

Application Number SSI 7485**WestConnex M4-M5 Link – Modification 2 The Crescent overpass**

**Alan Emerson & Heather Frazier
Annandale**

We request the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment ensure that the RMS and WestConnex contractors work harder to build a more sustainable responsible road and green space development that:

1. respects the community needs to live and move around their local suburb safely and easily without the burden of creating a major traffic thoroughfare through the centre of this small suburb
2. build a development that compliments the natural environment
3. maintains and enhances access to the public foreshore for residents and visitors alike to the area
4. enhances the liveability of this community; we recognise Sydney's population needs to swell to accommodate population growth. Our local area will need to welcome even more residents into the local area. This in itself increases pedestrian, bike and vehicle traffic placing even greater demands on amenities and green spaces
5. maintain good access to ample green space to support health living and underpin the Premiers directive for ensuring access to green and open space that is crucial for communities to thrive.

We ask you consider our objections to this modification change in the attached submission.

Annandale is as unique suburb, steeped in history. It's home to a diverse, eclectic group of residents that have selected Annandale for its neighbourhood character, mix of suitable housing options for working professionals, young families and long-term residents that have raised their family, retiring in this community. This community needs to be protected.

We, the undersigned, live with our two young children within view of the proposed M4-M5 modification, on the road that links into the Crescent overpass. We use Jubilee and Bicentennial Park lands every day for recreation, our children attend the local primary school and preschool and we work within Annandale.

This modification will impact directly on us and our neighbours specifically in the forms of increased traffic, light pollution, noise pollution and a degradation of the natural and urban historical environments within which we live sympathetically.

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This is a letter of objection and a request that you deny the application to the proposal to replace a tunnel with an overpass for the following reasons:

1. RESIDENTIAL ROADS BURDENED WITH A LARGE INFLUX OF NON-LOCAL LIGHT AND HEAVY VEHICLES

The approved design did not change the traffic lanes that could enter the Annandale community via Johnston Street (travelling southbound under the light rail viaduct). Currently:

- traveling northbound, two (2) lanes enter the Crescent intersection from Johnston Street
- One right lane exits the Crescent intersection onto Johnston Street with a second lane moving traffic eastbound along the Crescent toward Glebe.

This modification seeks to double the capacity of Johnston Street and the Crescent beyond the intersection into the local road network and Annandale suburb. Traffic turning right into Annandale (northbound) in the modification will be able use two lanes not one to travel along Johnston Street. This doubling of capacity along this road will see light and heavy vehicles passing many residential homes and medium density apartments, two (2) aged care homes, two (2) preschools, two (2) primary schools and a local park used every week by the primary schools carrying out school sporting activities.

Traffic moving east bound along the Crescent will have to travel past the newly developed kids Skate Park Plaza and extended parklands into Jubilee and Bicentennial Parks. This area is used daily by commuters (pedestrians and cyclists) connecting them to Glebe, Pyrmont and the City, school children using the parkland during the day for school sporting activities and the community for sport and recreation. In addition, the traffic will also pass one preschool/long day care and many residential homes.

Local councils with the support of the community have worked hard to link existing green space, restoring the heritage viaduct archways along the Crescent and Johnston Street to build one continuous open space. The large expansion of the WestConnex Rozelle Interchange will cause a bottleneck of traffic trying to navigate local roads, work directly against restoring the heritage features unique to this area and cut off the open space with roads and traffic.

Impacts of this development on our local area and our objections are:

Community safety and residential parking

- **Safety concerns for pedestrians and cyclists** to move around the local area moving across up to four lane roads.

- **Children at risk** as they walk, scoot and cycle to school – a higher volume of traffic funnelled along Johnston Street resulting in four lanes of traffic. Johnston Street will resemble a major highway not a local street.

- **Residential parking** - Due to the topography and natural landscape, parts of Johnston Street do not have access to side streets near to home or off-street parking. Residents and visitors park along this street to access their home, public transport connections, the foreshore and parklands with increases expected as the new skate park and extended parklands open at the Crescent.

Currently when parking on Johnston Street, you often need to come to a complete standstill in the far left lane, wait for a break in the traffic before completing the park. Most traffic uses only the centre lane therefore, vehicles attempting to park do not currently hold up traffic in the left lane and can safely wait for a break in traffic.

Doubling the lane capacity with traffic as is proposed in the overpass modification greatly increases the risk of major accidents for stationary vehicles attempting to park. Drivers travelling south along Johnston Street having turned right at the Crescent intersection have limited vision of the road ahead as they travel uphill until they reach the top of the crest. Re-entering traffic after parking along Johnston Street will be an increased risk as motorists need to see adjacent cars that are already hard to see around due to their size to enter two lanes of oncoming traffic.

