

8 December 2021

Secretary of the Department of Planning, Industry & Environment
4 Parramatta Square
12 Darcy St
Parramatta NSW 2150

To Whom It May Concern

RE: Statement of Public Benefit for DA Regarding The Rocks, Sydney

Sydney Trains proposes to upgrade an existing advertising asset to an LED digital sign at the above location to be operated under a formal advertising concession agreement with JCDecaux. The installation of this asset is proposed in accordance with the provisions of State Environmental Planning Policy 64 (SEPP 64) and the *Transport Corridor Outdoor Advertising and Signage Guidelines November 2017*.

Transport Asset Holding Entity of New South Wales (**TAHE**) owns the outdoor advertising assets and Sydney Trains has been appointed as agent of TAHE for operational control and asset management responsibilities for these assets.

Clause 13[2][iii] of SEPP 64 requires that the consent authority is satisfied that the proposal is acceptable in terms of public benefits provided in connection with the advertisement. Further, Section 4 of the Guidelines outlines how certain outdoor advertisements must meet a *public benefit test* to ensure that the advertising will result in a positive gain or benefit for the community.

In relation to Sydney Trains advertising, the Guidelines outline an appropriate public benefit as follows:

4.2.1 RMS and TfNSW, Sydney Trains and NSW Trains advertising

For TfNSW, Sydney Trains and NSW Trains, railway station upgrades (e.g. providing wheelchair access) and rail crossings (e.g. installation of lights or gates) or other rail safety measures may be considered priority works. Amenity improvements along rail corridors including landscaping, litter removal, or vandalism and graffiti management may also be considered appropriate public benefits.

On the 21 September 2021 when the current concession agreement commenced between Sydney Trains and JCDecaux, the Secretary for Transport for NSW (Mr Rob Sharp) released a public statement advising;

“Advertising on public transport is a long established practice, and finding innovative and efficient ways to create revenue from public assets is vitally important to creating sustainable business models and delivering a world class public transport service for our customers”.

Mr Sharp said further in that same public statement;

“All revenue from these new advertising contracts will be re-invested into running the Sydney Trains network, which is a great outcome for our customers and taxpayers of NSW, ensuring we can keep providing clean, frequent and reliable services for customers while also bringing the next generation of transport solutions online to continue improving our customers’ experience”.

The Chief Executive of Sydney Trains (Mr Matt Longland) also said in that same public statement;

“Sydney Trains is an industry leader when it comes to innovation, so it’s great to partner with these organisations to achieve common goals, while generating an alternative revenue stream so we can continue to improve our service offering. In addition to generating advertising revenue for Sydney Trains, our new digital assets will be used for customer communications and emergency alerts, further improving the customer experience at our stations”.

The installation of this sign at The Rocks, Sydney will continue to provide a valuable revenue stream to Sydney Trains which will continued to be used to support a number of improvements and maintenance programs in accordance with the public benefit test provisions identified in SEPP 64 and the Guidelines.

Digital advertising provides a further public benefit to Sydney Trains, TfNSW and emergency services to display instantaneous safety or public awareness messages. In addition to a revenue stream, the digital screens will also be used to provide important information to customers in the event of the following:

- ☐ Station emergency situations;
- ☐ Any major disruption which is likely to cause delays to train running times;
- ☐ Sydney Trains and TfNSW promotions and events; and
- ☐ Threat-to-life alerts by NSW Government Emergency and Police Agencies.

This public benefit for Sydney Trains, TfNSW and emergency services to access digital screens to provide instantaneous messaging to Sydney Trains users is a significant component of the digital program to provide a benefit to the public in certain locations around Sydney. In addition, Sydney Trains may also access the digital screens for up to 5 minutes per hour for Sydney Trains and TfNSW customer promotions and events at no cost.

If you require any further information on this proposed Development Application or the public benefits that this will facilitate, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Regards,

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Greg Attewell

Manager Advertising & Revenue

(M) 0477 395 746

(e) greg.attewell@transport.nsw.gov.au