

A report in the Northern District Times (*Too steep, too noisy, too late and too slow*, 29 October) contained a number of factual errors.

The noise issue in the Epping to Chatswood rail link is not expected to delay the opening of the link when OSCAR trains - not Tangaras - will be used for the shuttle service in early 2009.

This shuttle service has not been forced on us by gradient. It is to allow us to bed down all aspects of the new infrastructure ahead of the link's integration into the wider CityRail network. This is usual practice, and we did the same thing with the line to Bondi Junction.

Claims that 'most of the current fleet' cannot manage the link's steep grade are incorrect. It is the case that there are performance differences between different train types; these are well understood.

Tangaras are capable of operating there but will not be scheduled for regular use. From 2010 CityRail's new suburban PPP trains will increasingly replace older trains operating on the link.

CEO Rob Mason wrote to the editor of the Northern District Times pointing out these errors as well as some of the enormous benefits the link will have to North Western Sydney.

Specifically, the link will integrate the North Shore and Northern lines to form a new rail service to the north-west allowing direct rail access for the first time to Macquarie Park, one of Sydney's growing employment and educational hubs.

There are three new underground stations with world class facilities plus major upgrades of Epping and Chatswood stations.

The new link will provide for a new rail service to the growing education and economic centre of Macquarie Park servicing up to 26,000 Macquarie University students and staff and up to 35, 000 employees in the burgeoning business hub.

But the link will also benefit Western Line customers, by providing future track capacity for up to four additional trains per hour to the City from the West.

Mr Mason told the Northern District Times that Sydney will be proud of the Epping to Chatswood rail link.