

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

Submission to DP & E. Project Number: SSI-14_6788 WestConnex New M5

Social and Economic Impact Volume 1B – Chapter 15 and Appendix M

I strongly object to the project, and to the broader WestConnex scheme. The social and environmental impacts described in the EIS are unacceptable and far outweigh any alleged benefits of the project.

The importance of Community Values. Westconnex wants to destroy the very things we value – our enjoyment of our parks and greenspaces. The loss of significant trees. In a highly urban environment, the limited greenspace remaining is precious. Instead, what is planned for visually divisive motorway operation complexes, spaghetti interchanges and huge unfiltered exhaust stacks that are a constant reminder of the danger to our health.

The style of wording contained in the *Social and Economic Impact Report* is NOT the impartial assessment of a project determining ‘given these social impacts, should the project go ahead?’ but instead ‘assuming the project goes ahead what will the impact be?’

Given this is a \$17 Billion project - and that over one million people are highly impacted in one or more ways - it is damning that there are no real actual benefits to the community.

1 The Social and Economic Report (Report) states:

“Construction and operation of the project is expected to have social and economic benefits and impacts on communities and groups within and in the vicinity of the project corridor. The purpose of the Social and Economic Impact report (Volume 1B – chapter 15 and Appendix M) is to identify and assess these impacts and to identify management and mitigation measures to address these impacts”.

“The assessment needs to provide an overview of the existing social and economic environments in which the project is located and the communities and businesses impacted (positively and negatively) by the project. The potential impacts are the outcome of the interaction between the project and the existing environment and are considered from local and regional perspectives”.

It is noted from the Report that *“The preparation of the Social and Economic did not include direct consultation with businesses, individuals, community groups or industry. The primary research was limited to that undertaken by the project community consultation team and desktop inquiries”.*

The WestConnex community consultation team has been strongly criticised for incomplete and misinformation to the public.

When the EIS refers to ‘community consultation’ it might be referring to what many members of the community have experienced as inadequate information provision. Some ‘facts’ may also be selected rather than others because they promote the case for the Westconnex. For example, for the KGR Interchange, only two of the fifty residents involved in the voting regarding the

transparent noise walls voted for the 28 meter option. Both these residents later admitted that they had not considered that this view would be of 12 lanes of motorway and had since changed their minds. There was an overwhelming support to reinstate the noise walls as existing (ie concrete) as per the contents contained in the EIS. WestConnex Community Liason staff are now informing callers to the info line that there is support for 'transparent walls' to allow more light. This is a misrepresentation of fact.

The Secretary of the NSW Department of Planning and Environment (DP&E) has issued a set of environmental assessment requirements for the project.

SEAR	Where addressed
A description of the existing socio-economic environment.	Section 15.2
Social and economic impacts to businesses and the community within the vicinity of the proposal, with associated property acquisition, traffic, access, property, public domain and open space, and amenity and health related changes (including the broader regional impacts associated with the closure of the Alexandria landfill site should this be part of the proposal).	Section 15.3
An assessment of the impact of the proposal on community facilities, including open space and recreational facilities. The assessment must include the use of existing facilities impacted by the proposal, and options and opportunities for the relocation and / or reconfiguration of the community facilities, both temporary and permanent.	Section 15.3
Impacts on directly affected properties and land uses, including impacts related to access, land use, settlement and subsidence associated with tunnel excavation, property acquisition (including relocations and expenses for those properties acquired) and amenity related changes.	Section 15.3 Chapter 13 (Land use and property) Chapter 19 (Groundwater)
Where there are potential impacts to the OEH estate reserved under the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974 or where the proposal is located upstream of OEH estate, an assessment of the matters to be considered outlined in the <i>Guidelines for developments adjoining land and water managed by DECCW</i> (DECCW, 2010a).	Chapter 13 (Land use and property)
Opportunities for local centre and street revitalisation near the St Peters interchange.	Appendix L (Urban design report)
Potential impacts on utilities (including communications, electricity, gas, and water and sewerage) and the relocation of these utilities.	Chapter 13 (Land use and property)
A draft Community Consultation Framework identifying relevant stakeholders, procedures for distributing information and receiving/responding to feedback and procedures for resolving stakeholder and community complaints during construction and operation. Key issues that must be addressed in the draft Strategy include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • traffic management (including property access, pedestrian access), • landscaping/urban design matters, • construction activities including out of hours work; and • noise and vibration mitigation and management. 	Appendix E (Draft community consultation framework)

2 Description of the existing socio-economic environment

“Defining the relevant study area for the social and economic impact assessment, taking into account the extent or scale of the potential impacts of the project, including both direct and indirect impacts, and the context of the area surrounding the project.”

