[redacted]

From: Nevenka Moulakas [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 3:13 PM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

Submission to WestConnex New M5 EIS, project number SSI 14_6788

I strongly object to this project and the entire WestConnex of which this is part, and ask that you reject this proposal on the basis of this environmental impact statement (EIS).

I also strongly object to a number of specific aspects of this EIS, and I expect you to publish this submission and send me a written response to each of the objections I have outlined below.

The stated objectives for WestConnex, including the New M5, were contrived to fit the project after it had already been announced. Even so, WestConnex fails to meet them. For example, it will cause irreversible biodiversity loss, rather than minimising impacts to biodiversity. It will reduce social and visual amenity across the route. It will worsen regional air quality. Perhaps most critically for WestConnex, it will actively worsen congestion in many parts of Sydney, and make little impact on congestion across the rest of the city.

I strongly object to the fact that AECOM, which has a record of failed traffic modeling and other WestConnex contracts that depend on this project going ahead, has been paid $13 million of taxpayer money to complete this EIS. What's more, this EIS is of extremely poor quality, and filled with errors, basic omissions, superficial analyses, and opaque modeling.

The flaws and optimistic assumptions in the traffic modelling mean that toll revenue is likely to be significantly lower than forecast. AECOM has a history of providing over-optimistic traffic forecasts for toll roads, resulting in previous financial failures (e.g. Clem7 in Brisbane).

Billions of dollars of construction contracts have been let for this project before this EIS was lodged. This casts huge doubts on the legitimacy of the community consultation process, and places unreasonable pressure on the Dept of Planning and Environment to approve this project regardless of its flaws.

In fact the whole WestConnex has been characterised by corrupted processes, and a lack of transparency and accountability. This is unacceptable for any project funded by taxpayer money, let alone a massive one that would see communities and endangered species destroyed, thousands of people evicted from their family homes and businesses, and billions of dollars of public money diverted from projects that would benefit NSW more.

The average daily travel time in Sydney has been stable at about 80 minutes per person for decades, while the average trip distance has increased substantially. In this time, billions have been spent on tollways. Travellers are spending more than ever on tolls, yet are not spending any less time travelling. Why would this project be the exception to this norm?

The New M5 would cause costly traffic chaos throughout the inner west and south-west Sydney. It is unacceptable that no traffic modeling was only done past two intersections after the end of the project. Even so, this EIS still makes it clear that this project will provide no solution to traffic congestion, as it shows several intersections across the project route will remain at Level of Service F (i.e. the worst possible level, and the one that is indicative of system failure) after the project. It also shows that many already congested roads along the route will get worse, including those around the St Peters Interchange, Bexley, Rockdale, Kingsgrove and Brighton-Le-Sands.

Independent transport modelling experts have found scores of problems with the application of the WestConnex Road and Traffic Model, which has not been released for scrutiny. It would be negligent for any government to go ahead with a project based on uncertain predictions. What is even more worrying is that the proponent now concedes that it cannot make this model work without other, unfunded toll road projects. What happens if or when these projects do not proceed? This EIS fails to assess this.

Thousands of residents and workers will be exposed to health impacts in all areas where demolition, earthworks, construction and removal activities will take place for up to 24 hours per day, seven days a week. This includes communities in Arncliffe, Kingsgrove, Beverly Hills, St Peters and Alexandria. These health risks are rated as HIGH for all areas. Mitigation is recommended, but no firm information is available about who might receive this and what it might be. Instead, decisions are put off until after approval – and in some cases the beginning of construction. This is completely indefensible and communities cannot be forced to accept this.

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In cities like Sydney, traffic-based air pollution is a major contributor to total air pollution. The international experience with road projects like this is that they encourage more traffic. There are more cars, and more people use them, and indeed this is what the EIS predicts with its large forecasted rise in vehicle kilometers travelled (VKT). This is bad for population health in Sydney, not just the areas immediately surrounding this project.

There is overwhelming international evidence now from organisations like the World Health Organisation (WHO) that shows that traffic-based air pollution increases the number of heart attacks and strokes people have. It increases deaths from heart disease, and respiratory disease. There is some new evidence from WHO that links this pollution to impaired lung growth in children and diabetes. These health effects occur both with long-term exposure and repeated short-term exposure, and there is no safe level of exposure to this pollution.

The air quality study in this EIS shows that some communities will be exposed to increased doses of dangerous pollution, especially those living close to the project's surface roads and unfiltered stacks. Drivers in the long tunnels are also likely to experience high levels of exposure, particularly those on motorbikes. It is unacceptable for the NSW Government to deliberately place the health of citizens at risk in this way.

As well, the assessment of air quality and noise impacts in this EIS are completely dependent on the traffic modelling. But the traffic modeling used in this study cannot be independently verified, is extremely limited in scope, is dependent on other unfunded and unplanned toll road projects going ahead (e.g. Sydney Gateway and southern extension), and appears to be based on overly optimistic usage predictions. For this reason, the air, noise, social impacts and health risk assessments in this EIS cannot be regarded as reliable.

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The project will cause immense social harm. It will destroy long-established communities. It will cause an increase in air pollution-related deaths and illnesses. The increase in air pollution will inhibit lung and nervous system development in children. There are numerous ways of spending $16.8 billion that would deliver a much greater social and economic benefit, and would not cause so much destruction. Such alternatives are barely mentioned in this EIS and have certainly not been analysed as required by the project SEARs.

It is alarming that costs for this taxpayer-funded project are blowing out at the rate of more than $2 billion a year. When WestConnex was announced in 2012, it was one toll road with a price tag of $10 billion; it is now a series of toll road projects that encompasses WestConnex and additional projects such as the Southern Extension and Sydney Gateway that will now cost $16.8 billion. At this rate the final price tag will be well in excess of $20 billion even before the cost of financing large loans, addressing its social, health and environmental impacts, and covering the (inevitable) shortfall in toll revenues is taken into account.

This EIS also completely fails to consider negative impacts of the whole project – for example, total loss of vegetation – while relying on unproven, unplanned positive benefits for the whole project to justify its existence.

The project's proponents have misled the public about its plan to take 14,000 square metres of Sydney Park. For months it said it would only take 8,000 square metres, leaving it until the EIS was lodged to inform the local council

that it planned to forcibly acquire the rest. This will diminish the enjoyment of the park in many ways. Peaceful paths, exercise equipment, children's play areas and sporting grounds, and more will all be adjacent to a major highway. This is completely unacceptable, as is the destruction of other vital community parks along the route.

Community parks, an endangered Green and Golden Bell Frog colony, critically endangered Cooks River Castlereagh Ironbark Forest and trees along the project route would be destroyed for these projects. Some of these, such as the endangered flora and fauna, were species that the RMS was legally obliged to maintain and protect as part of construction for the M5 East. Others, such as the M5 Linear Park and trees lining the noise walls, are spaces the local community has built up over many years after their community was carved up the M5 East. For all of this to be swept aside for this toll road is not only unacceptable – it is undemocratic and a grave violation of the government's environmental and legal responsibilities.

I am aware that independent traffic experts have not access to full information about the assumptions on which traffic modelling. The proponents must be instructed to fully respond to independent experts who have been commissioned by Councils or are academic researchers and to make their models available. AECOM and RMS openly admit that they have collaborated on the modelling. Their claims must be fully and independently scrutinised. When the living conditions of thousands of residents and billions of dollars of public money are at stake, it is not acceptable for a government department or private company to keep such a model secret.

The planning processes surrounding this project and WestConnex as a whole have been utterly corrupted. For example, key parts of the business case remain hidden from public scrutiny, even though it is being funded by taxpayer money. Homes and businesses are being forcibly acquired, multi-million and/or billion-dollar contracts have been let, and construction works have occurred place before any planning approvals are granted for this project. The entire WestConnex, including this project, has been characterised by poor governance, and a complete lack of transparency and accountability. Community consultation has also taken place only after detailed plans have been drawn up, so the general public has little to no input on a project that will affect hundreds of thousands of people's lives for many years to come.

The arrogant social impact study in this EIS dismisses the impact of forcing hundreds of people from their homes and businesses on communities in a few lines – particularly when residents are being offered below-market prices for their homes and businesses, and suffering high levels of distress and trauma as a result. It is also unacceptable that these acquisitions have been forced through before any planning approvals were granted.

The social impact study also fails to assess the impact of this project on other communities that will be deeply affected. For example, the proponents and AECOM have not consulted properly with the community on and around Stoney Creek Road, nor informed residents that WestConnex has a plan that will make congestion and air quality worse in their neighbourhood.

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Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 3:03 PM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
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The social impact study also fails to assess the impact of this project on other communities that will be deeply affected. For example, the proponents and AECOM have not consulted properly with the community on and around Stoney Creek Road, nor informed residents that WestConnex has a plan that will make congestion and air quality worse in their neighbourhood.

WestConnex comes at not only a huge cost that is blowing out at the rate of over $2 billion a year. It also comes with a massive opportunity cost. The $16.8 billion and rising that would be spent on WestConnex is money that would be taken away from hospitals, schools, regional roads, and the public transport improvements that are urgently needed – not just in western Sydney, but many parts of regional NSW. If this $16.8 billion was spent on public transport and effective road management, a project like WestConnex would not be necessary.

I therefore ask that you reject this proposal, publish my name and submission in accordance with the undertaking on your website, and provide a written response to each of the objections I have raised.

Yours sincerely,

Hollie Ussher

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Chris Doyle [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 2:59 PM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

Submission to WestConnex New M5 EIS, project number SSI 14_6788

I strongly object to this project and the entire WestConnex of which this is part, and ask that you reject this proposal on the basis of this environmental impact statement (EIS).

I also strongly object to a number of specific aspects of this EIS, and I expect you to publish this submission and send me a written response to each of the objections I have outlined below.

The stated objectives for WestConnex, including the New M5, were contrived to fit the project after it had already been announced. Even so, WestConnex fails to meet them. For example, it will cause irreversible biodiversity loss, rather than minimising impacts to biodiversity. It will reduce social and visual amenity across the route. It will worsen regional air quality. Perhaps most critically for WestConnex, it will actively worsen congestion in many parts of Sydney, and make little impact on congestion across the rest of the city.

I strongly object to the fact that AECOM, which has a record of failed traffic modeling and other WestConnex contracts that depend on this project going ahead, has been paid $13 million of taxpayer money to complete this EIS. What's more, this EIS is of extremely poor quality, and filled with errors, basic omissions, superficial analyses, and opaque modeling.

The flaws and optimistic assumptions in the traffic modelling mean that toll revenue is likely to be significantly lower than forecast. AECOM has a history of providing over-optimistic traffic forecasts for toll roads, resulting in previous financial failures (e.g. Clem7 in Brisbane).

Billions of dollars of construction contracts have been let for this project before this EIS was lodged. This casts huge doubts on the legitimacy of the community consultation process, and places unreasonable pressure on the Dept of Planning and Environment to approve this project regardless of its flaws.

In fact the whole WestConnex has been characterised by corrupted processes, and a lack of transparency and accountability. This is unacceptable for any project funded by taxpayer money, let alone a massive one that would see communities and endangered species destroyed, thousands of people evicted from their family homes and businesses, and billions of dollars of public money diverted from projects that would benefit NSW more.

The average daily travel time in Sydney has been stable at about 80 minutes per person for decades, while the average trip distance has increased substantially. In this time, billions have been spent on tollways. Travellers are spending more than ever on tolls, yet are not spending any less time travelling. Why would this project be the exception to this norm?

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Independent transport modelling experts have found scores of problems with the application of the WestConnex Road and Traffic Model, which has not been released for scrutiny. It would be negligent for any government to go ahead with a project based on uncertain predictions. What is even more worrying is that the proponent now concedes that it cannot make this model work without other, unfunded toll road projects. What happens if or when these projects do not proceed? This EIS fails to assess this.

Thousands of residents and workers will be exposed to health impacts in all areas where demolition, earthworks, construction and removal activities will take place for up to 24 hours per day, seven days a week. This includes communities in Arncliffe, Kingsgrove, Beverly Hills, St Peters and Alexandria. These health risks are rated as HIGH for all areas. Mitigation is recommended, but no firm information is available about who might receive this and what it might be. Instead, decisions are put off until after approval – and in some cases the beginning of construction. This is completely indefensible and communities cannot be forced to accept this.

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In cities like Sydney, traffic-based air pollution is a major contributor to total air pollution. The international experience with road projects like this is that they encourage more traffic. There are more cars, and more people use them, and indeed this is what the EIS predicts with its large forecasted rise in vehicle kilometers travelled (VKT). This is bad for population health in Sydney, not just the areas immediately surrounding this project.

There is overwhelming international evidence now from organisations like the World Health Organisation (WHO) that shows that traffic-based air pollution increases the number of heart attacks and strokes people have. It increases deaths from heart disease, and respiratory disease. There is some new evidence from WHO that links this pollution to impaired lung growth in children and diabetes. These health effects occur both with long-term exposure and repeated short-term exposure, and there is no safe level of exposure to this pollution.

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As well, the assessment of air quality and noise impacts in this EIS are completely dependent on the traffic modelling. But the traffic modeling used in this study cannot be independently verified, is extremely limited in scope, is dependent on other unfunded and unplanned toll road projects going ahead (e.g. Sydney Gateway and southern extension), and appears to be based on overly optimistic usage predictions. For this reason, the air, noise, social impacts and health risk assessments in this EIS cannot be regarded as reliable.

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The project will cause immense social harm. It will destroy long-established communities. It will cause an increase in air pollution-related deaths and illnesses. The increase in air pollution will inhibit lung and nervous system development in children. There are numerous ways of spending $16.8 billion that would deliver a much greater social and economic benefit, and would not cause so much destruction. Such alternatives are barely mentioned in this EIS and have certainly not been analysed as required by the project SEARs.

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This EIS also completely fails to consider negative impacts of the whole project – for example, total loss of vegetation – while relying on unproven, unplanned positive benefits for the whole project to justify its existence.

The project's proponents have misled the public about its plan to take 14,000 square metres of Sydney Park. For months it said it would only take 8,000 square metres, leaving it until the EIS was lodged to inform the local council

that it planned to forcibly acquire the rest. This will diminish the enjoyment of the park in many ways. Peaceful paths, exercise equipment, children's play areas and sporting grounds, and more will all be adjacent to a major highway. This is completely unacceptable, as is the destruction of other vital community parks along the route.

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Yours sincerely,

Chris Doyle

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted] 12504

From: Angela Michaelis [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 2:58 PM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

Submission to WestConnex New M5 EIS, project number SSI 14_6788

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I also strongly object to a number of specific aspects of this EIS, and I expect you to publish this submission and send me a written response to each of the objections I have outlined below.

