



WestConnex M4-M5 Link

Mainline Tunnels – Modification 7

Northcote Street Cul- de-sac

Response to Submissions Report

August 2022

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WestConnex M4-M5 Link

Mainline Tunnel Modifications – Response to submissions reports

August 2022

Prepared for Transport for NSW 978-1-922875-25-9

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Executive Summary

Introduction

Transport for NSW (TfNSW) is seeking to modify the construction and operation of the WestConnex M4-M5 Link (the project) (State Significant Infrastructure (SSI) 7485) which was granted approval on 17 April 2018 by the NSW Minister for Planning.

The proposed modification involves retaining the Northcote Street and Parramatta Road intersection in Haberfield in its current configuration, restricting vehicle traffic between Northcote Street and Parramatta Road, however reinstating access to pedestrians and cyclists.

Summary of Proposal

Northcote Street in Haberfield was a former 'through road' connecting Parramatta Road and Ramsay Street prior to the commencement of the WestConnex M4 Project (SSI 6307). The intersection of Northcote Street and Parramatta Road, inclusive of footpaths, was temporarily closed in 2016 to facilitate the construction of the M4 Northcote Street tunnel site (C7) as approved under the M4 Approval.

Under Modification 1 (MOD 1) for the M4-M5 Link project, continued restricted access to Northcote Street and continued use of the Northcote Street tunnel site compound, was approved. As detailed in the project Environmental Impact Statement (AECOM 2018) and MOD 1, the intention was to reinstate Northcote Street as a through road upon project completion.

The proposed modification aims to:

- Reduce through traffic flow on Northcote Street;
- Eliminate a potential 'rat-run' between Parramatta Road and Wattle Street, Haberfield;
- Improve safety outcomes for both local vehicles and pedestrians using Northcote Street.

A Modification Report (dated February 2022) was prepared to address the relevant Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) and provide full details of the proposed changes to the approved project.

The Modification Report was publicly exhibited by the NSW Department of Planning and Environment (DPE) between 18 May and 31 May 2022.

Submissions Received

During the public exhibition of the Modification Report eighteen (18) submissions were received. Seventeen (17) submissions were from the community. One (1) submission was received from the Inner West Council (IWC).

In general, issues raised by IWC were regarding:

- Key stakeholder engagement throughout the approval process
- Impacts of increased traffic on the Wolseley Street residents and the need to assess amenity impact

- The consideration of walking, cycle and vehicular traffic generation and access requirements of proposed new developments
- Flooding and drainage concerns associated with the proposed interim design.

In general, issues raised by the community were regarding:

- Future zoning and planning proposals for the lots of land adjacent to the Northcote Street alignment that are TfNSW assets
- The proposed road configuration and overarching aesthetics of the interim design
- The potential generation of increased traffic and noise along Wolseley Street
- Pedestrian and cyclist access from Northcote Street entering the proposed pedestrianised area.

Proposed alterations

No further studies are proposed as part of the response to submissions to address the IWC issue to explicitly state that the proposal is an interim proposal with a permanent solution to follow.

No further changes to the outlined environmental management measures prepared to address the relevant SEARs are proposed.

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1 Introduction and overview of modification, consultation and submissions received

1.1 Introduction

Transport for NSW (TfNSW) is seeking to modify the approval for the construction and operation of the WestConnex M4-M5 Link (the project) (State Significant Infrastructure (SSI) 7485). The approved project comprises a multi-lane road link between the M4 Motorway at Haberfield and the M8 (former New M5 Motorway) at St Peters.

The proposed modification involves retaining the Northcote Street and Parramatta Road intersection in Haberfield in its current configuration, restricting vehicle traffic between Northcote Street and Parramatta Road, however reinstating access to pedestrians and cyclists.

A Modification Report (dated February 2022) was prepared and provided an environmental assessment and full details of the proposed changes to the approved project as part of the modification.

During the public exhibition of the Modification Report, eighteen (18) submissions were received. Seventeen (17) submissions were from the community. One (1) submission was received from the Inner West Council (IWC). This Response to Submissions Report has been prepared to respond to the issues raised in the submissions.

1.1.1 Approved Project

Approval for the construction and operation of the project was granted on 17 April 2018 by the NSW Minister for Planning (application number SSI 7485).

The project approval includes the construction and operation of a new multi-lane road link between the M4 Motorway at Haberfield and the M8 Motorway at St Peters. The project also includes an interchange at Lilyfield and Rozelle (the Rozelle Interchange) and a tunnel connection between Anzac Bridge and Victoria Road, east of Iron Cove Bridge (Iron Cove Link).

In summary, the approved project comprises two stages:

Stage 1 (also commonly referred to as Stage 3A of the WestConnex program of works or as the Mainline Tunnels), as described in the EIS included:

- Construction of the mainline tunnels between the M4 East Motorway at Haberfield and the New M5 Motorway at St Peters, stub tunnels to the Rozelle interchange (at the Inner West subsurface interchange) and ancillary infrastructure at the Darley Road motorway operations complex (MOC1), which was subsequently removed, and the Campbell Road motorway operations complex (MOC5),

Stage 2 (also commonly referred to as Stage 3B of the WestConnex program of works or the Rozelle Interchange), as described in the EIS, included:

- Construction of the Rozelle Interchange and Iron Cove Link including connection to the stub tunnels at the Inner West subsurface interchange, connection to the surface road network at Lilyfield and Rozelle, and construction of tunnels, ramps and associated infrastructure as part of the Rozelle Interchange to provide connections to the proposed future Western Harbour Tunnel and Beaches Link project. Ancillary infrastructure will be provided at the Rozelle West motorway operations complex

(MOC2), the Rozelle East motorway operations complex (MOC3) and the Iron Cove Link motorway operations complex (MOC4).