*“This section is required to accurately report on **all** the sensitive receivers that are impacted”.*

“The latest ABS Population statistics estimated resident population in 2013 was 660,000 people DP&E (Department of Planning and Environment, 2014) estimated that the population of the study area will reach approximately 850,000 residents in 2031. Between 2011 and 2031, it is estimated that Canterbury LGA will experience the smallest growth, with the population growing by 25 per cent over this period. Over the same period, Sydney LGA is projected to experience the greatest growth, with the population growing by 49 per cent.”

Within the **Educational facilities** section there are a number of schools and day care centres that are **MISSING** from the list. The omission of sensitive receivers from this list is not acceptable. The missing schools identified to date are:

- Our Lady of Fatima Primary, Caroline St Kingsgrove
- Bexley North Primary
- Kingsgrove Primary, Caroline / Stoney Ck (Impacted also by higher traffic on Stoney Ck)
- Kingsgrove High, Kingsgrove Rd / Stoney Ck (Impacted also by higher traffic on Stoney Ck)
- Babies Oasis (Day Care centre) Kingsgrove Ave
- St Pius, St Peters
- St Peters Community Preschool
- OOSH St Peters
- St Peters Playgroup
- Eskinville Primary
- And apparently more

Table 15-2 Educational facilities within the immediate vicinity of the project

Project area	Child care facilities	Primary schools	High schools	Tertiary education facilities
Western surface works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active Kids Beverly Hills • Active Kids Narwee • Barfa Bear Child Care Centre • Footsteps Early Learning Centre • Footsteps Early Learning Centre Oosh School Care • Kingsgrove World of Learning • Kids Oasis Childcare Centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regina Coeli Catholic Primary School • Beverly Hills North Public School • McCallums Hill Public School 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beverly Hills Girls High School • Kingsgrove North High School • St Ursula's College Catholic Girls High School 	None in proximity to the works
Bexley surface works	None in proximity to the works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clemton Park Public School 	None in proximity to the works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Booth College, School for Christian Studies, Bexley North (Salvation Army)
Arncliffe surface works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Busy Bee Long Day Child Care Centre • Do Re Mi Long Day Care Centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arncliffe Public School • St Francis Xavier's Catholic Primary School 	None in proximity to the works	None in proximity to the works
St Peters interchange	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active Kids Mascot • Building Blocks Early Learning & Child Care Centre Alexandria • Sydney Park Child Care Centre • Lady Gowrie Child Centre Newtown • Camdenville Public School Preschool 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Camdenville Public School • St Peters Public School • Newtown Public School • Alexandria Park Community School (kindergarten to year 12) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alexandria Park Community School (kindergarten to year 12) • Tempe High School • Newtown High School of the Performing Arts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sydney TAFE Design Centre Enmore

Within the **Sports and Recreation Section** it is concerning that **sporting fields are MISSING** from the list. These parks are in CLOSE PROXIMITY of an unfiltered exhaust stack and tunnel portals:

- Clempton Park Kingsgrove
- Beverly Hills Park

- Cahill Park Arncliffe
- Bennet Park Roselands
- Beaumont Park Bexley North

Together with Kingsgrove Avenue Park, there are thousands of kids that play sport each winter weekend. Without an adequate measurement of air quality, the community is rightly concerned that kids breathing heavily during sport the concentrated toxins of a 9km tunnel.

This is an extraordinary omission and determines that insufficient analysis has been conducted both in the Social Impacts and Air Quality impacts.

Park / Recreation Area	Location	Impacted
Wolli Creek		
Cooks River		
M5 Linear park	Beverly Hills / Kingsgrove / Bexley Nth	Impacted
Bennet Park – sports fields	Roselands	MISSING FROM LIST
Beverly Grove Park	Kingsgrove - M5 Linear park	10.7 hectares acquired. 2.6 hectares remain
Forrester Reserve	M5 Linear park	
Kingsbury Reserve	M5 Linear park	
Kingsgrove Avenue Reserve	Bexley North	Impacted by unfiltered stack
Canterbury Golf Course	Kingsgrove	Partially acquired
Clempton Park – Sports Fields	Kingsgrove	MISSING FROM LIST - highly impacted by unfiltered stack
Beverly Hills Park – Sports Fields	Beverly Hills	MISSING FROM LIST - highly impacted by unfiltered stack
Beaumont Park - Sports	Bexley North	MISSING FROM LIST
Kogarah Golf Course	Arncliffe	Significantly acquired
Barton Park Public Driving Range	Arncliffe	
Riverine Park (Baseball & playing fields)	Arncliffe	
Banksia Field	Arncliffe	
Eve Street Wetlands – off limits to public	Arncliffe	
Cahill Park – Sports Field	Arncliffe	MISSING FROM LIST - highly impacted by unfiltered stack
Sydney Park	St Peters	3 ½ acres acquired
Simpson Park	St Peters	
Camdenville Park – Playing fields	St Peters	
May St Park	St Peters	

Table sourced from Chapter 10 – Air quality.

