

Westconnex M4 East Tunnel (SSI 6307)
NSW Dept of Planning and Environment
GPO Box 39
Sydney NSW 2001

30/10/2015

By Email: information@planning.nsw.gov.au

Dear Sir / Madam

Westconnex M4 East Tunnel submission

My name is Paul de Heer, I live at 3/54 Martin Street, Haberfield (North of Wattle street) with my wife Elissa and our three young children Matilda (5 years old), Amelia (3 years old) and Atticus (8 months old). I am making this submission as we are extremely concerned about the health and safety concerns of the impact the construction of the WestConnex motorway will have on our lives.

I would like to formally overall oppose the construction of WestConnex motorway due to the following reasons outlined later below. Furthermore, even though I formally oppose the construction I am realistic that if the Westconnex construction goes ahead then I would like to make a specific submission for review of my proposal to change the traffic flow into my street (Martin Street) due to the specific impact outlined below from the Environmental Impact Statement section 5.9.1 (page 5-52);

Martin Street north of Wattle Street – currently connects to Wattle Street, providing left and right turn movements in and out. This connection would require modification to permit left-in and left-out movements only, due to the physical separation of the eastbound and westbound carriageways on Wattle Street

Martin Street (north of Wattle Street) is home to many families with young children and we are all very concerned about the potential of increased risk of injury or death to both children and adults trying to negotiate either via foot or vehicle through the construction zone during the minimum two years construction period, with so many heavy vehicles constantly entering the heavy vehicle turn around road that has only recently been disclosed as being directly connected at the end of Martin Street.



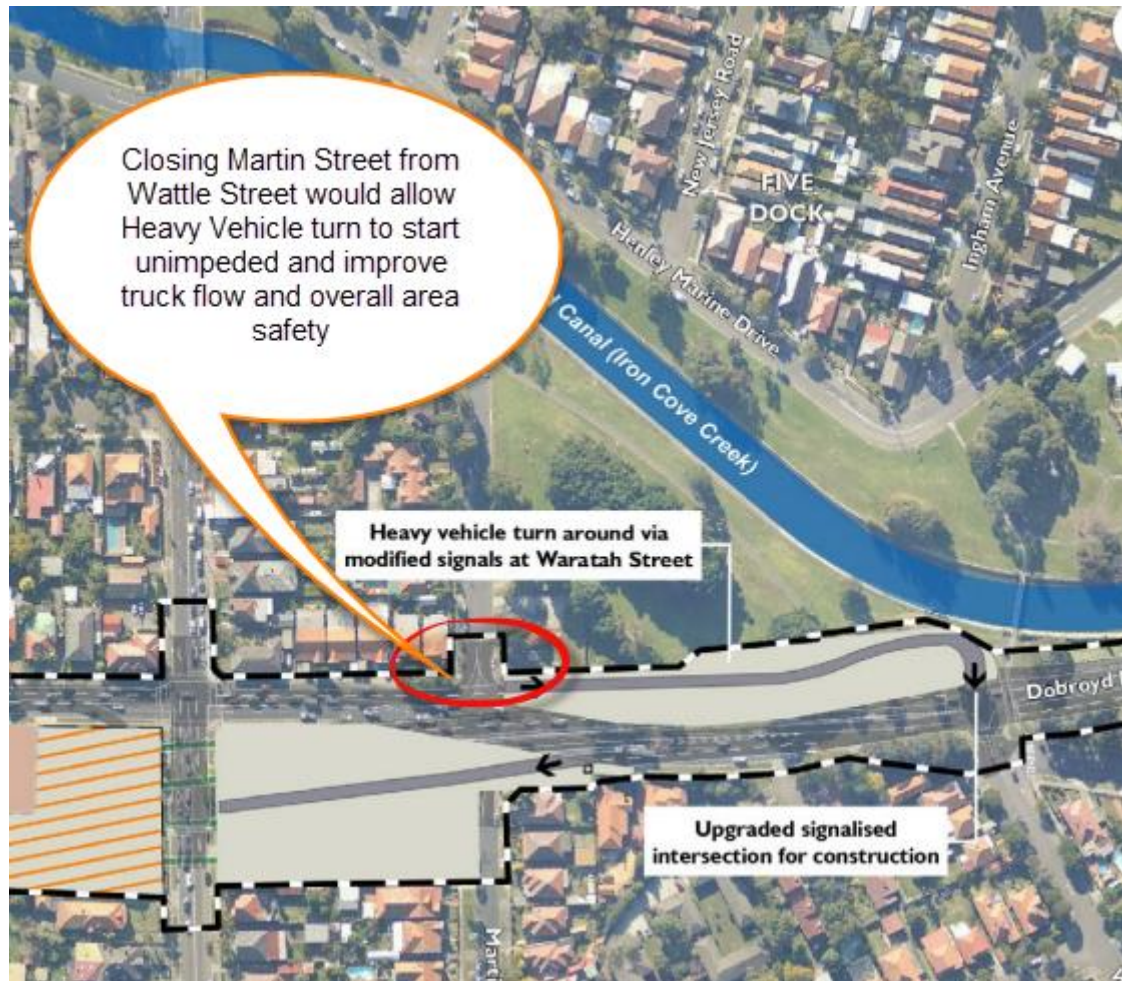
Furthermore, changing the connection to only permit left out movements means that local residents are forced to drive east towards the city on Wattle Street / Dobroyd Parade but if they actually want to drive west their first opportunity to head to this direction is when they arrive at the Timbrell Drive left turn off Dobroyd Parade. From personal experience during AM peak hour this trip already can take up to 15 minutes to travel this distance so we are very concerned, with the identified increase traffic

