

Bankstown Bushland Society
PO BOX 210
PANANIA NSW 2213
28-1-2016

Secretary,
Department of Planning and Environment,
NSW Department of Planning and Environment,
GPO Box 39, Sydney NSW 2001

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: WestConnex New M5 EIS, project number SSI 14_6788

I **object** to the **WestConnex New M5** for the following reasons:

DESTRUCTION OF ENDANGERED ECOLOGICAL COMMUNITY AT BEVERLY GROVE

On behalf of Bankstown Bushland Society, I point out that in 1997 I was personally engaged by the then RTA as an ecological consultant to report on remnant vegetation at Beverly Hills in the M5 corridor. The significance and uniqueness of the Beverly Grove remnant was very apparent. An on-site meeting was subsequently convened by the RTA, which included RTA executives, engineers and consultants, and National Parks & Wildlife Officers including representatives of the Threatened Species Unit. I was also present at this meeting. All parties were in agreement regarding the importance of retaining the Endangered Ecological Community at Beverly Grove.

A follow up meeting was held at RTA head office where the engineers spread the Motorway plans out on the table. After much constructive discussion of possible alternatives, the alignment was redrawn to accommodate the bushland. The redrawn alignment meant that in the main the site and its ecological integrity would be preserved, an outcome of which the RTA engineers were rightfully proud. It would now be a tragedy if this area was to suffer any further loss to its ecological integrity, to which the Bushland Society is totally opposed.

Additionally, we are very concerned about the destruction of the habitat of the Vulnerable Green and Golden Bell Frog population at Arncliffe, the removal of bushland and parkland adjacent Bexley Road, and the removal of trees that provide food for the Vulnerable Grey-headed Flying-fox, which has a camp of substantial size in the Wolli Creek Valley. Environmental values such as these should not simply be bulldozed out of the way as they simply cannot be replaced.

DEGRADATION OF RECREATIONAL GREEN SPACES

The Society also objects to any losses of green recreational spaces at Kingsgrove, Bexley North, Kogarah Golf Course at Arncliffe, and at St Peters. As the density of Sydney increases and the associated urban heat island effect intensifies, our green spaces must be increased and enhanced, not decreased and degraded. The building of new roads without considering the effects these roads will have on our urban environment should be reconsidered. There is much concern in the local community as to future parking provision given that by 2031, the New M5 is predicted to accommodate 81,500 vehicles per day, which will require many new carparks to be built on land in our city centres and suburbs.

AIR QUALITY

The Society shares the concerns of the general community with regard to the three new unfiltered emissions stacks proposed for Kingsgrove, Arncliffe and St Peters. These will negatively affect air quality in all surrounding suburbs. The adjacent suburbs are all densely populated, so that concerns about health and safety will be long-term. Diesel particulates are considered by the World Health Organisation to warrant the highest cancer level warnings as they are a great danger for the lungs of infants and adolescents.

ANALYSIS OF ALTERNATIVES

The EIS confirms that the project will have significant societal, environmental and economic impacts. For the future liability and well-being of our city other approaches, including the expansion of the light rail network and other improvements to the public transport system should be preferred. Sydney's population is forecast to increase, but increasing private vehicle usage is not a sustainable solution to supporting this population growth.

Yours sincerely,

Colin Gibson
Secretary
Bankstown Bushland Society