

25 October 2015

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

To whom it may concern

Re: My submission of opposition M4East WestConnex EIS

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.**

After three years consideration and waivering around the pros and cons for the WestConnex Stages 1-3 road infrastructure, I have now reached the position where **I wholeheartedly object to the project** but particularly the M4East widening into Haberfield. This project and all its process complexities completely privileges the car above public transport upgrades and expansions.

I wish to put on record my grave concerns about the overall environmental and social impacts of WestConnex through the heart of the inner-west of Sydney in order to privilege affluent motorists and truck operators able and willing to pay the road tolls at the expense of community well-being, built environment integrity and enhancement including improvements to public transport.

I object to the process by which WestConnex has imposed this plan that will have highly significant physical, psychological, health and heritage impacts onto all surrounding communities without releasing a business plan at least 12 months earlier, and with a deliberately impossible time frame for citizens to analyse and discuss the 5,000 pages of technical complexities in its Environmental Impact Statement. All of this has been done after a contractor was signed-up to start work on the project mid-2016.

My personal response to the approx. 5,000 page EIS is not and cannot be detailed or specialised but is informed and framed to the best of my understanding by the holistic research and analysis of the following professional, government, community organisations and individual responses. (*see References*)

I have been an Ashfield rate payer for 21 years and have lived in the Abbotsford/Rodd Point/Haberfield/Area all my life. My partner and I live in Chandos Street which will be affected by WestConnex, particularly by the projected transformation of our street through increased cars and trucks forced into "rat runs" into the entrance portals in Wattle Street/Frederick Street. As a consequence of noise, exhaust fumes and speed impacts within Chandos Street, Ashfield **we urgently request that the bottom end of Chandos Street abutting Parramatta Road be closed off and turned into a cul-de-sac.**

As a 66 year old public transport user who hasn't owned or driven a car in Sydney for nearly forty years, with health issues that affect my mobility, the proposed WestConnex M4East project both during its construction phase and, probable, completion, will not improve my pedestrian experience and enjoyment of my public surrounds, such as Ashfield Park and Haberfield. According to Ashfield Council's report and Eco Transit walking times to safe crossings and up to public transport utilities will increase substantially. It will also be more of a health risk due to the inhalation of dust and fumes and heightened noise emanating from the delivery trucks and construction activity, every day for three to five years and upwards.

I hereby acknowledge with great concern the claims made by EcoTransit in their submission summary stating that "the WestConnex would be the biggest underground motorway in the world and per kilometre, the most expensive". When all stages are proposed to be completed by 2031 it will be considered outmoded transport infrastructure engineering".

Health impacts and Air quality

I strongly object to the diminishing of the social capital of the Ashfield Municipality due to the health risks during and after the construction of the WestConnex tunnel is a social burden imposed on many suburbs which instead should be better serviced with technologically advanced environmentally sensitive public transport services that blend in and around well-maintained existing road networks. *(See personal submission by Kerry Barlow, resident of Ashfield)*

In particular, I have very strong concerns for the health and safety of children needing to cross Parramatta Road to attend classes at Haberfield Primary School, especially during the long construction period. The noise, air quality, and dirt could seriously impact their overall wellbeing and effect their concentration in classes, as the school is located a few blocks away from all the underground blasting.

I very strongly object to local residents having to live with unfiltered 25 metres height (equivalent to 8 storeys) and width ugly ventilation stacks and water coolers which will be totally out of place alongside the gracious John Stanton heritage garden suburb of Haberfield. This project totally destroys the ideals of harmonious living as originally outlined the Stanton's original concept for Haberfield. The Ashfield Council submissions states there will be major intervention or "cut out" of the western heart of Haberfield (approx. 780 metres long and approx. 53 metres at its widest point. Appropriate native tree planting could help mitigate some of its impacts.

I support Kerry Barlow when she objects strongly in her submission against the Westconnex EIS to the Air quality measurement tools and methodology to try and justify the lack of air filtration in the tunnels and ventilation stacks:

"The modelled data of forecasted PM2.5 increases and decreases shows one locality is traded against another. The top 10 ranked receptor readings, 2014 (Table K-47, pK-83) for annual mean concentrations show a range from 14.1 ug/m³ to 12.5ug/m³ (all well above the advisory standard of 8ug/m³), with the "do minimum" and "do something" scenarios

still showing modelled data above the advisory standard. With the completion of all stages of the project by 2031, these modelled readings are still above the advisory standard and will be well above the recommended new standard of 7ug/m3 (to be adopted possibly by end of 2015)".

