

<p>Neighbourhood Forum 5</p> <p>Wollongong's Heartland</p>		<p>Coniston, Figtree, Gwynneville, Keiraville, Mangerton, Mount Keira, Mount St Thomas, North Wollongong, West Wollongong, Wollongong City.</p>
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F6 Extension Stage 1 New M5 Arncliffe to President Ave. Kogarah

Submission to NSW Department of Planning and Environment

Neighbourhood Forums have been set up by Wollongong City Council to reflect the views of the community on matters of concern. Neighbourhood Forum 5 covering the Inner City area and nearby suburbs of Wollongong. This submission is by way of objection to this proposal specifically because:

- 1 viable alternatives have not been fully evaluated;
- 2 New South Wales has a large infrastructure deficit, specifically rail infrastructure, and this will require significant funding to remedy;
- 3 Sydney's car dependence should not be further encouraged by wishful thinking that road congestion can be reduced by building more roads;
- 4 options, such as better public transport or appropriate road pricing should be investigated before building more tollways and freeways for Sydney as these will ultimately be self defeating;
- 5 the option of road pricing on the basis of 'user pays' and 'polluter pays' was addressed in 2003 in the Parry report on Sustainable Transport and this should be re-examined;
- 6 overseas experience is that a more balanced strategy, including rail, is needed not just to reduce road congestion but also to limit carbon emissions and dependence on oil;
- 7 both Melbourne and Perth have found that there was a far better benefit cost ratio when replacing proposed highways with investment in new rail projects;
- 8 such projects could include the removal of many level crossings, duplication of existing rail lines, new rail lines and stations with car parks bicycle storage facilities and links to new walking and cycling paths;
- 9 the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy noted that there is a need to increase the average speed of the fastest Wollongong - Central trains, currently about 55 km per hour compared to trains in Perth and Melbourne which average 85 km per hour.
- 10 a grade separated intersection at the foot of Mt Ousley has a higher priority.

The Forum recommends that that the Stage One F6 extension proposal be put on hold by the NSW Department of Planning, until further and detailed consideration is given to alternatives including improved road pricing and better public transport for Sydney.

The Forum has made a number of submissions to the Department. These include objecting in 2013 to placing more quarry products on the Mt Ousley and Sydney roads, with some 200 heavy trucks per day, as opposed to upgrading or replacing the ship Claudia 1 that used to make three return trips a week from the company's quarry at Bass Port to Glebe, carrying 3100 tonnes per trip.

The issue of whether the F6 should be extended in Sydney between Arncliffe or Kogarah or whether the South Coast Railway line should be upgraded was given detailed consideration by Wollongong City Council at its meeting 23 July 2018. The Council resolved at that meeting, *inter alia*, that it:

- 1 Endorses the resolutions of the public meeting of South Coast commuters on 28 May 2018.
- 2 Writes to the NSW Minister for Transport and Infrastructure, and the Federal Minister for Infrastructure and Transport in support of the meeting resolutions, seeking clarification of the current and future capacity of the South Coast Line from Central to Bomaderry for freight and passenger services, and requesting a costed timeline of the South Coast rail upgrade implementation plan. The feedback from this correspondence be presented to Councillors in a Briefing on the strategic regional transport opportunities.
- 3 Seeks the support of the Illawarra-Shoalhaven Joint Organisation for the South Coast rail public meeting resolutions.
- 4 Calls on the NSW Government to invest at least \$2.6B in the South Coast Rail Line to match or exceed the sum proposed for the F6 extension between Arncliffe and Kogarah.
- 5 Call on the NSW Government to undertake detailed studies on the viability of the proposed South West Illawarra Rail Line, known as SWIRL, which would provide both freight and passenger access to South West Sydney and the second Sydney airport, from the Illawarra.
- 6 Write to local State and Federal Members informing them of Council's resolution and requesting their support.

At its meeting of 1 May 2019, Neighbourhood Forum 5 resolved that an objection be lodged to the proposed new motorway to extend the F6 between Arncliffe to Kogarah in Sydney, to support ongoing upgrading of the South Coast railway line and for a grade separated intersection at the foot of Mt Ousley.

The meeting also noted the strong objections of the City of Sydney to the proposed F6 extension from Arncliffe to Kogarah, and the February 2019 media release of the NSW Shadow Treasurer and Member for Keira, Mr Ryan Park MP. This release, SOUTHERN SYDNEY-ILLAWARRA TRANSPORT posted 14 February 2019, committed NSW Labor to set aside \$2.4 billion to improve transport along the southern Sydney and Illawarra rail corridor. This was with a board of experts (similar to the NSW Government retaining Professor McNaughton to advise on options for faster regional rail services) to help guide the specific upgrades that will focus on increasing services, improve punctuality and creating more reliable journeys.

Mr Park went on to say "Instead of proceeding with the F6 toll road, Labor will focus on public transport on one of the most congested corridors in NSW."

Neighbourhood Forum 5 has repeatedly called for a start of construction of grade separation at the foot of the Mt Ousley road in the City of Wollongong.

In 2017, a Review of Environmental Factors for this project was put on public exhibition by Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) and 130 submissions were received. RMS prepared a Submissions Report which was released in 2018, and some money was allocated in the 2018 budget for geotechnical and other studies.

The relevant factors are as follows

1. The growing traffic on the Mt Ousley Road;
2. The need to provide a new northern entrance to the University of Wollongong;
3. The current intersection at the foot of the Mt Ousley Road has been the scene of at least one fatal road crash this decade, and,
4. The recent allocation of more funds to other parts of the Princes Highway and now the current proposal for yet another motorway in Sydney.

The official website <http://www.rms.nsw.gov.au/about/corporate-publications/statistics/traffic-volumes> gives access to traffic counts on the Mt Ousley road that show in 2017, the annual average daily traffic (AADT) count on this road is 55,069, and of this, 14 % are trucks. The AADT has since increased and there are now an average of 7710 truck movements a day on this road.

The 2006 - 07 draft Sydney Wollongong Corridor Strategy released by the federal Department of Transport and Regional Services with the support of the NSW Government noted that the Mt Ousley Road had in 2003 an AADT of 34 500 in 2003 including about 5500 heavy vehicles. **In the intervening 16 years to 2019, traffic on the Mt Ousley Road has increased by nearly 60 per cent.**

For at least two years now, growth in student numbers at the main campus of the University of Wollongong has required special temporary traffic management measures by Roads and Maritime Services

From Monday 4 March, as noted by the University Website, “for three weeks, traffic will be monitored on the M1 Princes Motorway during peak periods. If queues form along the M1, RMS traffic controllers will divert all westbound traffic on University Avenue left onto Irvine St to access UOW via Murphys Avenue and Robsons Rd/O’Leary Rd. RMS expects that diversions will occur between 8:15-8:45am, from Tuesday to Thursday, based on previous years.”

It appears due to further growth in student numbers this year, special measures were in place for more than three weeks.

There would appear to be a case for completing the grade separation of the Mt Ousley Road with over 55,000 vehicles per day to replace the current dangerous intersection than starting work on the extension of the F6 within southern Sydney.