

Application Number SSI 7485

WestConnex M4-M5 Link – Modification 2 The Crescent overpass

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As part of the process of linking two existing arms of what is known as Sydney's Westconnex Motorway, the NSW Government proposes a new underground motorway tunnel linking the eastern ends of the existing M4 and M5 tunnels. Part of the new link involves the construction of a "Rozelle Interchange". Part of that interchange consists of a vehicle overpass, called the "Crescent Overpass", at the intersection of The Crescent and the City West Link, at Annandale.

Public comment was invited on Stage 1 of the Interchange project, with a closing date of Wednesday 18 September 2019.

I have reviewed the "Community Guide" to the project, available on the Westconnex.com.au website. It details the proposed modifications to the original Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the project, which was exhibited in August 2017 and approved in April 2018.

I OBJECT TO THE PROPOSAL

I take the proposed "Crescent Overpass" as a test case.

The Guide states that the overpass "provides the additional network capacity needed for other projects in the area, including the Western Harbour Tunnel". It also admits that the provision of the overpass will lead to increased (ie, induced) traffic on Johnston Street northbound and on the Anzac Bridge eastbound. This increased traffic will occur as a result of the elimination of one turning movement at one intersection! The accumulated impact from all the other elements of the interchange can hardly be imagined.

Of course traffic will increase, because, in theory, northbound traffic on Johnston Street which is destined for the Anzac Bridge will no longer be delayed by the current traffic signals at the intersection of The Crescent and the City West Link, and INITIALLY, ONLY, these trip times will be shorter.

But surely, the theoretical faster trip times will be cancelled out by the admitted increase in traffic.

So the net result will be, not "reduced congestion", but a numerical increase in traffic volumes.

JUST WHAT THE TOLL ROAD OPERATOR WOULD WANT.

The same result can be expected from ALL THE OTHER CHANGES to the road system associated with the Rozelle Interchange.

A reasonable person might ask "who will pay for the overpass, and who will pocket the benefits?"