



14 October 2011

Connecting the North West Rail Link with the Richmond Line, the Parramatta-Epping Line and the CityRail Network

EcoTransit Sydney is a community-based, not-for-profit public-transport and active-transport advocacy group. We are writing to seek your support for a modification to the current proposed route for the North West Rail Link.

EcoTransit supports both the North West Rail Link (NWRL) and the Parramatta to Epping line. Following a review of the NWRL project as proposed by the NSW Government, we have developed an alternative route and made a submission to Customer Strategy and Planning, North West Rail Link Project.

EcoTransit Sydney supports the development of a connected, comprehensive public transport rail network for Sydney. While supportive of the NWRL, the current proposal to build an isolated radial line targeted at the Sydney CBD will not yield the outcomes sought by the community, nor provide a good return on taxpayer funds. In particular it will fail to provide the kind of flexible network connections that passengers in the North West will require now and in the future.

Our proposed scheme builds on the existing CityRail network and enhances it by creating a Western Orbital Rail Route with interchanges allowing flexibility for commuters and rail operations.

The scheme outlined here also presents an opportunity to resolve the stand-off between the state and federal governments over construction of NWRL versus Parramatta-Epping. In effect it completes part of the Parramatta-Epping link, enhances its effect and enables an early start on it.

By altering the NWRL route into a shallow curve to the south of the currently preferred route (Figure 1: *Proposed route modification for North West Rail Link*) and placing another station (putatively called 'Murray Farm') in the vicinity of the intersection of Pennant Hills and North Rocks roads, the NWRL would achieve significant extra catchment. Three schools are located at this point and a station here would connect with bus routes 553 and 549 which serve large catchments.

The Murray Farm station would be the NWRL's junction with the Epping to Parramatta line, which could be constructed subsequent to or concurrently with NWRL. If it is decided to delay construction of the Parramatta-Epping line until after the NWRL, stub tunnels should be bored to allow grade-separated tunnelling to proceed south towards Carlingford where the proposed tunnel from Camellia to Parramatta would complete the Parramatta-Epping link. Similarly, east of the Murray Farm station, stub tunnels would be left orientated so that the line could in the future proceed southward towards Carlingford.

In this way a situation would be created whereby construction of a Y junction could proceed with no interruption to services.

We advocate the construction of an underground station in the vicinity of Carlingford Court which,

apart from serving a large regional shopping centre, has the advantage of good road access. Carlingford Court is already served by nine bus services which would act as feeders to the station.

At the western end of the NWRL, the project should encompass a further 3.3 km extension to connect it to the Richmond Line in the vicinity of the new Schofields Station, with at-grade connections to up and down lines.

In the medium term the aim would be the creation of an Outer Western Rail Orbital using the Carlingford (as the proposed Parramatta-Epping route), Western and Richmond lines with trains running continuously in both directions (Figure 2: *NWRL route revision as part of an Outer Western Rail Orbital*).

Assuming four 'orbital' trains per hour passing each station on the line in both directions and that on the NWRL these would alternate with through services to the CBD, this would give commuters the ability to travel direct to Parramatta or, if bound for points east of Epping, the option of changing trains at the Murray Farm station to services travelling east via the Parramatta-Epping line.

This scheme would greatly enhance commuter choice and rail operations flexibility.

EcoTransit seeks your support for this scheme and we would welcome an opportunity to meet with you to discuss how to progress this with the New South Wales Government. Pursuing this change will result in a major expansion of the rail network in the North West. Critically, it will introduce non-radial, orbital links that will offer more direct connections to not only CBD bound passengers, but for those people seeking to commute across Sydney.