1.1.2 Modifications to the WestConnex M4-M5 Link

Following approval on 17 April 2018, TfNSW, formerly Roads and Maritime Services, have submitted five modifications to the approved project under Section 5.25 of the EP&A Act. These modifications are:

- Modification 1: The modification related to Stage 1 of the approved project and was approved by the NSW Minister for Planning on 25 February 2019.
- Modification 2: The proposed modification related to Stage 2 of the approved project and was determined by the NSW Minister for Planning on 30 September 2020.
- Modification 3: The proposed modification related to Stage 2 of the approved project and was determined by the NSW Minister for Planning on 28 July 2020.
- Modification 4: The proposed modification related to Stage 2 of the approved project and was determined by the NSW Minister for Planning on 28 July 2020.
- Modification 5: The proposed modification related to Stage 1 and 2 of the approved project and was determined by the NSW Minister for Planning on 17 November 2020.
- Modification 6: The proposed modification relates to Stage 2 of the approved project and is still pending determination.

1.2 Proposed modification

The proposed modification involves retaining the existing configuration of the Northcote Street/Parramatta Road intersection in Haberfield. The modification is proposed to:

- Reduce traffic flow on Northcote Street;
- Eliminate a potential 'rat-run' between Parramatta Road and Wattle Street, Haberfield;
- Improve safety outcomes for both local vehicles and pedestrians using Northcote Street.

These benefits are proposed to be recognised with retaining the existing configuration and the diversion of traffic to the surrounding road network.

The following points provide an overview of the proposed modification:

- Northcote Street was a former 'through road' connecting Parramatta Road and Ramsay Street prior to the commencement of the WestConnex M4 Project (SSI 6307). The intersection of Northcote Street and Parramatta Road, inclusive of footpaths, was temporarily closed to facilitate the construction of the M4 East Northcote Street tunnel site (C7) as approved under the M4 East Approval.
- As detailed in the M4-M5 Link project EIS (Project EIS), Northcote Street civil site was part of an optioneering proposal for construction ancillary facilities (otherwise referred to as Option C3a) and would be used primarily for parking and laydown. As a result, the existing configuration of the Northcote Street and Parramatta Road intersection was carried over from the M4 to the project. Under Modification 1, the site was approved as a 24/7 tunnelling site (Northcote Street civil and tunnel site (C3a)).
- As described in the project EIS and Modification 1, the intent was to re-open Northcote Street to Parramatta Road at the completion of construction. The proposed modification would see Northcote Street left 'as is' whilst maintaining pedestrian and

cyclist access at the intersection at Northcote Street and Parramatta Road. The future development of this land and road reserve will be in accordance with the M4 East Project's approved Residual Land Management Plan (RLMP) and managed by TfNSW.

1.2.1 Statutory Context

The project was declared as State Significant Infrastructure (SSI) and Critical State Significant Infrastructure (critical SSI) and was therefore assessed and approved under Part 5 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (NSW) (EP&A Act).

TfNSW as the Proponent for the project, is proposing to modify project planning approval SSI 7485 under Section 5.25 of the EP&A Act, which states that *"the proponent may request the Minister to modify the Minister's approval for State Significant Infrastructure. The Minister's approval for a modification is not required if the infrastructure as modified will be consistent with the existing approval under this Division"*.

Section 5.25(3) states that *"the request for the Minister's approval is to be lodged with the Planning Secretary. The Planning Secretary may notify the proponent of environmental assessment requirements with respect to the proposed modification that the proponent must comply with before the matter will be considered by the Minister"*. Section 5.25(4) states that *"the Minister may modify the approval (with or without conditions) or disapprove of the modification"*.

The modification report was prepared to address the relevant Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) for the modification which are detailed in Appendix A of the Modification Report.

1.2.2 Modification Report Exhibition

The Modification report was exhibited by the Department of Planning and Environment (DPE) between 18 May and 31 May 2022. The report was exhibited on DPE's website and also advertised in the local newspaper.

During the exhibition period, a total of 18 submissions were received. One from local council and 17 from residents. Details of the responses received are covered under Section 2 of this report. All responses to submissions are detailed in Section 3 and 4 of this report.

1.2.3 Purpose of the document

A Modification Report (dated February 2022) for the proposed modification was prepared in accordance with section 5.25 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (NSW) (EP&A Act). The Modification Report provided an environmental assessment and full details of the proposed changes to the approved project as part of the modification.

During the public exhibition of the Modification Report, submissions were received to the DPE. The Secretary of the DPE provided copies of the submissions were provided to TfNSW.

This Response to Submissions Report has been prepared to identify the issues raised during the exhibition process and provides response to these issues. This report will be provided to the DPE for review and consideration in making a determination on the proposed modification.

1.3 Stakeholder and Community consultation

The proposed modification relates to Stage 1 of the project that is a component of the WestConnex program of works.

Consultation with the community and stakeholders has occurred throughout the preparation of the Modification Report, prior to public exhibition of the modification.

Preliminary consultation with the DPE was undertaken July 2021.

Following this, initial consultation with IWC, noting the proposed modification relates to an IWC local road asset, was undertaken via a meeting held on 10 August 2021. This meeting provided context on the proposal, a preliminary concept design and the approval pathway process.

Consultation with IWC and associated third parties via TfNSW (for example the IWC Local Traffic Committee) was ongoing throughout the preparation of the Modification Report process by the avenues of meetings and requesting subsequent feedback during the modification design process.

Local residents and businesses were also consulted via the various methods:

- a notification was distributed on 25 August 2021 via letter box drop outlining the proposed change and requesting initial community feedback over a four-week period
- a follow up reminder via email was also sent towards the end of the feedback period reminding residents to submit feedback.

During the exhibition period, a “postcard” notification was sent to the residents notifying them that the Modification Report was now on exhibition. The postcard provided details on how stakeholders could submit a submission on the proposal.

2 Submissions Received

The public exhibition period of 14 calendar days commenced 18 May and ended 31 May 2022. The report was exhibited on the DPE’s website.

Submissions in response to the Modification Report were received and accepted by DPE during the public exhibition period via:

- Online submission – www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects/projects/on-exhibition
- Paper submission via post - Transport Assessments, Planning and Assessment, Department of Planning and Environment, Locked Bag 5022, Parramatta NSW 2124

A total of 18 submissions were received in response to the Modification. Of that, one submission was from the local council and 17 from the community.