Table 10-16 Summary of RWR receiver types

Receiver type	Number	% of total
Child care / pre-school	25	0.05%
School	129	0.28%
Further education	9	0.02%
Aged care	14	0.03%
Residential	41,579	89.96%
Commercial	2,210	4.78%
Industrial	1,468	3.18%
Hotel	29	0.06%
Park / sport / recreation	136	0.29%
Public services	11	0.02%
Community	13	0.03%
Medical	101	0.22%
Religion	80	0.17%
Construction site	22	0.05%
Other	393	0.85%
Total	46,219	100.0%

The omission of schools, day care centres and sports fields that are directly impacted by construction and / or operations is concerning. It is also concerning that high impact suburbs – Bexley North and Arncliffe were not included in the introductory section of the report. – *“As the majority of the project would be in tunnels, physical and direct impacts would be limited to areas close to the western (ie at Kingsgrove and Beverly Hills) and eastern (ie at St Peters) extents of the project and at other locations where temporary (construction) and permanent (operational) surface infrastructure facilities are proposed for the project”*

It is therefore reasonable for the community to have **NO CONFIDENCE** in the completeness and accuracy of this Report.

On the grounds that the Social Impact assessment is profoundly inadequate, I strongly object to the New M5 and the WestConnex project in entirety.

3 Defining the Social Impacts

3.1 Amenity and health - construction

“Amenity contributes to a community’s identity and its sense of place. Amenity impacts during construction would include factors that affect the ability of a resident, visitor or business owner to enjoy their home, business and/ or daily activities. These impacts may affect individuals in private homes, as well as the general public’s use of educational facilities, shopping centres, cultural, sport and other recreational facilities.”

“Increases in noise and vibration associated with construction works, including increases in road traffic from construction vehicles and the construction workforce

- Increased dust and air emissions associated with surface disturbance and / or the handling, transport and disposal of soil, as well as vehicular emissions from construction vehicles
- Changes in visual amenity due to the introduction of construction compounds or activities
- Changes in traffic volumes and air quality resulting in changes in the health of residents and road users”.

Then the comment

“The majority of construction activity would occur underground, which would limit the extent of amenity impacts along the project corridor. Impacts would mainly arise at the locations of surface works, in proximity to construction sites and compounds and along transport routes used by construction traffic.” Coupled with the introductory comment *“As the majority of the project would be in tunnels, physical and direct impacts would be limited to areas close to the western (ie at Kingsgrove and Beverly Hills) and eastern (ie at St Peters) extents of the project and at other locations where temporary (construction) and permanent (operational) surface infrastructure facilities are proposed for the project”*

This is a deliberate attempt to downplay the extent that construction will have on the community. No consideration has been taken into account to the noise and vibration that will occur with tunnelling activities, as well as significant construction vehicles through residential streets.

It does not include the cumulative impacts of air pollution that will envelope the entire region.

3.2 Mitigation

Construction

“A community involvement plan would be implemented to provide timely, regular and transparent information about changes to access and traffic conditions, details of future work programs and general construction progress throughout the construction phase of the project. Information would be provided in a variety of ways including letter box drops, media releases, internet site, signage and a hotline”.

Thousands of homes, schools, and businesses will be affected by significant noise during construction and / or operation to a level that can damage health, while mitigation is recommended for some, no details are provided. Westconnex will provide no detailed plans until after approval, and in some case until after construction begins.

As a standard that is now known to expect – work has already been set with the King Georges Rd M5 Interchange, where temporary noise walls had been promised during construction. It is unreasonable for residents to accept that thin plywood can pass as ‘noise walls’. It is also unreasonable for residents at Beverly Hills to accept the duration for noise walls to be down for 14 weeks (in sections) to find ALL noise walls are removed and have been down for 4 months – with some time yet for reinstallation.

On the basis that Westconnex have demonstrated a lack of effort in addressing high noise impacts to residents, I reject the new M5 and the entire WestConnex project.

