

Raffael Maestri  
24 Rogers Avenue,  
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Secretary,  
Department of Planning,  
NSW Department of Planning and Environment,

Re: SSI 6307

I write to submit in relation to the Environmental Impact Statement for the WestConnex M4 East project. I am opposed to both the M4 East project and all other proposed stages of WestConnex. I request a response to my concerns outlined in this submission. (20151030 SL Final Part A)

I am a resident of Haberfield, and live in community that is going to be greatly and adversely impacted by this project. My home is located within a residential Heritage Conservation Area. If this project goes ahead then I will be living inside a massive construction zone for a minimum of three years.

During the construction period, there will be severe impacts on my home, life and community during the building of a large tunnel ventilation and associated facilities site; two interchanges, and four separate civic construction areas. (These separate and distinct construction sites are the Wattle St road surface construction site, the Dobroyd Parade/Reg Coady road surface construction site, the Northcote St road surface construction site, and the Parramatta Rd road surface construction site.)

At the end of any construction, my home will be left standing 150 metres from the Parramatta Rd, Ashfield/Haberfield interchange; 300 metres from the Stage 1 and Sage 3 tunnel ventilation and associated tunnels operating site on Walker Avenue, Haberfield; and 600 metres from the City West Link, Haberfield interchange.

On a deeply personal level I object to all this disruption and loss for no good purpose or end result.

**Overall, I object because:**

WestConnex as proposed is not going to meet its stated aim of being the best transport solution for Sydney and is not going to solve our transport problems.

There has been no proper consideration of improved and integrated public transport as an alternative to WestConnex.

The EIS refers to the M4East providing a connection between the Blue Mountains and Sydney, yet there is no evidence there has been any information provided, or consultation with the residents or Council about the M4 East project and it's supposed need or benefit to those living or working in the Mountains.

The traffic modeling presented in the EIS does not add up, and the EIS figures show no long term or permanent improvements.

No business case for the project has been publicly released.

The planning process is ad hoc, corrupted and lacks transparency.

Contracts have been signed, approval assumed and work commenced prior to planning approval and any proper community engagement.

There has been inadequate and conflicting information provided at EIS community sessions.

WestConnex community consultations have been lacking in real engagement and have been nothing but sham PR exercise.

I also strongly object to the project because the EIS display period and time for the public to submit has been too short and has significantly impacted on the community's ability to formulate a complete and detailed response to many concerns arising from the proposed M4 East project.

I object to statements by the proponents and supporters of the project that the community should 'trust' project development and planning process for the M4 East and support the project because it is in the 'best interests of the majority of the people'; and that necessarily 'some people will be inconvenienced or suffer some impacts.'

I object to the planning and development of the M4East proposal that has been seriously compromised by the involvement of AECOM in so many aspects of the project.

I object to the location of a construction site traffic exiting directly onto Bland St, Ashfield.

The Parramatta Rd interchange construction site vehicle exit onto Bland St, Ashfield will cause considerable and unacceptable noise, vibration pollution and traffic congestion in this location. Many people who live work and travel near the Bland St and Parramatta Rd intersection at Ashfield/Haberfield will be adversely impacted. I object to this loss of amenity.

The location of the Bland St construction site is on narrow road, very close to intersection lights. This construction exit will enter directly onto a traffic lane traveling in a north and south direction. Within a few meters past the proposed exit site, the north traveling lane expands into 2 lanes immediately before traffic lights. This is to enable north traveling traffic to turn right or left onto Parramatta Rd, or to travel straight across the intersection to immediately merge into 1 lane onto Bland St Haberfield. Also, construction vehicles entering Bland St, Ashfield and turning left onto Parramatta Rd to travel in a westerly direction will occupy the two turning lanes before the intersection.

The construction site exit will increase congestion along Bland St, Ashfield and Haberfield - a significant north/south and connecting road. It will be a very tight turn for construction vehicles turning left onto Parramatta Rd from Bland St.

Further, what is to stop construction vehicles turning right into Parramatta Rd, or even traveling straight ahead on Bland St, Haberfield as they try to avoid the inevitable traffic congestion in the area, or as they use this route as a de-facto 'marshalling' strategy as they await their turn and space to load up spoil, or to deliver goods and equipment in and out of the civil construction site. I object to this likelihood occurring during the construction period.

I object to the dangers likely to be caused by construction site traffic exiting onto Bland St, Ashfield to all road users and pedestrians passing through the Parramatta Rd intersection, and not only because of danger to school children and carers traveling to and from school.

