

1 November 2015

Attention: Director Infrastructure Projects  
Planning Services  
Department of Planning and Environment  
Application number SSI 6307  
GPO Box 39 Sydney NSW 2001

**RE: WestConnex M4 East EIS (SSI 6307)**

We are a family living in Haberfield, our children attend Haberfield Public School. My mother (in her late 70s) lives in Church Street, Ashfield.

I wish to register my objection to the Government awarding tenders for the WestConnex project before a full business case has been publicly released and before the EIS had been published and the public has exercised its right of participation. I also draw attention to the EIS' failure to:

- Factor into the traffic modelling the very large increases in apartment construction (and population) that has been promoted by the WestConnex Delivery Authority to rationalise the proposal
- Properly describe the long term impacts of air pollution generated by the increased traffic volumes the project is designed to facilitate
- Consider more sustainable public and active transport options that will produce a lower level of greenhouse gas emissions

**However my primary concern is in relation to our children's health and safety and the impact of the WestConnex project on my family and community during the construction phase and ongoing:**

**AIR QUALITY**

During a recent information night at our school attended by WestConnex representatives, we were told the proposed location for the eastern ventilation stack is "optimum". I am not satisfied by the EIS's suggestion that the increase in emissions will be negligible, and am concerned that our children's health will suffer from vehicle emissions from tens of thousands of cars being dispersed near our school from the pollution stack opposite the Bunnings site. The following action is requested:

- Install an air quality monitoring station at the school or very close by well before the M4 East tunnel begins operation to take baseline measurements of pollution, including PM2.5 and all emissions for which there are air quality standards.
- Leave the monitoring station operating after the M4 East tunnel opens to monitor emissions at the school. Data to be provided frequently to Haberfield Public School and the P&C and that action is taken immediately if there is a measurable impact on pollution levels.
- Filter the ventilation stack. If \$15.4 billion can be spent on a road to reduce travel times by just six minutes, the additional money required to ensure the vast majority of pollution is not released into this densely-populated neighbourhood can also be justified.
- **Consider relocating the stack to a topographically higher point further west along Parramatta Road where emissions will be released higher into the atmosphere. The stack should be away from schools, childcare centres and retirement homes so the most vulnerable members of the community are not exposed to increased levels of pollution.**
- **Increase the height of the ventilation stack to reduce the impact of emissions on the local area and increase the likelihood that emissions will be dispersed more widely.**

## **NOISE AND DUST:**

I am concerned that our children's learning and play at school will be disrupted by noise generated during construction by heavy machinery and vehicles operating close to the school. I understand the Haberfield Public School site is expected to have "high worst-case NML exceedances during the daytime" from construction and demolition work. I request the following action:

- Conduct a noise assessment at Haberfield Public School before construction begins and execute noise mitigation measures. This may take the form of double glazing of windows (and consequent installation of air conditioning) in classrooms. These mitigation measures must take place before construction begins. We also request compensation for the additional electricity costs associated with running the air conditioning because windows cannot be opened.
- Set up a noise monitoring station at Haberfield Public School so levels are monitored during construction. This data must be made available frequently to the school and the P&C.
- Amend work schedules as required so that students' learning and play is not affected by noise. This may include regular consultation with the school to ensure noise is reduced during, for instance, exams, music rehearsals, school assemblies and lunch/recess when students are outside.
- Immediately reduce noise at the construction sites if the school principal or senior staff contact authorities to complain of disruption to students and teachers.
- Ensure dust generated by construction activities and vehicle movements is limited and respond immediately by ceasing construction if notified that children playing outside at school are affected by dust in the air.