Built environment and heritage

I emphatically oppose the "Italian fascist-style brutalist architectural style' of the ventilation stacks and water coolers standing as landmarks that impose themselves onto the heritage surrounds of Haberfield and through to Ashfield. Many detailed concerns and alternative suggestions are by Ashfield Council in *Attachment 9 (Urban design and visual amenity impacts)* in their comprehensive response to the WestConnex EIS, and which I wholeheartedly endorse, as I believe their design recommendations will help ameliorate the massive ugly impacts and psychological trauma addressed upon the Haberfield and Ashfield both during and after construction, if this project is muscled through to legislation. They include:

- The 24/7 impacts in Wattle Street, Haberfield and other streets in Ashfield and Haberfield of intensive truck movements for the upcoming six to 10 years and the impact on residents health and well-being from noise and exhaust fumes;
- There needs to be significant creative visual impacts to counteract the aesthetic intrusion of a very tall 25 metre high ventilation exhaust stack and its long distance visual impacts. As it appears on WestConnex drawings, this and other ventilation stacks are very imposing and are an ugly blight that is out of all scale to the built environment of Ashfield and Haberfield. It will be a permanent industrial site within a suburban neighbour environment.
- The Urban Design and Visual Amenity Impacts of the Ashfield Council submission strongly recommends that only the highest design practice standards be employed for the landscape design and open space settings adjacent to properties in Walker Avenue and the corner of Wattle Street and Parramatta Road eg "there should be no cyclone wire mesh security fencing".
- WestConnex use of Unsuitable spatial tools to assess the environmental impacts of the construction instead of 3 dimensional spatial movie-type simulation which makes understanding all the visual impacts details easier for citizens, especially in our heavily multi-cultural community in Ashfield and Haberfield;
- There is a lot of masking by trees of the complete width of the motorway and thereby "disguising its hard edge spatial severity." I am concerned about this, particularly around both sides of streets converging onto Parramatta Road, such as Alt, Bland, Chandos, Hawthorne Parade, Church, etc.
- Connectivity between Ashfield and Haberfield to be irredeemably severed with fewer access points in and out for pedestrians making walking longer, arduous and even dangerous process.
- Need to manage accurately the night lighting requirements during construction and operation phases is imperative for the safety and wellbeing of all residents.
- I have considerable concerns about the maintenance of "natural green spaces" upon construction. Will special funding be allocated to the continuous high-quality maintenance of these spaces and the "sound-wall barriers", especially if heavily and frequently graffitied.
- Ashfield Council's submission advises that wider verges (footpaths) be installed (recommended to be 6 metres to maximise the separation buffer between the houses and roadway)

- Haberfield conservation area to be noted and themed, eg Signage to indicate “You have entered the garden suburb of Haberfield
- As Ashfield Council’s submission states, the Ramsay Street crossing verge areas across Wattle Street should be much wider and take a “fit out” that acknowledges the verges are within the Haberfield historic area, and one of the visual gateways into the Haberfield Town Centre
- Special treatments should be given to the balustrades and fencing, special bicycle path areas within Haberfield created
- Thematic Public artwork should be placed alongside the bicycle paths together with thematic planting to disguise the major roadways vistas to the north and south.
- Thematic artwork and planting should be given priority consideration around the south side of Wattle Street adjacent to Parramatta Road as one of the main entry portals into Haberfield

I strongly object to the potential destruction and structural damage to intact heritage buildings within the heritage conservation zones in Haberfield, and the impact of construction on **all** building structures within half a kilometre of all work zones. **I strongly object** to WestConnex not compensating buildings beyond a 50 metre radius of zones of work impact.

Also there appears to be a lack of truth around what properties will be acquired for the tunnel around Haberfield. It has come to my attention that there are heritage buildings in Haberfield that do not appear on the WestConnex EIS map of affected properties.

One such building is the 1888 built “**Louisa Cottage**” located **142 Alt Street, Haberfield** which does not appear either on the Ashfield LEP, the National Trust Heritage register nor the WestConnex Environment Impact Statement of affected houses, even though residents of the house and their surrounding neighbours have been given notice that their homes will eventually be required for WestConnex. There has been no explanation from WestConnex why these homes have not been transparently listed for acquisition and/structurally damaged by its proximity to the tunnel construction work over at least a three year period. According to one of the WestConnex maps, 142 Alt Street (“Louisa Cottage”) will have tunnel construction with explosives being undertaken right underneath this property.

The National Trust of Australia (NSW's) Built Heritage Committee will be considering a draft National Trust Register Listing for this property.

142 Alt St Haberfield appears in the Sydney Motorway Corporation's M4 East Interactive Map. The map identifies that the tunnel will be underneath the property.

<https://gis.aecomonline.net/westconnex/m4east/>

Compulsory acquisition of this property for demolition or tunneling near this property is not acceptable due to the potential structural impacts on this historical property which has heritage significance.