3.3 Amenity and health - operational

On Completion of the project, there will be significant impacts on over a million people that will impact on the enjoyment and connectivity of their homes and suburbs:

- Loss of own or neighbours homes including heritage homes
- Loss of businesses impacting local employment opportunities
- Significant loss of parks, trees and greenspace – contributing to the heat island affect

- *Significantly increased traffic on local roads inhibiting residents ability to navigate within suburb*
- *Increased traffic noise on local roads causing sleep disturbance and inability to open windows*
- *Increased traffic noise from the motorway likewise causing sleep disturbance*
- *Increased pollution from unfiltered exhaust stacks and from induced traffic impacting health*
- *Increasing incidence of pollution hot spots.*
- *Continued car dependency due to lack of public transport investment*
- *Lack of independence for non-drivers, remaining reliant on parents or family for transport.*
- *Visually divisive motorway structures dominating our suburbs*
- *Demonstrated lack of commitment for urban rehabilitation that benefits the community*
- *Lost opportunity to have invested in public transport that would have made Sydney great and benefited millions of people (not just the financiers and toll road operators).*
- *Lost opportunity to divest more freight onto rail rather than road*

The loss of sense of place. The loss of the amenity and enjoyment of our homes and suburbs. The loss of those things that a community holds most dear, that loss being our parks and trees. The dominant obtrusive motorway operation complexes. Unfiltered exhaust stacks.

The cumulative impacts of decades of successive road projects has on communities has not been factored into the Social Impacts.

4 Benefits

It's quite damning for a \$17 billion project that a search for 'benefits' yielded minimal results for the one million people that are impacted by the overall project.

This is about the only section found:

"The long term impact of the project on property values would be influenced by the long term benefits of the project as perceived in the land and property markets, arising from general overall improvements in amenity, including improved air quality, reduced traffic noise and improved road safety on local surface roads as traffic is diverted from them to the new tunnel".

Let's look at each of these 'benefits'

- **Property values?** - are always lower near major roads and higher near public transport. With a "value decline" for 10's thousands households across the route, can these residents expect payment to compensate for loss the loss of value caused by Westconnex, ie a reverse to 'value add' proposals?
- **Improved Amenity?** - Westconnex will impose a significant loss of amenity with the fracturing of community through acquisitions, the "Berlin Wall" impact of noise walls, the resumption of parks and a significant loss in trees and greenspace – replaced with a polluting road. The minimalistic cheap urban landscape designs returned to the communities, such as witnessed by the KGR Interchange designs. Traffic noise resulting in inability to open windows and in some highly impacted areas, unable to even use their backyard. Amenity?
- **Air quality improvement?** Nine unfiltered exhaust stacks located near schools, homes and playing fields. An additional 50,000 vehicles per day to be absorbed on the western end local roads will exacerbate an already congested and polluted environment and 60,000 at the Eastern end. We should be addressing the existing dangerous levels of pollution people are currently exposed to. It is not acceptable to identify that an area that is already exposed to high pollution levels, and thus a 'little more' is a negligible impact. What an extraordinary attitude, particularly in light that there has been a 68% increase of deaths in

Australia from pollution between 2005 and 2010. <http://www.smh.com.au/federal-politics/political-news/air-pollution-takes-toll-on-australian-lives-economy-oecd-report-20140522-38rre.html#ixzz3y4EmFZDb>

- **Reduced traffic noise?** Can only be set to increase, as no attempt to reduce traffic volumes on our roads is being undertaken. Quite the converse. Other infrastructure projects seemed designed to further increase traffic volumes (such as the closing of the Bankstown Train line for 11 months). Alleged mitigation measures, such as the 'quiet' road surfacing is only short term as it wears away. There is also no effort to pass legislation to catch and fine excessively noisy vehicles.
- **Improved Road safety of local roads?** With our local roads modelled to expect significant increase in traffic – 50,000 additional on the Western end and 60,000 in the Eastern end, how is local road safety being improved? Key local roads expected to absorb such high additional daily capacity will result in an increase of rat runners through the more residential streets.
- **Cycling at Kingsgrove** – the EIS has also stated improvements. What? Reducing size of Beverly Grove Park. Destroying all the trees. Destroying the Cooks River Clay Plain scrub forest. Replacing the current walkway view of trees with a transparent noise wall as an opportunity to 'enhance the motorists experience'. Removing the cycle lane off the legacy M5, expecting these proficient riders to mix in with recreational cyclists including small children. Installing an unfiltered exhaust stack as a constant reminder of the health impacts.
Sorry – please explain where are the unstated 'benefits' for Kingsgrove cyclists.

