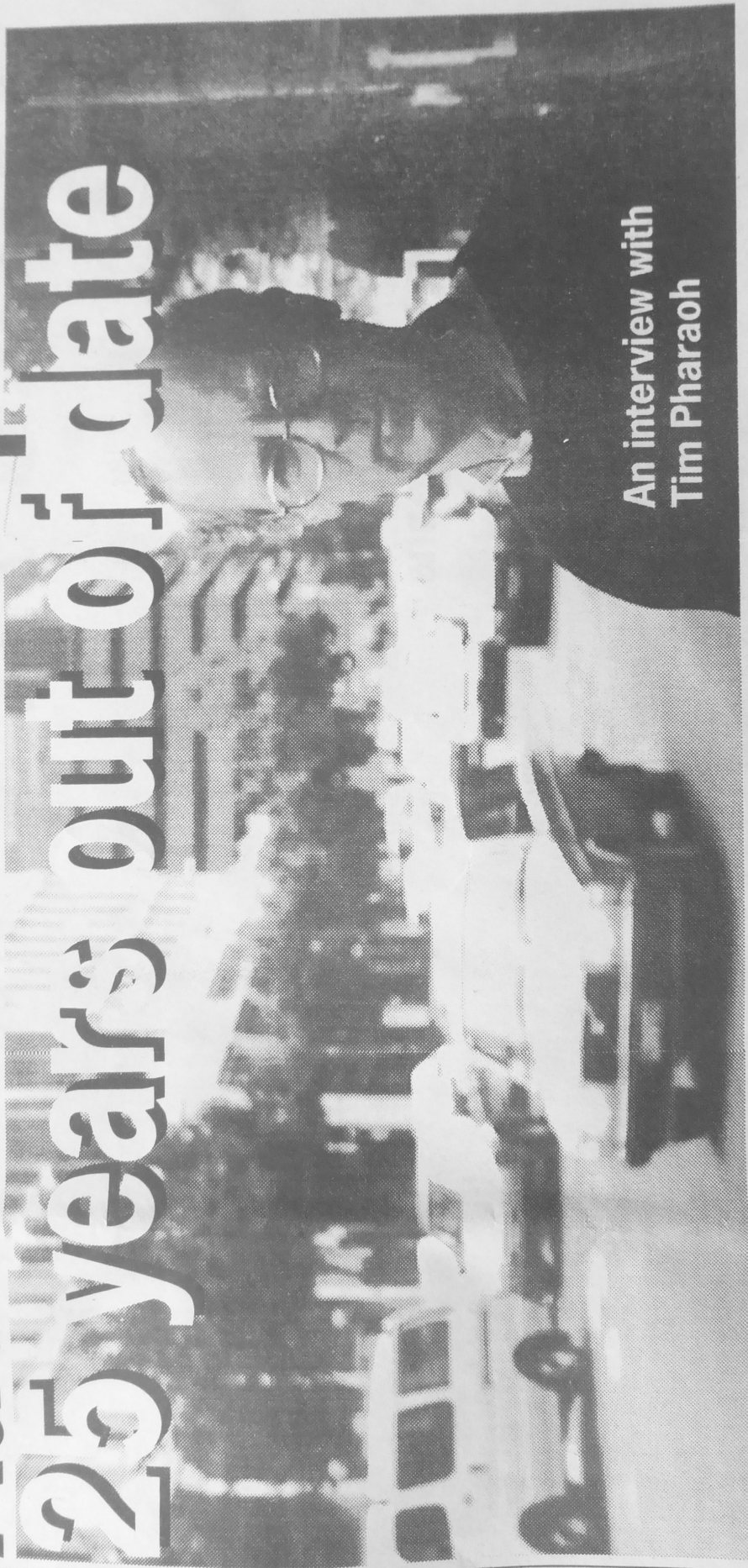


Australian road plans 25 years out of date



An interview with
Tim Pharaoh

HoW: We've heard there's been a fundamental shift in England away from road building. What's actually happening there?

Tim Pharaoh: We've seen a big change in the last five or six years with the Major Government recognising we couldn't continue attempting to build our way out of the traffic congestion problem. It's now recognised that that's impossible, and there's plenty of people around, including myself, who say that even if it were possible, it's not desirable. We should be looking for

Tim Pharaoh is a researcher and lecturer at London's Southbank

University, and a consultant in transport and urban planning.

