

Macquarie Point Northern Access Road submission

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I am making this submission as a former Tasmania who maintains a strong interest in the state.

I also write this with a background in both road safety and major event management. In Victoria, I have worked for Tennis Australia and the Melbourne Cricket Club amongst other major event organisers.

I urge members of the committee to not support the Northern Access Road, and in turn the busway proposal, but rather to pursue the re-establishment of an operating rail system to Macquarie Point.

It should be clear that with the Macquarie Point stadium now approved and progressed, rail along the existing northern corridor is going to be essential. The idea of believing that buses will be sufficient to move large numbers of people to and from Macquarie Point is fanciful. I find it perplexing that the Government has maintained this as its preference. The Northern Suburbs Transit Corridor in its busway form is a plan doomed to fail. And a ridiculous one, given the existence of a rail corridor.

Let's say that one-third of a full house at Macquarie Point. 7,500 people would require 125 x 60-seater buses. 125. Yes, only a portion of that 7,500 would be from the northern suburbs, but with an effective rail line, you could expect that more than one-third of people from the northern suburbs would travel by rail to stadium events.

People are simply not attracted to bus travel in the same way (or numbers) as rail. Many studies worldwide have shown this to be the case.

I would encourage committee members to look at what has happened with light rail in recent years in Canberra, Sydney, the Gold Coast and Adelaide.

As to events, it would be useful to consider the case of the Queensland Tennis Centre (Pat Rafter Arena) in Brisbane's southern suburb of Tennyson. I worked at the Brisbane International for four years (2011-2014), so am very familiar with the transport system. Pat Rafter Arena seats around 5,500 people, and at a busy day of the Brisbane International, around a further 10,000 people attend the precinct – a total of over 15,000. The Queensland Tennis Centre has no public car parking on event days. Around 90% of spectators at the Brisbane International travel to and from the event by train. The nearest railway station is around 600 metres from the venue. Macquarie Point, by comparison, is very lucky, with the ability to build a railway station right at the venue.

This Brisbane model for moving event patrons in large numbers should be applied to Macquarie Point. It is the obvious solution for people living along the entire northern corridor.

Over and above Macquarie Point, a light rail corridor should then continue through to the city.