The types of submitters have been summarised in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1 List of respondents

Respondent	Submission No.	Section number where issues are addressed
Inner West Council (IWC)	1	Section 3
Community	17	Section 4

Refer to Section 3 for response to key stakeholder submissions and section 4 for response to the community.

2.1 Overview of submissions received

The submissions from stakeholders and the community raised the following items regarding the proposed modification:

- Future zoning and planning proposals for the vacant lots of land either side of the Northcote Street alignment is not discussed in the Modification Report. This has raised concerns that Northcote Street could be reinstated as a through road thus resuming traffic. Any future development of the adjoining lots might favour commercial building and therefore change the initial land zoning of the area.
- The design should include a cul-de-sac turning circle as in its current configuration large vehicles and garbage trucks have difficulty manoeuvring.
- The design does not reflect the overarching character of the heritage ‘Garden Suburb’ due to:
 - The minimalist design
 - The absence of trees and shrubs
 - The absence of street furniture and a children’s play area.

- The potential generation of increased traffic along Wolseley Street, turning it into a rat run, as road users bypass the Wattle Street intersection to access Ramsay Street from Parramatta Road.
- The potential generation of increased noise associated with vehicles utilising Wolseley Street.
- Pedestrian and cyclist access from the existing Northcote Street footpath is cut off forcing road users to enter the roadway or dismount when continuing their journey into the pedestrianised area proposed in the design.
- The involvement and approval of the proposed modification from the Local Traffic Committee is not clearly evidenced in the report.
- The need for a more comprehensive traffic study to determine the amenity impact of retaining Northcote Street in its existing configuration on the Wolseley Street residents.
- Walking, cycle and vehicular traffic generation and access requirements of the proposed new developments needs to be considered as well as direct cycle access for the interim proposal.
- Any flooding, drainage and contamination issues need to be resolved for both interim and future proposals.

Overall, the submissions from key stakeholders and the community kept a general trend with the main items being future land zoning/ development and increasing the greenspace in the proposed design.

3 Response to key stakeholder submissions

Inner West Council provided a submission in response to the Modification report. Issues raised are as follows:

3.1 Future development

Issue description:

The current proposal has been presented as an interim proposal, with a permanent solution to follow. This should be made explicit in the current modification report.

Response:

The proposed modification is an interim design specific to the Northcote Street alignment noting TfNSW is planning future road and traffic network improvements that may affect the permanent final design of the Northcote Street intersection. It is being presented as an interim design, as the final footprint is subject to change which may alter the final configuration of landscaping and access/egress points.

The works for the upgrade of the Parramatta Road, Wattle Street and Frederick Street intersection were postponed in the interests of balancing community impacts across the delivery of the M4 East and M4-M5 Link projects.

The works will require a significant portion of land currently in use by the M4-M5 Link contractor at this intersection. Once work on the M4-M5 Link is complete, an upgrade of the intersection will take place to deliver the configuration proposed and assessed as part of the M4 East SSI Approval.

At this stage, it is not envisaged site investigations and delivery readiness work can commence until mid-2023. From there, a detailed design would be finalised, including service relocations to allow construction to commence in mid-2024 and be complete by early 2025.

The above is all reliant on a timely completion and vacation of the existing compound site.

Any future road and traffic network improvements will be subject to a separate approval process managed by TfNSW and will go through the consultative process with stakeholders, with feedback collated and addressed.

3.2 Approval process stakeholder consultation

Issue description:

Inner West Council has requested clarification of the process for involvement/ approval from the Local Traffic Committee.

Response:

Consultation with IWC has been ongoing throughout the design review process as detailed in Section 4 of the Modification Report. Following the initial consultation with IWC in August

2021, regular meetings, discussions and presentations were held with and provided to IWC. All meeting minutes were distributed to all stakeholders requesting any further feedback.

The local traffic committee (LTC) is a technical and advisory panel for the IWC providing guidance on traffic and parking control matters. The committee comprises of representatives from IWC, NSW Police, TfNSW and State Members of Parliament.

It is noted that retaining the current configuration of Northcote Street was raised with all members present during an LTC meeting held September 2021.

Once the final state design of the Northcote Street alignment is progressed by TfNSW, including the determination on whether the street will be re-opened or permanently closed, the LTC will be consulted as required.

3.3 Traffic impacts

Issue Description:

A more comprehensive traffic study to determine the full range of traffic impacts, in particular the potential through traffic impacts on Wolseley and Northcote Street, is needed. Whilst the traffic impact study undertaken and included in the proposed Modification Report include that Northcote Street closure will not create negative traffic capacity impacts, the amenity impacts on Wolseley Street have not been addressed. The traffic study should specifically address Wolseley Street resident's amenity concerns.

Response:

Northcote Street was initially closed as part of the M4 East Northcote Street tunnel site (C7) as approved under the M4 East Infrastructure Approval (SSI 6307).

Traffic impacts associated with implementing the current Northcote Street configuration did not undergo a targeted assessment within the M4 East EIS however it did note that "the bulk of road and lane closures are anticipated to have a limited impact on road users as they primarily impact local roads with low traffic volumes and/or those streets where land acquisition is taking place. Alternative routes could therefore be utilised with minimal impacts".

To evaluate the impacts of this interim proposed modification, keeping Northcote Street in its current configuration, a traffic and safety impact assessment was conducted in April 2021. This ascertained the performance of key intersections at:

- Wolseley Street/ Parramatta Road,
- Wolseley Street/ Ramsay Street,
- Ramsay Street/ Northcote Street and,
- Wattle Street/ Ash Lane.

The traffic impact assessment detailed in Section 5.2.2.1 of the Modification Report concluded that keeping Northcote Street in its current configuration, key surrounding intersections will continue to operate satisfactorily during peak periods and it is not expected to result in any adverse impacts on traffic capacity or road network performance, including Wolseley Street.