In particular I am concerned about:

Engagement of, and modelling by, AECOM, which has overestimated positive traffic impacts in the past

Lack of transparency about assumptions in the model

Unconvincing arguments that this will make a significant impact on road use, when we know that any improvement in traffic flow encourages more drivers to use roads until the improved effect is negated

Health effects of pollution discharges from the road tunnel

Bracket creep and rising cost of the project, especially considering the inadequacy and lack of scrutiny of a business case

The climate change effects of investing in infrastructure to encourage use of private vehicles using fossil fuels, which diverts funds from innovative and cleaner public transport projects.

My objections are set out in more detail below.

The stated objectives for WestConnex, including the New M5, were contrived to fit the project after it had already been announced. Even so, WestConnex fails to meet them. For example, it will cause irreversible biodiversity loss, rather than minimising impacts to biodiversity. It will reduce social and visual amenity across the route. It will worsen regional air quality. Perhaps most critically for WestConnex, it will actively worsen congestion in many parts of Sydney, and make little impact on congestion across the rest of the city.

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Yours sincerely,

Angela Michaelis

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: ava broinowski [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 2:55 PM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

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ava broinowski

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Josie Young [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 2:52 PM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

Submission to WestConnex New M5 EIS, project number SSI 14_6788

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Independent transport modelling experts have found scores of problems with the application of the WestConnex Road and Traffic Model, which has not been released for scrutiny. It would be negligent for any government to go ahead with a project based on uncertain predictions. What is even more worrying is that the proponent now concedes that it cannot make this model work without other, unfunded toll road projects. What happens if or when these projects do not proceed? This EIS fails to assess this.

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Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

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The analysis of alternatives provided by AECOM in this EIS provides no solid evidence for the conclusions drawn. I strongly object to this superficial 'analysis', which consists of little more than bald claims rather than a serious investigation of how alternatives such as improved public transport, better traffic management and freight on rail could reduce congestion more effectively than the WestConnex New M5.

This EIS shows hundreds of homes along the project route will experience noise during construction and operation at unsafe levels that can damage health. In fact the real impact is likely to be far worse than the results provided in this EIS, because noise monitoring was only done at Beverly Hills and St Peters. Such limited evidence provides the community with no confidence in the conclusions reached in this EIS. Independent experts have also reported that some of the tables are inaccurate in the noise report and are therefore unreliable.

The project will cause immense social harm. It will destroy long-established communities. It will cause an increase in air pollution-related deaths and illnesses. The increase in air pollution will inhibit lung and nervous system development in children. There are numerous ways of spending $16.8 billion that would deliver a much greater social and economic benefit, and would not cause so much destruction. Such alternatives are barely mentioned in this EIS and have certainly not been analysed as required by the project SEARs.

It is alarming that costs for this taxpayer-funded project are blowing out at the rate of more than $2 billion a year. When WestConnex was announced in 2012, it was one toll road with a price tag of $10 billion; it is now a series of toll road projects that encompasses WestConnex and additional projects such as the Southern Extension and Sydney Gateway that will now cost $16.8 billion. At this rate the final price tag will be well in excess of $20 billion even before the cost of financing large loans, addressing its social, health and environmental impacts, and covering the (inevitable) shortfall in toll revenues is taken into account.

This EIS also completely fails to consider negative impacts of the whole project – for example, total loss of vegetation – while relying on unproven, unplanned positive benefits for the whole project to justify its existence.

The project's proponents have misled the public about its plan to take 14,000 square metres of Sydney Park. For months it said it would only take 8,000 square metres, leaving it until the EIS was lodged to inform the local council

that it planned to forcibly acquire the rest. This will diminish the enjoyment of the park in many ways. Peaceful paths, exercise equipment, children's play areas and sporting grounds, and more will all be adjacent to a major highway. This is completely unacceptable, as is the destruction of other vital community parks along the route.

Community parks, an endangered Green and Golden Bell Frog colony, critically endangered Cooks River Castlereagh Ironbark Forest and trees along the project route would be destroyed for these projects. Some of these, such as the endangered flora and fauna, were species that the RMS was legally obliged to maintain and protect as part of construction for the M5 East. Others, such as the M5 Linear Park and trees lining the noise walls, are spaces the local community has built up over many years after their community was carved up the M5 East. For all of this to be swept aside for this toll road is not only unacceptable – it is undemocratic and a grave violation of the government's environmental and legal responsibilities.

I am aware that independent traffic experts have not access to full information about the assumptions on which traffic modelling. The proponents must be instructed to fully respond to independent experts who have been commissioned by Councils or are academic researchers and to make their models available. AECOM and RMS openly admit that they have collaborated on the modelling. Their claims must be fully and independently scrutinised. When the living conditions of thousands of residents and billions of dollars of public money are at stake, it is not acceptable for a government department or private company to keep such a model secret.

The planning processes surrounding this project and WestConnex as a whole have been utterly corrupted. For example, key parts of the business case remain hidden from public scrutiny, even though it is being funded by taxpayer money. Homes and businesses are being forcibly acquired, multi-million and/or billion-dollar contracts have been let, and construction works have occurred place before any planning approvals are granted for this project. The entire WestConnex, including this project, has been characterised by poor governance, and a complete lack of transparency and accountability. Community consultation has also taken place only after detailed plans have been drawn up, so the general public has little to no input on a project that will affect hundreds of thousands of people's lives for many years to come.

The arrogant social impact study in this EIS dismisses the impact of forcing hundreds of people from their homes and businesses on communities in a few lines – particularly when residents are being offered below-market prices for their homes and businesses, and suffering high levels of distress and trauma as a result. It is also unacceptable that these acquisitions have been forced through before any planning approvals were granted.

The social impact study also fails to assess the impact of this project on other communities that will be deeply affected. For example, the proponents and AECOM have not consulted properly with the community on and around Stoney Creek Road, nor informed residents that WestConnex has a plan that will make congestion and air quality worse in their neighbourhood.

WestConnex comes at not only a huge cost that is blowing out at the rate of over $2 billion a year. It also comes with a massive opportunity cost. The $16.8 billion and rising that would be spent on WestConnex is money that would be taken away from hospitals, schools, regional roads, and the public transport improvements that are urgently needed – not just in western Sydney, but many parts of regional NSW. If this $16.8 billion was spent on public transport and effective road management, a project like WestConnex would not be necessary.

I therefore ask that you reject this proposal, publish my name and submission in accordance with the undertaking on your website, and provide a written response to each of the objections I have raised.

Yours sincerely,

Karen Tok

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Ian Haigh [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 2:39 PM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

New roads are not the solution to transport woes facing Sydney. It appears as though the forces behind WestConnex are aware of this, if the lack of transparency is anything to go by. I urge you to reject this colossal waste of public money that will lead to increased congestion and environmental harm.

Thanks for your attention, the original text follows.

Submission to WestConnex New M5 EIS, project number SSI 14_6788

I strongly object to this project and the entire WestConnex of which this is part, and ask that you reject this proposal on the basis of this environmental impact statement (EIS).

I also strongly object to a number of specific aspects of this EIS, and I expect you to publish this submission and send me a written response to each of the objections I have outlined below.

The stated objectives for WestConnex, including the New M5, were contrived to fit the project after it had already been announced. Even so, WestConnex fails to meet them. For example, it will cause irreversible biodiversity loss, rather than minimising impacts to biodiversity. It will reduce social and visual amenity across the route. It will worsen regional air quality. Perhaps most critically for WestConnex, it will actively worsen congestion in many parts of Sydney, and make little impact on congestion across the rest of the city.

I strongly object to the fact that AECOM, which has a record of failed traffic modeling and other WestConnex contracts that depend on this project going ahead, has been paid $13 million of taxpayer money to complete this EIS. What's more, this EIS is of extremely poor quality, and filled with errors, basic omissions, superficial analyses, and opaque modeling.

The flaws and optimistic assumptions in the traffic modelling mean that toll revenue is likely to be significantly lower than forecast. AECOM has a history of providing over-optimistic traffic forecasts for toll roads, resulting in previous financial failures (e.g. Clem7 in Brisbane).

Billions of dollars of construction contracts have been let for this project before this EIS was lodged. This casts huge doubts on the legitimacy of the community consultation process, and places unreasonable pressure on the Dept of Planning and Environment to approve this project regardless of its flaws.

In fact the whole WestConnex has been characterised by corrupted processes, and a lack of transparency and accountability. This is unacceptable for any project funded by taxpayer money, let alone a massive one that would see communities and endangered species destroyed, thousands of people evicted from their family homes and businesses, and billions of dollars of public money diverted from projects that would benefit NSW more.

The average daily travel time in Sydney has been stable at about 80 minutes per person for decades, while the average trip distance has increased substantially. In this time, billions have been spent on tollways. Travellers are spending more than ever on tolls, yet are not spending any less time travelling. Why would this project be the exception to this norm?

The New M5 would cause costly traffic chaos throughout the inner west and south-west Sydney. It is unacceptable that no traffic modeling was only done past two intersections after the end of the project. Even so, this EIS still makes it clear that this project will provide no solution to traffic congestion, as it shows several intersections across the project route will remain at Level of Service F (i.e. the worst possible level, and the one that is indicative of system failure) after the project. It also shows that many already congested roads along the route will get worse, including those around the St Peters Interchange, Bexley, Rockdale, Kingsgrove and Brighton-Le-Sands.

Independent transport modelling experts have found scores of problems with the application of the WestConnex Road and Traffic Model, which has not been released for scrutiny. It would be negligent for any government to go ahead with a project based on uncertain predictions. What is even more worrying is that the proponent now concedes that it cannot make this model work without other, unfunded toll road projects. What happens if or when these projects do not proceed? This EIS fails to assess this.

Thousands of residents and workers will be exposed to health impacts in all areas where demolition, earthworks, construction and removal activities will take place for up to 24 hours per day, seven days a week. This includes communities in Arncliffe, Kingsgrove, Beverly Hills, St Peters and Alexandria. These health risks are rated as HIGH for all areas. Mitigation is recommended, but no firm information is available about who might receive this and what it might be. Instead, decisions are put off until after approval – and in some cases the beginning of construction. This is completely indefensible and communities cannot be forced to accept this.

Tunnelling would cause vibration and damage to homes. The EIS says it will only be for a "short period", but does not say what this short period is. In some cases, tunnels and tunneling would take place around 20m below people's homes. This is not acceptable, particularly given the collapse of buildings that took place during the Lane Cove Tunnel's construction, and the legal action residents above Brisbane's Airport Link are now being forced to take after experiencing property damage.

In cities like Sydney, traffic-based air pollution is a major contributor to total air pollution. The international experience with road projects like this is that they encourage more traffic. There are more cars, and more people

use them, and indeed this is what the EIS predicts with its large forecasted rise in vehicle kilometers travelled (VKT). This is bad for population health in Sydney, not just the areas immediately surrounding this project.

There is overwhelming international evidence now from organisations like the World Health Organisation (WHO) that shows that traffic-based air pollution increases the number of heart attacks and strokes people have. It increases deaths from heart disease, and respiratory disease. There is some new evidence from WHO that links this pollution to impaired lung growth in children and diabetes. These health effects occur both with long-term exposure and repeated short-term exposure, and there is no safe level of exposure to this pollution.

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Community parks, an endangered Green and Golden Bell Frog colony, critically endangered Cooks River Castlereagh Ironbark Forest and trees along the project route would be destroyed for these projects. Some of these, such as the endangered flora and fauna, were species that the RMS was legally obliged to maintain and protect as part of construction for the M5 East. Others, such as the M5 Linear Park and trees lining the noise walls, are spaces the local community has built up over many years after their community was carved up the M5 East. For all of this to be swept aside for this toll road is not only unacceptable – it is undemocratic and a grave violation of the government's environmental and legal responsibilities.

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The arrogant social impact study in this EIS dismisses the impact of forcing hundreds of people from their homes and businesses on communities in a few lines – particularly when residents are being offered below-market prices for their homes and businesses, and suffering high levels of distress and trauma as a result. It is also unacceptable that these acquisitions have been forced through before any planning approvals were granted.

The social impact study also fails to assess the impact of this project on other communities that will be deeply affected. For example, the proponents and AECOM have not consulted properly with the community on and around

Stoney Creek Road, nor informed residents that WestConnex has a plan that will make congestion and air quality worse in their neighbourhood.

WestConnex comes at not only a huge cost that is blowing out at the rate of over $2 billion a year. It also comes with a massive opportunity cost. The $16.8 billion and rising that would be spent on WestConnex is money that would be taken away from hospitals, schools, regional roads, and the public transport improvements that are urgently needed – not just in western Sydney, but many parts of regional NSW. If this $16.8 billion was spent on public transport and effective road management, a project like WestConnex would not be necessary.

I therefore ask that you reject this proposal, publish my name and submission in accordance with the undertaking on your website, and provide a written response to each of the objections I have raised.

Yours sincerely,

Ian Haigh

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Sandra Kemp [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 2:34 PM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

Submission to WestConnex New M5 EIS, project number SSI 14_6788

I strongly object to this project and the entire WestConnex of which this is part, and ask that you reject this proposal on the basis of this environmental impact statement (EIS). I have been horrified by the lack of transparency and accountability in the whole process. Many communities are going to be impacted by this badly planned and managed project. Communities who have already made sacrifices in how much access they have to green space by having smaller back yards to increase urban density and urban consolidation, are being forced to have further green space removed.

I also strongly object to a number of specific aspects of this EIS, and I expect you to publish this submission and send me a written response to each of the objections I have outlined below.

The stated objectives for WestConnex, including the New M5, were contrived to fit the project after it had already been announced. Even so, WestConnex fails to meet them. For example, it will cause irreversible biodiversity loss, rather than minimising impacts to biodiversity. It will reduce social and visual amenity across the route. It will worsen regional air quality. Perhaps most critically for WestConnex, it will actively worsen congestion in many parts of Sydney, and make little impact on congestion across the rest of the city.

I strongly object to the fact that AECOM, which has a record of failed traffic modeling and other WestConnex contracts that depend on this project going ahead, has been paid $13 million of taxpayer money to complete this EIS. What's more, this EIS is of extremely poor quality, and filled with errors, basic omissions, superficial analyses, and opaque modeling.

The flaws and optimistic assumptions in the traffic modelling mean that toll revenue is likely to be significantly lower than forecast. AECOM has a history of providing over-optimistic traffic forecasts for toll roads, resulting in previous financial failures (e.g. Clem7 in Brisbane).

Billions of dollars of construction contracts have been let for this project before this EIS was lodged. This casts huge doubts on the legitimacy of the community consultation process, and places unreasonable pressure on the Dept of Planning and Environment to approve this project regardless of its flaws.

In fact the whole WestConnex has been characterised by corrupted processes, and a lack of transparency and accountability. This is unacceptable for any project funded by taxpayer money, let alone a massive one that would see communities and endangered species destroyed, thousands of people evicted from their family homes and businesses, and billions of dollars of public money diverted from projects that would benefit NSW more.

The average daily travel time in Sydney has been stable at about 80 minutes per person for decades, while the average trip distance has increased substantially. In this time, billions have been spent on tollways. Travellers are spending more than ever on tolls, yet are not spending any less time travelling. Why would this project be the exception to this norm?

