

The Hon. Gabrielle Upton MP

Vaucluse@parliament.nsw.gov.au

**Re: Meeting 3 December 2015 with Mr Bill Grant
Transport service Planning and Development**

Dear Gabrielle

This is further to your letter of 18 March 2016 regarding the matter of accessibility of Edgecliff bus interchange and bus route 328, forwarding the reply from Mr Bill Grant, pursuant to the meeting under reference.

This reply was to say the least disappointing and didn't take any of the suggestions on board. Here are some comments which may be useful:

Bus 328 Edgecliff to Darling Point – peak Bondi Junction

The new route does not cater for the needs of the residents who want to travel, as they have done for decades in some cases, to the city for medical appointments, visit their favourite clubs such as City Tatts, shopping, going to the Opera House and other activities.

Mr Grant argues that people can alight near the corner of Darling Point Rd and New South Head Road, walk to Edgecliff station and take a train, change at Town Hall or Martin Place and go about their activities in the city down to Circular Quay.

Unfortunately we know that Edgecliff Station is difficult of access for the over 70's and the mothers with prams, particularly twin prams because of the lack of a lift. This means that now many people have become house bound and this is contrary to all the recommendations for good health, i.e. dementia and heart problems. In addition to the old and the mothers, blind people cannot use escalators with their dogs and we have seen blind sailors walk down from Kings cross stations to Sailability in Yarranabbe Park with their guide dogs because of the lack of suitable transport. Handicapped people with permanent or temporary injuries are equally disfavoured at the Edgecliff station.

There are still many buses still travelling through the city via Elizabeth Street but none are from the Eastern Suburbs. Why cant the 328 also travel along Elizabeth street, which would solve the problem? If no buses are to travel through the city, then that includes **all** buses along Elizabeth street or does it not? so why remove the 327 route?

Ferries

We welcome the news that ferry services are to be increased as this is an ideal alternative to the city for many while at the same time relieving the congestion in the CBD, provided people can access the wharf.

It is indeed very pleasing to note that the Darling Point ferries have increased in patronage by some 40%. However, the patrons do not include the over 70's and the mothers of twin babies and the handicapped. It is heartbreaking to see these residents make their way down to McKell park, hesitantly and slowly struggle down the steep staircase in the case of the older people and with much encumbrance and clutter for the young mothers and handicapped. The way back up the same stairs and up Darling Point Rd is extremely difficult for many.

The suggestion made by the Darling Point Society at the meeting with Mr Bill Grant, is that the 328 bus route be widened to serve the Double Bay ferry wharf and go as far as Martin Place in the City has not been retained as a possible alternative to the problem of transport in the peninsula.

It would seem reasonable to have the 328 bus travel down Greenoaks Avenue and down Ocean where people get to the ferry wharf or go about their medical and social activities in Double Bay, thereby ensuring they get out and meet people, which they cannot do stuck inside their flats.

This would also give residents the opportunity to go to medical appointments, hairdressers, restaurants, the new shopping centre and soon to open library, and many other activities which they cannot now enjoy unless they use taxis. They would also spend money in Double Bay which is a double win.

This service could also be useful to serve the Double Bay Public School and relieve the congestion of cars at drop off and pickup times.

New proposal

We welcome the proposal in 2017 to improve ferry connections, including a cross harbour route, with improved time tables directly from Double Bay to Circular Quay.

We welcome the pledge by Minister Constance to build a lift at Edgecliff station.

St Vincents Hospital

We disagree with the premise that this would provide only minimal benefit, as many people go for daily treatments such as Radiotherapy and other type of regular care.

The 389 bus goes close to the hospital but unfortunately it doesn't come near Darling Point and the alternative is to take the 328 from the peninsula to Edgecliff then change to 325 and then walk to the one's destination.

Summary

Widen the 328 route to serve Double Bay, St Vincents Hospital, Martin Place via Elizabeth Street. The bus can still serve to end at Bondi Junction.

Improve ferry frequency soon.

I will be at Parliament House on 10 May at 4.00 pm and hope to see you speak.

With very kind regards and thanks for your ongoing support

Charlotte Feldman

Darling Point Society Inc.