Currently, the left lane is not often used therefore providing safe passage for parked cars to join traffic and not cause accidents or congestion

- **Increased emissions** from stationary light and heavy vehicles caught in the bottle neck trying to move under the heritage light rail viaduct to access and exit the Rozelle interchange impacting residents, primary school children and the elderly that all reside within Annandale along Johnston Street and the Crescent.

- **Removal of right turn onto the Crescent from Johnston Street** limits access to the community to shopping and restaurants areas in Glebe and the city. This will funnel more traffic into other local Annandale Streets already unable to carry the existing capacity. Motorists will be forced into using the already congested Johnston Street/Booth Street intersection.

2. VISUAL IMPACT, RELOCATION OF GREEN LINK and PEDESRTIATION ACCESS TO GREEN SPACES

This modification will impose hugely on the local Annandale residents, visitors to the area and the foreshore landscape. This modification represents extreme overdevelopment and a lack of open space planning.

Media Release from the Premier (February 2019) published on www.nsw.gov.au/your-government/the-premier/media-releases-from-the-premier/new-minister-for-public-spaces-protections-for-public-land-150-million-for-new-parks/

Premier Gladys Berejiklian said "Access to green and open space is crucial for communities to thrive,"

"We have already worked hard to put local character at the heart of everything we do.

"Quality open space is so important to local communities, as a place to relax, kick a football or have a picnic or a barbecue," Ms Berejiklian said.

The Minister for Public Spaces would have responsibility for enhancing and expanding the State's parks and gardens and open spaces, ensuring that there is sufficient open space across NSW, and that public spaces are made welcoming and attractive.

The new Minister for Public Spaces will also have the first right to identify and protect existing Government owned land that should be preserved as parkland or public space.

Reported in Domian.com.au (April 16 2019) in an article titled New Minister for public spaces us welcome – now here are ten priorities for action

The premier announced one of the new minister's tasks would be to identify and protect publicly owned land for use as parks or public spaces.

As important as this task is, we need even more ambition in this portfolio. Public space is crucial to the social, economic, political and environmental life of our towns and cities. As well as increasing the quantity of public spaces, we need to improve their quality.

The proposed modification of the overpass and expansion of the road footprint is in direct conflict with the Premier's statement and one of the ten priorities for the news Minister of Public Spaces as listed above.

- The introduction of a **large-scale concrete structure** is in **no way aligned to the local infrastructure and architecture**. The introduction of this kind of structure to the urban landscape will significantly detract from quality of life for the resident building an enormous concrete and road network that reduces the access of the community to important public space that is currently used daily by the community

The building of the **overpass will be an eyesore**. It will aggressively dominate the local landscape. It is not in keeping with building urban liveable cities that foster closer connected communities. The proposed design disconnects the Annandale and surrounding communities from accessing public land, the foreshore and surrounding parklands in favour of expanding the road footprint into our already small and densely populated suburb.

- The overpass will also obstruct Rodney Monk's heritage mural which decorates the northern side of the light rail viaduct along The Crescent. Inspired by political and social movements in the inner west, it tells the story of our community. An historically important local artefact that should be protected and will in no way be complemented by the building of a concrete overpass that will cast a long shadow over the mural and this community.

- Under the conditions of the original consent, a '**Green Link**' was to be built linking the Rozelle Goods Yard to Bicentennial Park. **This modification includes relocating this link. It is far more than a 'relocation', it is a completely different concept.** The community will have to

navigate many more road crossings or overpass to access the existing cycle network, parklands that the foreshore.

Encouraging local residents to travel easily around the local area by foot or bike will help to remove cars from local roads thus reducing congestion and bottlenecks. This has not been considered properly within the proposed modification. Emphasis is placed only on a motorist's journey. There are no design modifications in this proposal that:

- streamlines pedestrian and cyclist journeys into existing cycle paths,
- connects them to a network of public transport or
- adds safe passage of movement in local streets?

The modification submitted by the RMS does not offer any suitable, safe and connected solution for pedestrians and cyclists living and passing through this community.

3. IMPACT ON PROPERTY VALUE and QUALITY OF LIFE

Properties in and around this proposed change will have their property values negatively impacted. The proposed overpass will turn people away from living in this area as it will no longer be considered a desirable and safe community to live and raise families.

For the reasons detailed above we oppose the proposed modification from a tunnel to an overpass. Residents believe that Annandale is a lovely place to live; we encourage developments that build on the rich texture of our suburb not build over it. Thank you for taking our objections and suggestions into account.