

10th September 2014

Westconnex Delivery Authority

Re;- Response to M4 Widening EIS

Dear Sir

I have reviewed the EIS for the M4 Widening and remain convinced this project is a big mistake feeding into an even larger proposed mistake. It is a waste of taxpayers money and fails to solve the transport needs of Sydney. Following are my reasons.

1. Parramatta City is expected to grow in size in excess of 100,000 workers and residents over the next 30 years and the proposal does nothing to facilitate the passage of vehicles from local roads to the M4. There is no new exit/entry ramps proposed. The need for review of M4 access to locals is referenced in the EIS but for some reason deemed to be not part of the M4 widening scope. Only westbound exit is at James Ruse Dr, queuing already blocks off through lanes, future queuing will only be worse when 4 lanes delivers greater vehicle volume to existing intersection, and M4 widening will only exacerbate problem.
2. Why is there no west bound exit at or East bound entry at Church St?
3. Homebush bay west bound has extra westbound ramp, why not a flyover east bound ramp to avoid the exiting long route to access entry ramp?
4. Adding extra lane in each direction will increase flow rates and speeds for the 5km of the widened section but it will create even longer more intense traffic jams at Concord Rd when it hits the traffic lights. This is meant to be a temporary scenario, but based on past projects and government priorities this could be 20 years not 3 years.
5. Currently there is no toll, the proposal is to widen the road which will provide a brief respite until you hit Parramatta Rd or the traffic queuing at James Ruse Drive and you will be paying \$5 each way for the privilege.
6. The proposal is to sell off the completed toll road to private owners, it is well documented they fee gouge and manipulate the tolls and tolling period to maximise profit = minimise social outcome. Eg Sydney Airport or proposed Northconnex which is funded by extended tolling on M7.
7. M4 widening is coupled with "urban activation" which is euphemism for usurping council zonings to allow construction of multi storey apartments along the corridor. 21st century slums! Check out Meritons efforts at the corner of the Gore Hill Freeway and Pacific Hwy, or driven down Hume Hwy at Enfield lately.

Apartments close to arterial roads have to sell cheap, therefore they are cheap and look even cheaper.

- 8. Proposed sketch of Burwood Rd Parramatta Rd shows on east bound lane. How is the increase in population and traffic going to get through? The westconnex is supposed to remove pinch points, not create them.**
- 9. There is no study showing how increased traffic generated by the "urban activation" will be accommodated by a narrowed Parramatta Rd.**
- 10. By Duncan Gays own admission the Westconnex has been rushed and not thought out enough. The city west link is going to be choked even worse than what it is now and there is no sensible plan to upgrade it, wait till Harold Park and Barangaroo development are complete hello gridlock!**
- 11. Ashfield Park has been "saved" by the Westconnex now exiting at some unknown point further to the east. It can't be before the Light rail bridge as Parramatta Rd is only 2 lanes wide, you don't have an alternative it's just a plan that will create a jam that will back into the tunnel, stationary trucks in a poorly ventilated tunnel, no thanks.**
- 12. There is some belief that motorists head from the west to the airport and this need must be catered for by the Westconnex burrowing under the inner west and some how exiting near the airport. Go to page 211 of Sydney Airports 2033 masterplan. (see attached copy) Over 90% of airport users are from the North Shore or Eastern Suburbs. It's a falsehood that motorist need a motorway from the west to the airport. A small part of the Westconnex budget should go to buying out the contract for the Airport Link rail and allow normal fares to apply. This will take a huge traffic impact from the road network.**
- 13. There is no detailed planning for the section of the Westconnex from Haberfield to the Airport. Reviewing the Sydney Airport masterplan 2033, significant roadworks are to be undertaken in the next 10 years and none accommodate any Westconnex connection. Also there is no practical way a tunnel can emerge at ground level and provide a suitable connection to the airport. There is no contingency for the westconnex forever and a day not continuing past Haberfield.**
- 14. There has been no community consultation for the Haberfield Airport section. Again what is the contingency for this community providing reasoned resisitance to the vents, tunnels, increased traffic congection etc. They will not be as apathetic and as ill informed as other parts of Sydney.**
- 15. There appears to be little understanding of physical obstructions to the Haberfield / Airport section. This section cuts across significant tunnelled infrastructure eg water supply tunnels, electricity supply tunnels, sewers, airport rail link etc.**
- 16. The Airport rail Link is another good example of why public transport should not be in private hands.**

17. Big business has developed the Westconnex proposal, it is a financial engineering outcome, not a traffic or public transport engineering outcome.
18. Any professional civil engineer working on the Westconnex proposal should be able to see through this monumental mis allocation of taxpayers money. Speak up.
19. \$15 billion is the proposed budget for the Westconnex. You won't get change out of \$25 billion based on other blowouts of major infrastructure spending, eg Chatswood to Epping rail.
20. The money needs to be spent, a well planned public transport option is the answer. It won't deliver dividends to the big end of town the same way a tollway will, but deliver what is required.
21. The westconnex and it related "urban activation" will turn this city into a sprawling congested metropolis like Sao Paulo or Beijing. Our children have to live in this, is that what you want.
22. I have reviewed your traffic forecasts and travel times. Where is the traffic study for impacts on Parramatta Rd and City West Link, post West connex. The absence of this key data indicates there is something to hide, like the fact it won't work. Westconnex directors and consultants have poor form in honest and accurate disclosure of traffic forecasting. Absence of data only further undermines the credibility of this proposal.
23. Previous Labour government spent half a billion dollars planning a metro train that never happened. You are heading the same way with the Westconnex, poorly conceived and driven for the wrong reasons. Why not exhume the Metro rail proposal, its cheaper and will not lead to worse traffic.
24. And the net result of the west connex is more cars going round and round in a very slow tunnel with no direct access to the city and getting sluggish for the privilege.
25. There is too much secrecy, big business, political donors, developers interests, merchant bankers etc. involved in the Westconnex, it is difficult to have trust in any aspect of their proposal.

From the above it can be correctly assumed I am totally against the Westconnex. The EIS is not objective and is more a marketing tool than an examination of the pros and cons of the proposal. The M4 widening should not proceed, it is the first step in a woefully conceived infrastructure proposal.

Regards