This indicates that the interim proposal to retain Northcote Street in its current configuration is not anticipated to generate any traffic net gain on the surrounding network and overall traffic volumes have remained low.

The regional context of the improved Wattle Street intersection at both Parramatta Road and Ramsay Street which aims to take traffic off local roads was also considered when assessing the broader amenity impact.

The amenity impacts were considered in the Operational Road Traffic Noise assessment conducted for the proposed modification detailed in Section 5.3.2 of the Modification Report.

Whilst it is understood that a reduction in traffic will most likely be experienced on Northcote Street and Ramsay Street, data suggests that the residents on Wolseley Street will not be subject to an amenity loss. As such, when assessing amenity impacts, it is unlikely that there would be a negative impact to the surrounding residents, including those located on Wolseley Street and Ash Lane.

All community submission responses concerning traffic are addressed in Section 4.4 of this report.

3.4 Access requirements and transport links for future developments

Issue Description:

Consideration of walk, cycle and vehicular traffic generation and access requirements of the proposed new developments, in particular motor vehicle access, is required. If Northcote Street is re-opened, access to the development bounded by Wattle Street, Parramatta Road and Northcote Street will be problematic.

Response:

The proposed modification is an interim design specific to the Northcote Street alignment. The adjacent lots of land either side of the alignment are owned by TfNSW and are subject to future development in accordance with the approved M4 East Residual Land Management Plan (RLMP) as discussed under 'Urban Design' and 'Property and Land Use', Section 5.4 and 5.5 of the Modification Report. Any future development of these areas will consider the requirement of the M4 East legacy project.

As detailed in the M4 East RLMP, TfNSW will divest land within 10 years of M4-M5 Link completion.

As such, access to these additional areas have not been explicitly addressed in the Modification Report however the proposed interim design has undergone review and comment by TfNSW to ensure the interim design, where feasible, does not inhibit potential future planning.

Any consideration of access requirements for future development proposals and creating new and improved transport links are at TfNSW discretion.

As addressed in Section 5.2.2.2 of the Modification report, the proposed modification will continue to maintain pedestrian and cycle access along the former alignment of Northcote Street.

3.5 Cycle Access

Issue Description:

So that cyclists do not need to dismount through the proposed interim closure, consider the need for a direct cycle access.

Response:

Pedestrian and cyclist access will be maintained as part of the proposed design.

Whilst the proposal will see a portion of the Northcote Street alignment closed to vehicular traffic, direct access to pedestrians and cyclists will remain as demonstrated in the proposed design included in Section 3 and Figure 3-5 of the Modification Report.

Section 5.2.2.2 of the Modification Report identifies IWC cycle routes for the Local Government Area (LGA). These routes are delineated as Heavy Traffic/ Cycle Path on Road, Mixed Traffic/ Light Traffic or Off Road/ Shared path. A copy of the IWC cycle routes was provided in Appendix D of the Modification Report. Neither Northcote Street nor Parramatta Road are identified as key cycle or pedestrian routes.

Direct cycle access through the cul-de-sac has not been catered for as Northcote Street is not closely located or easily connected to any of the IWC identified east/west or north/south bicycle routes. However, the proposed design does not inhibit cyclists from accessing these transport links.

3.6 Design of interim proposal

Issue description:

Resolve flooding, drainage and any contaminations issues associated with the current interim proposal and future proposals.

Response:

3.6.1 Flooding and Drainage

Flooding and drainage were assessed and discussed under Section 3.3.2 of the Modification Report and is subject to the Northcote Street alignment only.

The proposed modification design has not altered the pre-existing ground levels or the size of the catchment area. The design contour information and survey data reviewed as part of the proposed modification assessment and detailed in Figure 3-7 of the Modification Report shows that the Northcote Street alignment has a four per cent slope north-west towards Parramatta Road.

Any surface water falling on the former roadway will naturally drain towards the proposed pavement surface and adjacent residual land, utilising the existing recommissioned stormwater pits. This is reflective of the drainage pathway prior to the modification of the Northcote Street/ Parramatta Road intersection implemented by the M4 project.

As confirmed, in consultation with an IWC stormwater engineer, the site is not located in a flood prone area and flooding was determined as not being an issue. The proposed design to utilise existing drainage is deemed adequate to service the unaltered catchment area. It is

considered there are no impacts to flooding and drainage attributed from the proposed modification.

A dish drain/ swale, presented in Figure 3-5 of the Modification Report, has been included in the proposed interim final design to ensure the area has adequate capacity for a 10- year Annual Rainfall Intensity (ARI). The dish drain/swale is located within the TfNSW property lot, adjacent to the Northcote Street alignment. This will direct additional surface water within the alignment towards the adjacent residual land.

It is noted that a 1 in 20-year ARI design is specific to developed commercial industrial areas as per IWC development control plans (DCPs). Considering the nature of the rehabilitated site which is subject to future development by TfNSW, all drainage requirements will be considered as part of future permanent development proposals for this area. A 1 in 10-year ARI interim design is deemed satisfactory for the proposal.

3.6.2 Contamination

Following completion of the proposed modification, consistent with Condition of Approval (CoA) E182, a Site Audit Statement and Site Audit Report will be issued to declare the land is suitable for its intended future purpose.

In accordance with CoA E183, a copy of the Site Audit Statement and Site Audit Report will be submitted to the Secretary and relevant council, IWC, for information no later than one (1) month prior to the commencement of operation.

4 Response to community submissions

A total of 17 submissions from the community were received.

Of these 17:

- 7 commented on the proposal
- 3 objected to the proposal
- 7 supported the proposal.

In general, submitters who provided comment and/or support responded regarding the lack of trees and green space and how this differentiated from the characteristic of the suburb also referred to as the 'Garden Suburb', the desire for a children's playground and the need for a 'cul-de-sac' turning circle to be incorporated into the proposed design. Understanding the future development of the vacant lots either side of the Northcote Street alignment and how this could impact on the interim proposal was also a key issue raised.