Hell on Wheels caught up with him when he was in town as part of his

Visiting Fellowship, sponsored by the Australian Vice-Chancellors'

Committee.

brought together - firstly, some very powerful academic support in presenting a very tight case against road building and secondly,

have it in Australia, are the reclaiming-the-streets groups; for example, people have metal tripods and scaffolding to block off roads.

that meant for Britain?

It has meant an increase in the number of buses running about, but

of success already.

On the transport side we have a fair bit of work still to do in coming up with the alternative policy, but the cancellation of road projects is a big help, because all the time you have new road projects being built which is generating more traffic which is making the eventual outcome harder to achieve.

What about "road rage"? We understand it's a growing phenomenon in England.

I have experienced it in Australia too! The motor car is a de-socialising

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Roll on Wheels

Transport and lifestyle solutions for Sydney

NUMBER 4 NOVEMBER 1996

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Carr's motorway folly

Impact statements show traffic will flood local streets

The Carr Government is rushing to simultaneously construct two Los Angeles style motorways, the Eastern Distributor and the M5 East, which will degrade huge areas of Sydney at a cost of \$1.5 billion.

The environmental impact statement for the Eastern Distributor went on display on Friday 15 November and public submission will close on Monday 16 December. The supplementary EIS for the M5 East motorway is expected to go on display in mid-December.

If constructed, the two proposals would lead to a massive decline in residential amenity across vast areas of Sydney.

Residents of the Eastern Suburbs, South Sydney, Rockdale, and Canterbury will be effected by increases in traffic, air pollution and noise. The proposals would trigger another round of urban sprawl in the outer south-western suburbs and entrench already worsening air pollution.

These facts emerge from a close study of the recently released Eastern Distributor EIS and the 1994 M5 East EIS as well as from Sydney's previous experience of motorway projects such as the M4.

The government's move, timed to coincide with the public float of the Australian Infrastructure Trust (AIT), is intended to boost commuter road traffic to the maximum extent to generate sufficient cash flow to keep the privately-operated motorway system financially viable.

The Eastern Distributor proposal involves a tunnel from William Street East Sydney to Drivers Triangle at the junction of South Dowling Street and Anzac Parade. South Dowling Street and public roads would become tollways under the proposal and would be widened by two lanes, creating a Los Angeles style tollway of eight lanes (10 lanes in places) and six lanes in Southern Cross Drive section.

According to EIS data for the proposal, this would nearly triple traffic on the route, from 48,000 to 125,000 vehicles per day. Little if any traffic would be diverted from the existing routes and a high

degree of toll avoidance would occur, pushing additional traffic onto alternative routes through South Sydney and Newtown.

The 1994 environmental impact statement for the M5 East showed that the completion of the project would double traffic flow through the M5 tollgates, from the present 20,000 to around 40,000 vehicles per day.

According to data in the EIS, traffic on the vast majority of local streets would leap as soon as the motorway opened. There would also be a sharp increase in traffic on the existing routes (such as Canterbury Road, Forest Road and Stony Creek Road), which the RTA claims the M5 East is designed to 'relieve', and on local streets feeding these roads.

The Carr government's traffic generating proposals come at the same time as oil industry analysts are warning that world oil production is set to go into a permanent decline, leading to shortage, panic buying and spiralling price in-

creases for petroleum fuels.

"The two proposals are urban planning madness", said Mr Jim Donovan, a spokesman for Action For Public Transport.

"The government is trying to build the maximum car-dependence into the system right at the time we need to break Sydney's disastrous dependence on the private motor vehicle."

"Carr is spending money making Sydney's traffic problems worse when he could be funding solutions. At least \$1.5 billion would be spent on these two proposals."

"That money could be providing hundreds of kilometres of modern light rail in areas of Sydney that are almost completely without public transport. That's especially true of the Western Suburbs where most families now need at least two cars just to maintain basic mobility. They're going to be the hardest hit as oil prices continue to increase," Mr Donovan said.

Stop funding the problem and start funding the solution!

