

NSW Department of Planning and Environment  
23-33 Bridge St  
Sydney  
NSW 2000



RE: Westconnex EIS

Traffic modelling shows the WestConnex road project will not solve Sydney's traffic problems. We need to reduce car dependency. It isn't possible to provide enough road capacity to cater for the huge latent demand for car travel in a highly populated and fast growing city. Investing in urban road expansion to 'fix congestion' is essentially a huge waste, and should not be funded through either asset recycling or borrowing. We know that urban freeways give a negative return on investment – Sydney's Cross City Tunnel and Lane Cove Tunnel were based upon unsound economic reasoning. Any time savings and reductions in congestion will be short lived, because building urban freeways induces additional car travel demand: public transport users switch to car, off-peak travellers switch to peak, and people are encouraged to move further away from their workplaces. Urban freeways also adversely affect the quality of life and health of residents, as well as those who use them – they are subjected to stressful delays and exposed to high concentrations of air toxins.

The proposed toll road will encourage people onto already congested alternative routes. Traffic on Parramatta Road could increase by over 20 per cent as motorists attempt to avoid expensive tolls. Therefore the new M5 will not relieve congestion and traffic may continue to increase by up to 25 per cent on the M5 East – the preferred route to the airport, port and the city. By 2021, more than 31,000 vehicles a day will be dumped at the St Peters interchange located next to Sydney Park and could increase to exceed 55,000 vehicles by 2041. Traffic will probably end up on local roads and seriously impact on Ashmore and Green Square – Australia's largest urban renewal area – as well as King Street, Newtown.

Commuters travelling to the city centre from the western suburbs do so on overcrowded public transport and would appreciate improvements to public transport rather than another motorway. We are the only developed country in the world planning new motorways in the city centre. How can everyone else be so mistaken. The last motorway built in New York was in 1968.

Please reconsider your proposed motorway plan and change to a new plan for public transport.

Regards



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