The New M5 would cause costly traffic chaos throughout the inner west and south-west Sydney. It is unacceptable that no traffic modeling was only done past two intersections after the end of the project. Even so, this EIS still makes it clear that this project will provide no solution to traffic congestion, as it shows several intersections across the project route will remain at Level of Service F (i.e. the worst possible level, and the one that is indicative of system failure) after the project. It also shows that many already congested roads along the route will get worse, including those around the St Peters Interchange, Bexley, Rockdale, Kingsgrove and Brighton-Le-Sands.

Independent transport modelling experts have found scores of problems with the application of the WestConnex Road and Traffic Model, which has not been released for scrutiny. It would be negligent for any government to go ahead with a project based on uncertain predictions. What is even more worrying is that the proponent now concedes that it cannot make this model work without other, unfunded toll road projects. What happens if or when these projects do not proceed? This EIS fails to assess this.

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Tunnelling would cause vibration and damage to homes. The EIS says it will only be for a "short period", but does not say what this short period is. In some cases, tunnels and tunneling would take place around 20m below people's homes. This is not acceptable, particularly given the collapse of buildings that took place during the Lane Cove Tunnel's construction, and the legal action residents above Brisbane's Airport Link are now being forced to take after experiencing property damage.

In cities like Sydney, traffic-based air pollution is a major contributor to total air pollution. The international experience with road projects like this is that they encourage more traffic. There are more cars, and more people use them, and indeed this is what the EIS predicts with its large forecasted rise in vehicle kilometers travelled (VKT). This is bad for population health in Sydney, not just the areas immediately surrounding this project.

There is overwhelming international evidence now from organisations like the World Health Organisation (WHO) that shows that traffic-based air pollution increases the number of heart attacks and strokes people have. It increases deaths from heart disease, and respiratory disease. There is some new evidence from WHO that links this pollution to impaired lung growth in children and diabetes. These health effects occur both with long-term exposure and repeated short-term exposure, and there is no safe level of exposure to this pollution.

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This EIS also completely fails to consider negative impacts of the whole project – for example, total loss of vegetation – while relying on unproven, unplanned positive benefits for the whole project to justify its existence.

The project's proponents have misled the public about its plan to take 14,000 square metres of Sydney Park. For months it said it would only take 8,000 square metres, leaving it until the EIS was lodged to inform the local council that it planned to forcibly acquire the rest. This will diminish the enjoyment of the park in many ways. Peaceful paths, exercise equipment, children's play areas and sporting grounds, and more will all be adjacent to a major highway. This is completely unacceptable, as is the destruction of other vital community parks along the route. The community in the inner west has made the choice to live in areas of high urban density - doing our bit for urban consolidation. We have smaller blocks of land with small back yards. We make the most of our green community spaces such as parks like Sydney Park. To make them smaller and reduce community access to important green space for the sake of cars is unacceptable.

Community parks, an endangered Green and Golden Bell Frog colony, critically endangered Cooks River Castlereagh Ironbark Forest and trees along the project route would be destroyed for these projects. Some of these, such as the endangered flora and fauna, were species that the RMS was legally obliged to maintain and protect as part of construction for the M5 East. Others, such as the M5 Linear Park and trees lining the noise walls, are spaces the local community has built up over many years after their community was carved up the M5 East. For all of this to be swept aside for this toll road is not only unacceptable – it is undemocratic and a grave violation of the government's environmental and legal responsibilities.

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I therefore ask that you reject this proposal, publish my name and submission in accordance with the undertaking on your website, and provide a written response to each of the objections I have raised.

Yours sincerely,

Sandra Kemp

[redacted] 12511

From: [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 2:31 PM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

Submission to WestConnex New M5 EIS, project number SSI 14_6788

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In cities like Sydney, traffic-based air pollution is a major contributor to total air pollution. The international experience with road projects like this is that they encourage more traffic. There are more cars, and more people use them, and indeed this is what the EIS predicts with its large forecasted rise in vehicle kilometers travelled (VKT). This is bad for population health in Sydney, not just the areas immediately surrounding this project.

There is overwhelming international evidence now from organisations like the World Health Organisation (WHO) that shows that traffic-based air pollution increases the number of heart attacks and strokes people have. It increases deaths from heart disease, and respiratory disease. There is some new evidence from WHO that links this pollution to impaired lung growth in children and diabetes. These health effects occur both with long-term exposure and repeated short-term exposure, and there is no safe level of exposure to this pollution.

The air quality study in this EIS shows that some communities will be exposed to increased doses of dangerous pollution, especially those living close to the project's surface roads and unfiltered stacks. Drivers in the long tunnels are also likely to experience high levels of exposure, particularly those on motorbikes. It is unacceptable for the NSW Government to deliberately place the health of citizens at risk in this way.

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The project will cause immense social harm. It will destroy long-established communities. It will cause an increase in air pollution-related deaths and illnesses. The increase in air pollution will inhibit lung and nervous system development in children. There are numerous ways of spending $16.8 billion that would deliver a much greater social and economic benefit, and would not cause so much destruction. Such alternatives are barely mentioned in this EIS and have certainly not been analysed as required by the project SEARs.

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Community parks, an endangered Green and Golden Bell Frog colony, critically endangered Cooks River Castlereagh Ironbark Forest and trees along the project route would be destroyed for these projects. Some of these, such as the endangered flora and fauna, were species that the RMS was legally obliged to maintain and protect as part of construction for the M5 East. Others, such as the M5 Linear Park and trees lining the noise walls, are spaces the local community has built up over many years after their community was carved up the M5 East. For all of this to be swept aside for this toll road is not only unacceptable – it is undemocratic and a grave violation of the government's environmental and legal responsibilities.

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The planning processes surrounding this project and WestConnex as a whole have been utterly corrupted. For example, key parts of the business case remain hidden from public scrutiny, even though it is being funded by taxpayer money. Homes and businesses are being forcibly acquired, multi-million and/or billion-dollar contracts have been let, and construction works have occurred place before any planning approvals are granted for this project. The entire WestConnex, including this project, has been characterised by poor governance, and a complete lack of transparency and accountability. Community consultation has also taken place only after detailed plans have been drawn up, so the general public has little to no input on a project that will affect hundreds of thousands of people's lives for many years to come.

The arrogant social impact study in this EIS dismisses the impact of forcing hundreds of people from their homes and businesses on communities in a few lines – particularly when residents are being offered below-market prices for their homes and businesses, and suffering high levels of distress and trauma as a result. It is also unacceptable that these acquisitions have been forced through before any planning approvals were granted.

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[redacted]

From: [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 2:31 PM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

Submission to WestConnex New M5 EIS, project number SSI 14_6788

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[redacted]

From: [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 8:00 PM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

Submission to WestConnex New M5 EIS, project number SSI 14_6788

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[redacted]

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Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 7:56 PM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

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I therefore ask that you reject this proposal, publish my name and submission in accordance with the undertaking on your website, and provide a written response to each of the objections I have raised.

Yours sincerely,

Tina Palladinetti

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted] 12515

From: Kieran Hazelwood [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 7:47 PM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

Submission to WestConnex New M5 EIS, project number SSI 14_6788

I strongly object to this project and the entire WestConnex of which this is part, and ask that you reject this proposal on the basis of this environmental impact statement (EIS).

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Yours sincerely,

Kieran Hazelwood

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Hannah Tatam [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 7:46 PM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

Yes, this may be a stock standard reply, but I am very concerned by the proposal, and more importantly the way in which the NSW public (YOUR employers) have been treated. Poor form.

Submission to WestConnex New M5 EIS, project number SSI 14_6788

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WestConnex comes at not only a huge cost that is blowing out at the rate of over $2 billion a year. It also comes with a massive opportunity cost. The $16.8 billion and rising that would be spent on WestConnex is money that would be taken away from hospitals, schools, regional roads, and the public transport improvements that are urgently needed – not just in western Sydney, but many parts of regional NSW. If this $16.8 billion was spent on public transport and effective road management, a project like WestConnex would not be necessary.

I therefore ask that you reject this proposal, publish my name and submission in accordance with the undertaking on your website, and provide a written response to each of the objections I have raised.

Yours sincerely,

Hannah Tatam

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Glen Hazelwood [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 7:45 PM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

Submission to WestConnex New M5 EIS, project number SSI 14_6788

I strongly object to this project and the entire WestConnex of which this is part, and ask that you reject this proposal on the basis of this environmental impact statement (EIS).

I also strongly object to a number of specific aspects of this EIS, and I expect you to publish this submission and send me a written response to each of the objections I have outlined below.

The stated objectives for WestConnex, including the New M5, were contrived to fit the project after it had already been announced. Even so, WestConnex fails to meet them. For example, it will cause irreversible biodiversity loss, rather than minimising impacts to biodiversity. It will reduce social and visual amenity across the route. It will worsen regional air quality. Perhaps most critically for WestConnex, it will actively worsen congestion in many parts of Sydney, and make little impact on congestion across the rest of the city.

I strongly object to the fact that AECOM, which has a record of failed traffic modeling and other WestConnex contracts that depend on this project going ahead, has been paid $13 million of taxpayer money to complete this EIS. What's more, this EIS is of extremely poor quality, and filled with errors, basic omissions, superficial analyses, and opaque modeling.

The flaws and optimistic assumptions in the traffic modelling mean that toll revenue is likely to be significantly lower than forecast. AECOM has a history of providing over-optimistic traffic forecasts for toll roads, resulting in previous financial failures (e.g. Clem7 in Brisbane).

Billions of dollars of construction contracts have been let for this project before this EIS was lodged. This casts huge doubts on the legitimacy of the community consultation process, and places unreasonable pressure on the Dept of Planning and Environment to approve this project regardless of its flaws.

In fact the whole WestConnex has been characterised by corrupted processes, and a lack of transparency and accountability. This is unacceptable for any project funded by taxpayer money, let alone a massive one that would see communities and endangered species destroyed, thousands of people evicted from their family homes and businesses, and billions of dollars of public money diverted from projects that would benefit NSW more.

The average daily travel time in Sydney has been stable at about 80 minutes per person for decades, while the average trip distance has increased substantially. In this time, billions have been spent on tollways. Travellers are spending more than ever on tolls, yet are not spending any less time travelling. Why would this project be the exception to this norm?

The New M5 would cause costly traffic chaos throughout the inner west and south-west Sydney. It is unacceptable that no traffic modeling was only done past two intersections after the end of the project. Even so, this EIS still makes it clear that this project will provide no solution to traffic congestion, as it shows several intersections across the project route will remain at Level of Service F (i.e. the worst possible level, and the one that is indicative of system failure) after the project. It also shows that many already congested roads along the route will get worse, including those around the St Peters Interchange, Bexley, Rockdale, Kingsgrove and Brighton-Le-Sands.

Independent transport modelling experts have found scores of problems with the application of the WestConnex Road and Traffic Model, which has not been released for scrutiny. It would be negligent for any government to go ahead with a project based on uncertain predictions. What is even more worrying is that the proponent now concedes that it cannot make this model work without other, unfunded toll road projects. What happens if or when these projects do not proceed? This EIS fails to assess this.

Thousands of residents and workers will be exposed to health impacts in all areas where demolition, earthworks, construction and removal activities will take place for up to 24 hours per day, seven days a week. This includes communities in Arncliffe, Kingsgrove, Beverly Hills, St Peters and Alexandria. These health risks are rated as HIGH for all areas. Mitigation is recommended, but no firm information is available about who might receive this and what it might be. Instead, decisions are put off until after approval – and in some cases the beginning of construction. This is completely indefensible and communities cannot be forced to accept this.

Tunnelling would cause vibration and damage to homes. The EIS says it will only be for a "short period", but does not say what this short period is. In some cases, tunnels and tunneling would take place around 20m below people's homes. This is not acceptable, particularly given the collapse of buildings that took place during the Lane Cove Tunnel's construction, and the legal action residents above Brisbane's Airport Link are now being forced to take after experiencing property damage.

In cities like Sydney, traffic-based air pollution is a major contributor to total air pollution. The international experience with road projects like this is that they encourage more traffic. There are more cars, and more people use them, and indeed this is what the EIS predicts with its large forecasted rise in vehicle kilometers travelled (VKT). This is bad for population health in Sydney, not just the areas immediately surrounding this project.

There is overwhelming international evidence now from organisations like the World Health Organisation (WHO) that shows that traffic-based air pollution increases the number of heart attacks and strokes people have. It increases deaths from heart disease, and respiratory disease. There is some new evidence from WHO that links this pollution to impaired lung growth in children and diabetes. These health effects occur both with long-term exposure and repeated short-term exposure, and there is no safe level of exposure to this pollution.

The air quality study in this EIS shows that some communities will be exposed to increased doses of dangerous pollution, especially those living close to the project's surface roads and unfiltered stacks. Drivers in the long tunnels are also likely to experience high levels of exposure, particularly those on motorbikes. It is unacceptable for the NSW Government to deliberately place the health of citizens at risk in this way.

As well, the assessment of air quality and noise impacts in this EIS are completely dependent on the traffic modelling. But the traffic modeling used in this study cannot be independently verified, is extremely limited in scope, is dependent on other unfunded and unplanned toll road projects going ahead (e.g. Sydney Gateway and southern extension), and appears to be based on overly optimistic usage predictions. For this reason, the air, noise, social impacts and health risk assessments in this EIS cannot be regarded as reliable.

The analysis of alternatives provided by AECOM in this EIS provides no solid evidence for the conclusions drawn. I strongly object to this superficial 'analysis', which consists of little more than bald claims rather than a serious investigation of how alternatives such as improved public transport, better traffic management and freight on rail could reduce congestion more effectively than the WestConnex New M5.

This EIS shows hundreds of homes along the project route will experience noise during construction and operation at unsafe levels that can damage health. In fact the real impact is likely to be far worse than the results provided in this EIS, because noise monitoring was only done at Beverly Hills and St Peters. Such limited evidence provides the community with no confidence in the conclusions reached in this EIS. Independent experts have also reported that some of the tables are inaccurate in the noise report and are therefore unreliable.

The project will cause immense social harm. It will destroy long-established communities. It will cause an increase in air pollution-related deaths and illnesses. The increase in air pollution will inhibit lung and nervous system development in children. There are numerous ways of spending $16.8 billion that would deliver a much greater social and economic benefit, and would not cause so much destruction. Such alternatives are barely mentioned in this EIS and have certainly not been analysed as required by the project SEARs.

It is alarming that costs for this taxpayer-funded project are blowing out at the rate of more than $2 billion a year. When WestConnex was announced in 2012, it was one toll road with a price tag of $10 billion; it is now a series of toll road projects that encompasses WestConnex and additional projects such as the Southern Extension and Sydney Gateway that will now cost $16.8 billion. At this rate the final price tag will be well in excess of $20 billion even before the cost of financing large loans, addressing its social, health and environmental impacts, and covering the (inevitable) shortfall in toll revenues is taken into account.