I object to the increase of noise to be caused around the four construction sites in Haberfield and Ashfield. This cumulative increase of noise in our

neighborhood will cause a significant loss of amenity for all. In particular I object to the increased noise caused by construction vehicles exiting direct onto Bland St, Ashfield.

These construction vehicles will be heavily laden and will require revving in order to power up the incline towards the Parramatta Rd intersection. This will cause noise disturbance to all who live and work around the intersection. Because of the way noise travels, (increasing in volume and spread as it moves upwards) construction truck noise from this will also impact upon residents in Bland St, Haberfield, as well as upon the Haberfield Public School community.

I also object to the increase in localised pollution around construction sites. In particular around the Parramatta Rd construction exit onto Bland St, Ashfield by diesel vehicles heavily laden, revving up or idling and thus spewing out the most dangerous pollutants. Pollutants which will sit and hang low around the natural gully which surrounds the Parramatta Rd and Bland St intersection, and pollutants that may not disperse quickly or at all, - depending on the local weather conditions and volume of trucks using this location.

I object to the likelihood of local streets being used as 'marshalling areas' for trucks waiting to enter the construction site.

I object to the likelihood of local streets being used for parking by construction workers on the project.

I object to the lack of detail in the EIS in relation to the planned mitigation to be offered to individual premises. (Noise, vibration, dust, smell, light and pollution.)

There is mention in the EIS of 300 homes to be offered various mitigation measures along the project route. (Volume 2E, page vi) But within the EIS I have not found details of the exact locations or premises to be offered such mitigation. And no WestConnex or JV employee was willing to find out or share this information with me. I was repeatedly told that this information was private and confidential. I object to this lack of identification for the benefit of all.

In the EIS (Table 2.1 Indicative construction program overview, page 12, Vol 2E) three years of impacts has been given as likely for neighborhoods surrounding the Wattle St interchange, the Parramatta Road interchange and the Eastern Ventilation facility (bordered by Walker Ave, Wattle St, Parramatta Rd and Allum St).

But I have found no specific mention of construction impacts on the neighborhood around Parramatta Rd, between Northcote St and Wattle St, Haberfield. Only that this residential and commercial neighborhood is identified as the 4<sup>th</sup> area to be impacted and is marked up as the C7 Northcote Tunnel site (Figure 2.2 Overview of construction footprint and construction ancillary facilities, page 13, Volume 2E).

I object that the EIS does not identify, confirm or recommend specific mitigation for all the residents and businesses impacted by the four (4) construction zones in Haberfield and Ashfield around the:

- Parramatta Rd, Ashfield/Haberfield interchange site (on road surface and tunnel construction areas);
- City Link/ Dobroyd Parade, Haberfield interchange site (on road surface and tunnel construction areas,);
- Wattle St and Walker Avenue (on road and tunnel construction areas); - Northcote St and Parramatta Rd construction site (on road surface and tunnel construction areas).

There is reference in the EIS re noise and vibration impacts (page 85, Section 6.5.1, Volume 2E) that the Noise and Vibration Assessment has found that ‘much of the project area is already exposed to high noise levels from existing traffic with many properties already exceeding noise limits. As a result, the Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment has identified 310 properties that may be eligible for treatments to mitigate primarily existing noise impacts.’

I object that these 310 specific properties and locations have not been identified within the EIS to allow residents to know whether their homes or business are to be offered mitigation for noise and vibrations impacts.

I have also found reference re amenity impacts in the EIS (page 92, Section 7.4.1, Volume 2E) stating that: ‘There are 310 instances where noticeable noise increases could be experienced, primarily as a result of adjacent properties which had previously acted as noise barriers to these properties or where new noise road sources or traffic volumes increase.’

I object that these 310 properties and locations have not been identified within the EIS to allow residents or businesses to know whether their premises are to be offered mitigation for noise impacts during construction, or after completion of the project, due to adjacent properties being demolished for the project.

Also with reference to human health, (page 93, Section 7.4.3, Volume 2E) in relation to pollution the EIS states that: ‘... for a number of areas where traffic on the surface roads is expected to increase as a result of the project a small increase in pollutant concentration may occur.’ Also, within the same assessment it is noted that: ‘...where property treatments are required to mitigate traffic noise, these measures are to protect people from adverse health impacts where they spend most of the day (i.e. indoors). These treatments assume that residents take up these measures and where they do, they keep external windows and doors shut and have minimal use of outdoor areas.’