Those who objected to the proposal raised concerns regarding the negative impact on Wolseley Street and how it would generate or promote the rat-running of traffic between Parramatta Road and Ramsay Street for vehicles wanting to avoid turning left at the Wattle Street intersection. The submissions raised that this would generate increased noise and promote dangerous driving.

In consideration of the overall feedback, response to the submissions have been categorised as per the following:

- Landscaping and streetscape architecture
- Future land zoning and development proposals
- Design and formation of the cul-de-sac
- Traffic impacts.

4.1 Heritage, landscaping and streetscape architecture

Issue description:

The design proposal was considered inadequate for 'green space' and portrayed a minimalist design. Responders requested increased trees and vegetation in replacement of the proposed shrubs and provided comment that the design looked out of character and did not share similar aesthetic values with the area identified as the 'Garden Suburb'.

In light of the proposed modification pedestrianizing the former road corridor, comments were also provided suggesting the inclusion of a children's playground and general street furniture in addition to the grassed area and planter boxes captured in the proposed interim design.

Response:

Northcote Street, located in Sydney "Inner West" suburb of Haberfield, was temporarily closed by the former M4 project to facilitate the site establishment of the Northcote Street tunnel site (C7). The continued use of the site was approved under MOD 1 for the M4-M5 Link project, currently known as the Northcote Street civil and tunnel site (C3a).

The archaeological potential and significance and heritage-built environment at Haberfield was previously assessed as part of the M4 East project EIS (AECOM GHD 2015) Appendix S (GML Heritage, 2015) and was managed during construction of the M4 East project.

The Haberfield suburb contains a high number of heritage items and comprises a heritage conservation area (HCA) as per the Ashfield Local Environmental Plan 2013 (Ashfield LEP 2013). It is Australia's first fully planned and developed garden suburb.

The HCA consists of:

- Setbacks of predominantly brick federation and interwar period housing,
- Landscaped gardens,
- Tree lined streets and,
- The provision of consistent and aesthetically pleasing streetscapes.

The location of the Northcote Street Site, inclusive of the former Northcote Street alignment, is in a Historic Archaeology Management Unit (HAMU) and is of 'local' significance as identified in the M4 East EIS Heritage Study (GML Heritage, 2015).

The Non-Aboriginal heritage impact assessment under Appendix S of the M4 East EIS further shows Northcote Street partially intercepting the HCA area, refer to Figure 4-1, which identifies other 'contributory' and 'S170 heritage' listed items.

Impacts on these heritage items have already resulted from the M4 East demolition and construction works noting that demolition of 53 properties within the Haberfield HCA have already occurred (Section 20.2.2, pg. 20-15, M4-M5 Link EIS). Impacts on these items were assessed and approved under the M4 East EIS and managed by the M4 East contractor.

The M4-M5 Link project EIS (AECOM, 2017) archaeological assessment stated that significant archaeology remains are considered unlikely in the HAMU following the construction undertaken for the M4 East project. As such, the M4-M5 Link project would have no impact on archaeology.

Additionally, the potential impact on listed heritage items as detailed in the M4-M5 Link project EIS was rated as 'Neutral' in reference to the setting, vibration and settlement associated with tunnelling rather than surface activities (refer Table 20-17 AECOM 2017).

The interim proposed design for the Northcote Street alignment is partially located within the HCA as identified in the M4 East and M4-M5 Link EIS. Given the neutral and no impact rating assessed for archaeological and heritage items within the Northcote Street area under the M4-M5 Link occupation, it is considered the rating will apply to the proposed interim modification.

To ensure the interim design is considerate of the HCA garden suburb as referenced in the Ashfield LEP 2013, it is proposed that semi-mature trees in standalone pots along with heritage features including brickwork and/or sandstone features on planter boxes and along walkways will be introduced. These interim design features are considered appropriate for the temporary setting and will offset any interim/short term interface with the area's heritage characteristics.

Noting that the proposal is a temporary continuation of an interim solution, future developments undertaken in this area by TfNSW, subject to approval, will be required to consider a more permanent design in line with the Ashfield LEP 2013 and minimise permanent infrastructure visual impacts on the setting of the heritage buildings and landscapes.

