

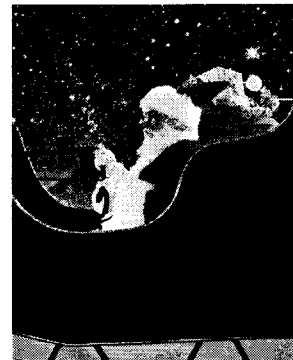
BEECROFT CHELTENHAM CIVIC TRUST INC

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BULLETIN 5

December 2013



President
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Secretary
Email

Colin Johnston
secretary@2119.org.au

BCCT was established in 1964 and has worked to protect our community for 49 years.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all our readers.

Want to be better informed?

Your Trust delivers these bulletins regularly – many thanks to our dedicated team of 40 volunteer distributors! You might also check our website and weblog at www.2119.org.au. If you would like more regular monthly updates – and give your opinions on emerging issues, please join some 600+ Trust members and friends, who receive concise Trust emails. Just email comment@2119.org.au and we will keep in touch!

In this issue:

- How the North West Rail Link Downsizing will affect YOUR travel to the city
- North West residents also question downsizing of rail to metro
- How our Bushland will be destroyed by proposed North West Rail Link haulage road
- Anger at Tree Removal at Cheltenham with Epping to Thornleigh Third Track
- Our 50th Anniversary Dinner Thursday 27 February, 2014 at Pennant Hills Golf Club
- Please support our work - Join the Trust

How the North West Rail Link Downsizing Will Affect YOU

1. Travelling to City on Northern Line

Commuters on the Northern Line will no longer have a direct train connection to the City. Your options will be:

- Change trains at Epping to NWRL then change at Chatswood to go to the city.
- Travel via Strathfield to Central Country platforms then change for the city.
- Travel to Hornsby and change to the North Shore Line.

2. Loss of Valued Bushland near Cheltenham Oval when there is an alternative of using the M2

North West Rail Link is good – downsizing it to Metro is not...

All of Sydney should be alarmed at what the NSW Government is doing to our NWRL!



In 2011, before the O'Farrell NSW Government was elected, they promised a NWRL that was a full, heavy-rail extension of the Sydney suburban system, operated with manned double-deck trains. Since election, the NSW Government has

broken its promise in favour of a separate Metro style train. That means a metro train from Rouse Hill to Epping and Chatswood. This involves downsizing to Metro standard of the existing public line from Epping to Chatswood.

Metro trains might have their place for short CBD journeys, but passengers should not have to pay to stand 37 kilometres (over an hour) from Rouse Hill to Chatswood and then change for a train to the city. Passengers from Beecroft or Cheltenham will have to change at Epping for a Metro train from the North West, then change at Chatswood for a North Shore train. Passenger trains from Beecroft and Cheltenham will go via Strathfield and are planned to terminate at Central Country platforms; then we change to get to City. *In the 1920's local steam trains terminated at Central.*

One resident has quipped the surest way to get a seat to the City will be "go to Hornsby and travel on a train from there straight into the city." A bit slower, but more likely seated!

Despite the Trust putting 250 residents' questions to NSW Transport Minister Berejiklian and two meetings of BCCT representatives with her, her responses have failed to convince us that Metro is a good idea. Regardless of our requests, supporting evidence for a metro has not been supplied. Are the only people that think a metro is a good idea is the Minister and her immediate staff? Transport experts (even from her Sydney Rail) are all agreed that building an incompatible metro will be a blight on our city rail system forever. (Our questions to the Minister and her answers are on the BCCT website)

The Minister has told BCCT that all new rail expansion in Sydney will be privatised Metro and we will just have to expect to change trains frequently. Just get used to it! The respected transport journalist, Jacob Saulwick, in Sydney Morning Herald, Nov 11, 2013 noted the concerns of commuters having to change trains or from bus to trains. He also notes that the majority of the current express bus services to the city from the North West will cease and the buses used to take people to the NWRL trains. The 'cost' of changing trains is estimated to be 8 minutes and the 'cost' of changing from bus to trains is estimated to be 15 minutes.

