

# Sydney Harbour HighLine



**A Project:**

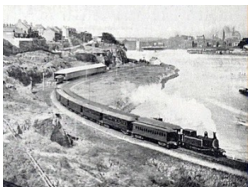
- an icon in waiting,
- designed and costed,
- approved by the landowner - Sydney Trains to go forward is two stages
  - Stage 1 on land not now needed by Sydney Trains
  - Stage 2 on land when no longer needed by Sydney Trains

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### WHY WAS THE LINE BUILT?

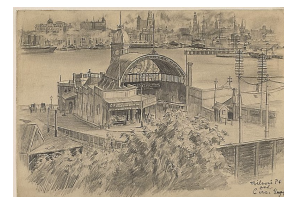


- Sydney Harbour's North Shore Rail Line - built in two stages:
- Stage 1 - opened in 1890 connected St Leonards to the Sydney to Brisbane rail line
  - Stage 2 - opened in 1893 connected St Leonards to Milsons Point ferry wharf

Part of a plan to open up the harbour's north shore:

- first for trade (goods up-line to the main line at Hornsby)
- then for commuters (people down-line to the Milsons Point wharf)

With the opening of the Bridge in 1932 it became obsolete



### WHAT WAS THE IMPACT OF THE LINE?

The line provided a physical barrier to harbor foreshore land, patches of which, considered to have little commercial value, simply morphed into harbour-side parks



- 3.3km "corridor"
- 310 meter tunnel
- 3.77 hectares
  - including a harbour fronting 2 hectare field

It isolated:

• Ball's Head Reserve & the coal loader,	8.9
• Waverton Park,	3.6
• Sawmiller's Reserve,	1.3
• Wendy's "secret" Garden,	5
• Lavender Bay Parklands	2.2
• Harry's Park	0.5



## LUNA PARK RESERVE TRUST'S 1991 PLAN OF MANAGEMENT

The Luna Park Site Act 1990 objective is:

*to return the Luna Park site to the people of New South Wales and to ensure that Luna Park and the associated harbour foreshore remain available and accessible for the enjoyment of the people of New South Wales*

The 1991 Plan of Management states:

*At the direction of the Premier, the Plan covers the area defined by the Act and the SRA land to Waverton Station*

*The SRA has recognised that in the long-term Lavender Bay land should not continue to be used for train stabling*

*As employment grows in the St. Leonards/Chatswood area .. it is most likely that evening services which commence at North Sydney will in future start from Chatswood, this coupled with the proposed increase in capacity on the line would mean that a stabling site further north than Lavender Bay could be more advantageous in 7-10 years*



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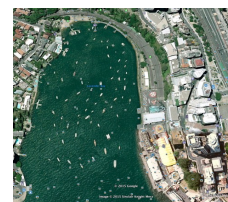
## THE GENESIS OF AN IDEA

In the 1991 the Luna Park Plan of Management appeared a vision:

*if and when, the Waverton to Lavender Bay rail line becomes surplus to railway purposes*

*it is recommended that it be considered for*

- *dedication as a corridor of open space, providing a magnificent pedestrian link between Luna Park and Waverton Station*
- *linking existing parkland' and open space, providing significant opportunities for viewing the harbour,*
- *enabling retention of identified significant elements and promoting their public appreciation*



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## THE GENESIS OF AN IDEA – WHY NOT THEN

Prime real estate left – use by the railways has declined from the opening of the Bridge in 1932 to next to nothing

At the start of this saga the reasons given as to why the rail line must be retained:

- Terrorism
  - The “loss” of the Bridge and the need to revert to ferries – then the Metro
- Operational:
  - Training guards
    - Not since 2916
  - Stabling of trains
    - North of Chatswood



Putting it in context



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## COMPETING INTERESTS – THE STAKEHOLDERS

MULTIPLEX



2004 Multiplex acquired Luna Park

2011-12 – concerns the rail corridor between Lavender Bay/Luna Park and Waverton

- RailCorp requests the removal of the under bridge from the Heritage Register
- Luna Park's financial report (2012):
  - *The loans from related entities ... repayable on the successful development and sale of development sites adjacent to the Park*
- Sydney Trains reports to the Government
  - the line (to Lavender Bay) is one of 12 “operational bottlenecks”

2016 Government amended legislation to allow Minister to sell off disused rail lines

2017 The community, fearing the rail corridor was about to be handed to developers, exploded



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## COMPETING INTERESTS – THE STAKEHOLDERS

February 2017 - the Minister for Transport, responsible for Sydney Trains, the “owner” of the line advised:  
*I confirm that work to create a walking path can commence on the side where tracks have been removed before the active rail line is closed on the other side of the spur (Stage 1)*

July 2017 - the Premier announced support for the project  
*I give an iron clad guarantee that a NSW Liberals & Nationals Government will never sell off the land and ensure it remains a community asset in the event it is not needed for railway use*

August 2017 - Premier established a committee to examine the feasibility (design and costs) - the Sydney High Line Committee (chaired by Felicity Wilson) with representatives from:

- o Sydney Harbour HighLine Association
- o Sydney Trains,
- o Office of Environment and Heritage,
- o Destination NSW,
- o Sydney Heritage Trains,
- o North Sydney Council,
- o Waverton and Lavender Bay Precincts and the
- o Federal Government