This EIS also completely fails to consider negative impacts of the whole project – for example, total loss of vegetation – while relying on unproven, unplanned positive benefits for the whole project to justify its existence.

The project's proponents have misled the public about its plan to take 14,000 square metres of Sydney Park. For months it said it would only take 8,000 square metres, leaving it until the EIS was lodged to inform the local council

that it planned to forcibly acquire the rest. This will diminish the enjoyment of the park in many ways. Peaceful paths, exercise equipment, children's play areas and sporting grounds, and more will all be adjacent to a major highway. This is completely unacceptable, as is the destruction of other vital community parks along the route.

Community parks, an endangered Green and Golden Bell Frog colony, critically endangered Cooks River Castlereagh Ironbark Forest and trees along the project route would be destroyed for these projects. Some of these, such as the endangered flora and fauna, were species that the RMS was legally obliged to maintain and protect as part of construction for the M5 East. Others, such as the M5 Linear Park and trees lining the noise walls, are spaces the local community has built up over many years after their community was carved up the M5 East. For all of this to be swept aside for this toll road is not only unacceptable – it is undemocratic and a grave violation of the government's environmental and legal responsibilities.

I am aware that independent traffic experts have not access to full information about the assumptions on which traffic modelling. The proponents must be instructed to fully respond to independent experts who have been commissioned by Councils or are academic researchers and to make their models available. AECOM and RMS openly admit that they have collaborated on the modelling. Their claims must be fully and independently scrutinised. When the living conditions of thousands of residents and billions of dollars of public money are at stake, it is not acceptable for a government department or private company to keep such a model secret.

The planning processes surrounding this project and WestConnex as a whole have been utterly corrupted. For example, key parts of the business case remain hidden from public scrutiny, even though it is being funded by taxpayer money. Homes and businesses are being forcibly acquired, multi-million and/or billion-dollar contracts have been let, and construction works have occurred place before any planning approvals are granted for this project. The entire WestConnex, including this project, has been characterised by poor governance, and a complete lack of transparency and accountability. Community consultation has also taken place only after detailed plans have been drawn up, so the general public has little to no input on a project that will affect hundreds of thousands of people's lives for many years to come.

The arrogant social impact study in this EIS dismisses the impact of forcing hundreds of people from their homes and businesses on communities in a few lines – particularly when residents are being offered below-market prices for their homes and businesses, and suffering high levels of distress and trauma as a result. It is also unacceptable that these acquisitions have been forced through before any planning approvals were granted.

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Yours sincerely,

Glen Hazelwood

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Rob Joyner [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 7:41 PM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

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This EIS also completely fails to consider negative impacts of the whole project – for example, total loss of vegetation – while relying on unproven, unplanned positive benefits for the whole project to justify its existence.

The project's proponents have misled the public about its plan to take 14,000 square metres of Sydney Park. For months it said it would only take 8,000 square metres, leaving it until the EIS was lodged to inform the local council

that it planned to forcibly acquire the rest. This will diminish the enjoyment of the park in many ways. Peaceful paths, exercise equipment, children's play areas and sporting grounds, and more will all be adjacent to a major highway. This is completely unacceptable, as is the destruction of other vital community parks along the route.

Community parks, an endangered Green and Golden Bell Frog colony, critically endangered Cooks River Castlereagh Ironbark Forest and trees along the project route would be destroyed for these projects. Some of these, such as the endangered flora and fauna, were species that the RMS was legally obliged to maintain and protect as part of construction for the M5 East. Others, such as the M5 Linear Park and trees lining the noise walls, are spaces the local community has built up over many years after their community was carved up the M5 East. For all of this to be swept aside for this toll road is not only unacceptable – it is undemocratic and a grave violation of the government's environmental and legal responsibilities.

I am aware that independent traffic experts have not access to full information about the assumptions on which traffic modelling. The proponents must be instructed to fully respond to independent experts who have been commissioned by Councils or are academic researchers and to make their models available. AECOM and RMS openly admit that they have collaborated on the modelling. Their claims must be fully and independently scrutinised. When the living conditions of thousands of residents and billions of dollars of public money are at stake, it is not acceptable for a government department or private company to keep such a model secret.

The planning processes surrounding this project and WestConnex as a whole have been utterly corrupted. For example, key parts of the business case remain hidden from public scrutiny, even though it is being funded by taxpayer money. Homes and businesses are being forcibly acquired, multi-million and/or billion-dollar contracts have been let, and construction works have occurred place before any planning approvals are granted for this project. The entire WestConnex, including this project, has been characterised by poor governance, and a complete lack of transparency and accountability. Community consultation has also taken place only after detailed plans have been drawn up, so the general public has little to no input on a project that will affect hundreds of thousands of people's lives for many years to come.

The arrogant social impact study in this EIS dismisses the impact of forcing hundreds of people from their homes and businesses on communities in a few lines – particularly when residents are being offered below-market prices for their homes and businesses, and suffering high levels of distress and trauma as a result. It is also unacceptable that these acquisitions have been forced through before any planning approvals were granted.

The social impact study also fails to assess the impact of this project on other communities that will be deeply affected. For example, the proponents and AECOM have not consulted properly with the community on and around Stoney Creek Road, nor informed residents that WestConnex has a plan that will make congestion and air quality worse in their neighbourhood.

WestConnex comes at not only a huge cost that is blowing out at the rate of over $2 billion a year. It also comes with a massive opportunity cost. The $16.8 billion and rising that would be spent on WestConnex is money that would be taken away from hospitals, schools, regional roads, and the public transport improvements that are urgently needed – not just in western Sydney, but many parts of regional NSW. If this $16.8 billion was spent on public transport and effective road management, a project like WestConnex would not be necessary.

I therefore ask that you reject this proposal, publish my name and submission in accordance with the undertaking on your website, and provide a written response to each of the objections I have raised.

Yours sincerely,

Rob Joyner

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Chantel Benbow [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 7:40 PM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Submission to WestConnex New M5 EIS, project number SSI 14_6788

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

Attn: Secretary, re: WestConnex New M5 EIS, project number SSI 14_6788

I, Chantel Benbow, strongly object to this Project and the entire WestConnex Project. I ask that you reject the WestConnex Project on the basis of this environmental impact statement (EIS).

Global experience and research has shown conclusively that these kinds of toll road mega-projects are hugely expensive and counterproductive. WestConnex will increase pollution and traffic for thousands of residents and workers, and expose NSW taxpayers to unacceptably high levels of financial risk. Even the EISs produced for the various stages of WestConnex show it is not a long-term solution to Sydney's congestion problem. Why spend so much money on building a super-road that we know from historic evidence is not the way forward - we should be investing this money in environmentally responsible solutions such as public transport.

I also strongly object to a number of specific aspects of this EIS, and I expect you to publish this submission and send me a written response to each of the objections I have outlined below.

The planning processes surrounding this project and WestConnex as a whole have been utterly corrupted. For example, key parts of the business case remain hidden from public scrutiny, even though it is being funded by taxpayer money. Homes and businesses are being forcibly acquired, multi-million and/or billion-dollar contracts have been let, and construction works have occurred place before any planning approvals are granted for this project.

I repeat, before any planning approvals have been granted for this project. That is corruption. Please explain how this has been allowed?

The entire WestConnex Project has been characterised by poor governance, and a complete lack of transparency and accountability. Community consultation has also taken place only after detailed plans have been drawn up, so the general public has little to no input on a project that will affect hundreds of thousands of people's lives for many years to come. That is not fair. If the community is not to be consulted property, then who's benefit is this for?

This project is diverting billions of dollars of NSW and Federal taxpayer money into a tollway that only 1% of people in NSW, most of whom are based in Sydney, will use. $16.8 billion invested across the state would go a very long

way towards improving existing regional and city roads, public transport, schools and hospitals. Spending it on a tollway that so few people will use is both wasteful and deeply unfair.

It is also quite clear that this project will provide no solution to traffic congestion, as the EIS shows that several intersections across the project route will remain at Level of Service F (i.e. the worst possible level, and the one that is indicative of system failure) after the project. Why build a super toll road if it is not going to relieve traffic? Perhaps that is not the solution to improving traffic conditions in Sydney. Why spend all that money for such minor improvement (if any overall?)

The New M5 would cause costly traffic chaos throughout the inner west and south-west Sydney. It is unacceptable that no traffic modeling was done beyond a very narrowly defined area – as little as two intersections past the end of the project. Not acceptable.

The EIS does however clearly demonstrate that traffic on roads around the St Peters Interchange will deteriorate as a result of WestConnex, as well as already heavily congested roads in Bexley, Rockdale, Brighton-Le-Sands and Kingsgrove. For example, according to the business case, Euston Road is supposed to handle 61,000 cars on 3 lanes each way. This is almost 10 times what it can handle on 2 lanes. There is no way it can handle 61,000 cars, however many lanes are added to it, because the streets around it are already at capacity. As another example, traffic on Stoney Creek Road was forecast to increase by 74%, with a total of 2280 big truck movements a day — three times more than now. How are these road going to cope?

Meanwhile, this EIS projects that the existing M5 and New M5 combined will take less traffic now than the Cross City Tunnel, which was a financial disaster. This is because the proponents know commuters will be unwilling to pay $6 each way to use either of these toll roads. The assumptions behind the EIS's prediction that drivers will somehow decide to start paying this toll years after the toll road opens are not explained, and this has not been the experience with other recent toll road failures, including the aforementioned Cross City Tunnel. People will NOT want to pay such high toll fees. Already this is being set up for financial failure.

I strongly object to the fact that AECOM, which has a record of failed traffic modeling, has been paid $13 million of taxpayer money to complete this EIS even though it has been awarded other WestConnex contracts that depend on the project going ahead. This is an utterly unacceptable conflict of interest. Unacceptable.

Therefore, the public cannot trust that this EIS properly and fully investigates the true economic, environmental and social impacts of this project, and indeed the poor quality of this document reflects this. The EIS is riddled with errors, basic omissions, superficial analyses, and opaque modeling, and should be rejected on this basis alone. How can you allow such an obviously corrupt Project to go ahead?

Billions of dollars of construction contracts have been let for this project before this EIS was lodged. This casts huge doubts on the legitimacy of the community consultation process, and places unreasonable pressure on the Dept of Planning and Environment to approve this project regardless of its flaws. Did anyone say corruption?

The air quality study shows that some communities will be exposed to increased doses of dangerous pollution, especially those living close to surface roads and unfiltered ventilation stacks. I am particularly concerned about residents on hills and in high buildings in Kingsgrove, St Peters, Arncliffe and Alexandria, who are likely to be subjected to high levels of these pollutants.

The analysis of alternatives to WestConnex provided by AECOM in this EIS provides no solid evidence for the conclusions drawn. A combination of demand management of traffic and new public transport projects, especially for western Sydney, should have been explored. This is just one of many potential alternatives that could have provided more effective, sustainable and cost-effective ways of easing congestion that AECOM has failed to analyse. Not. Good. Enough. I expect better. This is a lazy EIS and seriously flawed in its ability to provide evidence for its own conclusions drawn.

The noise assessment shows that hundreds of homes will experience noise above acceptable levels. In fact the real impact is likely to be far worse than the results provided in this EIS, because noise monitoring was only done for one location at Beverly Hills and one in St Peters, where only 30% of results could be included. Such limited evidence provides the community with no confidence in the conclusions reached in this EIS. Independent experts have also reported that some of the tables are inaccurate in the noise report and are therefore not reliable.

One of my main concerns is this: community parks, an endangered Green and Golden Bell Frog colony, critically endangered Cooks River Castlereagh Ironbark Forest and trees along the M5 East would be destroyed for these projects. Some of these, such as the endangered flora and fauna, were species that the RMS was legally obliged to maintain and protect as part of construction for the M5 East. Others, such as the M5 Linear Park and trees lining the noise walls, are spaces the local community has built up over many years after their community was carved up the M5 East. For all of this to be swept aside for this toll road is not only unacceptable – it is undemocratic and a grave violation of the government's environmental and legal responsibilities.

Additionally, the project's proponents have misled the public about its plan to take 14,000 square metres of Sydney Park. For months it said it would only take 8,000 square metres, leaving it until the EIS was lodged to inform the Council that it planned to forcibly acquire the rest. This will diminish the enjoyment of the park in many ways. Peaceful paths, exercise equipment, children's play areas and sporting grounds, and more will all be adjacent to a major highway. This is completely unacceptable. Loads of residents use Sydney Park and it should not be reduced to make way for a super-road built on corruption.

This project will see roads expanded to within five metres of residents' homes, which is outrageous. I am aware that in cases in St Peters and Alexandria, it is within two metres of family homes. This is absolutely unacceptable.

I strongly object to compulsory acquisition of so many homes and businesses and the arrogant way the impact of this on communities is dismissed in the EIS. I also object to the process by which these acquisitions are taking place, which the NSW Government was told three years ago was deeply unfair to people whose properties were being forcibly acquired. It is clear from the number of home and business owners who have had their properties seriously undervalued by the RMS that such changes were not implemented, and in fact the government appears to have become systematically aggressive and unfair in its approach to forcibly taking properties for this project and other parts of the WestConnex.

There are no clear plans of where millions of cubic metres of spoil will be deposited in communities in western Sydney. None of these communities have been given information or consulted about these impacts. This is unacceptable. Where is it going to go?

I therefore ask that you reject this proposal, publish my name and submission in accordance with the undertaking on your website, and provide a written response to each of the objections I have raised.

Yours sincerely,

Chantel Benbow

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Meg Ashforth [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 7:40 PM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

Submission to WestConnex New M5 EIS, project number SSI 14_6788

I strongly object to this project and the entire WestConnex of which this is part, and ask that you reject this proposal on the basis of this environmental impact statement (EIS).

I also strongly object to a number of specific aspects of this EIS, and I expect you to publish this submission and send me a written response to each of the objections I have outlined below.

The stated objectives for WestConnex, including the New M5, were contrived to fit the project after it had already been announced. Even so, WestConnex fails to meet them. For example, it will cause irreversible biodiversity loss, rather than minimising impacts to biodiversity. It will reduce social and visual amenity across the route. It will worsen regional air quality. Perhaps most critically for WestConnex, it will actively worsen congestion in many parts of Sydney, and make little impact on congestion across the rest of the city.

I strongly object to the fact that AECOM, which has a record of failed traffic modeling and other WestConnex contracts that depend on this project going ahead, has been paid $13 million of taxpayer money to complete this EIS. What's more, this EIS is of extremely poor quality, and filled with errors, basic omissions, superficial analyses, and opaque modeling.

The flaws and optimistic assumptions in the traffic modelling mean that toll revenue is likely to be significantly lower than forecast. AECOM has a history of providing over-optimistic traffic forecasts for toll roads, resulting in previous financial failures (e.g. Clem7 in Brisbane).