I object that the EIS does not identify the location and properties known to be affected by an increase in pollution due to the project, yet the EIS assumes mitigating treatment will be provided and taken up by residents. But without specific identification of the location where pollution will increase, residents or businesses will not know if their premises require or are to be offered mitigation for increased pollution.

I object to the lack of information, or consideration within the EIS of the likely cumulative health and social impacts upon people who not only live within the project area, but who may both work, live and study within that same or different project area. The health and social impacts upon these people will be significantly greater than on others who spend less time within the project area.

I object that within the EIS, there is no reference or table that clearly lists or documents the total number of residents likely to be impacted by the project that also includes a break down and identification of single or combined impacts.

I object that the project boundary and areas identified as affected is only 50 metres. The impact of this major road project will go far wider than 50 metres of the indicative route. By restricting the footprint of the project's impact to just 50 metres along the indicative route, the true number of properties and people adversely impacted is hidden, and the true costs of mitigation avoided. I object that much of the mitigating costs of the impacts of this project are to be borne by individual residents or businesses and not by the proponents.

I object to the loss of any vegetation along the project route. Given that the route will go through a highly urbanised environment, any loss of vegetation, on either private or public land, constitutes an unacceptable loss and degradation.

I object that this loss is proposed for no good purpose, as WestConnex is not a solution to Sydney's transport problem, and traffic modelling suggests that

congestion will remain a problem in many areas after construction of the M4 East project.

I object to the loss of any vegetation planted as part of the rehabilitation/landscaping works following the construction of the M4 motorway. I have often been forced to travel on the M4 between the Sydney and the Blue Mountains. Over many years, I have watched side vegetation grow and provide visual relief, shade and refuge. I object to this loss, especially as once upon a time, the construction of the M4 motorway was then supposed to be the answer to Sydney's east/west transport problems. I object that this existing motorway vegetation is seen to have no real value within the EIS.

I object to the impact upon the habitat of birds and animals which live, forage and shelter amongst the vegetation and trees to be lost due to the construction or operational needs of the project.

I object to the fact that the project will result in the know removal of about 15.7 hectares of vegetation, comprising 12.9 hectares of planted trees and screening vegetation (mainly from alongside the M4) and about 2.8 hectares of grassland with scattered trees (such as from Cintra Park and Reg Coady Reserve).

I object to the loss of open space available for passive recreation and enjoyment and loss of trees from the Reg Coady reserve. There is too little green space available for passive enjoyment these days. Any loss is an unacceptable loss. As our urban environment is built up and becomes more densely populated, there is an increasing need for green space available for passive enjoyment, not less.

I object to the loss of the 'scattered trees' within the Reg Coady reserve. Some of which are magnificent specimens and the home and staging posts for local birds. I object to the loss of cool, shade and shelter due canopy loss with the removal of trees in the reserve.

I object to public land (Council or State Government) being taken solely for the purpose of building a toll motorway that is not a solution to Sydney's transport problems. I object to public land being seized to build a road that will force Sydneysiders into greater car dependency, induce more traffic into our city, and inevitably increase road congestion throughout all of Sydney.

I object to the loss and threat to the Grey-headed Flying-fox, a vulnerable fauna species listed under the TSC Act and the EPBBC Act. The Grey-headed Flying Fox has been recorded with the project footprint.

I also object to the threat caused by the M4 East project to the threatened microbat species, such as the Eastern Bentwing Bat and the Large-footed Myotis. These are species that roost under bridges and culverts. Roosting bats, if present would be disrupted by construction activities. There is no suitable breeding habitat for these species within the construction footprint or adjoining areas. The project would also remove areas of foraging habitat (planted trees along roads and in parks) for the Eastern Bentwing Bat.

I object that the EIS recommends that a 'formal biodiversity offset is not considered necessary to compensate' for 'minor and localised residual impacts' of the M4East project. I believe that a formal biodiversity offset is required.

I object that EIS does not recommend referral of the M4East project to the Australian Government Department of the Environment for further assessment or approval under the EPBC Act. I believe that the M4 East project, in all proposed stages, and because of its cumulative impact should be referred to the Australian Government under the EPBC Act.

I object to the validity of the Social Impacts Assessment (SIA) because baseline information and much of the research material used was not collected independently. I object that much of the material and information used as a basis for the GHD SIA had been collected and supplied to the SIA team by WestConnex Delivery Authority. I object to this lack of independence of the SIA from the proponent of the project.