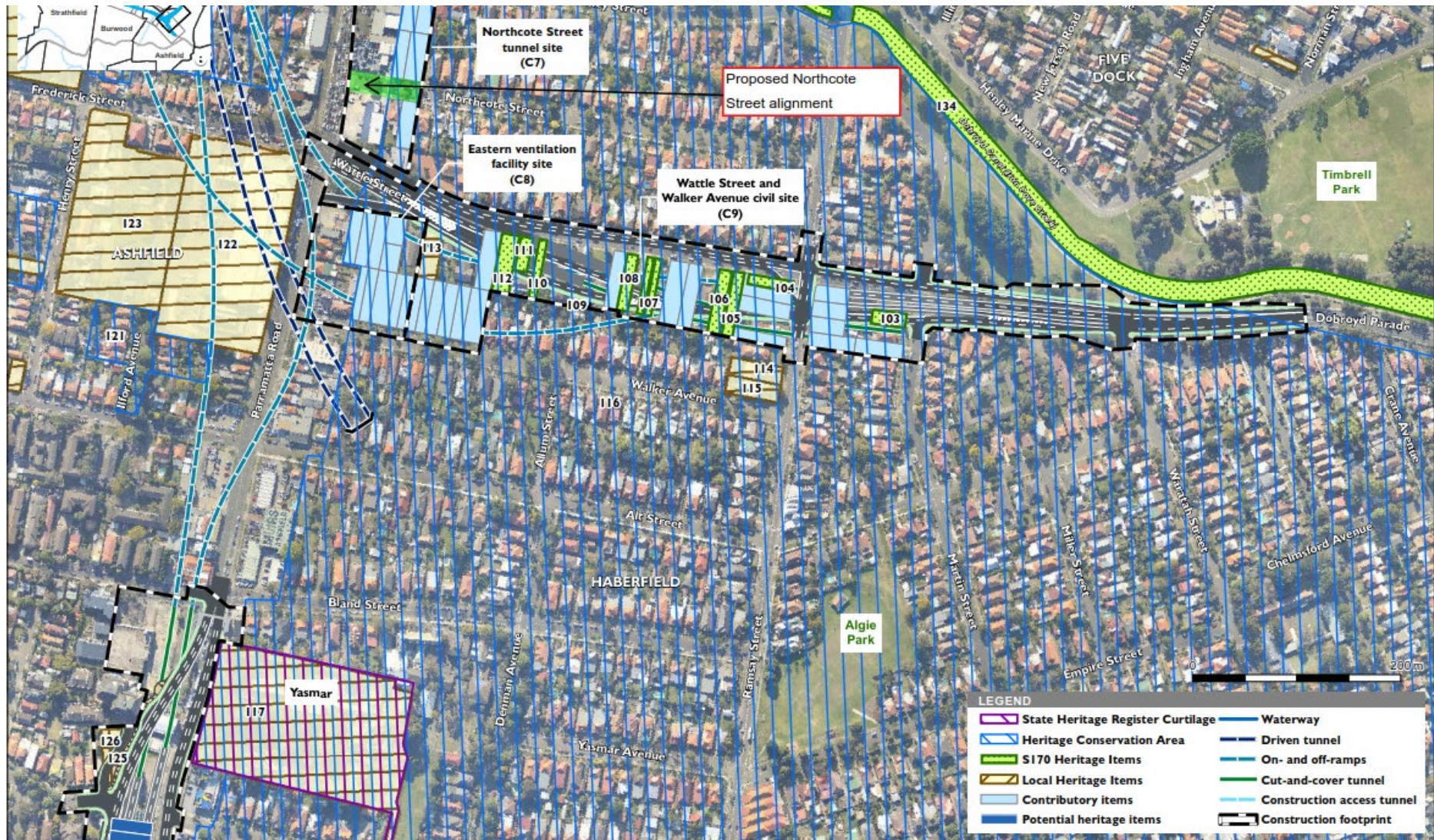


Figure 4-1: Extract from M4 East EIS, Appendix S, Figure 6.6 'non-aboriginal heritage items and heritage conservation areas – Haberfield and Ashfield'

The proposed design is considered appropriate for the Northcote Street alignment, noting this is an interim proposal for the road reserve that connects Northcote Street and Parramatta Road. The proposed design clearly delineates the road reserve area from the TfNSW owned land that is subject to future development and has been designed to achieve a user-friendly area that offers a green space that is low maintenance for IWC.

Any future development of the adjoining areas is at the discretion of TfNSW. Any development will take a holistic “highest and best use” approach to encompass and enhance the surrounding area, suburb character and consider any future need for street furniture to meet such approach.

4.2 Future land zoning and development proposals

Issue description:

Submitters raised concerns that the interim design of Northcote Street could see it reinstated as a through road thus resuming traffic and reducing amenity. Comments regarding the favouring of commercial future development, potential impacts of residential property access, in this occurrence and the change of initial land zoning were also received.

Response:

The proposed modification is for the Northcote Street alignment only and does not impact on the current land zoning of the area.

The land adjacent to the alignment will be handed back to TfNSW upon completion of the M4-M5 Link project for disposal in accordance with the approved M4 East Residual Land Management Plan (RLMP). Currently the status of future development is unknown as discussed under Section 5.4 and 5.5 of the Modification Report.

The proposed modification offers benefit to future development of the residual land handed back to TfNSW. It facilitates future design to complement the objectives of the existing land zoning and Parramatta Road Corridor Urban Transformation Strategy (UrbanGrowth NSW 2016) and provides opportunity to return business enterprise back into the area.

Any future development of these areas will be in accordance with the approved M4 East RLMP and will consider the requirement of the M4 East legacy project. The RLMP, under Section 7.2.2, documents no adjustment to land zoning, and as such the B6 Enterprise corridor and R2 low density residential land zoning will remain.

Any future development will be subject to a separate approval process managed by TfNSW and will go through the consultative process with stakeholders, with feedback collated, addressed and communicated.

As detailed in the M4 East RLMP, TfNSW will divest land within 10 years of M4-M5 Link completion.

4.3 Design and formation of the cul-de-sac

Issue description:

Submitters raised the following concerns regarding the proposed design:

- *The interim design should include a cul-de-sac turning circle as in its current configuration large vehicles and garbage trucks have difficulty manoeuvring.*
- *The current temporary cul-de-sac design has caused a loss in amenity since implementation and has created parking and property access issues.*
- *The footpath and continuous handrail within the proposed design creates a safety risk for pedestrians by creating a bottle neck effect resulting in users having to enter the roadway when seeking access to Parramatta Road. The proposed ramp design creates an additional hazard and propose an easier gradient slope.*

Response:

Cul- de-sac design:

The proposal is to retain the current configuration of Northcote Street that has been in place since the M4 East project.

It was agreed through the proposal design consultation process that leaving Northcote Street in its current configuration was the most appropriate interim design.

The current interim design is adequate to meet the specifics of its locality, access points and carriage width with its design approved through local (Inner West Council) and state authorities (TfNSW) under the Roads Act.

A circular cul-de-sac design would encroach upon the TfNSW lots on either side of the Northcote Street alignment and may indicate a permanent change to the road layout, which is not the intent of this modification.

At initial implementation of no through access, the M4 East installed 'No Stopping' signs at the end of Northcote Street. No further parking restrictions have been implemented since this initial change. No further or greater amenity impact (property access and parking) will be generated as a result of retaining this interim design. Long term access and parking will be further considered through permanent design.

As stated in Section 4.2 of this report, any future development will be subject to a separate approval process managed by TfNSW.

Safety in Design:

A redesign is being conducted to locally extend the footpaths into the pedestrian area allowing for a continuous route that removes the need for pedestrians to step off the footpath into Northcote Street roadway. This will see the removal of the handrails that span perpendicular to Northcote Street, as shown in the original proposed design, therefore accommodating a more suitable, safer design for users.