And then this comment contained in the EIS:

"The provision of a new motorway standard connection between St Peters and Kingsgrove, and the possible future connection to the rest of the WestConnex program of works, is likely to increase the desirability of residential, commercial and industrial developments particularly around motorway access points. This improved connectivity and reduced traffic congestion may make some areas more desirable for living and working than is currently the case. Changes in desirability are likely to gradually affect the nature and scale of development around key project connection points over time"

Location of residences close to major roads are regarded as a **dis-amenity** due to pollutant emissions, high traffic noise, loss of amenity with acquisition of parks and greenspaces, loss of aesthetics with dominant motorway operation complexes. The above statement contained in the EIS is nonsense. All impacted residents and businesses should be entitled to a 'value-loss' to compensate.

5 Community Values

"The identification of community values was also undertaken using local councils' community strategic planning documents. These values were identified to aid the assessment of potential social and economic impacts, provide insight into how the community may perceive these impacts, and assist in the assessment of indirect impacts on community identity, cohesion and sense of place."

The Councils contribution to the values that the various communities have is quite accurate.

There has been no effort to link these community values to any alleged benefits that Westconnex will bring to our communities. It is a requirement to address community values in infrastructure design.

Road

The social and economic study area is characterised by a number of major motorways and arterial roads. The extensive road network means that travel by car is common. Car trips (as a driver or passenger) were the most common mode of travel to work in Canterbury (71.8 per cent), Hurstville (67.3 per cent), Rockdale (68.1 per cent), Botany Bay (68.1 per cent) and Marrickville (48.9 per cent) LGAs. Car trips (as a driver or passenger) were the second most common mode of travel in Sydney CBD, behind walking, accounting for 30.4 per cent of total trips to work.

The result of 30 years neglect of public transport has meant that public transport has not kept pace with the changing employment patterns of Sydney workers. For people that do not work in the CBD, the lack of reasonable transport has forced people to commute by car.

It is obvious that commuters prefer public transport. Three recent examples.

- The reduction of train fares at Green Square and Mascot has resulted in a significant increase in patronage. What was empty stations for 10 years due to outrageous fares now are bustling stations.
- The increased use of the Inner-West Light Rail with patronage up 60% from last year with 90 extra trips planned.
- Gold Coast Light Rail. This is also an excellent example that it is the provision of public transport that aids the performance of the road network. The parallel Gold Coast Hwy performance has improved.

It is so obvious that Public transport is enormously popular. As a heavy user of Public Transport throughout the week and weekend, at various times of the day, there is high patronage of our rail system.

I object to the New M5 and the Westconnex project in entirety. The strategic justification is weak and inconsistent with the NSW Governments Strategy planning and policy framework.

I consider that is a false claim that WestConnex was front and centre of the NSW Transport Master Plan 2012, when it is painfully obvious that it was shoehorned into the document in 2013. The inclusion of WestConnex in this document contradicts the main objective – to reduce car dependency, promote active transport, and enhance the livability of our suburbs.

There has been **no** compelling case for Westconnex to be built. It is shocking that the Sydney Motorway Corporation has now admitted that the New M5 will not work as a stand-alone project. It is also shocking that Sydney Motorway Corporation have advised that their traffic model does not function properly and presents results that can be misleading.

This is extraordinarily poor planning to plunge into a road project with inadequate assessment that then it is discovered that a myriad of more and more expensive toll roads, and more and more road widening in a desperate effort to make it work. This is extraordinary poor planning, and thus reasonable for the community to consider that this is road planning on the run.

WestConnex claim the main purpose of the project is for the transport of freight from Port Botany. Yet the new M5 does not go anywhere near Port Botany. It is now relying on an extension – the Sydney Gateway for this route. The concern with this extension is the impact this will have on the existing rail freight line.

It is reasonable for the NSW Public have a right to know the full costs and the full extent of the motorway plans for an informed decision if this is what the Public want for Sydney, and whether the social, environmental and financial impacts are worth it. Not by section with alleged benefits stated from the overall project, but the impacts limited to just that section.

I consider that the lack of proper initial assessment and the lack of gateway reviews has resulted in the wrong infrastructure project being selected for Sydney. We have seen how popular the Inner-West Light rail, with an increase of patronage at 68% for the past year requiring an additional 90 services required. This is the sort of projects that enable Sydney to get moving, without the huge Social and Financial costs.

I strongly object to the entire WestConnex project as 33 km of communities are expected to give up the amenity of their suburbs for a road project that fails to meet any of its objectives.

Kathryn Calman

Beverly Hills