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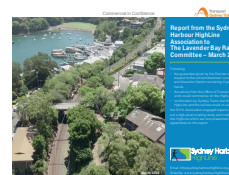
## THE GOVERNMENT FORMED A COMMITTEE

### The Committee

Received complimentary designs and costings from Sydney Trains and The Sydney Harbour HighLine Association

The Committee reported (2018) - unanimously:

- The HighLine will be:
  - constructed and operated in parallel with Sydney Train’s diminishing use of the current rail corridor
  - operated in conjunction with the ongoing operation of Sydney Trains
- Confirmed the viability of construction and use of the HighLine walkway whilst Sydney Trains and Transport Heritage used the rail corridor to be developed in two stages:
  - Stage 1, on land not needed by Sydney Trains (i.e. Wendy’s Secret Garden to Union Street)
  - Stage 2, on the rest of the land when Sydney Trains ceased to use it ( i.e. from Wendy’s Garden to Luna Park and from Union Street to Waverton Station)



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## THE ASSOCIATION SETS ABOUT DESIGNING THE HIGHLINE

With:

- the position of the Department of Transport (2017 approval for work to commence) and
- the findings of the Premiers Committee (2018 approval for the staged development)

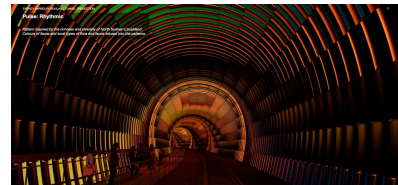
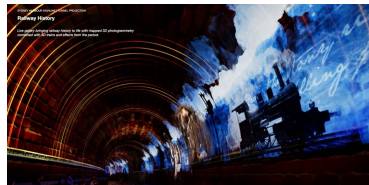
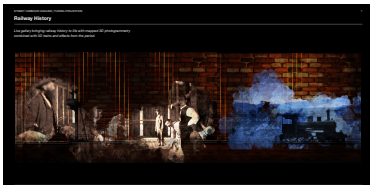
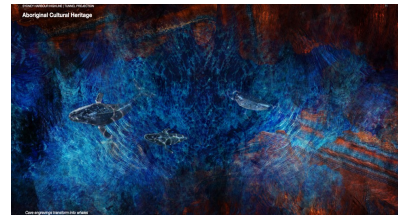
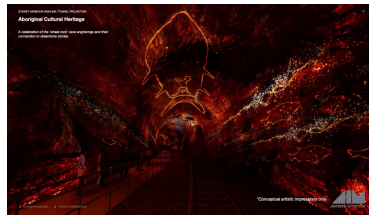
All the stakeholders were aligned – the Sydney Harbour HighLine Association set about completing the designs for the walkway and tunnel.



## THE ASSOCIATION SETS ABOUT DESIGNING THE HIGHLINE

The Magic ...

using the tunnel walls to bring to life the history of the land and people over time



### MINISTER CONSTANCE STALLS



Remember Minister Constance in 2017 - the Minister for Transport (responsible for Sydney Trains, the "owner" of the line) advised:

*I confirm that work to create a walking path can commence*

Minister Constance in 2019 – still the Minister for Transport

*The NSW Government's position (is)*

- *subject to the appropriate due diligence being completed and*
- *provided it does not interfere with current or future passenger service delivery requirements of the rail network,*

*it was happy to consider investigating how the Sydney Harbour High Line project might be facilitated. I am advised that significant portions of the proposed route continue to be required to operate the rail network*

Which begs two questions –

- Had the Minister read the Premier's Committee's report?
- Was there another agenda at work?



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### STAY WITH THE PLAN



We won't deliver it because ...



We will deliver it!



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## DECISIONS TAKEN WITH THE SPEED OF SUMMER LIGHTNING



We won't deliver it because ...

- *the .. Highline .. would have a serious impact on the operations of the T1 Western Line, with implications for service reliability for passengers across the rail network, including western Sydney residents*

Really? Serious *impact on operations* - Stabling trains

- That 1991 Plan Of Management –
  - T1 efficiency demands stabling north of termination points
  - Terminations are now almost all north of St Leonards
- The 2011 Sydney Rail Future Report
  - Lavender Bay junction is a bottleneck

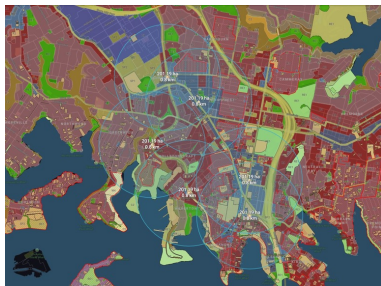
Truism - Governments act on the advice of bureaucrats (in this case Sydney Trains)

Question - Why did Sydney Trains change its position?



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## REPURPOSE?



The State Government:

- has identified Crows Nest (and 7 other "hubs")
- for rezoning for the delivery of up to 47,800 new high and mid-rise homes over the next 15 years

"Hubs" defined as areas within 1200m of the Metro and rail stations

The tragedy

- No thought of how to grow open green with the HighLine ready to go



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## RE-PURPOSING LAND THAT'S BECOME SURPLUS



The fear is that the stakeholders that came together in the Premier's Committee are diverging

Nothing like unbridled self interest to divide stakeholders

What now is Sydney Trains' interest?

Help is needed to get the State Government to revisit the Sydney Harbour HighLine and look to how best to serve the interest of Sydneysiders – deliver the HighLine