The pedestrian ramp configuration will be re-examined after the demobilisation and demolition of the Northcote Street Civil Site to assess whether an extension to the ramp to reduce the gradient to a 1 in 12 is feasible.

In addition, the design includes a pedestrian safety fence at the frontage of Parramatta Road and Northcote Street, at the closure point, running along the kerb line. The need for a well-

marked barrier was raised by the community in the submissions and is supported by TfNSW Network Integration and Road Safety Teams.

The fencing proposed aligns with the Roads and Maritime Services safety specification and has been input into design as a secondary safety measure for users of the pedestrian link to:

- discourage unlawful crossing of or integration into Parramatta Road and,
- provide an additional visual aid for Parramatta Road drivers that Northcote Street remains restricted to vehicle access.

4.4 Traffic impacts

Issue description:

Submitters raised concerns that the proposed modification only benefits residents on Northcote Street and disadvantages those on Wolseley Street. Since the initial closure of Northcote Street, Wolseley Street has experienced increased traffic and has turned into a 'rat-run' from vehicles using an alternative route to access Parramatta Road from Ramsay Street. Concerns were also raised regarding the safety to the residents on Wolseley Street.

Response:

To evaluate the impacts of the proposed modification to keep Northcote Street in its current configuration, a traffic and safety impact assessment was conducted in April 2021. This assessment is included in the Modification Report in Appendix C. This performance at the following key intersections were assessed:

- Wolseley Street/ Parramatta Road,
- Wolseley Street/ Ramsay Street,
- Ramsay Street/ Northcote Street and,
- Wattle Street/ Ash Lane.

The traffic impact assessment detailed in Section 5.2.2.1 of the Modification Report concluded that with Northcote Street in its current configuration, key surrounding intersections will continue to operate satisfactorily during peak periods and retaining this current configuration in the interim would not result in any adverse impact on traffic capacity or road network performance, including Wolseley Street.

The daily traffic profiles recorded at the Wolseley Street /Ramsay Street intersection and Northcote Street/ Ramsay Street intersection across a 14-hour period (6:00am – 8:00pm), as shown in Figure 5 and Figure 6 of the traffic assessment, Appendix C of the Modification Report, show similar daily volumes. Refer to Figure 4-1 and Figure 4-2.

