



Inner South Canberra Community Council

Committee Secretary
Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and External Territories
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

email: jscncet@aph.gov.au

INNER SOUTH CANBERRA COMMUNITY COUNCIL (ISCCC) SUBMISSION: STAGE TWO OF THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY LIGHT RAIL PROJECT

The ISCCC is a voluntary, not for profit, community-based association operating in the inner south area of Canberra. The ISCCC's objective is to preserve and improve the social, cultural, economic and environmental well-being of Inner South Canberra and the Inner South Canberra community.

We are the peak community representative body in Inner South Canberra representing the interests of local residents and communities with representation from:

- Old Narrabundah Community Council
- Griffith Narrabundah Community Association
- Yarralumla Residents Association Inc
- Deakin Residents Association
- Red Hill Residents Group
- Kingston and Barton Residents Group
- Oaks Estate Progress Association
- Forrest Residents Group

The ISCCC held a public forum on light rail in 2017 and there have been a couple of online surveys by residents' groups in the past year to determine residents' views on this issue. This is a complex issue, with differing views and impacts across inner South Canberra.

There is a lack of detailed information at this time about the business case for stage 2, the exact route and alignment, and associated traffic and heritage impacts. To ensure the ISCCC, member residents' groups, and inner south residents can make well-informed comment, we need this more detailed information well ahead of deadlines for formal feedback.

We have also been provided with just over a month to make comment, which is not enough time for us to fully engage with inner south residents and then pull together submissions.

With these caveats in mind, this ISCCC submission will highlight some of the issues raised with us by member residents' groups, associate members, and at our public forum last year.

Marea Fatseas
Chair
15 June 2018

ISCCC Response to Relevant Terms of Reference

- 1. The relevant parliamentary approval processes for works within the Parliamentary zone**
- 2. The roles of the National Capital Authority and the Australian Government, and the associated approval processes**

We assume that due to the national heritage importance of the Parliamentary Triangle, and other places along the light rail route, including The Lodge, that approvals under the Environment Protection and Environment Diversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act) will be required.

The National Heritage List (NHL) assessment of Canberra as the national capital has been in final assessment status since 2009. This should be finalized, so there is guidance on what should be protected in advance of major infrastructure projects of this kind.

We understand that the EPBC Act requires Commonwealth bodies, such as the NCA, to identify and protect heritage within those areas they own or manage. Accordingly, the NCA should have in place an up to date Heritage Strategy to manage places on its required Heritage Inventory. These mandatory requirements determine the NCA should be protecting the heritage values of the Parliamentary Zone and Lake Burley Griffin, including through heritage conservation management plans and heritage impact assessments.

We also understand that nomination of 'Lake Burley Griffin and Adjacent Lands' is currently under assessment for the Commonwealth Heritage List (CHL). This assessment should be concluded as soon as possible.

3. Possible impacts on the Parliamentary zone and Parliamentary precincts, including any impacts on the heritage values and national importance of the Parliamentary zone and our national capital

Our comments on heritage values are provided under Terms of Reference 1 and 2.

In addition, the ISCCC supports the NCA position that Light Rail stage 2 should not use overhead wires through the Parliamentary Triangle and that there should be an appropriate standard of landscaping, urban design and infrastructure. Ensuring the quality of vistas along the main avenues towards Parliament House is also important.

An on-line survey by Deakin Residents Association with 336 respondents showed strong support in favour of freedom from overhead wires, and opposition to tree removal along Commonwealth Avenue. A majority of respondents did not support removal of car lanes to accommodate light rail. Over half supported a new bridge over Lake Burley Griffin.

A traffic impact analysis based on up-to-date origin-destination data should be made available to enable assessment of the likely impact of light rail on the Commonwealth Avenue, Canberra Avenue, Adelaide Avenue and Kings Avenue transport corridors. This will provide a better understanding of the districts from which the people driving along those corridors come, and whether they would be likely to use the light rail.

This analysis is especially important because traffic data obtained by the ISCCC last year indicated that Commonwealth Avenue was the busiest transport corridor in Canberra at the time the data were collected. See Attachment 1.

Also, significant changes to Commonwealth Avenue Bridge may redirect traffic into Barton and onto Kings Avenue Bridge, adding to an already congested arterial route and resulting in rat running through Barton as people try to find faster routes to Kings Avenue. The entrance to Kings Avenue from Bowen Drive is already becoming extremely congested with traffic banking up at busy times during the morning.

4. The identification of matters that may be of concern prior to formal parliamentary or Australian Government consideration of the project

Besides matters raised earlier in this submission, it would be prudent to evaluate the impacts of Light Rail stage 1 after its completion at the end of 2018 in order to draw lessons for stage 2.

Also, the business case for stage 2 should be made available to enable better understanding of the scale and type of density along the light rail corridor necessary to make the project viable, and implications for the built environment and public open space along that corridor. The transport corridor from Civic to the turn-off leading to the Governor-General's residence appears in the National Capital Plan as "Designated Areas", for which the National Capital Authority has responsibility for determining detailed planning policy, and for Works Approval (otherwise known as development assessment).