North West Rail link – proposed downsized rail Tunnelling is tragic...

The new rail tunnels from Epping to Rouse Hill are to be purposely drilled **400mm too small** to allow double deck-trains – so the ***Metro will not allow any reversal to standard trains if it is not extended or if the privatised line fails***, as significant other privatised transport ventures have. Remember the Monorail. This will forever condemn north western Sydney to have an incompatible orphaned line. This can only be interpreted as a political decision to privatise the line and never be able to restore it for standard trains.

North West Residents question rail downsizing to Metro

The Trust has collated hundreds of comments from concerned residents from Hills Shire, Hawkesbury City, Blacktown City and Parramatta City residents. These reflect similar high percentage levels of concern and agreement with our local residents about the downsized Metro service:

- *The proposed North West Rail Line must be fully compatible with the rest of City Rail network*
- *Future NWRL direct connection to the Parramatta and Richmond lines must be an option*
- *The line grades must be designed to allow full use by current network trains*
- *The old times, when a different rail gauge existed between the eastern states, surely cannot be repeated in this new venture. It was a total disaster ...why repeat the problem...some people never learn from history.*
- *The Hills Shire deserves the same level of public transport as residents in the rest of the city.*
- *Where's the common sense gone!*
- *Just look at the historical effects on efficient and workable transport in the past by systems that are non-compatible - the "Man in the street" knows this all too well... what's wrong with the planners???*

Please Sign our Petition. The Trust has online petition. We are aiming to get reconsideration of a process that favours a private metro operator getting control of a stand alone 'link' rather than the NWRL being state owned and compatible with the rest of the Sydney rail system. We are targeting 10,000 signatures and as we go to print we have 1750 of them. Please assist us by signing today and encouraging your friends and family to do the same.

Please add your comments at our e-petition – go to www.2119.org.au, or use the following QR code for smart-phone scan:



Impact of NWRL Proposed Access Road on Castle Howard Conservation Reserve and Wildlife Protection Area adjacent to Cheltenham Oval...

The NWRL propose to build a concrete roadway, 8 metres wide, through pristine bushland to allow construction of service facilities at Cheltenham Oval and remove some 1000 truckloads of fill over a year. It might be used as access should an emergency occur. Imagine the congestion on Kirkham Street! This roadway will be constructed along the M2 fence line to Kirkham Street on land owned by RMS and will result in the loss of about 1 hectare of bushland. Unfortunately, this area has the best vegetation and the road will cause maximum environmental damage. With the M2 running directly beside this site, BCCT has lobbied that haulage route should use the M2, which at grade would require no major earth works and would save the bushland. We do not know if this will be a permanent or a temporary road. Local opinion has been arrogantly dismissed by the representatives of NWRL. Despite promises by the State Government to integrate transport agencies to achieve greater co-operation, it is disgraceful that they can't or won't work together to achieve the best solution.



This road will result in the removal and destruction of pristine bushland that has been lovingly cared for by a dedicated and committed team of community based volunteer bushland regenerators. It is adjacent to the **Castle Howard Conservation Reserve and Wildlife Protection Area** and is widely used by the local schools, sporting bodies and for the enjoyment of the broader community for recreation in this bushland sanctuary.

The bushland comprises a well-managed and diverse range of native vegetation that is indigenous to the locality. Species include Blackbutt, Angophora and Turpentine trees, understorey layers of NSW Christmas bush, Wattles, Banksia and Geebung. One of the outstanding features of the conservation reserve following a controlled burn by the fire brigade three years ago is the regeneration of the grass trees and the masses of colourful native sarsaparilla, clematis, banksias and grevilleas.