Figure 5: Ramsay St / Wolesey St Weekly Traffic Profile

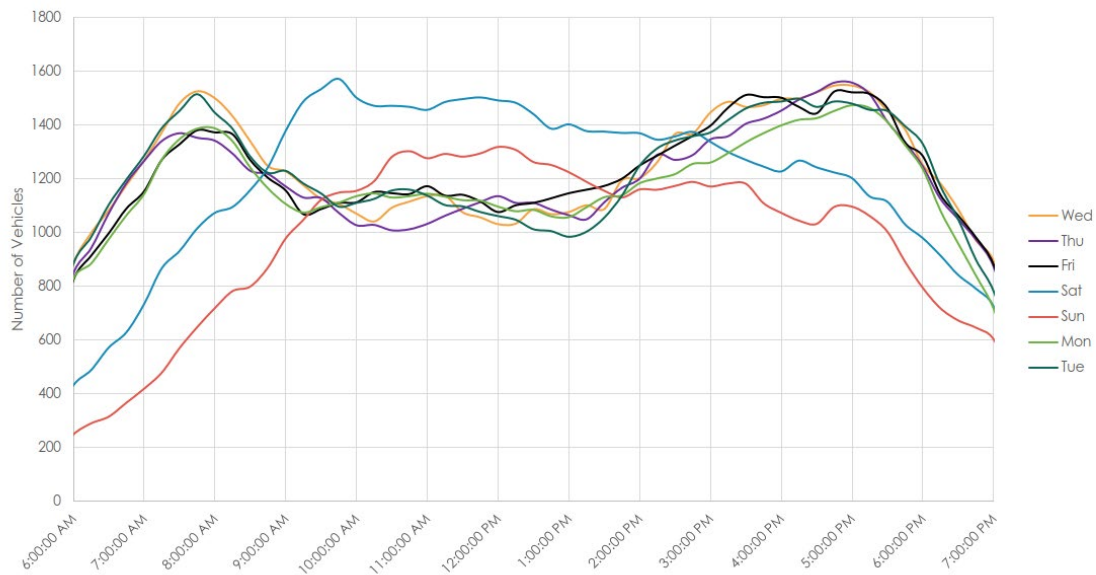


Figure 4-2 Ramsay St/ Wolesey St Weekly Traffic Profile

Figure 6: Ramsay St / Northcote St Weekly Traffic Profile

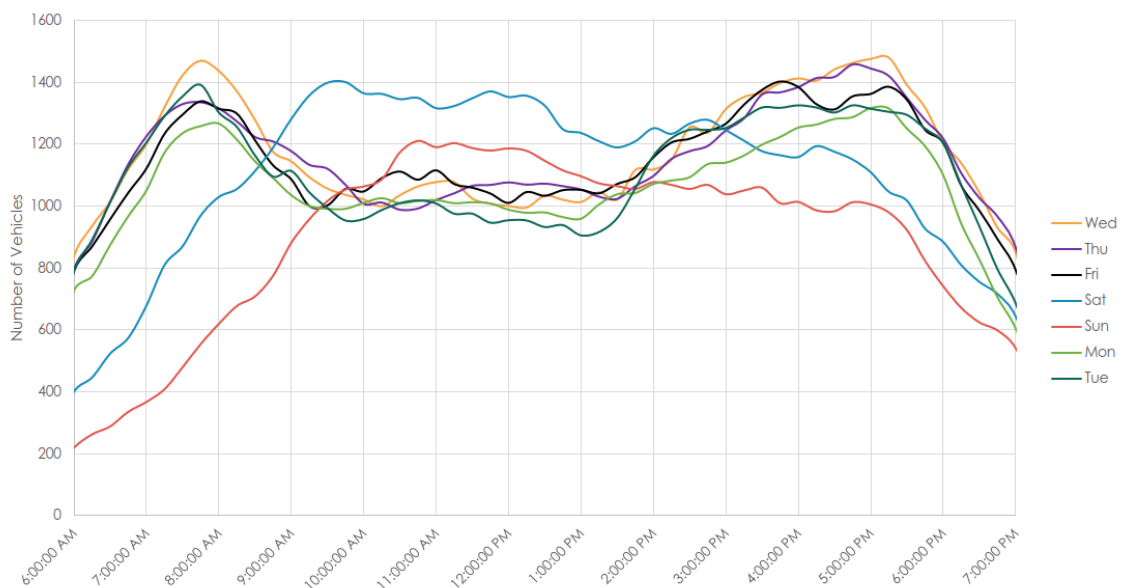


Figure 4-3 Ramsay St/ Northcote St Weekly Traffic Profile

The level of service (LoS) from the daily profiles confirmed both intersections operate under a 'good' to 'satisfactory' level.

This suggests there has been little impact to both Wolesey Street and Northcote Street intersections with Northcote Street in its current configuration. The modification proposes to leave Northcote Street in this configuration.

Despite the lack of pre-construction traffic data, with both Northcote and Wolseley Street portraying similar traffic volumes it is unlikely that the Wolseley Street residents will experience a greater negative impact. Overall traffic volumes have remained low and it is anticipated the proposed modification to retain Northcote Street in its current configuration would not affect this.

The regional context of the improved Wattle Street intersection at both Parramatta Road and Ramsay Street which aims to divert traffic off local roads will additionally improve overall safety with restrictions for heavy vehicle movements already imposed on Wolseley Street for a three-tonne vehicle limit.

5 Other issues

Other issues raised by submitters included:

Issue description:

- *The retention of the existing site hoarding, the duration that the hoarding will remain and who would be responsible for its maintenance.*
- *Concerns regarding noise generation from Parramatta Road for Northcote Street residents with some residents requesting to see a permanent wall maintained or additional taller planter boxers to block noise.*
- *Concerns regarding land subsidence as the original levels, prior to the closure of Northcote Street and the operation of the Northcote Street Civil and Tunnelling Site, are not being restored.*

Response:

The existing hoarding on the eastern side of the lots is proposed to be retained, with an opening created to integrate Northcote Street with the pedestrianised area, maintaining pedestrian and cyclist access.

Hoarding will be maintained by TfNSW Land Management and is likely to remain in place at least until it is divested in accordance with the M4 East RL MP.

It is acknowledged that concerns have been raised regarding noise generation from Parramatta Road for the Northcote Street residents with some requesting permanent or temporary structures to be constructed in place of the hoarding removal.

It is considered that the proposed modification for Northcote Street results in improved amenity (i.e. better noise mitigating qualities) in comparison to the original scope to reinstate Northcote Street. If reinstatement in accordance with the EIS was executed, the residents would see full removal of the hoarding and an active road reinstated thus creating a line of sight to the Parramatta Road and increasing potential noise impact.

As such, amenity impact associated with the proposal, including the partial removing of the existing hoarding, was not directly assessed considering the positive impact this will have on the Northcote Street residents when compared against a full Northcote Street reinstatement.

The proposal is specific to the restoration of Northcote Street alignment only and does not consider the lots of land located either side. Minor surface works will be required to construct the proposed modification however this will have no impact to the surrounding properties and will not undermine ground stability or property foundations.

6 Support for the proposed modification

Seven (7) submitters noted conditional support for the components of the modification.

Issue description:

Some submitters provided conditional support for the proposed modification including:

- *Keeping Northcote Street closed will promote drivers to use the new traffic changes implemented at the Wattle Street intersection and divert traffic away from local roads.*
- *The initial temporary closure of Northcote Street has resulted in the road has becoming a safer more family friendly environment.*

Response:

Response to the submitter's suggestions have been captured above in Section 4.1 of this report.

The support for the proposed modification to leave Northcote Street it is current configuration and modify the existing roadway alignment is noted.

7 Environmental Management Measures and Conclusion

7.1 Environmental Management Measures

No further changes are proposed to the outlined environmental management measures prepared to address the relevant Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) for the proposed modification as detailed in Section 5 and presented in Appendix A of the Modification Report.

7.2 Conclusion

The DPE will, on behalf of the NSW Minister for Planning review the Modification Report and this Response to Submissions Report for the proposed modification of the M4-M5 Link project. Once DPE has completed its assessment, an assessment report will be prepared for the Secretary of DPE.

The assessment report will be provided to the NSW Minister for Planning (or delegate), who will then make a decision on whether to approve the proposed modification.

A copy of the final Response to submissions report will be made publicly available. The NSW Minister for Planning's determination and the Secretary's Environmental Assessment Report will be published on the DPE Major Project's website following determination.

8 References

AECOM Australia Pty Ltd GHD Pty Ltd (2015) Australia Pty Ltd, WestConnex M4 East Environmental Impact Statement, prepared for WestConnex Delivery Authority

AECOM (2018) Australia Pty Ltd, WestConnex M4-M5 Link: Mainline Tunnel – Modification report, prepared for NSW Roads and Maritime Services

AECOM (2017) Australia Pty Ltd, WestConnex M4-M5 Link: Environmental Impact Statement, prepared for NSW Roads and Maritime Services

Ashfield Local Environmental Management Plan 2013 (NSW) (EP&A Act)

Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (NSW) (EP&A Act).

Ministers Conditions of Approval, WestConnex M4-M5 Link SSI 7485 (MOD5, November 2020)

Parramatta Road Corridor Urban Transformation Strategy (UrbanGrowth, NSW, 2016)

WestConnex M4 East Response to Condition of Approval B57 Residual Land Management Plan and B58 Residual Open Space and Timing (Transport for New South Wales, March 2020)