

# SUSTAINABILITY SPEAKING

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## TRANSPORT TRUMPS PLANNING



At Randwick City Council's Ordinary Meeting on 29th April 2014 a copy of a letter written by Jeff Goodling, Project Director for the CBD South East Light Rail, to Ray Brownlee, General Manager, was tabled. The letter was dated 17<sup>th</sup> April 2014 and stamped as received 29th April, 2014. In that letter Mr Goodling stated that the PPP(Public Private Partnership) tender for the Light Right had been issued on the 7th March, 2014. He also noted that as the tender had already been issued it would be 'problematic' to incorporate Council's *Draft Urban Design Guidelines*.

The Environmental Impact Statement for the Light Rail is still in the assessment phase. Once assessed by the Department of Planning and Infrastructure (since late April, the Department of Planning and Environment) it is given to the Minister for Planning for approval, or disapproval. In the case of State Significant projects of this size an approval from the Minister would normally be accompanied by *Conditions of Consent*. In some cases the Conditions can be so onerous as to discourage the proponent progressing. They usually increase the cost of the project. The Light Rail project is estimated to cost \$1.6 billion with additional monies being provided by the City of Sydney Council and Randwick City Council. By comparison, the Port Botany Expansion was listed at \$1/2 billion at the time it was approved. When complete it was around \$1billion. Getting the details right at the beginning of the process is critical.

Normally the Conditions of Consent would be taken into account when scoping the tender. However not only has this not occurred but the project has progressed to the next stage where Transport for NSW have a short-list of tenders. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> April, 2014, Aurecon in a media release indicated that it had been chosen, along with Parsons Brinkerhoff, to design the tender for one of the short-listed candidates: *iLinQ consortium comprised of Balfour Beatty, McConnell Dowell, Downer Keolis, Bombardier and Macquarie Capital*. The media release has since been retracted. Parsons Brinkerhoff are the organisation responsible for producing the Transport for NSW Response to Submissions to the Environmental Impact Statement. It's a small world.

**More at [www.facebook.com/RandwickLightRail](http://www.facebook.com/RandwickLightRail)**

(Photographs L-R: Mr Brad Hazzard former Minister for Planning, Ms Gladys Berejiklian, Minister for Transport and the new Planning Minister Ms Pru Goward.)



### Eastern Australia a tsunami hotspot

Australia has experienced 145 tsunamis, and in the past 130 years this has resulted in 11 deaths. According to physical geographer, Professor James Goff of the UNSW, most of the tsunamis in historical times have been on the continent's east coast.

## New Minister for the Environment



Our new Minister for Environment and Assistant Planning Minister is Dr Rob Stokes. Dr Stokes is an advocate for domestic solar. In the Sydney Morning Herald on 28<sup>th</sup> October last year he wrote: *Rather than seeking to target and penalise households that are taking advantage of renewable energy technology to lower their bills and environmental impact, it is time for energy businesses to change their thinking to embrace innovation, rather than thinking up ways to stop it.*

In his inaugural speech in Parliament on 31 May 2007 he spoke about loss of biodiversity and environmental injustice: *A sober, conscious evaluation of New South Wales planning policies cannot but scream their failure. Twenty-five years of urban consolidation has not delivered an urban nirvana where people sip mugaccinos at sidewalk cafes and share home decor tips. Instead, its legacy has been the loss of built and natural heritage, diminishing neighbourhood character and identity, habitat loss, no slow down of outward growth, and the total overload of existing infrastructure. Urban consolidation policy has resulted in more power failures, more sewage overflows, and more concentrated air pollution.....There is not much "nowhere" left any more. As with a page of writing, where the margins and spaces are just as important as the words, so we need to preserve our coastal grasslands and littoral rainforests to give meaning to the places in between..... We are contributing to a worldwide decline, where the systems we rely upon to give us life are being suffocated. Government is running out of time to address the consequences of environmental injustice.*

He has also written on coastal planning and his PhD thesis in Environmental Law was titled *The Battle for the Big Backyard - Can public participation mitigate the conflict between residential amenity and urban consolidation?*

(Photographed: L: Rob Stokes R: Chris Taylor from the Chaser, the Minister's debating team colleague from school days at Shore)

## Clean-up notice issued to Caltex for Botany Bay incident

Media release: 2 April 2014



The NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA) has issued a clean-up notice to Caltex Refineries (NSW) Pty Ltd following an incident at Botany Bay last week.

Chief Environmental Regulator, Mr Mark Gifford, said that Caltex Refineries (NSW) have been issued with a clean-up notice after oily water was discharged from their Kurnell premises into Botany Bay during heavy rainfall in March.

"On 24 March an incident occurred whereby Caltex Refineries undertook a controlled release of oily water in to Botany Bay due to heavy rain," Mr Gifford said.

"The Sydney Ports emergency response team lead the initial clean-up and left heavy duty booms in place for several days to capture as much of the spill as possible.

"It appears that due to prevailing winds, the oily water moved to the shoreline between Yarra Bay and Congwong Bay and over the following days our officers and members of the community observed oil on rock platforms and in the sand at Congwong and Little Congwong Beaches.

"The company has an emergency procedure for stormwater management during heavy rain, however the incident has impacted on the local environment which is unacceptable and as a result we have issued Caltex with a clean-up notice as a further step in our regulatory actions."

**Mr Gifford emphasised that this was the first in a potential series of clean up notices to be issued in relation to the immediate impacts of the incident.**

(Photograph of water collected at Little Congwong Beach)

If it can't be reduced, reused, repaired, rebuilt, refurbished, refinished, resold, recycled or composted, then it should be restricted, redesigned or removed from production.

