



16 December 2010

Reference: 932599\_1.DOC

Michael Woodland  
Director, Metropolitan Projects  
Department of Planning  
GPO Box 39  
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Attention: Caroline Owen

Dear Mr Woodland

**Bakehouse Quarter Environmental Assessment (MP 09\_0054)**

I refer to your correspondence of 12 November 2010 with respect to the Pelorus Property Group (the Proponent) submission of an Environmental Assessment (EA) supporting a major project application under Part 3A of the EP&A Act for a mixed use development at the Bakehouse Quarter, Parramatta Road and George Street, North Strathfield (the Bakehouse Quarter proposal) to the Department of Planning (the Department) for approval. TCA notes it has provided comments previously on the preliminary environmental assessment and Director-General's requirements for this proposal.

TCA has reviewed the Bakehouse Quarter proposal and has identified several areas of concern, particularly with respect to its potential to conflict with the North Strathfield Rail Underpass (NSRU) Project both during construction and operation.

The NSRU Project seeks to improve the capacity, availability and reliability of freight services on the Main North Line by allowing free flow of freight trains in the presence of existing and future passenger services. The NSRU Project will provide an underpass from the Up Relief to the Down side of the corridor, eliminating the flat crossing for freight trains north of Concord West. Under the new configuration there will be no conflict with northbound trains.

Holding capability, on the reinstated and extended Up Relief between the northern dive and north of Concord West Station, will also be provided for freight trains travelling in the Up direction after diverging from the main line. This is long enough to hold a 1500 metre train without interference with the Up Main. This will prevent delays to any following passenger trains in the event that the single track freight line to Flemington is blocked by a northbound freight train proceeding in the opposite direction.

The NSRU Project has been assessed under Part 5 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*, in consultation with RailCorp, Transport NSW and the Roads and Traffic Authority. The Review of Environmental Factors (REF) for the NSRU Project is intended to be made available for public exhibition in the first half of 2011.

During construction of the NSRU Project, TCA intends to acquire a lease over a parcel of land under the ownership of the Roads and Traffic Authority (RTA) on the corner of George Street and George Lane for the purposes of use of the site as a construction compound. Discussions with the RTA to secure this lease are well underway. The Proponent proposes to use this same site as a construction compound in the Bakehouse Quarter EA, however

TCA understands that the previous lease the Proponent held over the site has since expired and no arrangement for renewing the lease with the RTA has been secured.

If the RTA site cannot be utilised by TCA during the construction of the NSRU Project, construction materials, plant and site amenities will need to be located further from the works area on the other side of the rail corridor, which will make the delivery of materials and access to the corridor more difficult and lead to an increase in project cost and duration. The impacts of the project on local traffic will also be considerably increased as construction vehicles would require access to the works area via residential streets from an alternate site compound adjacent to North Strathfield Station.

In addition to the above impacts during construction, the following potential conflicts are also likely during the operational phase of the NSRU Project:

- **Noise and vibration** – the noise and vibration impact assessment in the Bakehouse Quarter proposal EA is predicated on a separation distance of 18 metres (the current distance) from the operating track, at current service frequencies. Under the NSRU Project operating conditions, freight movement frequencies will increase and running trains will be more proximate to the building line of the Bakehouse Quarter proposal.

Accordingly noise and vibration impacts will be greater than those predicted under the Bakehouse Quarter model and the associated mitigation measures proposed in the EA are unlikely to be adequate to appropriately mitigate the likely impacts of adjacent rail operations.

This will not only affect the tenants of the future land uses within the Bakehouse Quarter, but may also trigger the need for additional mitigation measures to be incorporated in the NSRU Project which are not currently required. For example, should the proposed theatre be constructed and not appropriately designed for vibration and groundborne noise impacts, the need for floating track slab and/or attenuating track fastening systems may need to be incorporated in the NSRU Project design, which would significantly increase the project cost.

It is recommended that the Department require as a condition of approval that a revised noise impact assessment be undertaken for the proposal which takes into account the likely impacts of rail operations following the implementation of the NSRU Project, and that appropriate noise and vibration mitigation measures are implemented to respond to the greater impacts this would entail. The condition of approval should also require concurrence of the assessment and mitigation measures by TCA and RailCorp.

- **Building maintenance** – as the finished building line coincides with the rail corridor boundary, any maintenance of the building façade adjacent to the corridor will require access to the rail corridor. It is recommended that the Department require as a condition of approval that the finished building line be setback from the rail corridor to allow for building maintenance access.
- **Corridor access** – the current design effectively removes the existing Railway Street RailCorp corridor accessway, with the proposed reconfiguration of Railway Street/George Lane. This removal of corridor access will affect RailCorp's operations and also TCA's access during construction of the NSRU Project. Although the Proponent's drawings in the Bakehouse Quarter EA include the removal of the access





gate, and the formalisation of car parking and landscaping, the Proponent does not include these items in the project scope for which it seeks approval.

- **Development contribution works in kind** – under the Canada Bay Council Development Contributions Plan prepared under section 94A of the EP&A Act, the Proponent is liable for \$1.4 million in contributions for the Bakehouse Quarter proposal. In lieu of making a cash contribution, the Proponent has proposed to provide a pedestrian/cycle shareway between North Strathfield and Strathfield Stations, within the rail corridor as works-in-kind.

RailCorp have not approved this proposal, and the footprint of the proposed cycleway conflicts with the footprint of the proposed rail works comprising the NSRU Project, and accordingly would not be able to be constructed. Any proposed shareway would need to be provided on the Proponent's land or land outside of the rail corridor.

- **Structural loads** – the proposed new track and corresponding loads from the trains being closer to the rail corridor boundary will likely increase the structural loads on the proposed underground carpark. This will need to be considered in detail in the proposed Bakehouse Quarter design. The retaining wall design will need to have particular regard to the retaining method proposed, as RailCorp requirements will not allow for rock anchors below the rail corridor.

TCA understands that additional conflicts with the Bakehouse Quarter proposal and rail operations will also be addressed in a submission from RailCorp with respect to the proposal.

To further elaborate upon the issues raised in this letter, TCA seeks to arrange a meeting with Department staff as soon as practicable. Please contact Aaron Bowden, Planning Manager on 9422 5402 or at [aaron.bowden@tca.nsw.gov.au](mailto:aaron.bowden@tca.nsw.gov.au).

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'D Gainsford', with a small 'PP' written to the left.

David Gainsford  
Director, Planning and Assessments