Billions of dollars of construction contracts have been let for this project before this EIS was lodged. This casts huge doubts on the legitimacy of the community consultation process, and places unreasonable pressure on the Dept of Planning and Environment to approve this project regardless of its flaws.

In fact the whole WestConnex has been characterised by corrupted processes, and a lack of transparency and accountability. This is unacceptable for any project funded by taxpayer money, let alone a massive one that would see communities and endangered species destroyed, thousands of people evicted from their family homes and businesses, and billions of dollars of public money diverted from projects that would benefit NSW more.

The average daily travel time in Sydney has been stable at about 80 minutes per person for decades, while the average trip distance has increased substantially. In this time, billions have been spent on tollways. Travellers are spending more than ever on tolls, yet are not spending any less time travelling. Why would this project be the exception to this norm?

The New M5 would cause costly traffic chaos throughout the inner west and south-west Sydney. It is unacceptable that no traffic modeling was only done past two intersections after the end of the project. Even so, this EIS still makes it clear that this project will provide no solution to traffic congestion, as it shows several intersections across the project route will remain at Level of Service F (i.e. the worst possible level, and the one that is indicative of system failure) after the project. It also shows that many already congested roads along the route will get worse, including those around the St Peters Interchange, Bexley, Rockdale, Kingsgrove and Brighton-Le-Sands.

Independent transport modelling experts have found scores of problems with the application of the WestConnex Road and Traffic Model, which has not been released for scrutiny. It would be negligent for any government to go ahead with a project based on uncertain predictions. What is even more worrying is that the proponent now concedes that it cannot make this model work without other, unfunded toll road projects. What happens if or when these projects do not proceed? This EIS fails to assess this.

Thousands of residents and workers will be exposed to health impacts in all areas where demolition, earthworks, construction and removal activities will take place for up to 24 hours per day, seven days a week. This includes communities in Arncliffe, Kingsgrove, Beverly Hills, St Peters and Alexandria. These health risks are rated as HIGH for all areas. Mitigation is recommended, but no firm information is available about who might receive this and what it might be. Instead, decisions are put off until after approval – and in some cases the beginning of construction. This is completely indefensible and communities cannot be forced to accept this.

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In cities like Sydney, traffic-based air pollution is a major contributor to total air pollution. The international experience with road projects like this is that they encourage more traffic. There are more cars, and more people use them, and indeed this is what the EIS predicts with its large forecasted rise in vehicle kilometers travelled (VKT). This is bad for population health in Sydney, not just the areas immediately surrounding this project.

There is overwhelming international evidence now from organisations like the World Health Organisation (WHO) that shows that traffic-based air pollution increases the number of heart attacks and strokes people have. It increases deaths from heart disease, and respiratory disease. There is some new evidence from WHO that links this pollution to impaired lung growth in children and diabetes. These health effects occur both with long-term exposure and repeated short-term exposure, and there is no safe level of exposure to this pollution.

The air quality study in this EIS shows that some communities will be exposed to increased doses of dangerous pollution, especially those living close to the project's surface roads and unfiltered stacks. Drivers in the long tunnels are also likely to experience high levels of exposure, particularly those on motorbikes. It is unacceptable for the NSW Government to deliberately place the health of citizens at risk in this way.

As well, the assessment of air quality and noise impacts in this EIS are completely dependent on the traffic modelling. But the traffic modeling used in this study cannot be independently verified, is extremely limited in scope, is dependent on other unfunded and unplanned toll road projects going ahead (e.g. Sydney Gateway and southern extension), and appears to be based on overly optimistic usage predictions. For this reason, the air, noise, social impacts and health risk assessments in this EIS cannot be regarded as reliable.

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The project will cause immense social harm. It will destroy long-established communities. It will cause an increase in air pollution-related deaths and illnesses. The increase in air pollution will inhibit lung and nervous system development in children. There are numerous ways of spending $16.8 billion that would deliver a much greater social and economic benefit, and would not cause so much destruction. Such alternatives are barely mentioned in this EIS and have certainly not been analysed as required by the project SEARs.

It is alarming that costs for this taxpayer-funded project are blowing out at the rate of more than $2 billion a year. When WestConnex was announced in 2012, it was one toll road with a price tag of $10 billion; it is now a series of toll road projects that encompasses WestConnex and additional projects such as the Southern Extension and Sydney Gateway that will now cost $16.8 billion. At this rate the final price tag will be well in excess of $20 billion even before the cost of financing large loans, addressing its social, health and environmental impacts, and covering the (inevitable) shortfall in toll revenues is taken into account.

This EIS also completely fails to consider negative impacts of the whole project – for example, total loss of vegetation – while relying on unproven, unplanned positive benefits for the whole project to justify its existence.

The project's proponents have misled the public about its plan to take 14,000 square metres of Sydney Park. For months it said it would only take 8,000 square metres, leaving it until the EIS was lodged to inform the local council

that it planned to forcibly acquire the rest. This will diminish the enjoyment of the park in many ways. Peaceful paths, exercise equipment, children's play areas and sporting grounds, and more will all be adjacent to a major highway. This is completely unacceptable, as is the destruction of other vital community parks along the route.

Community parks, an endangered Green and Golden Bell Frog colony, critically endangered Cooks River Castlereagh Ironbark Forest and trees along the project route would be destroyed for these projects. Some of these, such as the endangered flora and fauna, were species that the RMS was legally obliged to maintain and protect as part of construction for the M5 East. Others, such as the M5 Linear Park and trees lining the noise walls, are spaces the local community has built up over many years after their community was carved up the M5 East. For all of this to be swept aside for this toll road is not only unacceptable – it is undemocratic and a grave violation of the government's environmental and legal responsibilities.

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The planning processes surrounding this project and WestConnex as a whole have been utterly corrupted. For example, key parts of the business case remain hidden from public scrutiny, even though it is being funded by taxpayer money. Homes and businesses are being forcibly acquired, multi-million and/or billion-dollar contracts have been let, and construction works have occurred place before any planning approvals are granted for this project. The entire WestConnex, including this project, has been characterised by poor governance, and a complete lack of transparency and accountability. Community consultation has also taken place only after detailed plans have been drawn up, so the general public has little to no input on a project that will affect hundreds of thousands of people's lives for many years to come.

The arrogant social impact study in this EIS dismisses the impact of forcing hundreds of people from their homes and businesses on communities in a few lines – particularly when residents are being offered below-market prices for their homes and businesses, and suffering high levels of distress and trauma as a result. It is also unacceptable that these acquisitions have been forced through before any planning approvals were granted.

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I therefore ask that you reject this proposal, publish my name and submission in accordance with the undertaking on your website, and provide a written response to each of the objections I have raised.

Yours sincerely,

Meg Ashforth

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 7:39 PM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

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[redacted]

From: Peta Caswell [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 7:36 PM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

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WestConnex comes at not only a huge cost that is blowing out at the rate of over $2 billion a year. It also comes with a massive opportunity cost. The $16.8 billion and rising that would be spent on WestConnex is money that would be taken away from hospitals, schools, regional roads, and the public transport improvements that are urgently needed – not just in western Sydney, but many parts of regional NSW. If this $16.8 billion was spent on public transport and effective road management, a project like WestConnex would not be necessary.

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Yours sincerely,

Peta Caswell

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted] 12523

From: Jocelyn McGahey [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 7:35 PM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

Submission to WestConnex New M5 EIS, project number SSI 14_6788

I strongly object to this project and the entire WestConnex of which this is part, and ask that you reject this proposal on the basis of this environmental impact statement (EIS).

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I strongly object to the fact that AECOM, which has a record of failed traffic modeling and other WestConnex contracts that depend on this project going ahead, has been paid $13 million of taxpayer money to complete this EIS. What's more, this EIS is of extremely poor quality, and filled with errors, basic omissions, superficial analyses, and opaque modeling.

The flaws and optimistic assumptions in the traffic modelling mean that toll revenue is likely to be significantly lower than forecast. AECOM has a history of providing over-optimistic traffic forecasts for toll roads, resulting in previous financial failures (e.g. Clem7 in Brisbane).

Billions of dollars of construction contracts have been let for this project before this EIS was lodged. This casts huge doubts on the legitimacy of the community consultation process, and places unreasonable pressure on the Dept of Planning and Environment to approve this project regardless of its flaws.

In fact the whole WestConnex has been characterised by corrupted processes, and a lack of transparency and accountability. This is unacceptable for any project funded by taxpayer money, let alone a massive one that would see communities and endangered species destroyed, thousands of people evicted from their family homes and businesses, and billions of dollars of public money diverted from projects that would benefit NSW more.

The average daily travel time in Sydney has been stable at about 80 minutes per person for decades, while the average trip distance has increased substantially. In this time, billions have been spent on tollways. Travellers are spending more than ever on tolls, yet are not spending any less time travelling. Why would this project be the exception to this norm?

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Independent transport modelling experts have found scores of problems with the application of the WestConnex Road and Traffic Model, which has not been released for scrutiny. It would be negligent for any government to go ahead with a project based on uncertain predictions. What is even more worrying is that the proponent now concedes that it cannot make this model work without other, unfunded toll road projects. What happens if or when these projects do not proceed? This EIS fails to assess this.

Thousands of residents and workers will be exposed to health impacts in all areas where demolition, earthworks, construction and removal activities will take place for up to 24 hours per day, seven days a week. This includes communities in Arncliffe, Kingsgrove, Beverly Hills, St Peters and Alexandria. These health risks are rated as HIGH for all areas. Mitigation is recommended, but no firm information is available about who might receive this and what it might be. Instead, decisions are put off until after approval – and in some cases the beginning of construction. This is completely indefensible and communities cannot be forced to accept this.

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In cities like Sydney, traffic-based air pollution is a major contributor to total air pollution. The international experience with road projects like this is that they encourage more traffic. There are more cars, and more people use them, and indeed this is what the EIS predicts with its large forecasted rise in vehicle kilometers travelled (VKT). This is bad for population health in Sydney, not just the areas immediately surrounding this project.

There is overwhelming international evidence now from organisations like the World Health Organisation (WHO) that shows that traffic-based air pollution increases the number of heart attacks and strokes people have. It increases deaths from heart disease, and respiratory disease. There is some new evidence from WHO that links this pollution to impaired lung growth in children and diabetes. These health effects occur both with long-term exposure and repeated short-term exposure, and there is no safe level of exposure to this pollution.

The air quality study in this EIS shows that some communities will be exposed to increased doses of dangerous pollution, especially those living close to the project's surface roads and unfiltered stacks. Drivers in the long tunnels are also likely to experience high levels of exposure, particularly those on motorbikes. It is unacceptable for the NSW Government to deliberately place the health of citizens at risk in this way.

As well, the assessment of air quality and noise impacts in this EIS are completely dependent on the traffic modelling. But the traffic modeling used in this study cannot be independently verified, is extremely limited in scope, is dependent on other unfunded and unplanned toll road projects going ahead (e.g. Sydney Gateway and southern extension), and appears to be based on overly optimistic usage predictions. For this reason, the air, noise, social impacts and health risk assessments in this EIS cannot be regarded as reliable.

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This EIS also completely fails to consider negative impacts of the whole project – for example, total loss of vegetation – while relying on unproven, unplanned positive benefits for the whole project to justify its existence.

The project's proponents have misled the public about its plan to take 14,000 square metres of Sydney Park. For months it said it would only take 8,000 square metres, leaving it until the EIS was lodged to inform the local council

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Community parks, an endangered Green and Golden Bell Frog colony, critically endangered Cooks River Castlereagh Ironbark Forest and trees along the project route would be destroyed for these projects. Some of these, such as the endangered flora and fauna, were species that the RMS was legally obliged to maintain and protect as part of construction for the M5 East. Others, such as the M5 Linear Park and trees lining the noise walls, are spaces the local community has built up over many years after their community was carved up the M5 East. For all of this to be swept aside for this toll road is not only unacceptable – it is undemocratic and a grave violation of the government's environmental and legal responsibilities.

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To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
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Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

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Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 7:32 PM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
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Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

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The planning processes surrounding this project and WestConnex as a whole have been utterly corrupted. For example, key parts of the business case remain hidden from public scrutiny, even though it is being funded by taxpayer money. Homes and businesses are being forcibly acquired, multi-million and/or billion-dollar contracts have been let, and construction works have occurred place before any planning approvals are granted for this project. The entire WestConnex, including this project, has been characterised by poor governance, and a complete lack of transparency and accountability. Community consultation has also taken place only after detailed plans have been drawn up, so the general public has little to no input on a project that will affect hundreds of thousands of people's lives for many years to come.

The arrogant social impact study in this EIS dismisses the impact of forcing hundreds of people from their homes and businesses on communities in a few lines – particularly when residents are being offered below-market prices for their homes and businesses, and suffering high levels of distress and trauma as a result. It is also unacceptable that these acquisitions have been forced through before any planning approvals were granted.

The social impact study also fails to assess the impact of this project on other communities that will be deeply affected. For example, the proponents and AECOM have not consulted properly with the community on and around Stoney Creek Road, nor informed residents that WestConnex has a plan that will make congestion and air quality worse in their neighbourhood.

WestConnex comes at not only a huge cost that is blowing out at the rate of over $2 billion a year. It also comes with a massive opportunity cost. The $16.8 billion and rising that would be spent on WestConnex is money that would be taken away from hospitals, schools, regional roads, and the public transport improvements that are urgently needed – not just in western Sydney, but many parts of regional NSW. If this $16.8 billion was spent on public transport and effective road management, a project like WestConnex would not be necessary.

I therefore ask that you reject this proposal, publish my name and submission in accordance with the undertaking on your website, and provide a written response to each of the objections I have raised.

[redacted]

From: Margaret Grove [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 7:30 PM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

Submission to WestConnex New M5 EIS, project number SSI 14_6788

I strongly object to this project and the entire WestConnex of which this is part, and ask that you reject this proposal on the basis of this environmental impact statement (EIS).

I also strongly object to a number of specific aspects of this EIS, and I expect you to publish this submission and send me a written response to each of the objections I have outlined below.

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I strongly object to the fact that AECOM, which has a record of failed traffic modeling and other WestConnex contracts that depend on this project going ahead, has been paid $13 million of taxpayer money to complete this EIS. What's more, this EIS is of extremely poor quality, and filled with errors, basic omissions, superficial analyses, and opaque modeling.

The flaws and optimistic assumptions in the traffic modelling mean that toll revenue is likely to be significantly lower than forecast. AECOM has a history of providing over-optimistic traffic forecasts for toll roads, resulting in previous financial failures (e.g. Clem7 in Brisbane).

Billions of dollars of construction contracts have been let for this project before this EIS was lodged. This casts huge doubts on the legitimacy of the community consultation process, and places unreasonable pressure on the Dept of Planning and Environment to approve this project regardless of its flaws.

