

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

1 November 2015

By Email: information@planning.nsw.gov.au

Dear Sir / Madam

Westconnex M4 East Tunnel submission

My children attend Dobroyd Point Public School located at Waratah Street, Haberfield. I am making this submission having regard to the impact the construction that the WestConnex motorway will have on our school and its surrounds.

Our School

Dobroyd Point Public School was established in 1937. It is situated in a quiet residential street in the Federation suburb of Haberfield.

Our school is known locally as 'the school among the trees' in the tradition of Haberfield as the first Australian "garden suburb".

Dobroyd Point is a small school with approximately 230 students but despite our small size we are proud of the friendly learning environment provided to our students.

Traffic

Waratah Street is a quiet Haberfield Street used daily by families taking children to and from our local school. Children also walk down Waratah Street to access the sporting fields adjacent to Timbrell Park.

The Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) shows that:

- vehicles exiting the tunnel portal east of Ramsay Street will be able to turn right onto Waratah Street as it appears to be the first exit point for drivers leaving the Westconnex Tunnel;
- similarly, vehicles will be able to turn left from the western end of Waratah Street in order to gain access to the westbound tunnel;
- the character of Waratah Street will change dramatically as it becomes a rat-run for in and outbound Westconnex traffic seeking to avoid major congestion on Dobroyd Pde (and City West Link);
- there will be congestion due to the traffic lights at Mortley Avenue, increasing the likelihood of Waratah Street becoming a rat-run;
- Timbrell Drive and Dobroyd Parade intersection will be downgraded to the worst possible traffic impact status; and
- congestion will back up into the tunnel, creating additional pollution along Dobroyd Parade and Wattle Street.

Additional traffic poses a real risk to students at Dobroyd Point Public School as well as impacting their learning environment with additional noise and pollution.

It will also make it difficult for local families arriving and leaving from our school each day.

We are very disappointed that no steps appear to have been taken to ensure the safety of children and their families who use (and will continue to have to use) Waratah Street each day.

Reg Coady Reserve

The EIS shows plans for a truck turning circle in Reg Coady Reserve for the duration of construction (approximately three years).

Our school uses this area (and the surrounding parklands and sporting fields) regularly at present.

Many families also come to school from the Five Dock area surrounding Reg Coady Reserve and Timbrell Park. Those families who walk through Reg Coady Reserve will need to find another route to access our school safely.

No information is provided in the EIS to show how those families will be able to access the school by foot from their homes around Timbrell Park or what other options are available for our school for the use of sporting fields.

Mortley Street Bridge

The EIS shows that the Mortley Street Bridge will be closed for the duration of construction of the Westconnex, making it difficult for parents and students who walk, drive or ride to school through Timbrell Park to get to school.

How is it proposed that the families coming to our school by foot from this area will be able to continue with their journey?

Further, how will the families of Haberfield be able to access Timbrell Park easily by foot?

The Timbrell Park playground areas is one of the only all access playgrounds in the inner west suitable for children with disabilities.

Traffic Lights

It is unclear from the EIS if there will be traffic lights at Waratah and Wattle Streets. If so, there will be pressure to minimise the time for pedestrians crossing due to traffic congestion. This poses a risk to young pedestrians crossing to get to school.

Wider concerns

The community has been given only a short amount of time to digest and respond to the EIS, which is thousands of pages and many volumes long. It is likely that this submission does not address many additional issues affecting our school and the Haberfield community. Unfortunately, I have not had sufficient time to identify those concerns and respond properly to all of them.

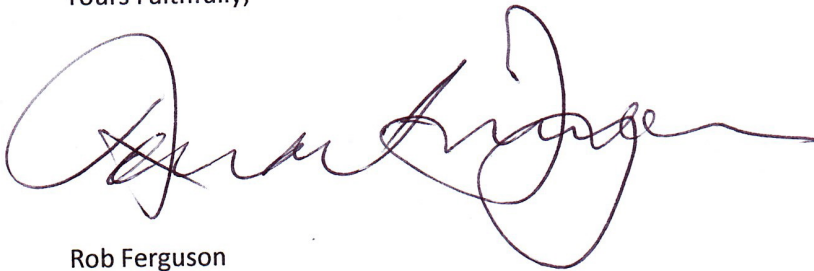
However, I make the following additional general comments:

- The overall benefits disclosed in the EIS are minimal at best. No business case has been released for Westconnex.
- The Government's own heritage experts say the heritage value and significance of Haberfield will be diminished by Westconnex with 53 properties to be destroyed within the Haberfield Conservation area along with other heritage items. The proposal will result in Stanton's original "Garden Suburb" plan being torn in half despite the heritage nature of the suburb having survived for over 100 years.
- An unfiltered tunnel exhaust stack is being built at the corner of Wattle Street and Parramatta Road, in close proximity to Haberfield Public School, the Infants' Home, nursing homes and to many families in the Haberfield area.
- There will be round-the clock truck movements during the years of construction situated in extremely close proximity to our school.
- There is no information about what will happen to unused land following construction. Reports suggest much of it will be used for development and not public space with no commitment to retain as many of the heritage items as possible.

For the reasons outlined above, I oppose the current Westconnex plan.

I request that urgent consideration be given to each of the matters referred to above.

Yours Faithfully,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Rob Ferguson', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Rob Ferguson
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