

18/01/16

Director Infrastructure Projects
Planning Services
Department of Planning and Environment
Application number SSI 6788
GPO Box 39
Sydney, NSW 2001

To Director Infrastructure Projects,

I am writing to lodge my objection to the WestConnex St Peters Interchange.

Both Newtown and Alexandria are both big draw cards for locals and tourists. Newtown is one of the best loved suburbs in Sydney and has always been a social meeting ground with its many restaurants and bars, as well as arts and culture. I have lived in Alexandria for 5 years now and have watched it turn into a very popular area with a large increase of cafes and restaurants, for example The Grounds of Alexandria is known nation wide. There has also been a massive increase in residential developments introduced into the area over the last few years, with several more apartment blocks slated to go up in the near future.

If WestConnex goes ahead it will dump thousands of additional vehicles onto King St and Euston Road. Both of these roads are already congested during peak hour. If these additional vehicles are dumped into the area it will cause an even larger bottleneck with the traffic having nowhere to go. King St is often backed up from the Princes Highway to Broadway and Parramatta Rd. Euston Rd is often backed up all the way to South Dowling St. The WestConnex business case admits that drivers will avoid the new tolls by finding alternative routes through surrounding residential streets.

I read that Euston Rd will be turned into a six lane highway many of these new apartment buildings and commercial developments along Euston Rd will have to be demolished to make room, leaving thousands of families homeless. All of this additional traffic will destroy the local businesses and devalue real estate in these popular areas. The government has suggested that WestConnex will create jobs, but it will destroy jobs by bankrupting once booming businesses that people will no longer want to go to because of the road development. Nobody wants to have lunch next to a highway!

All of this additional traffic will worsen local air quality and destroy the appeal of Sydney Park along with the many other parks used by families for walking dogs, exercising, picnics and I've even seen a few weddings.

The cost of WestConnex just keeps increasing. The updated business case says that it will cost almost \$17 billion, an increase of \$7 billion from the original estimate. These figures don't include the cost of any additional stages so the project will only get more expensive.

The government should be trying to discourage people from driving into the city. Traffic in the city is already congested with the recent closure of George St this has only gotten worse. There is nowhere near enough parking in the to accommodate the vehicles that are already there without the increase of traffic coming from the WestConnex.

The Government should be spending the money on improving the public transport into and around Sydney, encouraging people to leave their cars at home. Public transport would be faster for people to get into the city, reduce the carbon emissions from exhaust fumes, and decongest the inner city and surrounding suburbs.

I am aware that the roads will need to be updated at some point, but would it not be better to widen the already existing M5? Widening the M5 would cause much less damage to the surrounding suburbs because the highway already exists. Traffic would follow the existing path leaving the inner city suburbs safe for locals and tourists alike to enjoy, rather than turning it into a thoroughfare for traffic from the western suburbs.

I have been speaking to local residents around Alexandria, Erskineville and Newtown and haven't found anyone who doesn't think the WestConnex St Peters Interchange will be a disaster for surrounding suburbs and our entire city.

Regards,
Shannon Riggs
Resident of Alexandria