I object to the project because of poor and limited methodology used in the compilation of the SIA. How meaningful is the identification of the true and complete social impacts of the M4 East project on the Haberfield and Ashfield communities, - and what chance of redress and mitigation given such bias and limitation in the development of the SIA? I believe that the SIA must be redone, in order for the full social impacts of the project to be identified and addressed.

I object that much of the SIA work was done in preparation for the concept plan when the 'baseline' work was completed and before the preferred route was announced.

I object that there was no SIA consultation with Ashfield Council after initial discussions around the concept plan phase, and not in direct relation to the preferred and indicative route released in 2015. I strongly object to this serious



omission, as the route and the impacts of the M4East project changed significantly from those associated with the concept phase announced in 2013.

I object that after the community 'consultation' re the 2013 concept plan there was no direct engagement with residents in the development of the SIA for the EIS of the preferred route released in 2015.

I object that only residents whose homes were notified of acquisition in 2013 and 2015 were considered 'consulted' in relation to the SIA for the EIS.

I object to how little knowledge or information about Haberfield and Ashfield Social Infrastructure Providers (SIPs) is revealed or referred to in the SIA of the EIS.

I object that Dobroyd Public School, St Joan of Arc Primary School, Ella Community centre and outreach programs, the Ella residential care facility, Ella childcare, and another child care centre in Ramsay St, Haberfield were omitted from direct consultation in the development the SIA.

I object that these important local services were not consulted in relation to the SIA, because they were considered outside of the area affected by the route and project area.

I object that only SIPs located directly along the route and very close to it were regarded as within the project area to be considered for the SIA. I object that many other social infrastructure providers from Homebush to Haberfield must also have been excluded for consideration and consultation in preparation of the M4East EIS. I object that it is most likely that there will be many other aged, child and community centres and services that will have been overlooked in the EIS.

I object to the lack of consideration of by the SIA of the considerable impact on residents, schools and community caused by local street changes required due to a new right hand turn into Waratah St, Haberfield. I understand that these impacts were omitted from the SIA, because they were seen as being outside the project area required to be considered by the SIA.

I object to the complete omission within the SIA and consideration of resulting social impacts from proposed traffic changes and restrictions at the intersection of City West Link with Timbrell Avenue and Mortley Avenue, Haberfield. I

understand that these impacts were omitted from the SIA, because they were seen as being outside the project area required to be considered by the SIA.

I object to the lack of attention by the SIA of the impacts on residents in Ashfield & Haberfield cause by trucks exiting into Bland St, Ashfield, from a construction site in the middle of a densely populated area.

I object to the SIA of the EIS because it is a poor and inadequate report, insulting to all of us who live in Haberfield and Ashfield.

I object that only 'consultation' undertaken for the Economics Impact Assessment with commercial property owners and business operators along Parramatta Rd, was after the concept design was released, and then only in relation to acquisitions proposed on the Haberfield side of Parramatta Rd, between Alt St and Rogers Avenue.

I object that some businesses on the Haberfield side of Parramatta Rd were initially being pressured to negotiate and settle on a 'voluntary' acquisition price before any planning approval for the project. I object that other businesses to be left standing were desperately seeking and not receiving information and support from WDA and RMS after the concept route was released.

I object that there are businesses along Parramatta Rd, Haberfield that have been left in limbo land for the past 2 years, and are unlikely to receive adequate compensation for business losses that occurred during the post concept and preferred route phase.

I object to current acquisition of property and the loss of businesses on the Ashfield side of Parramatta Rd.

I object that businesses, remaining in situ on Parramatta Rd that have already suffered considerable disruption and business loss, believe they will continue to lose more money and business in the next phases of the M4 East project.

I object to the lack of any real consultation between WDA/JV consortia and businesses in Haberfield and along Parramatta Rd (Haberfield and Ashfield).

I object because the WDA/JV 'teams' have no real knowledge or understanding of the Haberfield village, businesses or community. Whilst there was some acknowledgment of the likely chaos and impacts to be caused by the M4East project, the only compensation or sympathy offered by the WDA/JV 'team

members' was that all the workers would be buying their coffees and lunches in Haberfield during construction.

I object to the fact that the Economic Impact Assessment 'consultation' has only been around specific issues related to the acquisition of individual commercial premises and businesses

I object that that EIS response period has been truncated into a very short period. The document itself is not easy to digest and contains many internal contradictions. I object that we have inadequate time to highlight all its inadequacies. I look forward your response.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Yours sincerely,  
Raffael Maestri