

CHELTENHAM AND CONCORD WEST

OBJECTIVE OF THE VISIT

To examine the significance of community power in relation to the provision of railway infrastructure

METHODOLOGY

To compare recent station developments at Cheltenham and Concord West stations following the impact of track alterations related to changes to trackwork for freight train operations

HISTORY OF CHELTENHAM STATION

All buildings on both platforms prior to 1963 were small, timber structures,

In 1963, the first brick building was provided, being a brick toilet block on the Sydney-bound platform,

The 1963 toilet block remains on the Sydney-bound platform as the present toilet block (it is identified by the contrasting brickwork which replaced the windows facing the tracks),

In 1978, approval was issued for the replacement of all timber buildings by an officially- named modular” system of brick structures (really, this was a misuse of the term and the “modular” component was restricted to standard room functions with standard measurements),

At the same time in 1978, the same modular system of structures was provided at Thornleigh, Normanhurst, Wollstonecraft and Loftus, all which survive in 2017 in some form,

TODAY AT CHELTENHAM

The 1978 structure on the Hornsby-bound platform was replaced by the present communications building in 2016,

On the Sydney-bound platform, the present large structure incorporates the walls of the 1978 structure, plus additions in 2016 (the former windows have been blocked with brickwork),

HISTORY OF CONCORD WEST STATION

Up to 1994, the station comprised a collection of small, timber buildings,

In 1994, a new overhead booking office was provided, which has since been demolished,

On the Hornsby-bound platform, a simple, translucent shelter was provided,

On the Sydney-bound platform, a three-room timber building with skillion roof survived until 2015,

TODAY AT CONCORD WEST

All traces of infrastructure prior to 2013 have been obliterated,

In the main, only awnings are located on the platforms,

All station facilities are placed in the overhead concourse structure,

WHAT HAPPENED AT BOTH STATIONS BETWEEN 2013 AND 2016?

1 Cheltenham

Sydney Trains desired to build a new overhead concourse towards the centre of the platforms and eliminate all platform structures,

The local community successfully protested at the large size of the concourse, arguing that its scale was too large for the surrounding, low-rise, urban development,

Not only was the overhead concourse reduced in size, it was relocated to serve the existing overhead road bridge,

Additionally, the existing 1963 and 1978 brick buildings on the Sydney-bound platform were adapted for re-use,

An emergency exit was provided at the Sydney end of the Hornsby-bound platform, making Cheltenham perhaps the only minor station in Sydney to have such a facility,¹

2 Concord West

Sydney Trains faced no community opposition to the provision of the now-familiar, large overhead concourses that dwarf most suburban, residential developments,

For some inexplicable reason, the platform surfaces have been left in the rare concrete finish,

Plastic lettering on all platform surfaces are rapidly disintegrating,

No emergency exit has been provided.

Stuart Sharp

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¹ These have been provided at large stations, including Hurstville and Chatswood.