## **TRAFFIC – DURING CONSTRUCTION AND WHEN TUNNELS ARE OPERATING**

I am greatly concerned that our children's safety will be put at risk by changed traffic behaviours as a result of WestConnex during construction and when the tunnels open. For instance, I understand the pedestrian overpass at the corner of Bland St and Parramatta Rd will close for a period during construction – this is used by many students and parents to get safely to and from our school. The Brescia property at that intersection will be a major construction site, with heavy vehicles departing the site on to Bland St – a narrow and congested road. Hundreds of heavy vehicles will use this and other intersections used by our students: eg the EIS reports that 80 trucks will use the Wattle St/Parramatta Rd intersection between 7.30am and 8.30am alone. Rat-running in local streets is likely to increase as drivers avoid using the tollways – motorists already use the streets of Haberfield and Leichhardt to avoid using the City West Link. I request the following action:

### Before construction begins

- Take base-level data on traffic volumes on the following Haberfield streets: ○ Dalhousie (between Parramatta Rd and Ramsay St), Rogers, Chandos, Bland, Alt, Walker, and Ramsay (before and after the Haberfield shopping area, and also between Marion and Sloane Streets).
  - On Denman Ave outside Haberfield Public School.
- Take base-level data on traffic volumes on the following Ashfield streets: ○ Church, Frederick, Elizabeth, Alt, Julia and Bland Streets
- Monitor the above streets in Haberfield and Ashfield during construction and for a period of at least 12 months after construction.
- If any streets exceed acceptable increases, take steps to return the streets to acceptable levels (eg blocking access, speed bumps) and consider pedestrian safety measures (eg crossing, bridges).

### During construction

- For the whole period of the closure of the southern footpath on Parramatta Rd between Chandos and Bland Sts, have lollipop people in attendance at the Dalhousie St/Ashfield Park traffic lights to ensure those children who walk to school alone are guided across Parramatta Road safely. The lollipop people must be present at these lights for both the morning & afternoon 'school zone' times.

- For the whole period that the Bland St overpass is unable to be used, have lollipop people present at the Parramatta Rd/Bland St traffic lights (both to cross Bland from the east and to cross Parramatta Rd) for the morning & afternoon 'school zone' times.
- Install traffic lights at the corner of Alt St and Parramatta Road for at least the construction phase, to provide a crossing away from Bland St where there will be heavy truck movements. This may also require the installation of traffic lights at Church St/Alt St, as that intersection is already busy and difficult to negotiate because of poor sightlines.
- That any truck movements made during morning & afternoon school zone times are made under the supervision of a 'spotter' (i.e. a person on the ground whose job it is to be the driver's 'eyes & ears' as visibility from a high cab is often poor), who ensures the safe passage of the children on the footpaths of and when crossing Bland St, Wattle St and Parramatta Rd.
- Declare a quarantine zone at an agreed distance around the school to ensure construction staff's parked vehicles do not restrict parking for parents in the streets near the school during pick-up and drop-off times.

### PEDESTRIAN/CYCLIST INITIATIVES

I request the following action:

- Install additional pedestrian/cyclist crossings between Haberfield and Ashfield as a permanent positive legacy of the Project.
- Install similar crossings over Wattle St/City West Link, ie at Waratah St linking to Timbrell Park and/or at Ramsay St – Timbrell Park is a site used regularly by Haberfield children for sporting fixtures, training and exercise. This is an opportunity to improve the existing crossing which is potentially dangerous for pedestrians particularly primary school children to cross unaccompanied by an adult.

### SOCIAL IMPACT

This Project is already having a significant and direct social impact on my community. I do not feel the EIS adequately acknowledges or compensates for this impact. I request the following action:

- Provide a fund for the Ashfield and Haberfield community (perhaps through Ashfield Council) to fund positive community initiatives for the next 10 years.
- Provide a fund for Haberfield Public School to address the unexpected consequences of the construction and the subsequent road. In a project of this size, it is reasonable to acknowledge some unplanned outcomes will occur for our school given its proximity to key sites.
- Set a specific quota for new trees and other planting in the community, particularly in the most affected areas (Parramatta Road at and beyond the tunnel exit, Walker Ave around the stack and other tunnel buildings, City West link at and beyond the tunnel exit).
- Require that property used for construction sites is turned into local parks or for other community benefit following the tunnels' opening, **not high-rise housing**.

### MISCELLANEOUS

- I request and expect that the Haberfield P&C and/or Haberfield Public School Principal will hold a seat on the community consultative committee that will be established as part of this Project.
- I note the lack of materials produced in languages other than English as part of the 'community consultation'.
- I protest that the EIS submission period was too short to allow all affected parties to read and consider the 5000-page EIS and consult adequately.