

## Westconnex M4 Road widening EIS — public comments and concerns

TO: NSW Government — Department of Transport infrastructure

12-Sep-2014

I am very concerned about the Westconnex M4 road widening and further proposed road widenings, tunnels and smoke stacks. The inner west will suffer greatly from the pollution generated from increased traffic on the roadways and exhaust from the stacks. Health issues will emerge and become greater as times goes on. Apart from the immediate increased incidents of respiratory problems and asthma, particularly amongst the elderly and young children, there will inevitably be cancer clusters in the years ahead. The general public are becoming more aware of this and will be seeking compensation for their ill health. This will be very costly for the Government and health care.

The inner west is already a built up area with little green space. A 6-8 lane motorway tunnel under Parramatta Road and access ramps running through will destroy a lot of the existing character of the area. Historical homes and shopfronts will become demolished and the area will look like any other with bland new shop fronts and apartments. Part of living in this area is the enjoyment of the old world charm, which also attracts visitors to the Inner West character.

I think that a lot of money will be wasted on this project overall, when it would be far better spent in upgrading the public transport system. The buses that run along Parramatta Road are awfully notorious for not being on time, and in a lot of cases just don't arrive at all. My family has been kept waiting for buses along this road on many occasions. A tram system would be brilliant as they have in Melbourne. It would also be in keeping with the landscape of the area. The railway network in the inner west has suffered recently with less trains running with the new timetable. This is very frustrating for commuters.

*The NSW State of the Environment Report 2012 says that "While the number of trips in Sydney has been growing, the proportion of trips using private vehicles peaked in 2004–05 and is now the lowest it has been in 11 years. In contrast, over the same period, total public transport passenger kilometres travelled grew at nearly double the annual average rate of VKT at 1.1% per year (BTS 2011)."*

*With the release of the NSW 2011/12 Household Travel Survey the need for public transport has become very clear. In the past decade, Sydney's population has increased by 12% but the demand for Sydney's trains increased by 23% and Sydney's buses by 16%. Yet the NSW Government has proposed a \$15 billion dollar motorway."*

Upgrading the public transport system on par with European models will be less expensive, keep cars off the road and help with environmental and health issues. It would save money for the Government and retain the character of Sydney's more interesting historical suburbs.

Why spend so much money when we have this so-called 'huge deficit' that the Government cries poor about? Myself and many people don't get this logic. However obvious to all is that a lot of it is about the developers getting their hands on this project and the subsequent 'kick backs' to the Government. Just see what gets shown up in ICAC from time to time. This does nothing to address the real problems-

Plan it properly right now, and reap the rewards in the years to come, not leave the Westconnex ugliness and ensuing environmental and health problems for a next generation to come to grips with and future health claims for the Government of the day.

Can all of the integrated transport options for road and rail be looked at properly, before the Westconnex motorway and tunnels goes ahead and spends too much money and does too much damage to health, society, homes and environment in the Inner West?

Yours sincerely

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