



Parliamentary Secretary for Transport

ML09/02957  
ML09/03111  
ML09/04120

Dr Sacha Blumen  
blumensacha@yahoo.com.au

Dear Dr Blumen *Sacha*

I refer to your correspondence to the Minister for Transport. The Minister has asked me to respond on his behalf and I apologise for the delay. The Minister appreciated receiving your correspondence and has taken careful note of your comments about the route 311 bus service, a route which carries approximately 12,000 passengers each and every week.

Between 16 June and 25 July 2008, comprehensive public consultation took place on proposed changes to the Eastern Suburbs bus network, which included alterations to route 311. Approximately 2,300 submissions were received to the overall review.

Following feedback from passengers, several of the proposed changes affecting route 311 have been amended so that:

- the route continues to service Central Station into the CBD;
- the use of Elizabeth Street in the City is maintained; and
- the proposal to terminate the service in Darlinghurst and operate away from William Street was withdrawn.

However, one of the key reasons why changes needed to be made to route 311 was to enable us to introduce modern, low floor, air-conditioned buses to meet the needs of parents with prams, the elderly and less mobile across the entire route.

State Transit and the NSW Government are more than happy to run these modern vehicles around the Billyard/Ithica/Onslow loop also. Unfortunately for commuters, the City of Sydney Council has refused to agree to changes in kerbside parking layout or to provide bus zones that meet Australian Road Rules Standards to facilitate the accessible buses. State Transit raised these issues with the Council as long ago as October 2008, but the Council has refused to accommodate these requests.

The Minister has personally met with the Mayor and with the City of Sydney Council and will continue to lobby for buses on route 311 over the Council's preference for parked cars.

In the meantime, current hours of operation and frequencies on route 311 have been maintained and I am advised that walking distances remain within bus service planning guidelines.

With regards to the relocation of the CBD terminus for the route 311 service to Gresham Street, I am advised that this alteration was required to ease congestion around Circular Quay. The new terminus is one block back from the original terminus, and follows the successful transition of a number of other routes to Gresham Street. It is expected that these changes will substantially reduce overcrowding of services in Circular Quay.

I am advised that State Transit originally operated into the Domain in mid 2008 and operated three full time routes, seven days a week, morning, evening and night.

Following an assessment of the area, primarily due to anti-social behaviour, State Transit now only operates services to the Domain between 7.00am and 6.00pm, seven days a week.

I am advised that State Transit will not be resuming full time operations to the Domain until the new facility is completed in early 2010.

A company called Challenger is the developer who would have submitted the development application with consent from the Royal Botanical Gardens.

The development application for the redevelopment of the Domain parking station includes a bus layover.

I understand the development application, which includes acoustic reports and ways to ameliorate the impacts, is currently under consideration by the City of Sydney Council.

Again, thank you for taking the time to write to the Minister with your views. The action officer for this matter in State Transit is Ms Shirley Leven-Pester, Administration Officer, who can be contacted on (02) 9245 5770.

Yours sincerely



21 JUL 2009

**Penny Sharpe MLC**  
**Parliamentary Secretary for Transport**