

Submission on the West Connex EIS

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To Whom it concerns ,

We are located at 5 Wolseley st Haberfield and are located directly adjacent to the proposed Northcote tunnel site. We have major concerns regarding the project in general , however are particularly concerned to matters that may arise during the construction phase , and with the uncertainty of the zoning of the Northcote site post completion. We would ask that each of the following points be considered and adequate responses provided. The concerns are raised herewith:

1. Process of the EIS – additional time once plans are finalised:
as per our communications with the WDA , the actual plan for the Northcote works site has not been finalised and is still in draft stage (as at 28th Oct 2015). Based on this it is in fact not possible to provide conclusive feedback , and we would ask that an additional period of time be provided to the community once these plans are final so that any further concerns that come out of the final plans can be raised.
2. Process of community engagement and accuracy of information
Our property is located next to 3 Wolseley St Haberfield , which is one of the properties that were acquired under compulsory acquisition. We were advised by the owner of 3 Wolseley St at the time he was advised early in 2015. At that time , all drawings and photographs that were publically available , showed that 3 Wolseley St Haberfield would remain and not be demolished . This made sense to us on 2 counts (i) it is a heritage house that was situated inside the conservation line and (ii) it would provide a buffer between occupied properties and the Northcote work site. On that basis , as owners of 5 Wolseley st , we made a conscious decision not to sell our property , as we could probably withstand the construction period given a reasonable buffer , and this buffer would also provide a level of certainty of impact post production regardless of the zoning at that point. When the EIS released , changes had been made to the plan , with 3 Wolseley St to be demolished and the work zone to be adjacent to our property boundary.
Given this misleading information was a critical part of our decision making and that this change (whether by design or mistake) substantially changes the impact on us , in instantly reducing the value of our property and the ability to sell it given the timings , the potential impact during the construction period , and the impact any zoning changes may have post construction , we would ask for consideration to be given to compulsory acquisition of our property , or compensation by way of a cash settlement (factoring in diminished value and stamp duty to purchase another property of equal value)

3. Noise

Given the fact that our property is located directly adjacent to the work site , and that with the increase in loudness estimated to be between 32% and 100% (double) greater than current , we would ask that our property be given suitable “architectural treatment” so that the loudness experienced by us is no greater than 0.7dBA over current levels , in our house.. My wife operates a business from the property , and the proposed significant increases would make the doubling of noise during the daytime , near impossible to continue this creating issues for us in not being able to sustain our current income. In addition to this we have 3 young children (one of which has been treated for anxiety) living in the house , and having to deal with deprived sleep over the construction period (2-3 years) , would in our belief have a significant impact on their ability to function and develop. As raised in point 2 , our preference is for consideration being given to compulsory acquisition of our property , to enable a buffer to be provided to other residents and also overcome the issues we will face with regards to noise. If this does not occur , among the measures we would be seeking to be undertaken would be , suitable insulation added , the replacement of the current glazing with thickened laminated glass (to provide no change to the character of the property) , additional landscaping to absorb some of the noise and other measures as seen fit in discussions with specialist consultants.

4. Dust mitigation or compensation

Given that the Northcote work site will be a large workzone that will inevitably create dust , we would insist that during the construction period , all reasonable requests to clean our property and possessions of dust generated by the site will be undertaken and that the cost of any damage related to dust will be covered.

5. Road and traffic

Given that the final site drawings for the Northcote tunnel site are currently unavailable , a final assessment of the potential traffic impacts cannot be foreseen. It is however reasonable to assume that with a significant number of trucks and a large number of workers and subcontractors attending the site daily , there will be a significant change to the current local traffic movements. We would like the following considered :

- (i) That Wolseley st be cut off adjacent to the boundary of the tunnel site (effectively creating a dead end) and the Cove street be one way from the corner near Wadim Bill reserve to Paramatta Rd ,(alternate suggestion would be modification of the road only to allow a left hand turn out and not into Cove st off Paramatta Rd) thus preventing traffic getting off Paramatta Rd before the construction site to proceed to Ramsay St and Wattle St
- (ii) That no vehicular access to the work site , be provided from Wolseley St , and that it would be from Paramatta Rd and Wattle St only
- (iii) That parking along Wolseley St , Cove St and Northcote St be restricted to 2 hours , residents exempt and also provided with visitors passes , and that a commitment be made by Ashfield council to police these restrictions on a daily basis

6. Parking for workers and sub-contractors

Given that the final site drawings for the Northcote tunnel site are currently unavailable , a final assessment of the potential parking impacts cannot be foreseen , however we would like the following considered.

- (i) That the site have parking provisions for the maximum number of workers , plus a reasonably anticipated number for visiting sub-contractors , consultants etc
- (ii) Should (i) above not be provided , a satellite parking area by set up at Canterbury racecourse or similar and shuttle buses provided for workers , whose route would also take in Ashfield and Croydon train stations to cater for workers travelling via train
- (iii) Reasonable parking restrictions as per 5. Be implemented

7. Security

Given that the final site drawings for the Northcote tunnel site are currently unavailable , a final assessment of the security on our property impacts cannot be foreseen . Our major concern is related to the location of the pedestrian footpath that runs through the site to provide access to Wattle st , assuming no pedestrian access along Paramatta Rd.

It would be our expectation that proper security measures are taken should this path be located along the boundary of our property. We are concerned that should this access be along our boundary and that reasonable measures not taken , our property could be subject to robbery &/or vandalism. Some measures that may be considered could be , but not limited to fencing of a reasonable height , that has a flat face that is not easily scaled , security cameras and lighting.

8. Fence construction

As per the advice to us from the WDA , the final specification of fencing to be erected along our boundary , or close to has not been decided. We understand WDA are still awaiting advice from noise specialists. We would insist that the following be considered and that further consultation take place with us prior to finalisation of the plan that accounts for :

- (i) Noise reduction
- (ii) Aesthetics – colour and material
- (iii) Shadowing of our property (obviously balanced with a need to reduce noise and also provide security)

9. Relocation during demolition and construction of Northcote tunnel site

Whilst it appears that actions are being taken to mitigate noise from tunnelling , there seems to be no mitigation taking place whilst demolition of existing buildings occurs or whilst the construction of the tunnelling shed is taking place. It would seem appropriate and reasonable , and we would like consideration given to re-imbursing us for relocation during this period where we will have excessive disruption and noise and be unable to conduct normal , personal and commercial business in our property.

10. Zoning post construction

After approaches to Ashfield Council , WDA , and Urban Growth , we have been unable to establish , and it appears that no body is able to provide any clear direction regarding the zoning that will be applied once the construction phase is complete. The property adjoining ours is currently zoned 2(c) Low density residential , and was within the heritage zone We would like an assurance that once sold by RMS upon completion , that the zoning control be handed back to Ashfield council , and that they in turn return the properties to the current zoning and also ensure that properties built within the existing heritage zone are rebuilt in line with federation guidelines.

The inability to be able to access this information , has created a great deal of uncertainty for property owners such as ours , made decisions with regards to whether to stay or relocate difficult and being able to value a property in such a scenario for possible sale near impossible , again making logical decision making about a decision to sell very difficult.