In fact the whole WestConnex has been characterised by corrupted processes, and a lack of transparency and accountability. This is unacceptable for any project funded by taxpayer money, let alone a massive one that would see communities and endangered species destroyed, thousands of people evicted from their family homes and businesses, and billions of dollars of public money diverted from projects that would benefit NSW more.

The average daily travel time in Sydney has been stable at about 80 minutes per person for decades, while the average trip distance has increased substantially. In this time, billions have been spent on tollways. Travellers are spending more than ever on tolls, yet are not spending any less time travelling. Why would this project be the exception to this norm?

The New M5 would cause costly traffic chaos throughout the inner west and south-west Sydney. It is unacceptable that no traffic modeling was only done past two intersections after the end of the project. Even so, this EIS still makes it clear that this project will provide no solution to traffic congestion, as it shows several intersections across the project route will remain at Level of Service F (i.e. the worst possible level, and the one that is indicative of system failure) after the project. It also shows that many already congested roads along the route will get worse, including those around the St Peters Interchange, Bexley, Rockdale, Kingsgrove and Brighton-Le-Sands.

Independent transport modelling experts have found scores of problems with the application of the WestConnex Road and Traffic Model, which has not been released for scrutiny. It would be negligent for any government to go ahead with a project based on uncertain predictions. What is even more worrying is that the proponent now concedes that it cannot make this model work without other, unfunded toll road projects. What happens if or when these projects do not proceed? This EIS fails to assess this.

Thousands of residents and workers will be exposed to health impacts in all areas where demolition, earthworks, construction and removal activities will take place for up to 24 hours per day, seven days a week. This includes communities in Arncliffe, Kingsgrove, Beverly Hills, St Peters and Alexandria. These health risks are rated as HIGH for all areas. Mitigation is recommended, but no firm information is available about who might receive this and what it might be. Instead, decisions are put off until after approval – and in some cases the beginning of construction. This is completely indefensible and communities cannot be forced to accept this.

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In cities like Sydney, traffic-based air pollution is a major contributor to total air pollution. The international experience with road projects like this is that they encourage more traffic. There are more cars, and more people use them, and indeed this is what the EIS predicts with its large forecasted rise in vehicle kilometers travelled (VKT). This is bad for population health in Sydney, not just the areas immediately surrounding this project.

There is overwhelming international evidence now from organisations like the World Health Organisation (WHO) that shows that traffic-based air pollution increases the number of heart attacks and strokes people have. It increases deaths from heart disease, and respiratory disease. There is some new evidence from WHO that links this pollution to impaired lung growth in children and diabetes. These health effects occur both with long-term exposure and repeated short-term exposure, and there is no safe level of exposure to this pollution.

The air quality study in this EIS shows that some communities will be exposed to increased doses of dangerous pollution, especially those living close to the project's surface roads and unfiltered stacks. Drivers in the long tunnels are also likely to experience high levels of exposure, particularly those on motorbikes. It is unacceptable for the NSW Government to deliberately place the health of citizens at risk in this way.

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Margaret Grove

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted] 12527

From: Tom Fichtner [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 7:26 PM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

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From: Chris Gorman [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 7:16 PM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

Submission to WestConnex New M5 EIS, project number SSI 14_6788

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It is alarming that costs for this taxpayer-funded project are blowing out at the rate of more than $2 billion a year. When WestConnex was announced in 2012, it was one toll road with a price tag of $10 billion; it is now a series of toll road projects that encompasses WestConnex and additional projects such as the Southern Extension and Sydney Gateway that will now cost $16.8 billion. At this rate the final price tag will be well in excess of $20 billion even before the cost of financing large loans, addressing its social, health and environmental impacts, and covering the (inevitable) shortfall in toll revenues is taken into account.

This EIS also completely fails to consider negative impacts of the whole project – for example, total loss of vegetation – while relying on unproven, unplanned positive benefits for the whole project to justify its existence.

The project's proponents have misled the public about its plan to take 14,000 square metres of Sydney Park. For months it said it would only take 8,000 square metres, leaving it until the EIS was lodged to inform the local council

that it planned to forcibly acquire the rest. This will diminish the enjoyment of the park in many ways. Peaceful paths, exercise equipment, children's play areas and sporting grounds, and more will all be adjacent to a major highway. This is completely unacceptable, as is the destruction of other vital community parks along the route.

Community parks, an endangered Green and Golden Bell Frog colony, critically endangered Cooks River Castlereagh Ironbark Forest and trees along the project route would be destroyed for these projects. Some of these, such as the endangered flora and fauna, were species that the RMS was legally obliged to maintain and protect as part of construction for the M5 East. Others, such as the M5 Linear Park and trees lining the noise walls, are spaces the local community has built up over many years after their community was carved up the M5 East. For all of this to be swept aside for this toll road is not only unacceptable – it is undemocratic and a grave violation of the government's environmental and legal responsibilities.

I am aware that independent traffic experts have not access to full information about the assumptions on which traffic modelling. The proponents must be instructed to fully respond to independent experts who have been commissioned by Councils or are academic researchers and to make their models available. AECOM and RMS openly admit that they have collaborated on the modelling. Their claims must be fully and independently scrutinised. When the living conditions of thousands of residents and billions of dollars of public money are at stake, it is not acceptable for a government department or private company to keep such a model secret.

The planning processes surrounding this project and WestConnex as a whole have been utterly corrupted. For example, key parts of the business case remain hidden from public scrutiny, even though it is being funded by taxpayer money. Homes and businesses are being forcibly acquired, multi-million and/or billion-dollar contracts have been let, and construction works have occurred place before any planning approvals are granted for this project. The entire WestConnex, including this project, has been characterised by poor governance, and a complete lack of transparency and accountability. Community consultation has also taken place only after detailed plans have been drawn up, so the general public has little to no input on a project that will affect hundreds of thousands of people's lives for many years to come.

The arrogant social impact study in this EIS dismisses the impact of forcing hundreds of people from their homes and businesses on communities in a few lines – particularly when residents are being offered below-market prices for their homes and businesses, and suffering high levels of distress and trauma as a result. It is also unacceptable that these acquisitions have been forced through before any planning approvals were granted.

The social impact study also fails to assess the impact of this project on other communities that will be deeply affected. For example, the proponents and AECOM have not consulted properly with the community on and around Stoney Creek Road, nor informed residents that WestConnex has a plan that will make congestion and air quality worse in their neighbourhood.

WestConnex comes at not only a huge cost that is blowing out at the rate of over $2 billion a year. It also comes with a massive opportunity cost. The $16.8 billion and rising that would be spent on WestConnex is money that would be taken away from hospitals, schools, regional roads, and the public transport improvements that are urgently needed – not just in western Sydney, but many parts of regional NSW. If this $16.8 billion was spent on public transport and effective road management, a project like WestConnex would not be necessary.

I therefore ask that you reject this proposal, publish my name and submission in accordance with the undertaking on your website, and provide a written response to each of the objections I have raised.

Yours sincerely,

Chris Gorman

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Lorelie Luna [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 7:09 PM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

Submission to WestConnex New M5 EIS, project number SSI 14_6788

Hoping for a resolution: it is NEVER TOO LATE to make adjustments.

I strongly object to this project and the entire WestConnex of which this is part, and ask that you reject this proposal on the basis of this environmental impact statement (EIS).

I also strongly object to a number of specific aspects of this EIS, and I expect you to publish this submission and send me a written response to each of the objections I have outlined below.

The stated objectives for WestConnex, including the New M5, were contrived to fit the project after it had already been announced. Even so, WestConnex fails to meet them. For example, it will cause irreversible biodiversity loss, rather than minimising impacts to biodiversity. It will reduce social and visual amenity across the route. It will worsen regional air quality. Perhaps most critically for WestConnex, it will actively worsen congestion in many parts of Sydney, and make little impact on congestion across the rest of the city.

I strongly object to the fact that AECOM, which has a record of failed traffic modeling and other WestConnex contracts that depend on this project going ahead, has been paid $13 million of taxpayer money to complete this EIS. What's more, this EIS is of extremely poor quality, and filled with errors, basic omissions, superficial analyses, and opaque modeling.

The flaws and optimistic assumptions in the traffic modelling mean that toll revenue is likely to be significantly lower than forecast. AECOM has a history of providing over-optimistic traffic forecasts for toll roads, resulting in previous financial failures (e.g. Clem7 in Brisbane).

Billions of dollars of construction contracts have been let for this project before this EIS was lodged. This casts huge doubts on the legitimacy of the community consultation process, and places unreasonable pressure on the Dept of Planning and Environment to approve this project regardless of its flaws.

In fact the whole WestConnex has been characterised by corrupted processes, and a lack of transparency and accountability. This is unacceptable for any project funded by taxpayer money, let alone a massive one that would see communities and endangered species destroyed, thousands of people evicted from their family homes and businesses, and billions of dollars of public money diverted from projects that would benefit NSW more.

The average daily travel time in Sydney has been stable at about 80 minutes per person for decades, while the average trip distance has increased substantially. In this time, billions have been spent on tollways. Travellers are spending more than ever on tolls, yet are not spending any less time travelling. Why would this project be the exception to this norm?

The New M5 would cause costly traffic chaos throughout the inner west and south-west Sydney. It is unacceptable that no traffic modeling was only done past two intersections after the end of the project. Even so, this EIS still makes it clear that this project will provide no solution to traffic congestion, as it shows several intersections across the project route will remain at Level of Service F (i.e. the worst possible level, and the one that is indicative of system failure) after the project. It also shows that many already congested roads along the route will get worse, including those around the St Peters Interchange, Bexley, Rockdale, Kingsgrove and Brighton-Le-Sands.

Independent transport modelling experts have found scores of problems with the application of the WestConnex Road and Traffic Model, which has not been released for scrutiny. It would be negligent for any government to go ahead with a project based on uncertain predictions. What is even more worrying is that the proponent now concedes that it cannot make this model work without other, unfunded toll road projects. What happens if or when these projects do not proceed? This EIS fails to assess this.

Thousands of residents and workers will be exposed to health impacts in all areas where demolition, earthworks, construction and removal activities will take place for up to 24 hours per day, seven days a week. This includes communities in Arncliffe, Kingsgrove, Beverly Hills, St Peters and Alexandria. These health risks are rated as HIGH for all areas. Mitigation is recommended, but no firm information is available about who might receive this and what it might be. Instead, decisions are put off until after approval – and in some cases the beginning of construction. This is completely indefensible and communities cannot be forced to accept this.

Tunnelling would cause vibration and damage to homes. The EIS says it will only be for a "short period", but does not say what this short period is. In some cases, tunnels and tunneling would take place around 20m below people's homes. This is not acceptable, particularly given the collapse of buildings that took place during the Lane Cove Tunnel's construction, and the legal action residents above Brisbane's Airport Link are now being forced to take after experiencing property damage.

In cities like Sydney, traffic-based air pollution is a major contributor to total air pollution. The international experience with road projects like this is that they encourage more traffic. There are more cars, and more people use them, and indeed this is what the EIS predicts with its large forecasted rise in vehicle kilometers travelled (VKT). This is bad for population health in Sydney, not just the areas immediately surrounding this project.

There is overwhelming international evidence now from organisations like the World Health Organisation (WHO) that shows that traffic-based air pollution increases the number of heart attacks and strokes people have. It increases deaths from heart disease, and respiratory disease. There is some new evidence from WHO that links this pollution to impaired lung growth in children and diabetes. These health effects occur both with long-term exposure and repeated short-term exposure, and there is no safe level of exposure to this pollution.

The air quality study in this EIS shows that some communities will be exposed to increased doses of dangerous pollution, especially those living close to the project's surface roads and unfiltered stacks. Drivers in the long tunnels are also likely to experience high levels of exposure, particularly those on motorbikes. It is unacceptable for the NSW Government to deliberately place the health of citizens at risk in this way.

As well, the assessment of air quality and noise impacts in this EIS are completely dependent on the traffic modelling. But the traffic modeling used in this study cannot be independently verified, is extremely limited in scope, is dependent on other unfunded and unplanned toll road projects going ahead (e.g. Sydney Gateway and southern extension), and appears to be based on overly optimistic usage predictions. For this reason, the air, noise, social impacts and health risk assessments in this EIS cannot be regarded as reliable.

The analysis of alternatives provided by AECOM in this EIS provides no solid evidence for the conclusions drawn. I strongly object to this superficial 'analysis', which consists of little more than bald claims rather than a serious investigation of how alternatives such as improved public transport, better traffic management and freight on rail could reduce congestion more effectively than the WestConnex New M5.

This EIS shows hundreds of homes along the project route will experience noise during construction and operation at unsafe levels that can damage health. In fact the real impact is likely to be far worse than the results provided in this EIS, because noise monitoring was only done at Beverly Hills and St Peters. Such limited evidence provides the community with no confidence in the conclusions reached in this EIS. Independent experts have also reported that some of the tables are inaccurate in the noise report and are therefore unreliable.

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The project's proponents have misled the public about its plan to take 14,000 square metres of Sydney Park. For months it said it would only take 8,000 square metres, leaving it until the EIS was lodged to inform the local council that it planned to forcibly acquire the rest. This will diminish the enjoyment of the park in many ways. Peaceful paths, exercise equipment, children's play areas and sporting grounds, and more will all be adjacent to a major highway. This is completely unacceptable, as is the destruction of other vital community parks along the route.

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I therefore ask that you reject this proposal, publish my name and submission in accordance with the undertaking on your website, and provide a written response to each of the objections I have raised.

Yours sincerely,

Lorelie Luna

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Bret Judd [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 7:04 PM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

Attn: Secretary, Department of Planning and Environment

Please find below my submission in response to the WestConnex New M5 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), project number SSI 14_6788. Many members of my community, as well as myself strongly oppose this project and the whole WestConnex for a range of reasons, which I have listed below.

Please address all of my concerns with a written response in return.

- I strongly object to the reclaiming of any parkland that is essential to community well-being. Sydney Park is one of the most beautiful parks in our city and should be protected to keep Sydney beautiful for future generations and us. Furthermore, the ambiguity of just how much land will be taken by this and any subsequent road projects is unacceptable. Remaining public spaces in Sydney are off limits to this kind of development and building roads through them is immoral and not good for our city and our nation.

- I strongly object to the huge increases in traffic around the already congested areas of Newtown, St Peters, Alexandria and Erskineville.

- Council town planners invest much effort into making Sydney a sustainable and beautiful Sydney. These efforts are continuously and recklessly undone by state government planning and development decisions. Your department has a very big responsibility to plan sustainably. Overruling local government planning is simply wrong. The City of Sydney has a very successful plan and vision for our city. The WestConnex crushes this vision and will devastate local communities and make Sydney ugly. Tourists that visit Sydney enjoy our unique villages, this will be destroyed to become like many other countries around the world.

- I strongly object to such a large infrastructure spend on roadways when what our city really needs is more efficient public transport that encourages motorists to use other forms of transport. Building roads over public transport is a very backward approach to addressing the transportation needs of the people of Sydney, especially in the context of Climate Change and every governments responsibility to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

- I strongly object to the huge increases in traffic across the New M5 route that will result from both induced demand and drivers doing 'rat runs' to avoid paying tolls on the current M5 and New M5.

