

To the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate,

PTCBBR welcomes the opportunity to make a submission on the development applications for the proposed Woden Transport Interchange and associated works. We support the ACT Government's significant investment in public transport infrastructure and are pleased to see a project of this scope to replace the current interchange, which is tired and poorly configured.

Our comments are mainly focused on the impact this project will have on public transport users, and therefore are not strictly focused on whether the project meets specific planning criteria. The comments below reflect aspects which PTCBBR consider to be missed opportunities to build an interchange which places public transport users at the centre of the design.

We hope that Major Projects Canberra (MPC) and Transport Canberra and City Services (TCCS) closely consider these comments and those of other transport users, such as the Council on the Ageing and peak disability groups, to finalise a truly exceptional design.

Passengers must cross multiple lanes of traffic to transfer between services

Seamless and safe transfers between services is crucial for the success of any public transport network. This is why PTCBBR was disappointed to see recent drawings suggesting passengers must cross two lanes of traffic to move between the central light rail platforms and the bus platforms ([Figure 1](#)), which was a departure from earlier drawings which showed only one lane of traffic ([Figure 2](#)). PLAN-202138251-GENERAL_ARRANGMENT-01 suggests that [Figure 2](#) is correct. We sincerely hope that it is, as requiring passengers to cross two lanes of traffic reduces opportunities to cross the road, potentially adds to transfer times and most importantly, increases the risk of collisions between buses and pedestrians.

PTCBBR accepts that fully grade-separating passenger and vehicular traffic may not be feasible for a bus and light rail interchange on Callam Street and may actually result in a longer transfer times if passengers are required to go up and down stairs, ramps and lifts. However, we strongly encourage MPC and TCCS to again consider the feasibility of accommodating buses and light rail on either side of a single platform, allowing for cross-platform transfers, as occurs at the Juniors Kingsford terminus of the Sydney CBD and South East Light Rail ([Figure 3](#)) and Kelmscott Station in Perth ([Figure 4](#)). We refer to our earlier submission dated 18 December 2020 (see [Attachment A](#)) in this regard. While we acknowledge cross-platform transfers would require a significant revision to the current design, we believe this would result in a superior experience for public transport users.

If such changes are out of scope for this development application, then we encourage:

- indentations which require buses to merge into a single lane of traffic, rather than continue from the platform through a pedestrian crossing (as in [Figure 2](#)),
- raised crossings to affirm that pedestrians are the primary users of the interchange and to slow bus traffic, and
- generous traffic signal timing to give passengers plenty of opportunity to cross the road and discourage passengers from running across red signals.

While this may be of some inconvenience to bus operators, it is important that passenger needs are considered first.

Passenger shelters do not adequately protect from the elements

The proposed shelters are similar in design to those on Light Rail Stage 1 and the Gungahlin Bus Interchange. The deep 3.9 metre roof should provide reasonable shelter from the rain. However, PTCBR consistently receives feedback that these open shelters do not adequately protect passengers from the Canberra wind and cold. It is not clear why the central light rail platforms have a greater degree of shelter than the bus platforms (see, for example 4 - COMPSTREET-202138251-02 and 12 - FLOORREG-202138251-TYPICAL_BAY-01).

We encourage MPC and TCCS to consider additional protections from the elements, including:

- extending a continuous back wall to all bus platforms, and not only the central light rail platforms,
- bays at the end of each platform with at least 270° shielding to protect from breezes, which were a feature of many Canberra bus shelters until the 1990s (see [Figure 5](#)),
- cafe-style infra-red heating, which is common in most outdoor dining areas these days, and
- a suitable seated waiting area within the future CIT complex, with appropriate passenger information to allow passengers enough time to walk to their platform.

The design must facilitate the best passenger services, rather than passenger services having to accommodate the design

56 - SUPP-202138251-INTERCHANGE-01 provides a good indication of what the transport network will look like after the interchange is built. PTCBR welcomes the suggested increase in services. We understand that this document is only indicative, and most of the proposed service changes fall outside of the scope of this development application.

However, it is important to point out that the document anticipates constraints in the new interchange which will require some changes to the current network. For example, at Section 3.2, the report proposes a change in direction for Weston Creek services to prevent one side of the interchange from being over-utilised in peak periods. PTCBR believes this is backwards reasoning.

There may be a number of good reasons to redirect Weston Creek services in this manner, such as providing closer access to the office precinct at the northern end of the town centre. There may also be downsides, such as longer travel times and stops which are further away from the Phillip trades area. As a general rule, PTCBR believes that MPC and TCCS should be making operational decisions based on whether they result in a better bus service, not whether they work for the interchange. If the interchange cannot accommodate these services from the outset, then the design should be reconsidered so it can accommodate them.

Further, if the design anticipates capacity constraints in the first 10 years of operation, then MPC and TCCS need to consider how the interchange can be expanded as transport demand increases in the decades to follow.

The PTCBR Executive are available to discuss any aspect of this submission.

Sincerely,



Ryan Hemsley
Chair,
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Figure 1 - Current Render of New Woden Transport Interchange



Figure 2 - Previous Render of New Woden Transport Interchange



Figure 3 - Juniors Kingsford Bus and Light Rail Terminus



Figure 4 - Kelmscott Bus and Train Station

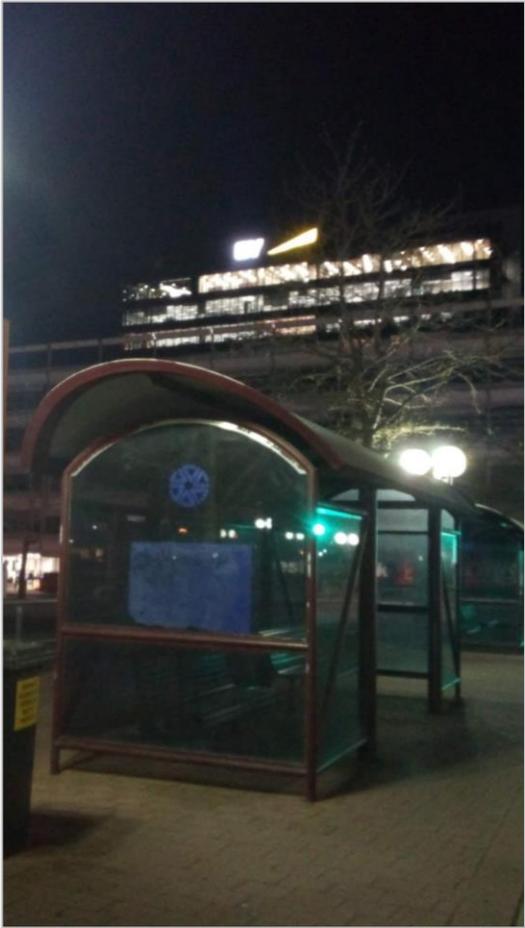


Figure 5 - City West Bus Shelters