

GARY E FIFER
19 NORTHCOTE ST HABERFIELD

28th May 2022

Department of Planning and Environment
Via: planninportal.nsw.gov.au

Dear Sir Madam

Feedback:

CONCEPT DESIGN – Northcote Street into a cul-de-sac at Parramatta Rd Haberfield

This feedback is to update and reinforce my correspondence of 23rd May.

I have formal authorisation to represent 31 households (in Northcote St) and one household in Wolseley St and we would like to express an opinion on the proposed cul-de sac in Northcote St and the concept design in accordance with a notice received on Friday 20th May 2022.

Firstly from my discussions with many households in our street there is overwhelming support of the abovementioned proposal to reconfigure Northcote Street to a cul-de-sac at Parramatta Road Haberfield.

To reiterate our grounds for closure of the street:

1. Northcote Street was closed in May 2016 and prior closing off the street (by WestConnex) it was used significantly used as a rat run, with an increasing traffic volume over the years (more than any other local street). Many cars speeding and numerous accidents at the corner of Ash Lane and Northcote Street (one serious accident seeing the vehicle being flipped onto its roof).
2. What makes our street dangerous with flow through traffic is that this intersection (Ash Lane and Northcote St) is a cross intersection (X) unlike Wolseley St which is a tee (T) intersection. Speeding street traffic crossing the laneway traffic causes numerous accidents which is not the case in Wolseley Street. Since the closure, while we still get rat run traffic, we have not had any accidents.
3. Number 15 Wolseley Street (who has authorised me to communicate on their behalf) has stated that they are in favor of the closure of Northcote Street and they feel the general mood in Wolseley St is also in support.
4. Number 15 Wolseley Street anecdotally advises that rat run traffic has NOT increased since 2016 (the closure of Northcote St) and in fact it has decreased with the closure of the taxi depot. They also anticipate once WestConnex is complete there will actually be a fall in traffic volume as the WestConnex employees currently use this street.
5. The concerns proposed by “some” Wolseley St residents that the closure of Northcote St will “create” a rat-run can only be justified if the continued closure of Northcote (a state of affairs that has now existed for more than 6 years) would “increase” traffic flow to Wolseley.

6. There is no evidence that the continued closure of Northcote Street would or could create any “additional” adverse impact on Wolseley Street. In the absence of objective evidence that opening Northcote would reduce traffic flow in Wolseley, there is no legitimate reason to change the status quo.
7. Since the commencement of the Ramsey Street/Wattle Street interchange there has been unquestionably a decrease in "rat-run" traffic in the whole area.
8. Northcote Street has many young families and during the period of closure the Street has become safer for all of the residents, substantially quieter and vehicles driving slower. We consider it is in the interests of our community that this closure continues, and from my discussions with most households in Northcote St (and some in Wolseley Street) there is a strong element of approval for the proposal.
9. The benefits of closure far outweigh the disadvantages.

After discussion with the residents I represent, we provide the following feedback in response to the proposed “concept design”.

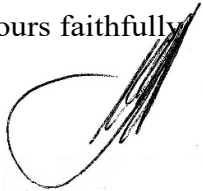
1. The concept design is lacking any information on the use of property either side of the walk through.
2. At the commencement of this project four (4) beautiful examples of Federation houses were destroyed, as well as substantial vegetation. As part of the closure we consider, in the circumstances the land associated with these old houses could be shown to be given back to the “community”.
3. Haberfield is a Heritage listed garden suburb and open space with gardens and trees on this land would be a welcome addition to benefit the community as a whole.
4. The concept design shows a lack of trees, which is very important all through out the Haberfield heritage area. We feel there should, as a minimum, be trees at the end of Northcote Street corresponding to the rest of the street, and in accordance with point 2 above, also trees both within the walkway and either side.
5. The WestConnex original proposal showed a turning circle which is missing from this concept design. This should be reinstated. Garbage trucks and other large vehicles currently have difficulty turning at the end of the street moving back and forth a number of times or simply reversing to the laneway.
6. Following on with the model of more gardens and trees we believe it would be appropriate to install and small playground for children. There is a precedent for this in Walker Avenue (the street parallel to us).
7. The concept design shows a “straight through” approach with the appearance that it has been designed specifically so at some stage the street could be opened up again, this would be considered against the spirit of the proposal. It

also could indicate that WestConnex would want vehicle access to some form of commercial use at present undisclosed.

8. Obviously we as a community cannot dictate what use WestConnex does with their land, however Northcote Street could still be closed off to at least half way down the proposed walkway (the approximate distance of the original properties destroyed) and they could still have access for any commercial business's from Parramatta Road.

We respectfully request you seriously consider our feedback and given the significant support from Northcote St (and some in Wolseley St) that the cul-de-sac proposal be ratified and made permanent in the interests of the local community and making our streets safer.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'G.E. Fifer', written over a faint rectangular stamp.

G.E.Fifer. B.Bus., FIPA, FFA, CTA, FTIA, JP