- I strongly object to the public announcements that King Georges Road will have a 49% improvement in travel time, yet the EIS acknowledges that the current LoS-F (Level of Service) will be the same with our without WestConnex.

- The EIS ignores the published work of independent traffic and planning experts who have presented evidence based arguments that the WestConnex will not meet its goals. It should be rejected on that basis alone.

- I strongly object to further deterioration to our amenity that this project will cause. Statements such as "the narrowed pedestrian access around the edge of the widened portion of the M5 East Motorway would not be out of character" completely dismisses the significant change to our urban environment with the legacy M5.

- I particularly object to the transparent noise walls, as an "opportunity to enhance the driver experience with views across Canterbury Golf Course, Beverly Grove Park and Tallawalla St park". This demonstrates that urban repair for the people who actually live in these areas, as opposed to motorists passing through, is not a priority.

- I strongly object to the failure of this EIS to seriously consider the long-term impact of WestConnex on increased carbon emissions, despite the EIS's authors accepting the science of climate change. The EIS also fails to plan for the impact of climate change on the project itself, despite the tollway needing to remain operational for many years if it is built.

- No credible authority in the world today would suggest that building huge urban motorways is the solution to cutting national greenhouse emissions, or that increases in vehicle kilometres travelled (VKT) would somehow result in a net reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. Yet this is exactly what the proponent is claiming in this EIS. I object to this flawed analysis.

- I strongly object to the decision by AECOM to do no serious traffic modelling outside the project area; it is absurd to suggest that the impacts will stop at the end of the project. Instead communities will be left to deal with traffic and unhealthy pollution and the additional financial and social costs that will result from WestConnex.

- I strongly object to the failure of the Sydney Motorway Corporation to publicly reveal the peer review of the traffic model and their failure to reveal the assumptions on which it is based so independent traffic planners can test its results.

- I strongly object to the superficial consideration of alternatives which consists of little more than bald claims rather than presenting analysis of alternatives including public transport and traffic management that could reduce road freight and car use.

- I strongly object to hundreds of trucks a day for years transporting millions of cubic metres of soil including contaminated waste (asbestos) through heavily populated residential suburbs in inner and south-west Sydney to the western suburbs, where it will be dumped without any clear plans or information for communities affected.

- The RMS was given approval to build the old M5 on condition that it protected endangered flora and fauna. Now it wants approval to destroy those communities for a new tollway because its old project has failed to solve congestion. This makes the system of conditions meaningless. This proposal should be rejected.

- I strongly object to removal of most of critically endangered Cooks River Iron Bark forest at Kingsgrove. I note that scientists have observed that its value has been deliberately minimised in the EIS.

- I strongly object to the removal of 7 hectares of habitat of one of only two surviving colonies in NSW of endangered Green and Golden Bell Frogs for a massive tunnelling site.

- I strongly object to the selection of tunnelling methods that may damage houses at the surface.

- I strongly object to a transport 'solution' that results in a further nine unfiltered exhaust stacks throughout highly populated suburbs.

- It is unacceptable that unfiltered pollution stacks are to be located in the valley of Kingsgrove, with schools, homes and sporting fields on higher ground; and in the heart of heavily residential areas in Arncliffe and St Peters, where the stacks will also be placed within metres of many primary schools, childcare centres, sporting grounds, and residential aged care facilities.

- I strongly object to the use of an air quality model that has not been used in Australia before and which cannot be verified by the NSW EPA. I note that there will be an increase in dangerous pollution in some areas close to the tollway portals and near roads with increased traffic. It is not acceptable to me that a government should deliberately place the health of citizens in jeopardy.

- I particularly object to tollway portals and increased traffic being so close to local schools. I note that fine particle pollution can cause lung cancer and is particularly dangerous for the lungs of growing children. I support the parents of local schools who have requested an extended period of time after school returns at the end of Janaury 2016 in which to seek independent advice.

- I strongly object to a planning system that awards billion-dollar contracts to tollway construction company when local government staff and many experts are convinced the WestConnex will not deliver on its objectives. This places unreasonable pressure on planners to approve the project.

- I strongly object to the fact that AECOM who have a record of failed traffic modelling has been paid $13 million of taxpayer money to complete this EIS, despite the fact that it has been awarded other WestConnex contracts that depend on the project going ahead. This is an unacceptable conflict of interest given that these documents are supposed to be independent assessments. The public cannot trust that this EIS properly and fully investigates the true economic, environmental and social impacts of this project, and indeed the poor quality of this document reflects this. The EIS is riddled with errors, basic omissions, superficial analyses, and opaque modelling, and should be rejected on this basis alone.

- There was no serious community consultation for the New M5. Public meetings where senior executives lecture hundreds of residents or stalls in shopping centres staffed by poorly informed casuals may tick a box, but it does not amount to community consultation. The Community Feedback report is misleading.

- I strongly object to the submissions period for this EIS being held during January when many of the people and institutions that will be most deeply affected by this project are on holidays or unavailable. For example, schools are closed, residents are away, and many local government staff are on holidays. The consultation period should be extended until March 2016.

- Whole communities will be disastrously impacted by this project. The social impact study - which is even less detailed than the inadequate one done for the WestConnex M4 East EIS - should be rejected, as it ignores well-established evidence of the significant negative impacts on people of loss of community identity and social connections. The study is little more than a cut and paste and is insulting to residents, both those who are being forced to sell and those who will stay.

- Many residents will experience noise during construction and operation at unsafe levels that can damage health. I object to the lack of information about mitigation and the suggestion that those above a second story may not be mitigated at all.

I recognise there is pressure on several NSW Departments, including Planning and the Environment, to approve this project. I remind public servants of their obligation to the public and to the potential social, health and economic costs of spending $16.8 billion on WestConnex when it provides no solution to Sydney's transport needs.

Yours sincerely,

Bret Judd

1402/221 Sydney Park Road

Erskineville NSW 2043

From: Kathryn Murphy [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 6:55 PM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

Submission to WestConnex New M5 EIS, project number SSI 14_6788

I strongly object to this project and the entire WestConnex of which this is part, and ask that you reject this proposal on the basis of this environmental impact statement (EIS).

I also strongly object to a number of specific aspects of this EIS, and I expect you to publish this submission and send me a written response to each of the objections I have outlined below.

The stated objectives for WestConnex, including the New M5, were contrived to fit the project after it had already been announced. Even so, WestConnex fails to meet them. For example, it will cause irreversible biodiversity loss, rather than minimising impacts to biodiversity. It will reduce social and visual amenity across the route. It will worsen regional air quality. Perhaps most critically for WestConnex, it will actively worsen congestion in many parts of Sydney, and make little impact on congestion across the rest of the city.

I strongly object to the fact that AECOM, which has a record of failed traffic modeling and other WestConnex contracts that depend on this project going ahead, has been paid $13 million of taxpayer money to complete this EIS. What's more, this EIS is of extremely poor quality, and filled with errors, basic omissions, superficial analyses, and opaque modeling.

The flaws and optimistic assumptions in the traffic modelling mean that toll revenue is likely to be significantly lower than forecast. AECOM has a history of providing over-optimistic traffic forecasts for toll roads, resulting in previous financial failures (e.g. Clem7 in Brisbane).

Billions of dollars of construction contracts have been let for this project before this EIS was lodged. This casts huge doubts on the legitimacy of the community consultation process, and places unreasonable pressure on the Dept of Planning and Environment to approve this project regardless of its flaws.

In fact the whole WestConnex has been characterised by corrupted processes, and a lack of transparency and accountability. This is unacceptable for any project funded by taxpayer money, let alone a massive one that would see communities and endangered species destroyed, thousands of people evicted from their family homes and businesses, and billions of dollars of public money diverted from projects that would benefit NSW more.

The average daily travel time in Sydney has been stable at about 80 minutes per person for decades, while the average trip distance has increased substantially. In this time, billions have been spent on tollways. Travellers are spending more than ever on tolls, yet are not spending any less time travelling. Why would this project be the exception to this norm?

The New M5 would cause costly traffic chaos throughout the inner west and south-west Sydney. It is unacceptable that no traffic modeling was only done past two intersections after the end of the project. Even so, this EIS still makes it clear that this project will provide no solution to traffic congestion, as it shows several intersections across the project route will remain at Level of Service F (i.e. the worst possible level, and the one that is indicative of system failure) after the project. It also shows that many already congested roads along the route will get worse, including those around the St Peters Interchange, Bexley, Rockdale, Kingsgrove and Brighton-Le-Sands.

Independent transport modelling experts have found scores of problems with the application of the WestConnex Road and Traffic Model, which has not been released for scrutiny. It would be negligent for any government to go ahead with a project based on uncertain predictions. What is even more worrying is that the proponent now concedes that it cannot make this model work without other, unfunded toll road projects. What happens if or when these projects do not proceed? This EIS fails to assess this.

Thousands of residents and workers will be exposed to health impacts in all areas where demolition, earthworks, construction and removal activities will take place for up to 24 hours per day, seven days a week. This includes communities in Arncliffe, Kingsgrove, Beverly Hills, St Peters and Alexandria. These health risks are rated as HIGH for all areas. Mitigation is recommended, but no firm information is available about who might receive this and what it might be. Instead, decisions are put off until after approval – and in some cases the beginning of construction. This is completely indefensible and communities cannot be forced to accept this.

Tunnelling would cause vibration and damage to homes. The EIS says it will only be for a "short period", but does not say what this short period is. In some cases, tunnels and tunneling would take place around 20m below people's homes. This is not acceptable, particularly given the collapse of buildings that took place during the Lane Cove Tunnel's construction, and the legal action residents above Brisbane's Airport Link are now being forced to take after experiencing property damage.

In cities like Sydney, traffic-based air pollution is a major contributor to total air pollution. The international experience with road projects like this is that they encourage more traffic. There are more cars, and more people use them, and indeed this is what the EIS predicts with its large forecasted rise in vehicle kilometers travelled (VKT). This is bad for population health in Sydney, not just the areas immediately surrounding this project.

There is overwhelming international evidence now from organisations like the World Health Organisation (WHO) that shows that traffic-based air pollution increases the number of heart attacks and strokes people have. It increases deaths from heart disease, and respiratory disease. There is some new evidence from WHO that links this pollution to impaired lung growth in children and diabetes. These health effects occur both with long-term exposure and repeated short-term exposure, and there is no safe level of exposure to this pollution.

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As well, the assessment of air quality and noise impacts in this EIS are completely dependent on the traffic modelling. But the traffic modeling used in this study cannot be independently verified, is extremely limited in scope, is dependent on other unfunded and unplanned toll road projects going ahead (e.g. Sydney Gateway and southern extension), and appears to be based on overly optimistic usage predictions. For this reason, the air, noise, social impacts and health risk assessments in this EIS cannot be regarded as reliable.

The analysis of alternatives provided by AECOM in this EIS provides no solid evidence for the conclusions drawn. I strongly object to this superficial 'analysis', which consists of little more than bald claims rather than a serious investigation of how alternatives such as improved public transport, better traffic management and freight on rail could reduce congestion more effectively than the WestConnex New M5.

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This EIS also completely fails to consider negative impacts of the whole project – for example, total loss of vegetation – while relying on unproven, unplanned positive benefits for the whole project to justify its existence.

The project's proponents have misled the public about its plan to take 14,000 square metres of Sydney Park. For months it said it would only take 8,000 square metres, leaving it until the EIS was lodged to inform the local council

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The planning processes surrounding this project and WestConnex as a whole have been utterly corrupted. For example, key parts of the business case remain hidden from public scrutiny, even though it is being funded by taxpayer money. Homes and businesses are being forcibly acquired, multi-million and/or billion-dollar contracts have been let, and construction works have occurred place before any planning approvals are granted for this project. The entire WestConnex, including this project, has been characterised by poor governance, and a complete lack of transparency and accountability. Community consultation has also taken place only after detailed plans have been drawn up, so the general public has little to no input on a project that will affect hundreds of thousands of people's lives for many years to come.

The arrogant social impact study in this EIS dismisses the impact of forcing hundreds of people from their homes and businesses on communities in a few lines – particularly when residents are being offered below-market prices for their homes and businesses, and suffering high levels of distress and trauma as a result. It is also unacceptable that these acquisitions have been forced through before any planning approvals were granted.

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WestConnex comes at not only a huge cost that is blowing out at the rate of over $2 billion a year. It also comes with a massive opportunity cost. The $16.8 billion and rising that would be spent on WestConnex is money that would be taken away from hospitals, schools, regional roads, and the public transport improvements that are urgently needed – not just in western Sydney, but many parts of regional NSW. If this $16.8 billion was spent on public transport and effective road management, a project like WestConnex would not be necessary.

I therefore ask that you reject this proposal, publish my name and submission in accordance with the undertaking on your website, and provide a written response to each of the objections I have raised.

Yours sincerely,

Kathryn Murphy

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Janine Kovacevic [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 6:54 PM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

Submission to WestConnex New M5 EIS, project number SSI 14_6788

I strongly object to this project and the entire WestConnex of which this is part, and ask that you reject this proposal on the basis of this environmental impact statement (EIS).

I also strongly object to a number of specific aspects of this EIS, and I expect you to publish this submission and send me a written response to each of the objections I have outlined below.

The stated objectives for WestConnex, including the New M5, were contrived to fit the project after it had already been announced. Even so, WestConnex fails to meet them. For example, it will cause irreversible biodiversity loss, rather than minimising impacts to biodiversity. It will reduce social and visual amenity across the route. It will worsen regional air quality. Perhaps most critically for WestConnex, it will actively worsen congestion in many parts of Sydney, and make little impact on congestion across the rest of the city.

I strongly object to the fact that AECOM, which has a record of failed traffic modeling and other WestConnex contracts that depend on this project going ahead, has been paid $13 million of taxpayer money to complete this EIS. What's more, this EIS is of extremely poor quality, and filled with errors, basic omissions, superficial analyses, and opaque modeling.

The flaws and optimistic assumptions in the traffic modelling mean that toll revenue is likely to be significantly lower than forecast. AECOM has a history of providing over-optimistic traffic forecasts for toll roads, resulting in previous financial failures (e.g. Clem7 in Brisbane).

Billions of dollars of construction contracts have been let for this project before this EIS was lodged. This casts huge doubts on the legitimacy of the community consultation process, and places unreasonable pressure on the Dept of Planning and Environment to approve this project regardless of its flaws.

In fact the whole WestConnex has been characterised by corrupted processes, and a lack of transparency and accountability. This is unacceptable for any project funded by taxpayer money, let alone a massive one that would see communities and endangered species destroyed, thousands of people evicted from their family homes and businesses, and billions of dollars of public money diverted from projects that would benefit NSW more.