Yours sincerely,



John Bignucolo
Secretary
EcoTransit Sydney

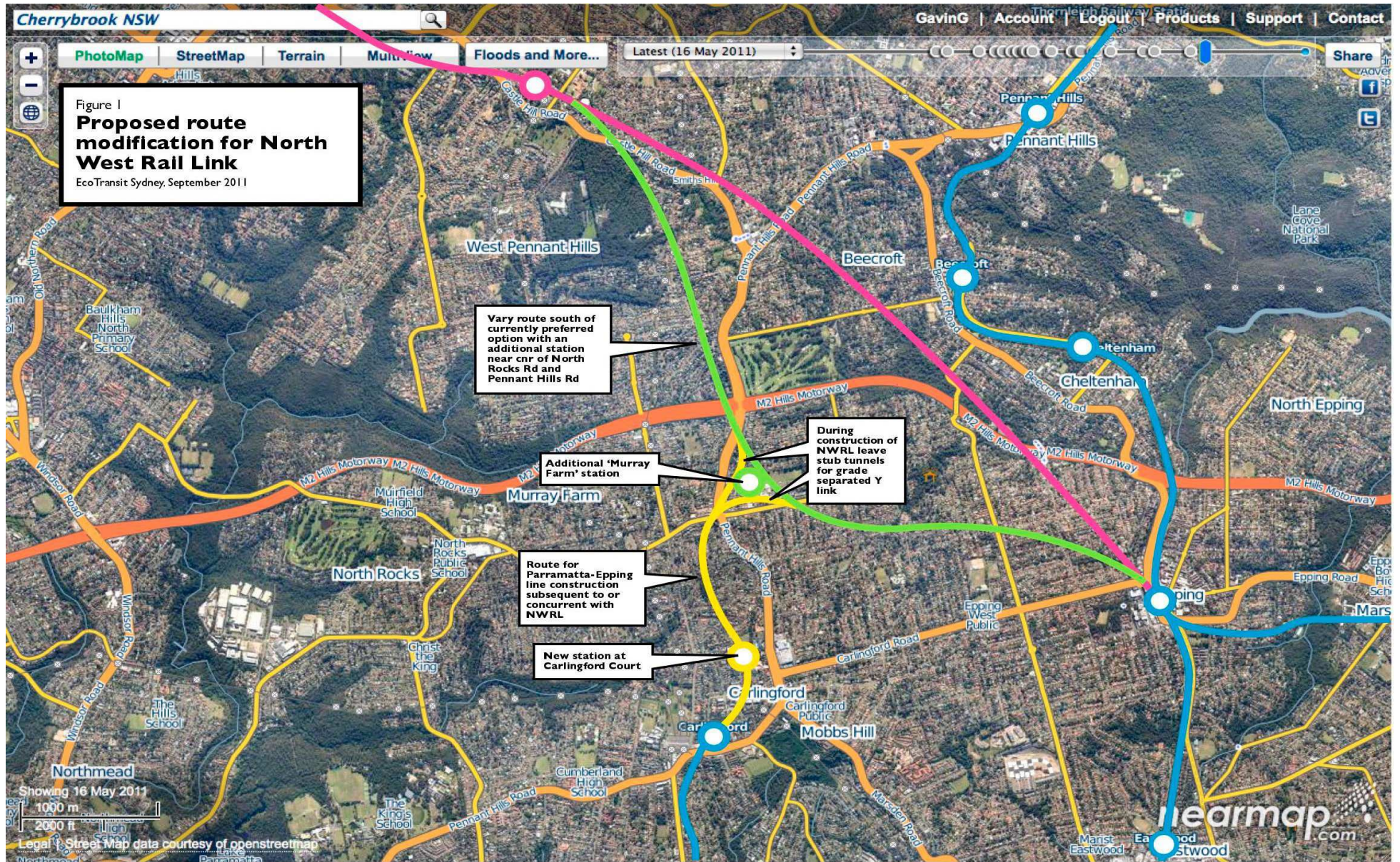
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