

I make this submission in relation to the Environmental Impact Statement for the WestConnex M4 East project. I strongly object to this project, as well as the entire WestConnex of which this forms a part, on the grounds that no proper justification for the project has been provided. Specifically:

- The claimed benefits of the project in the EIS are based on traffic projections that have not been made public. Nor have they been subjected to independent review.
- Taxpayers therefore have no means of judging the quality of this forecasting. Yet traffic models are forecasts only; they cannot predict the future. The assumptions behind the models (e.g. about induced traffic) determine what their outcomes are. This is why these assumptions need to be subjected to proper review.
- Proper review is even more urgent, given that
 - o the consultant AECOM has been found to have been negligent in its modelling for the Brisbane tollway.
 - o The experience of previous tollway projects is that traffic projections are routinely inflated.
 - o The Auditor General found that proper gateway reviews for the WestConnex have not been adhered to.
 - o We are on the cusp of significant future change in our car usage, especially (but not limited to) the introduction of autonomous vehicles. Traffic forecasting has therefore never been more difficult, with there being a pressing need for models to take into account the latest research and evidence.
 - o Construction contracts have already been signed, suggesting that there is pressure for the project to go ahead. Under these circumstances, it is important to demonstrate that the EIS has not overstated the benefits of the project nor understated the costs.
- In addition, the business case and its underlying assumptions have not been made public, so that projected revenues/returns have also not been subjected to any scrutiny.

I therefore call on the Government to release the business case and full traffic modelling, so the taxpayers and citizens of this state can ascertain whether the supposed benefits of the project can be independently verified. Until this occurs, a proper EIS process cannot be undertaken.

I ask that your Department provide a full and proper reply to these concerns.

Yours sincerely,

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