Everybody agrees that Sydney needs to get cars off the roads and reorganise so that less travel is necessary and more journeys are made by public transport. The problem for most Sydneysiders is that public transport



**Locations to view
the Eastern
Distributor EIS**

**Roads and Traffic Authority
Sydney Region**
83 Flushcombe Road, Blacktown
8.30am to 5.00pm, Monday to
Friday

**Eastern Distributor
Community Access Centre**
535 Crown Street, Surry Hills
2.00pm to 8.00pm, Wednesday
12 noon to 6.00 pm, Thursday to
Friday
10.00am to 3.00pm, Saturday to
Sunday

**Department of Urban Affairs
and Planning**
Information Centre, Ground Floor
Governor Macquarie Tower
1 Farrer Place, Sydney
8.45am to 5.00pm, Monday to
Friday

**NSW Government
Information Centre**
Goodsell Building
Corner Philip and Hunter Streets,
Sydney
8.45am to 4.45pm, Monday to
Friday

NSW Environment Centre
39 George Street, Sydney
10.00am to 5.00pm, Monday to
Friday

**Sydney City Council One
Stop Shop**
Level 2
456 Kent Street, Sydney
8.00am to 6.00pm, Monday to
Friday

Sydney City Council Library
Level 3
456 Kent Street, Sydney
9.00am to 7.00pm, Monday to
Friday

Randwick City Council
Frances Street (near Anson Street),
Randwick
8.30am to 5.30pm, Monday to
Friday

denied that new roads
extra traffic; following
they officially accepted
as the case.

**gather there's been
top the building of any
based shopping centres
of cities.**

uring the 1980's Britain
of car-based shopping
now the policy is to
investment in existing,
ished centres. This is a
und because the devel-
I to be able to build
entres more or less as
d, but now they have to
prove that they cannot
e town centre before any
an be considered.

**shift back towards the
type of shopping cen-**

ocus on places which are
on foot and by public

**cial terms, what actu-
ned to the roads budget?
I was it and how much
by?**

tional road-building
overnment-funded. The
un was for expansion of
ystem at the cost of 20
nds (A\$40 billion) over
cently that program has
and most of the money
emains is for bypassing
and villages on the na-

1970, and that bedrock of opinion
and solid study remains just as valid
today.

**What was your personal in-
volvement in the push to cut down
car use in England?**

I was involved in
the campaign against
the London motor-
way program, and
later on against other
road programs. I men-
tioned earlier we won
the battle in the mid
'70s, but we didn't
win the war. There are
always skirmishes
arising; when the go-
ing gets rough
politically, the pro-
road engineers tend
to lock their plans in
the bottom draw. They keep the key
well hidden until they consider the
climate's favourable, and, hey
presto! they pull out the plans again.
Dressed up in new arguments, of
course.

**What sort of people were in-
volved in the anti-road movement?
We hear it ranged right across the
political and social spectrum.**

In Britain there are many differ-
ent groups that have grown out of
opposition to individual projects, but
over the past five years or so there
has also been a loose, national, coa-
lition of these groups and some
full-time direct action campaigners.
this

traditional political avenues, the
big parties were only marginally
involved. How did the politicians
respond?

The first major battle, the Lon-

**"Attempting to satisfy the
demand for car travel is a
process without end ... All you
end up with is the destruction
of the city, with problems three
times as bad as the ones you
started with."**

don motorway plan, was won partly
with political support. The road-
builders proposed a road through a
wealthy part of north-west London,
which also housed a good number of
MPs. It wasn't difficult to attract
anti-road support from those politi-
cians whose constituencies were
affected. So it wasn't purely the
public versus the politicians, there
was also a lot of support for the
movement at the highest political
levels.

**Does that support run through
both Labour and the Tories?**

It does sometimes split on party
lines, but by and large there is sup-
port across the spectrum. I actually

pedestrian areas?

In the British sense "traffic calm-
ing" only relates to measures which
moderate the behaviour of drivers.
It's driven primarily by safety ob-

jectives but there are
also increasing con-
cerns about the actual
level of traffic. In the
inner parts of the cit-
ies, slowing down the
traffic is not really the
issue - it's a question
of whether it should
be moving at all. I've
been amongst a group
of people pushing for
traffic reduction tar-
gets. We haven't yet
achieved that, but I
think we are on the
way.

**How are you going to go about
that. Are you considering using
measures like changes in land use
planning and location of services,
or are we talking about traffic
management measures which
physically prevent traffic from
moving in certain directions or to
certain places?**

Both things are important. In 1994
the British Government produced a
major new planning policy which is
designed to reduce the need to travel
and to reduce the dependence on the
car. This involves creating urban
forms which are more closely
aligned to the kind of urban forms
which developed around the rail,
tramway and bus systems, and
developments

friendly people
rates, and I can-
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to the USA or
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the NSW G

policies, par-
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