-Pete Seeger

## Noise from Port Botany



Record your concerns at  
[www.facebook.com/PortNoiseComplaints](http://www.facebook.com/PortNoiseComplaints)

## Qenos Annual Safety Health and Environmental Excellence Awards

There were 10 nominations and two winning teams - Utilities "changes to Boiler Flue Gas Filter Bag and Cage Design" (pictured) and Alkatuff's "Deactivation of the Product Purge Bin". Jonathan Clancy, CEO Qenos with Matt Thistlethwaite MP with the winners for Environmental Excellence in February.



## Public servants & politician self-interest a barrier to better infrastructure outcomes says Head of Infrastructure Australia



Shortly before he resigned as CEO of Infrastructure Australia, Michael Deegan was reported in the Australian Financial Review (24 January 2014) as being critical of the Abbott government. He suggested it was threatening the credibility of Infrastructure

Australia by eroding its independence. The government was achieving this through changes to the Infrastructure Act currently before Parliament. He indicated that the changes could give the government the right to intervene in how the body – established by the Rudd Labor government in 2008 – prepares long-term infrastructure plans and block it from considering how climate change may affect needs in sectors such as energy and transport.

In a submission to a Senate committee inquiry into the changes, Mr Deegan suggested they would reinforce public cynicism about politicians' infrastructure promises and obscure the true scale of the current backlog "or the cost of overcoming that backlog". He was critical of both political parties for promising big-ticket projects with "only limited regard" for how they would be funded and without preparing "robust business cases". He cited Sydney's WestConnex as an example. "With rising infrastructure expectations and limited budgets, there is an air of unreality about our infrastructure planning," the submission says.

In June the previous year he made scathing statements about groups within the public services who he said were putting "self-interest before reform" and are "stolid, hesitant and reluctant" about implementing changes.

*"You would expect that somebody, somewhere, knows all the key pieces of economic infrastructure, what is needed for the future and that all relevant land spaces are monitored, protected and planned....."*

*"You would expect commonsense and effective planning," he said.*

*"You'd be wrong."*

## Public Infrastructure



A recent report by Price Waterhouse Coopers showed more than a quarter of leading chief executives, including Telstra's David Thodey, want the Abbott government to urgently fix flagging infrastructure.

The Productivity Commission is conducting an inquiry

into Public Infrastructure. On releasing the Draft Report in March, Commissioner Peter Harris noted that a comprehensive overhaul of public infrastructure procurement was required. At the recent Hearing in Sydney, 14<sup>th</sup> April 2014, he **emphasised the need for transparency, benchmarking, improved scoping and data collection.** The report, submissions and transcripts from the Brisbane, Melbourne and Sydney Hearings are on the website:

<http://www.pc.gov.au/projects/inquiry/infrastructure>

Remember when ABC Media Watch tried to downplay community concerns about Grace Campbell Reserve and attacked Natalie O'Brien, the journalist who was providing coverage. **Natalie won the first round of her legal battle with the ABC after launching court action against the program for what she claimed was a defamatory critique of her reporting.**

### Sydney Airport links

Around half of the 12,000 people that travel to work at Sydney Airport everyday live within cycling distance of the airport. We will complete missing links in bike routes from surrounding areas in St George, the Eastern Suburbs, Inner Sydney and the Inner West. This will also improve connections with residential growth areas at Wollri Creek, Mascot and Green Square.

-  5km catchment to major centre
-  Major centres + neighbourhood destinations
-  Strategic bicycle corridor
-  Existing cycleways

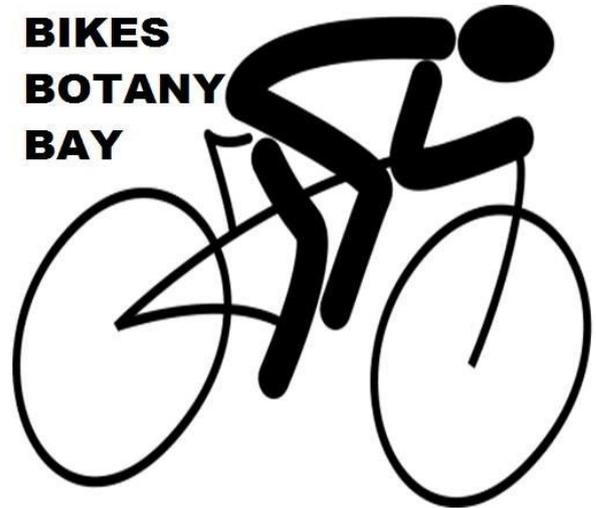
NOTE: corridors are subject to detailed route selection with local councils and the community.



From Transport for NSW  
Sydney's Cycling Future,  
December 2013

Lynda Newnam, May 2014

## BIKES BOTANY BAY



In 2009 SSROC (Southern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils) published the Botany Bay Trail. The Sydney Metropolitan Regional Recreational Trails framework (developed by the Department of Planning) listed the Botany Bay Trail as a Priority 1 Route. The SSROC Masterplan identified pinch points on the trail that needed to be addressed to enable easier access for walkers and cyclists. The WestConnex Enabling Works to be undertaken by Roads and Maritime in order to achieve higher levels of freight traffic by both road and rail and reduce congestion around Sydney Airport provides an opportunity to address the SSROC Plan and the Airport/Port 'Missing Links' priorities. To support this a new advocacy group has been formed: Bikes Botany Bay.

Get on board at  
[www.facebook.com/BikesBotanyBay](http://www.facebook.com/BikesBotanyBay)