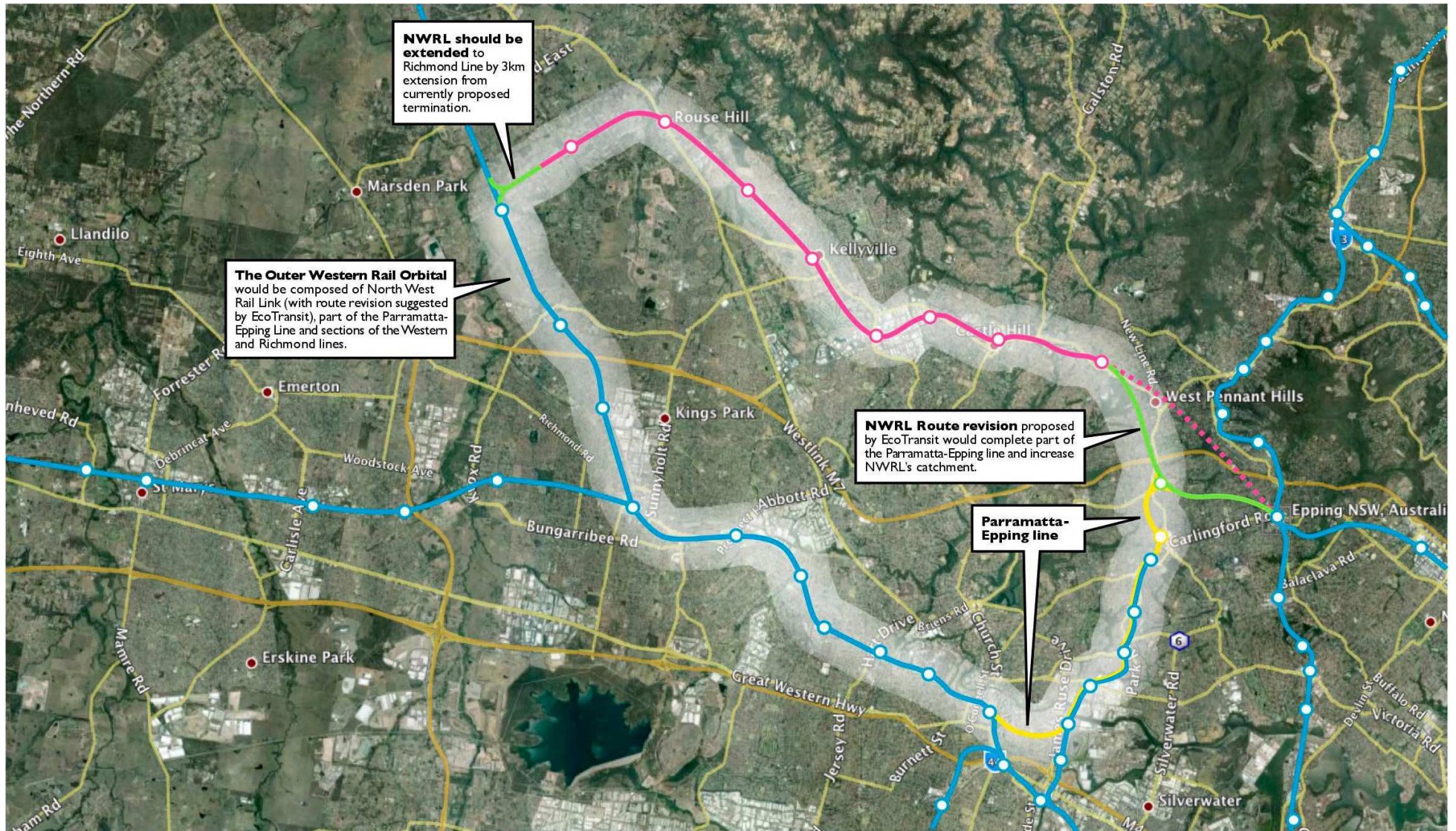


Figure 2
NWRL route revision as part of an Outer Western Rail Orbital

EcoTransit Sydney, September 2011