

The Rozelle Metro should be opposed by those in Western Sydney

The Wrong Priorities.

The Rozelle Metro project is focused in an already well serviced area while leaving other areas of Greater Sydney serviced inadequately: Western Sydney, South Western Sydney and particularly North Western Sydney.

The North West and South West growth centres are experiencing rapid expansion and dynamic population growth as are a number of suburbs surrounding Parramatta. These North West and South West growth centres are expecting to create 70,000 and 110,000 new households over the next decades and the development is happening now at breakneck speed despite the market turndowns. (See www.gcc.nsw.gov.au).

It is a recurrent cry from local people that, as new housing is built, there is insufficient transport infrastructure to meet the needs. Large swathes of the city - our city Sydney - are being left dependent on toll roads and private cars. (See excerpts from the Rouse Hill Times, March 18 on the blog www.wsptu.blogspot.com for an example).

The Rozelle Metro Burns Up the Infrastructure Budget For Years The West Will Wait For Decades

The Rozelle Metro is very expensive for a 7klm service and uses up the transport infrastructure budget inefficiently. The five harbour crossings and the deep tunnels make this a project with a very poor cost/benefit ratio compared to other projects and with the potential to have poor public appeal - particularly at the CBD end as people would rather stay on the surface for short journeys, not descend into a deep subway.

The timelines for the Rozelle/CBD Metro to service the people of the West and North West are prohibitively long. The inefficient use of the budget makes the timelines much longer. At best, the resources being poured into the Rozelle Metro development delays the reach of rail-based public transport into these other areas for decades. What does it mean to have all of these buses from the North West and the Northern Beaches pouring into the city for decades to come?

Using the transport infrastructure budget on this project delays the South West Rail Link and the enhancements of the Richmond rail line; critical now as the Riverstone West and other North West Growth Centre projects materialise.

Buses Will Continue to Pour Into The City

The Rozelle Metro proposal does nothing to get the M2 buses out of the city or relieve the people of the North West of this long bus ride. Any suggestion that this service will link to the M2 buses from the North West is likely to cause road and amenity problems in the Rozelle/Gladesville area. It will also slow the trip and create a difficult transfer for North West commuters. It remains to be seen what people in Rozelle and

Gladesville will think about the arrival of a major bus/rail interchange in their area.

City People Are Asking For Light Rail

While Sydney City Council has integrated the Metro into their plan the centerpiece of their plan is a light rail loop around the city on the surface. This is a comparatively inexpensive project which would enhance activity and amenity within the CBD. Influenced by the planning ideas of the recently appointed internationally renowned consultant Jan Ghel, transport expert Peter Newman also recommends this idea. This should be the priority for the city [See <http://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/2030/thedirections/projects/IntegTransProj.asp>].

People in the inner west have been lobbying for an extension to the light rail to Dulwich Hill. There is potential for the existing light rail to also service Rozelle using some existing infrastructure and public land. Projects like these are vastly cheaper, have much lower government capital and running costs and are appropriate to service the short distances involved.

While it makes sense for a Metro to go to the CBD, the Metro should be focused in the areas between Parramatta, Macquarie Park, the CBD and Bankstown where the population densities are high, the distances short and the congestion on the roads and existing public transport infrastructure is high. This also has the potential to contribute to relieving the crowded inner city roads of buses. Extensions into the East, South East and Northern Beaches would be appropriate.

The City and Rozelle are Already Heavily Serviced

The CBD currently has hundreds of bus services, a Cityrail loop, a free loop bus, a light rail service, ferries and the monorail. Rozelle has frequent STA bus services which go west along Victoria Rd and east into the city as well as a number of services which go through Rozelle and into Balmain. There are also ferries into the CBD and they are walking distance to the light rail system. Access to the Cityrail network from Rozelle is also reasonably good into the city or Petersham. Now we are told it is imperative to start the Sydney Metro system on a route between the CBD to Rozelle.

Does the Rozelle Metro Prevent Future Harbour Crossing Tunnels?

It has been reported that the Rozelle Metro uses some of the same underground CBD space as the planned Cityrail tunnels and precludes the use of a second harbour crossing for expansion of the heavy rail into the North and North West. This would adversely affect the people in the West (and the Northern Beaches). If this is true, the Metro should be opposed at all costs.

Experts Don't Agree With The Rozelle Metro Plan

Expert opinions such as Dr Gary Glazebrook from UTS and the 10,000 Friends of Greater Sydney (FROGS) have plans which provide much better outcomes for both the City and Western Sydney and use existing infrastructure much more effectively. Dr Gary Glazebrook opposes the Rozelle/Metro plan.

[See Dr Gary Glazebrook's Plan
<http://www.dab.uts.edu.au/research/outcomes/garry-glazebrook-main.pdf>
And the FROGS plan
<http://www.10000friends.org.au>]

Recommendations

Western Sydney Community Forum urges that the Rozelle/CBD Metro project be abandoned and a plan which provides effective public transport outcomes for the Greater Sydney City be adopted - plans which include links to the North West and South West Growth Centres, Macquarie Park, Liverpool, Campbelltown and Parramatta.

WSCF recommends that the NSW Government seek advice from independent experts such as Dr Gary Glazebrook and FROGS and take note of advice from the decades of planning by their own NSW Government planning bodies presented in the Metro Strategy.

More information

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