

Attn: Secretary of DP&E
NSW Department of Planning & Environment
SSI 6307
(WestConnex M4 East – EIS)

1/11/2015

Dear Sir/Madam,

I make the following submission in relation to the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that has been exhibited for the WestConnex M4 East Project (SSI 6307).

As a resident of Haberfield, I am opposed to the project in its current form and request that the following items be reviewed and considered:

1) Local Heritage

At the Eastern end of the Project, it would appear that very little regard has been given to the local heritage within the suburbs of Haberfield and Ashfield when designing the proposed on & off ramps to the City West Link and Parramatta Road. A great number of residences in this Heritage Conservation Area are being demolished to make way for the proposed eastern Ventilation Facility and widening of Wattle Street and Parramatta Road to accommodate the on & off ramps and associated surface works.

I would request that further work be done to find more suitable locations for the Ventilation Facility and on & off ramps to the City West Link and Parramatta Road, which lessens the impact on the local heritage of both Ashfield and Haberfield.

For example, can the on & off ramps and associated surface works to the City West Link be moved further eastward to a location that is less confined by residential properties.

2) Division of the Suburb of Haberfield

With the current proposed design, Wattle Street is being extensively widened to accommodate the Ventilation Facility and on & off ramps to the City West Link. In addition to this, it is proposed that approximately 714m of 5m high acoustic wall is to run on the eastern side of Wattle Street between Parramatta Road to Crane Avenue.

The combination of the widening of Wattle Street and the erection of the 5m high acoustic walls, will visually and physically divide the suburb of Haberfield.

I would request that further design work be undertaken to minimise the works on Wattle Street, so that suburb of Haberfield is not divided.

Again, this could be addressed by moving the on & off ramps and associated surface works to the City West Link further eastward.

3) Eastbound Off Ramps First Signalised Intersections

The current M4 East design shows that eastbound traffic exiting the tunnels properly re-join the surface road network at the signalised intersections at Wattle Street / Waratah Street (City West Link exit) & Parramatta Road / Dalhousie Street (Parramatta Road exit). Both these intersections are “T” intersections.

Today, the traffic arriving at these intersection is somewhat metered in both directions by the preceding sets of signalised intersections on the surface road network.

However, with the current exit ramp proposal the traffic arriving at these surface road intersections will be doing so uninhibited (in ideal traffic conditions). These will therefore become the first intersections that traffic exiting the tunnels, having been travelling at increased speeds for the length of the tunnel, will encounter red lights.

I therefore have the following concerns about the safety of these intersections.

a) Parramatta Road / Dalhousie Street (Parramatta Road exit)

- i) This intersection is used extensively by pedestrians (including local school children travelling to/from school and on school outings) to cross between the suburb of Haberfield and Ashfield / Ashfield Park. In an eastbound direction this intersection is approached by over a blind summit by vehicles.

I am concerned that the current design does not address the safety of pedestrians crossing at this intersection in relation to traffic exiting the tunnel.

I therefore request that the design be reviewed to improve pedestrian safety at this intersection (e.g. improved sighting distance and/or advance dynamic signage to warn of red light at intersection).

- ii) Today this intersection provides the only opportunity for westbound traffic on Parramatta Road to turn right into Haberfield (Dalhousie Street). This is used by both local traffic and Sydney Buses.

I am concerned that with the increase flow of traffic approaching this intersection in an eastbound direction (combination of surface traffic and exiting tunnel traffic), there will be very little intersection phase time allocated to the right turn movement into Haberfield.

I therefore request that a traffic study be undertaken at this intersection, to ensure that the design is reviewed to allocate sufficient future phase time to the right turn movement into Haberfield.

b) Wattle Street / Waratah Street (City West Link exit)

- i) Again, this intersection is used extensively by pedestrians (including local school children travelling to/from school and on school outings) to cross between the suburb of Haberfield and Five Dock / Timbrell Park. The intersection crossing is also used by cyclists, as part of the official cycle path network within the Ashfield Council area.

Today, this “T” intersection only has a marked crossing on its eastern leg (Wattle Street east). As a result of this, peak period eastbound traffic on Wattle Street queue across the intersection. This blocks the crossing to both pedestrians & cyclists and the intersection for traffic trying to exit Haberfield in an eastbound direction.

As a result of the current “T” intersection and crossing arrangement, I have frequently observed eastbound and westbound vehicles running red lights at this location.

I am concerned that with the future increase flow of traffic approaching this intersection, especially in an eastbound direction (combination of surface traffic and exiting tunnel traffic), this intersection will become more unsafe for pedestrians and cyclists.