Open up the Dobroyd Parade connection to Ramsay street and permit left in and left out movements only

Close up the Martin Street to Wattle Street connection completely.

Ideally, it would then also be possible for some form of physical sound isolation barrier to be installed at the closed off Martin Street end to help minimise noise and dust into Martin Street and increase safety by physically isolating Martin Street entrance.

I believe my recommendation would be beneficial to Westconnex as it will allow the proposed Heavy vehicle turn around road (as per screen shot from the Haberfield construction site fact sheet published September 2015) that enters via corner Martin St (north of Wattle Street) and Reg Coady Reserve to allow (up to 120) Heavy Vehicles per day to enter unimpeded without Westconnex having to manage local vehicle traffic flow into and out of Martin Street to and from Wattle Street



Furthermore, this proposal would effectively shield Martin Street (north of Wattle street) local residents from the increased danger risk of trying to drive in or out of Martin Street whilst there is up to 20 Heavy Vehicles per hour (up to 120 per day) negotiating this turn around entry point during the minimum 2 year construction period.

After construction is finished, leaving Martin Street blocked completely from Wattle street would only improve traffic flow on Wattle Street as this traffic would not need to contend with local residents trying to enter and exit from this very busy street.

And finally, allowing Martin Street local traffic only to exit left only into Ramsey street would allow easy access to drive into Haberfield and surrounding areas such as Leichardt and Ashfield and completely bypassing the likely increased traffic build up that will occur on Wattle street eastbound traffic.

Formal Opposition to WestConnex.

Further to my proposal above, please note I am overall formally opposed to WestConnex Construction going ahead due to the following primary reasons outlined below;

Our Local School

Dobroyd Point Public School was established in 1937. It is situated in a quiet residential street in the Federation suburb of Haberfield.

Our school is known locally as 'the school among the trees' in the tradition of Haberfield as the first Australian "garden suburb".

Dobroyd Point is a small school with approximately 230 students but despite our small size we are proud of the friendly learning environment provided to our students.

Traffic around our Local School

Waratah Street is a quiet Haberfield Street used daily by families taking children to and from our local school. Children also walk down Waratah Street to access the sporting fields adjacent to Timbrell Park.

The Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) shows that:

- Vehicles exiting the tunnel portal at Ramsay Street will be able to turn right onto Waratah Street. It appears to be the first exit point for drivers leaving the Westconnex Tunnel;
- the character of Waratah Street will change dramatically with significantly increased traffic flows as vehicles exit the tunnel;
- there will be congestion due to the traffic lights at Mortley Avenue, increasing the likelihood of Waratah Street becoming a rat-run;
- Timbrell Drive and Dobroyd Point Parade intersection will be downgraded to the worst possible traffic impact status; and
- congestion will back up into the tunnel, creating additional pollution along Dobroyd Parade and Wattle Street.

Additional traffic poses a real risk to students at Dobroyd Point Public School as well as impacting their learning environment with additional noise and pollution.

It will also make it difficult for local families arriving and leaving from our school each day.

We are very disappointed that no steps appear to have been taken to ensure the safety of children and their families who use (and will continue to have to use) Waratah Street each day.

Reg Coady Reserve

The EIS shows plans for a truck turning circle in Reg Coady Reserve for the duration of construction (approximately three years).

Our school uses this area (and the surrounding parklands and sporting fields) regularly at present.

Many families also come to school from the Five Dock area surrounding Reg Coady Reserve and Timbrell Park. Those families who walk through Reg Coady Reserve will need to find another route to access our school safely.

No information is provided in the EIS to show how those families will be able to access the school by foot from their homes around Timbrell Park or what other options are available for our school for the use of sporting fields.

Mortley Street Bridge

The EIS shows that the Mortley Street Bridge will be closed for the duration of construction of the Westconnex, making it difficult for parents and students who walk, drive or ride to school through Timbrell Park to get to school.

How is it proposed that the families coming to our school by foot from this area will be able to continue with their journey?

Further, how will the families of Haberfield be able to access Timbrell Park easily by foot?

The Timbrell Park playground areas is one of the only all access playgrounds in the inner west suitable for children with disabilities.

Traffic Lights

It is unclear from the EIS if there will be traffic lights at Waratah and Wattle Streets. If so, there will be pressure to minimise the time for pedestrians crossing due to traffic congestion. This poses a risk to young pedestrians crossing to get to school.

Wider concerns

In summer and winter Timbrell Park is used for Western Suburbs PSSA (Primary Schools Sports Association). Many of the local schools who are part of the Western Suburbs PSSA use Timbrell Park for soccer and AFL in winter and T-ball and softball in summer. All of these schools in the Western Suburbs PSSA could be affected by any work in and around Timbrell Park for several years. Throughout the PSSA seasons, parents often attend at Timbrell Park to watch the children participating in their sport.

The community has been given only a short amount of time to digest and respond to the EIS, which is thousands of pages and many volumes long. It is likely that this submission does not address many additional issues affecting our school and the Haberfield community. Unfortunately, I have not had sufficient time to identify those concerns and respond properly to all of them.

However, I make the following additional general comments:

- The overall benefits disclosed in the EIS are minimal at best. No business case has been released for Westconnex.
- The Government's own heritage experts say the heritage value and significance of Haberfield will be diminished by Westconnex with 53 properties to be destroyed within the Haberfield Conservation area along with other heritage items. The proposal will result in Stanton's original "Garden Suburb" plan being torn in half despite the heritage nature of the suburb having survived for over 100 years.

- An unfiltered tunnel exhaust stack is being built at Wattle Street and Parramatta Road, in close proximity to Haberfield Public School, the Infants' Home, and nursing homes and to many families in the Haberfield area.
- There will be round-the clock truck movements during the years of construction situated in extremely close proximity to our school.
- There is no information about what will happen to unused land following construction. Reports suggest much of it will be used for development and not public space with no commitment to retain as many of the heritage items as possible.

For the reasons outlined above, I oppose the current Westconnex plan.

I request that urgent consideration be given to each of the matters referred to above.

Yours Faithfully,

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