbeing of staff at SBHS.
- g. Approximately 50% of the Moore Park West (MPW) grounds will be lost to the SBHS because it will be used for the construction site over at least 6 years. Presently, the SBHS uses the fields in MPW before, during and after school for various school related activities. The southern part of the MPW region is a very busy corridor since it provides access to MPW for both SBHS and SGHS students. The EIS does not consider how the school will continue its daily activities with this substantial portion of MPW being lost, and whether the MPW fields will be returned to their original state when the construction site is closed.

3. How P&C Association concerns should be addressed

- i. Evidence must be provided for significant decisions related to safety of children crossing Anzac Pde (and to some extent Cleveland St). Without conclusive evidence that the CSELR

does not pose any additional risk for the 10,000 or more additional crossing required each school week, the only legally defensible position and appropriate duty of care considerations must be a pedestrian bridge complemented by measures that would prevent the crossing of Anzac Pde by pedestrians e.g. closing pedestrian crossing / traffic lights on Anzac Pde located between SBHS and SGHS and securing footpaths on both sides with fencing. We would also propose that the current Cleveland St crossing is made more secure by fencing along the length of the footpath on both sides of this busy road.

- ii. The P&C would seek assurance from the NSW Government that following the construction of the CSELR students at SBHS are no worse of in terms of travel time or costs. Presently, there is an efficient transfer of students between the school and Central railway station by the bus service which is free. The P&C is concerned that the Moore Park Stop which has the capacity to be expanded to cope with sporting crowds may not function in this way for the SBHS (and SGHS) students and trams reaching Moore Park Stop from UNSW might be full making the travel time for students longer than at present. The proposed Opal Card which will be available for the light rail should also be free for travel to and from school.
- iii. Failing a satisfactory resolution of i and ii above, the P&C would expect the current *status quo* i.e. bus transfers, to be continued for an indefinite period until safety issues were resolved.
- iv. The worksite on MPW poses pollution hazards to staff and students at SBHS over a period of 6 years. We would expect an independent WH&S review of these risks so that appropriate safeguards can be implemented. During construction the documented WH&S risks should be regularly audited to ensure appropriate compliance.
- v. SBHS is compensated to allow it to seek alternative playing fields for before, during and after school activities on the MPW. Compensation might not be necessary if the NSW Government can facilitate suitable discussions between SBHS and the Centennial Park and Moore Park Trust (CMPT) which has control over a number of the alternative playing fields. Doubtless, the CMPT will need to consider requests for playing fields from a number of its customers affected by the CSELR development. However, there is considerable anxiety from the P&C that those who are "high" paying customers such as the professional football clubs will have more leverage compared to the "poorer" customers as represented in this example by SBHS, a NSW public school. Historically, our public schools were given special consideration in these negotiations but this would seem to be changing with the CMPT.

4. Summary

The SBHS P&C Association is very concerned that the EIS has misread the safety issues related to the crossing of Anzac Pde by students at SBHS (and SGHS) to access the Moore Park Stop. This risk is particularly high during the exodus of students in the afternoon peak hour between 3.00 to 3.30 PM. We could not see any evidence for the view in the EIS that the additional crossings (at least 10,000 per school week) posed no increased risk and so nothing further needed to be done apart from the current conventional foot crossing located between SBHS and SGHS.

It has also been brought to our attention that the EIS might not represent the final view of Government on the CSELR. For example, the Moore Park Stop might be moved to a position opposite SGHS. The P&C cannot comment on what might happen only on what we have read in the EIS. Nevertheless, we would consider the Moore Park Stop location closer to SGHS to be ideal for both schools as it would help to address the efficient transfer issue (2e above). In this location it would also optimise use of the pedestrian overbridge by a larger clientele e.g. pedestrians attending various sporting venues, the Entertainment quarter, equestrian centre, as well as the 2,000 SBHS and SGHS students.

The P&C also understands that the viaduct option to cross Moore Park West is not entirely excluded contrary to what is stated in the EIS. For the reasons we mention above in 2g we would not agree to a viaduct because it would lead to a permanent loss of these critical recreational and sporting fields to SBHS.