I therefore request that the design of this intersection be reviewed to improve safety for both pedestrians and cyclists (e.g. introduction of additional crossing on western leg of “T” intersection / grade separation for pedestrians & cyclists / red light camera).

- ii) Today this intersection provides the only opportunity for eastbound traffic out of Haberfield to turn right onto Wattle Street (City West Link). This is used by local traffic.

I am concerned that with the increase flow of traffic approaching this intersection in an eastbound direction (combination of surface traffic and exiting tunnel traffic), there will be very little intersection phase time allocated to the right turn movement out of Haberfield.

I therefore request that a traffic study be undertaken at this intersection, to ensure that the design is reviewed to allocate

sufficient future phase time to the right turn movement out of Haberfield.

My intersection concerns listed in item 3) above could also be reviewed in conjunction with my requests to relocate the location of the City West Link and Parramatta Road on / off ramps and associated surface works.

4) City West Link Capacity East of M4 East

I note that EIS for the proposed M4 East shows that no work will be undertaken on the City West Link east of the Wattle Street / Waratah Street intersection.

This will therefore in peak periods result in relatively free flow traffic exiting the M4 East joining the already saturated City West Link.

The current City West Link east of Wattle Street is effectively two lanes in each direction, which during peak periods is affected by the poor Levels of Service & Degrees of Saturation at the following intersections.

- City West Link / Mortley Avenue / Timbrell Drive (Haberfield).
- City West Link / James Street (Leichhardt).
- City West Link / Norton Street (Leichhardt).
- City West Link / Balmain Road (Leichhardt).
- City West Link / Catherine Street (Leichhardt).

Whilst the M4 East may allow vehicles to arrive at its eastern end in a free flow manner, on exiting towards the City at peak periods the traffic speeds and volumes will be dictated by the current capacity of the City West Link.

I am concerned that vehicles arriving via the M4 East cannot be dispersed by the surface road network at a sufficient rate. This will result in traffic backing up towards and into the tunnel exits.

Without a firm commitment to also construct the M4-M5 Link section of WestConnex, I would therefore request that the current design be reviewed to consider the extension of the City bound tunnels to better serve the traffic (e.g. extend beyond Catherine Street Leichhardt to City West Link / The Crescent intersection at Rozelle).

5) Ventilation Facilities

Current ventilation design for the M4 East tunnels is based on a longitudinal ventilation system. This relies on air movement in the tunnels being achieved through the "piston effect" of the moving traffic assisted by ventilation fans. The exhaust air is then collected and discharged just before the exit portal.

The M4 East tunnels have also been designed with larger cross sectional area, to improve in tunnel air quality. This increase in tunnel cross sectional area will reduce the effectiveness of the “piston effect” of the moving traffic, and increase the reliance on mechanical fan assistance.

The current design also allows for the eastern ventilation facility of the M4 East to be utilised for the proposed M4-M5 Link. This would result in the eastern M4 East ventilation facility becoming an intermediate stack in the tunnel ventilation system between Homebush and Rozelle (proposed).

I consider this to be grossly unfair to the residence of Haberfield / Ashfield / Five Dock and surrounding areas.

I therefore request that the tunnel ventilation design be reviewed to include additional intermediate stacks on the M4 East project. This would I believe assist in the more equitable dispersion of the tunnel exhausts.

For example, the current M4 East design allows for a central fresh air supply facility for the tunnels at Cintra Park in Concord. Could this facility not also be designed and utilised to collect and discharge tunnel exhaust, as well as the currently proposed western and eastern ventilation facilities.

I would request that a similar review be also undertaken for the proposed M4-M5 Link project.

6) Tunnel Construction Methodology

In reviewing the proposed tunnel construction methodology, I note that the upper heading of the tunnels will be excavated using road header, with the lower bench being excavated using drill and blast methods.

In reviewing the new alignment to the M4 East to the south of Parramatta Road, I have noted that the new tunnel alignment passes under residential areas.

In order to limit sleep disruption to residents along the tunnel alignment, I would request that further study be undertaken to ascertain whether the drill and blast operations should be limited to the normal working day (Monday to Friday 7:00am to 6:00pm / Saturday 8:00am to 1:00pm / No work Sundays or public holidays).

7) Business Case for M4 East

Without a published, valid or approved business case for both the M4 East and the M4-M5 Link (both projects are required to gain the full benefit of the proposed WestConnex network), I request that any Planning & Environment approval for the project is conditional upon the formal approval of the business case for the project.