I wholly support the work of the National Trust of Australia, Ashfield Council and the authors of *The People's EIS* in their critical evaluation and risk assessment of the WestConnex Environmental Impact Statement intrusion into the Haberfield conservation areas and nearby precincts and parts of Ashfield residential areas.

Community well-being

I support Victor Storm of Haberfield who draws attention in his submission to the break down in social cohesion along with the psychological impacts of the construction on the community:

“Many residents are deeply concerned to maintain the social cohesion of Ashfield and Haberfield in particular the special “sense of place” for all residents who enjoy the best features of both Haberfield and Ashfield through employing enhanced urban design street improvements and local area traffic management treatments. The project has already had an impact on the health and wellbeing of local citizens. Many residents have reported becoming anxious, angry, depressed and resorting to medication. There will be further health, social and economic consequences on a greater scale if construction activities remain unmodified, particularly in regard to 24 hour heavy vehicle movements and tunnelling work”.

I utterly object to the impossible demands of a 55 day response time to any/all objections to the 4,500 page technical EIS. It is beyond the scope of many average citizens to understand, research and write a quality evidence-based rebuttal. This shows a cavalier contempt for the human rights of affected citizens to full participation and detailed transparency which has not been shown throughout the WestConnex community consultations. **55 days response time (after a request for an extension from 35 days) is evidence of malpractice and abuse of the democratic process.**

The WestConnex EIS maps show that Chandos Street, Ashfield, where I live, will be situated next to an exit and entry to the M4 East tunnel and that Chandos Street will be opened up with a left turning lane leaving it open to rat-runs into Ashfield. Also noted is the planned ten lanes of traffic next to Chandos Street.

I want the following addressed from the EIS before this lamentable project is approved:

- **Filter and redesign the smoke stacks and relocate** away from schools and childcare centres.
- **Build a noise wall** for properties in Ashfield next to the Parramatta Road interchange, during and after construction, as recommended in the Ashfield Council Submission.
- **Build a cul-de-sac at the Chandos Street/Parramatta Road junction** so traffic has to be diverted into Julia Street.
- **Stop rat-running** through Haberfield and Ashfield, by removing the right turn into Waratah Street, Haberfield, and close Chandos Street at Parramatta Road after construction.
- **Offer acquisitions and WDA-funded dilapidation reports** for those properties near construction sites in Northcote, Wolseley, Wattle, Walker, Ramsay, Bland, Chandos and Loftus Streets.
- Restrict tunnelling and truck movements to standard construction hours – **not 24/7.**

- **Return acquired properties not required after construction to Ashfield Council for community use and public open space.**

In summary, It's current estimated cost of around 15 billion dollars would have also squander the financial legacy that is the democratic right of future generations who deserve more innovative and efficient public transport systems and beautiful and affordable environmentally sustainable low-to-mid rise homes serviced by well-maintained road/pedestrian pathways and extended fast train services and new stations.

I object to all stages of the WestConnex project as I believe it to be an act of historic criminal vandalism bestowed upon Sydney by both the Australian and NSW governments as their legacy for generations of Australians for perpetuity.

Yours faithfully

THERESE KUTIS

REFERENCES:

Ashfield Council Response to WestConnex EIS, 2015:

http://www.ashfield.nsw.gov.au/page/our_submission.htm

Environmental Impact Statement – WestConnex M4 East, 2015,

National Trust of Australia Response to WestConnex EIS:

m4eis.org/2015/10/20/national-trust-westconnex-not-worth-heritage-destruction

The People’s EIS, 2015: EcoTransit Respose, 2015;

Victor Storm’s submission opposing Westconnex EIS;



Victor M4E EIS 30
October 2015.pdf

Kerry Barlow submission opposing Air Quality Health impacts as stated by WestConnex EIS;

<http://m4eis.org/2015/10/22/comments-on-air-quality-impact-statement/>

Lyllall Kennedy submission opposing WestConnex traffic modelling; Wendy Bacon, *AECOM poor choice for EIS given conflict of interest*: <http://www.m4eis.org>

and

<http://m4eis.org/2015/10/29/transport-economist-explains-poor-project-selection-behind-westconnex-part-1-lyllall-kennedy/>

<http://m4eis.org/2015/10/29/narrow-interests-plus-public-transport-failure-behind-westconnex-m4-east-lyllall-kennedy-submission-part-2/>

<http://m4eis.org/2015/10/30/tackling-congestion-with-congestion-pricing-and-important-questions-but-no-answers-from-westconnex/>

Kathy Calman submission; <http://m4eis.org/2015/10/23/westconnex-fails-objective-10-protect-natural-cultural-resources-and-enhance-environment/>