The outcrops of weather Sydney Sandstone are outstanding adding to the ruggedness of the site. The enormous rocks make a major contribution to the visual and landscape amenity of this unspoilt nature reserve. This diverse area of bushland provides safe habitat for a broad range of fauna and reptiles as they seek refuge and nest in the canopies of the native trees and scurry around and over the rock outcrops.

BCCT has been fighting the issue of the road since April 2012. In September 2012, Channel 10 broadcast a news item featuring one of our members. We have met with representatives of the NWRL and walked through the bushland. They showed **absolutely no interest in the community's point of view**. They have a **predetermined route through the bush and would consider no other route or access from the M2**. We have asked Greg Smith to bring this matter to the Minister for Roads but have not had any response. We have also raised this in meetings with the Minister for Transport.

The reserve belongs to the community; it is maintained and managed by funds collected from the rate payers and above all the volunteers who have given decades of their valuable time to care for this public facility.

Write or email the following asking them to save the bushland and use the M2 for access to the construction site and haulage of waste.

Greg Smith MP SC Member for Epping: epping@parliament.nsw.gov.au

Duncan Gay, Minister for Roads: office@gay.minister.nsw.gov.au

Gladys Berejiklian, Minister for Transport: office@berejiklian.minister.nsw.gov.au

Anger at Tree Removal at Cheltenham Station

Despite the continuing efforts of community groups, removal of trees has commenced at Cheltenham Station for the Epping to Thornleigh Third Track (ETTT). This is in preparation for a car park on the western side to replace most of the existing car park. The additional spaces will only replace the number of parking spaces that exist in the present car park. As entry to the new spaces will come directly off The Crescent, there will be no street parking on the railway side between the station and Lyne Road, resulting in an overall loss of car parking. There will also be no room to plant trees for shade or to replace those which have been removed and to break the line of sight of the rail line. The majority of trees on both sides of the station are scheduled for removal. This is very frustrating for an angry community which is seeing its suburbs destroyed and is not having its voice heard. **This historic palm can and should be saved or relocated.**



Becroft Cheltenham Civic Trust will be 50 next year

All members, former members and residents can celebrate the Trust's 50th anniversary on **Thursday 27 February 2014** with a dinner held at **Pennant Hills Golf Club** in conjunction with the Becroft Forum. Cost is \$50 for a two course meal and includes one pre-dinner drink. The BCCT is awaiting a reply to our invitation to a Guest Speaker and will advise you when this is known. Bookings are essential and can be made now through Janet Hayes 9980 9917 or hayes.janet@hotmail.com

Date: Thursday 27 February 2014

Venue: Pennant Hills Golf Club, Copeland Road, Becroft

Time: 7.00pm for 7.30pm

Cost: \$50 per person

Payment: Cheque made out to "MIAT" and mailed to 52 Hannah Street, Becroft 2119

Electronic: Commbank Account Name MIAT – BSB 062 113 – Account 10132308 – please give your name as the reference

Meals: Please advise any special dietary requirements at the time of booking so that the golf club can be prepared

Membership subscriptions are the main source of income for the Trust.

Please join the Trust and support your community. Membership paid now covers 2014.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL/APPLICATION FORM 2014

Fees are \$20 household (two adults), \$10 individual

Surname (1).....First name (1)

Surname (2).....First name (2)

Address Post Code

Street address preferred

Suburb

Phone Number Mobile No.....

E-mail address

Membership fees \$ as noted below. Method of payment please mark appropriate box:-

Post with cheque to PO Box 31 Becroft 2119

Deposited in bank BSB 062 113 Commonwealth Bank Becroft Account No 10068238.

Electric Funds Transfer EFT from your bank account via computer

BSB 062 113 Commonwealth Bank Becroft Account Number 10068238. NB Use your name as reference.

So we know your details, please send a copy of this completed form to The Treasurer, PO Box 31 Becroft 2119 OR email your name, address, phone no and email address to treasurer@2119.org.au