

***Submission re Environmental Impact Study for Westconnex M4
Widening—Parramatta Rd to Homebush Section.***

***We are totally opposed to the entire Westconnex project and the
associated "urban redevelopment".***

Reasons as below:

_ The State Govt. claims they are two separate projects, but they are both reliant on each other. A cynical exercise in playing various sections of our community against each other (eg. changed plans for Ashfield Park) and especially the western suburbs against the inner city and eastern suburbs. This should be seen for what it is—a blatant effort to retain parliamentary seats won in the last elections (state/federal) to ensure these so called developments aimed at benefitting those in the west, while riding rough shod over the property and open space rights of the inner and eastern suburbs residents, are "locked in/guaranteed " as a reward to financial backers (developers/builders) of those currently in government.

_ We note too the limited time frame for community responses to the masses of material on which we need to consult, and believe the wider community is unaware of the EIS, and call for submissions.

_The compulsory acquisition of properties and open spaces necessary for the creation of the Westconnex cannot be justified. The building of motorways throughout the world's major cities are now seen as major errors in the management of peak hour movements of traffic/people, and to have have a negative impact on the environment. These other cities see public transport as the best, most efficient way to deal with this.

_ To widen the M4 will merely encourage more vehicles to use it (but then perhaps that's the intention, as tolls would increase?) and to only again become a bottle neck at Homebush. The latter already is what happens, so how much worse will it be? The situation will then arise whereby many motorists and heavy vehicles will go back onto Parramatta Rd, slowing down all traffic there—esp. buses—and increase the hazards (accidents), the noxious fumes, and the time taken to travel the distances. All these factors add financial costs to the entire community. And what about the quality of life of those who'll reside in the adjacent high rise residential properties along Parramatta Rd?

_ Clearly this State Govt. cares little about residents and small businesses and is only interested in financial returns to major construction companies. If this were not the situation, then this vast amount of our money being wasted in this manner would instead be invested in long term solutions of public transport, in its many forms.

_ To spend \$5.3 b—and it's always more than estimated—of public money on a project for which the actual planning process has not been completed, and of which those to suffer the greatest negative impact are still unaware or only partially so, is either irresponsible or of deliberate intent. Where will the stacks go? Where are the on/off ramps? Whose properties will go? Which open space areas will be “annexed”? This Govt. shows pure disdain for a significant number of its constituents, state wide.

_ Why would it spend so much money building these outmoded means of moving goods and people across Sydney, and leave the rest of NSW with very poor local roads and major connecting highways—eg. Pacific—and also to neglect the safe, efficient and environmentally friendly railways as a means to assist ? It's absolutely irresponsible as this Westconnex benefits a few and is not in the best interest of the majority of residents in NSW.

_ Statistics for 2011/2012 Travel Survey showed that over the last decade Sydney's population had increased by 12 % but travel by train was up 23 % and buses 16 %. Clearly then an efficient, expanded integrated public transport system (trains/light rail / ferries/buses) that would service the needs of Sydney's population (from where they live to where they work) would be the way of building infrastructure for immediate and more distant future needs.

_ We object to the proposed widening of the M4, all three stages of the proposed Westconnex, and especially any plans to send part of stage 3 of the proposal across to the Anzac Bridge! It's currently a nightmare as any morning traffic report/view will verify!!

_ We also object to the proposed “Urban Redevelopment” along Parramatta Rd., and any plans that will take control of such sites from the relevant local government.

Comment;

The notion, as stated by Chris Johnston, that people want to live in high rise units, is ridiculous! Reality is that they are being forced to do so due to the costs of owning—and renting—a property close to the CBD, the beaches or near reliable public transport networks. It's not evidence of desire it's a result of necessity ie. What they can afford.