The average daily travel time in Sydney has been stable at about 80 minutes per person for decades, while the average trip distance has increased substantially. In this time, billions have been spent on tollways. Travellers are spending more than ever on tolls, yet are not spending any less time travelling. Why would this project be the exception to this norm?

The New M5 would cause costly traffic chaos throughout the inner west and south-west Sydney. It is unacceptable that no traffic modeling was only done past two intersections after the end of the project. Even so, this EIS still makes it clear that this project will provide no solution to traffic congestion, as it shows several intersections across the project route will remain at Level of Service F (i.e. the worst possible level, and the one that is indicative of system failure) after the project. It also shows that many already congested roads along the route will get worse, including those around the St Peters Interchange, Bexley, Rockdale, Kingsgrove and Brighton-Le-Sands.

Independent transport modelling experts have found scores of problems with the application of the WestConnex Road and Traffic Model, which has not been released for scrutiny. It would be negligent for any government to go ahead with a project based on uncertain predictions. What is even more worrying is that the proponent now concedes that it cannot make this model work without other, unfunded toll road projects. What happens if or when these projects do not proceed? This EIS fails to assess this.

Thousands of residents and workers will be exposed to health impacts in all areas where demolition, earthworks, construction and removal activities will take place for up to 24 hours per day, seven days a week. This includes communities in Arncliffe, Kingsgrove, Beverly Hills, St Peters and Alexandria. These health risks are rated as HIGH for all areas. Mitigation is recommended, but no firm information is available about who might receive this and what it might be. Instead, decisions are put off until after approval – and in some cases the beginning of construction. This is completely indefensible and communities cannot be forced to accept this.

Tunnelling would cause vibration and damage to homes. The EIS says it will only be for a "short period", but does not say what this short period is. In some cases, tunnels and tunneling would take place around 20m below people's homes. This is not acceptable, particularly given the collapse of buildings that took place during the Lane Cove Tunnel's construction, and the legal action residents above Brisbane's Airport Link are now being forced to take after experiencing property damage.

In cities like Sydney, traffic-based air pollution is a major contributor to total air pollution. The international experience with road projects like this is that they encourage more traffic. There are more cars, and more people use them, and indeed this is what the EIS predicts with its large forecasted rise in vehicle kilometers travelled (VKT). This is bad for population health in Sydney, not just the areas immediately surrounding this project.

There is overwhelming international evidence now from organisations like the World Health Organisation (WHO) that shows that traffic-based air pollution increases the number of heart attacks and strokes people have. It increases deaths from heart disease, and respiratory disease. There is some new evidence from WHO that links this pollution to impaired lung growth in children and diabetes. These health effects occur both with long-term exposure and repeated short-term exposure, and there is no safe level of exposure to this pollution.

The air quality study in this EIS shows that some communities will be exposed to increased doses of dangerous pollution, especially those living close to the project's surface roads and unfiltered stacks. Drivers in the long tunnels are also likely to experience high levels of exposure, particularly those on motorbikes. It is unacceptable for the NSW Government to deliberately place the health of citizens at risk in this way.

As well, the assessment of air quality and noise impacts in this EIS are completely dependent on the traffic modelling. But the traffic modeling used in this study cannot be independently verified, is extremely limited in scope, is dependent on other unfunded and unplanned toll road projects going ahead (e.g. Sydney Gateway and southern extension), and appears to be based on overly optimistic usage predictions. For this reason, the air, noise, social impacts and health risk assessments in this EIS cannot be regarded as reliable.

The analysis of alternatives provided by AECOM in this EIS provides no solid evidence for the conclusions drawn. I strongly object to this superficial 'analysis', which consists of little more than bald claims rather than a serious investigation of how alternatives such as improved public transport, better traffic management and freight on rail could reduce congestion more effectively than the WestConnex New M5.

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The project will cause immense social harm. It will destroy long-established communities. It will cause an increase in air pollution-related deaths and illnesses. The increase in air pollution will inhibit lung and nervous system development in children. There are numerous ways of spending $16.8 billion that would deliver a much greater social and economic benefit, and would not cause so much destruction. Such alternatives are barely mentioned in this EIS and have certainly not been analysed as required by the project SEARs.

It is alarming that costs for this taxpayer-funded project are blowing out at the rate of more than $2 billion a year. When WestConnex was announced in 2012, it was one toll road with a price tag of $10 billion; it is now a series of toll road projects that encompasses WestConnex and additional projects such as the Southern Extension and Sydney Gateway that will now cost $16.8 billion. At this rate the final price tag will be well in excess of $20 billion even before the cost of financing large loans, addressing its social, health and environmental impacts, and covering the (inevitable) shortfall in toll revenues is taken into account.

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Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 6:53 PM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
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Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

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Yours sincerely,

Kathryn Murphy

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From: [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 12:14 AM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

Attn: Secretary, re: WestConnex New M5 EIS, project number SSI 14_6788

I strongly object to this project and the entire WestConnex of which this is part, and ask that you reject this proposal on the basis of this environmental impact statement (EIS).

Global experience and research has shown conclusively that these kinds of toll road mega-projects are hugely expensive and counterproductive. WestConnex will increase air pollution and traffic for thousands of residents and workers, and expose NSW taxpayers to unacceptably high levels of financial risk. Even the EISs produced for the various stages of WestConnex show it is not a long-term solution to Sydney's congestion problem.

I also strongly object to a number of specific aspects of this EIS, and I expect you to publish this submission and send me a written response to each of the objections I have outlined below.

The flaws and optimistic assumptions in the traffic modelling mean that toll revenue is likely to be significantly lower than forecast. AECOM has a history of providing over-optimistic traffic forecasts for toll roads, resulting in previous financial failures (e.g. Clem7 in Brisbane).

Billions of dollars of construction contracts have been let for this project before this EIS was lodged. This casts huge doubts on the legitimacy of the community consultation process, and places unreasonable pressure on the Dept of Planning and Environment to approve this project regardless of its flaws.

The average daily travel time in Sydney has been stable at about 80 minutes per person for decades, while the average trip distance has increased substantially. In this time, billions have been spent on tollways. Travellers are spending more than ever on tolls, yet are not spending any less time travelling. Instead of encouraging costly road-based sprawl, the NSW Government should be investing in more sustainable transport solutions, and in developing economic opportunities outside of the inner city so that more people who live outside of central Sydney can work closer to home instead of being locked into long commutes.

The New M5 would cause costly traffic chaos throughout the inner west and south-west Sydney. It is unacceptable that no traffic modelling was only done past two intersections after the end of the project.

Experts at the EIS exhibition sessions gave contradictory advice about traffic modelling. All traffic modelling should be transparently and independently tested, particularly because AECOM has a demonstrably poor record in traffic modelling.

Independent transport modelling experts have found scores of problems with the application of the WestConnex Road and Traffic Model, which has not been released for scrutiny. It would be negligent for any government to go ahead with a project based on uncertain predictions.

The roads around the St Peters interchange are already at an unacceptable Level of Service and are getting worse because of in-fill developments not allowed for by the EIS, including Green Square, Ashmore, Waterloo Estate and Central 2 Eveleigh. With an extra 150,000 people in an area of a few square kilometres, this is going to be the most densely populated area in Australia. There is no evidence that this EIS has factored in this huge increase in density.

However, the EIS clearly demonstrates that the traffic on roads around the St Peters Interchange will deteriorate as a result of WestConnex, as well as already heavily congested roads in Bexley, Rockdale and Brighton-Le-Sands. It also projects that the existing M5 and New M5 combined will end up taking less traffic now than the Cross City Tunnel, which was a financial disaster, as drivers 'rat-run' to avoid the tolls.

What is even more worrying is that the proponent now concedes that it cannot make its traffic model work without other, unfunded toll road projects. What happens if or when these projects do not proceed? This EIS does not say, so the public does not have a chance to form a view or comment.

AECOM was paid $13 million of taxpayer money to complete this EIS, despite its conflict of interest (it has other WestConnex contracts that depend on the project going ahead). This is an unacceptable given that this EIS is supposed to provide an objective assessment of the project impacts. The public cannot trust that this EIS properly and fully investigates the true economic, environmental and social impacts of this project, and indeed the poor quality of this document reflects this. It contains many errors, omissions, superficial analyses, and opaque models, and should be rejected on this basis alone.

The suggestion that tunnelling activities would need to be conducted 24 hours per day, seven days a week – including associated activities such as spoil handling and haulage – is not justified. This will place great pressure on significant numbers of nearby residents throughout day and night-time periods.

The EIS repeatedly says that threats to the liveable environment of residents during construction and operation would be subject to plans developed later. Mitigation is recommended in many instances, but no firm information is available about who might receive this and what it might be. Instead, decisions are put off until after approval – and in some cases the beginning of construction. This is completely indefensible and communities cannot be forced to accept this. The whole point of an EIS is to assess the impact of the project, so these plans should have been made available in this EIS.

The method used in this EIS to measure air quality has not been used in Australia before and cannot be verified by the NSW EPA. I note that there will be an increase in dangerous pollution in some areas close to the tollway portals and near roads with increased traffic. It is not acceptable to me that a government should deliberately place the health of citizens in jeopardy.

I particularly object to tollway portals and increased traffic being so close to local schools. I note that fine particle pollution can cause lung cancer and is particularly dangerous for the lungs of growing children. I support the parents of local schools who have requested an extended period of time after school returns at the end of January 2016 in which to seek independent advice.

The whole WestConnex system will increase greenhouse gas emissions in Sydney at a time when we should be doing all we can to reduce them. I am not convinced by a method of analysis that does not look at alternatives but instead compares the New M5 project against a 'do nothing' scenario to claim a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.

No credible authority in the world today would suggest that building huge urban motorways is the solution to cutting national greenhouse emissions, or that increases in vehicle kilometres travelled (VKT) would somehow result in a net reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. Yet this is exactly what the proponent is claiming in this EIS. I object to this flawed analysis.

The analysis of alternatives provided by AECOM in this EIS provides no solid evidence for its conclusions. Potential alternatives that could have provided more effective, sustainable and cost-effective ways of easing congestion have been ignored. This failure to meet the project SEARs should also be reason enough to reject the proposal.

The noise assessment shows that hundreds of homes will experience noise above acceptable levels. The real impact is likely to be far worse, because noise monitoring was only conducted at a very limited level for this EIS in Beverly Hills and St Peters, and did not properly assess the massive noise that will be generated by construction and operation of this project. Independent experts have also reported that some of the tables are inaccurate in the noise report and are therefore not reliable.

The social impact study is little more than a description of the project, rather than an assessment of its impacts. It is insulting to communities where hundreds of tenants and owners have lost homes and businesses, and others will live in decimated communities. For example, the impact of forced acquisition of scores of homes in St Peters on the families affected and the close-knit community that will be fractured as a result is merely briefly described and not assessed. I am not aware of any affected homeowner that was surveyed or even contacted by the authors for this study, which is a gross failing on the part of AECOM.

Residents affected by compulsory acquisitions are also being offered below-market prices for their homes and businesses, which has caused additional and completely unnecessary distress and trauma for the owners. I find it disturbing that the NSW Government was warned three years ago that the compulsory acquisition process was unfair to those whose properties were being forcibly taken, yet has both failed to make the changes recommended and actively suppressed the report that handed down these findings.

Community parks, an endangered Green and Golden Bell Frog colony, critically endangered Cooks River Castlereagh Ironbark Forest and trees along the M5 East would be destroyed for these projects. Some of these, such as the endangered flora and fauna, were species that the RMS was legally obliged to maintain and protect as part of construction for the M5 East. Others, such as the M5 Linear Park and trees lining the noise walls, are spaces the local community has built up over many years after their community was carved up for the M5 East. For all of this to be swept aside for this toll road is not only unacceptable – it is undemocratic and a violation of the government's environmental and legal responsibilities.

The RMS has lied about how much of Sydney Park was needed for the New M5. It is disgraceful that the City Council only became aware that some of its land would be acquired well after this EIS was lodged.

Thousands of trees along the route in Beverly Grove Park, the M5 Linear Park and other areas are also being destroyed to make way for a tollway that even the EIS shows won't solve traffic congestion. The NSW government should be preserving green space and vegetation, not destroying it.

The planning processes surrounding this project and WestConnex as a whole have been utterly corrupted. For example, key parts of the business case remain hidden from public scrutiny, even though it is being funded by taxpayer money. Homes and businesses are being forcibly acquired, multi-million and/or billion-dollar contracts have been let, and construction works have occurred place before any planning approvals are granted for this project. The entire WestConnex, including this project, has been characterised by poor governance, and a complete lack of transparency and accountability. Community consultation has also taken place only after detailed plans have been drawn up, so the general public has little to no input on a project that will affect hundreds of thousands of people's lives for many years to come.

This project will see roads expanded to within metres of residents' homes, which is outrageous. I am aware that in cases in St Peters and Alexandria, roads being widened for WestConnex will be less than two metres of family homes, and that young children will have more than 50,000 cars and trucks a day going right past their windows. This is absolutely unacceptable.

There are no clear plans of where millions of cubic metres of spoil will be deposited in communities in western Sydney. None of these communities have been given information or consulted about these impacts. This is unacceptable.

If this project and other parts of WestConnex go ahead, the residents of western and south-west Sydney will be forced into even greater car dependency and paying large tolls to use this road. It is unacceptable that no attempt is made in this EIS to assess the impact alternatives such as increasing public transport capacity and connections within these areas would have on reducing traffic congestion and improving access to jobs for people in these suburbs.

I therefore ask that you reject this proposal, publish my name and submission in accordance with the undertaking on your website, and provide a written response to each of the objections I have raised.

[redacted]

From: Mike Engelsman [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 12:08 AM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

Attn: Secretary, re: WestConnex New M5 EIS, project number SSI 14_6788

I strongly object to this project and the entire WestConnex of which this is part, and ask that you reject this proposal on the basis of this environmental impact statement (EIS).

Global experience and research has shown conclusively that these kinds of toll road mega-projects are hugely expensive and counterproductive. WestConnex will increase air pollution and traffic for thousands of residents and workers, and expose NSW taxpayers to unacceptably high levels of financial risk. Even the EISs produced for the various stages of WestConnex show it is not a long-term solution to Sydney's congestion problem.

I also strongly object to a number of specific aspects of this EIS, and I expect you to publish this submission and send me a written response to each of the objections I have outlined below.

AECOM, which has a record of failed traffic modeling, has been paid $13 million of taxpayer money to complete this EIS even though it has been awarded other WestConnex contracts that depend on the project going ahead. This is an utterly unacceptable conflict of interest. The public cannot trust that this EIS properly and fully investigates the true economic, environmental and social impacts of this project, and indeed the poor quality of this document reflects this. The EIS is riddled with errors, basic omissions, superficial analyses, and opaque modelling, and should be rejected on this basis alone.

Billions of dollars of construction contracts have been let for this project before this EIS was lodged. This casts huge doubts on the legitimacy of the community consultation process, and places unreasonable pressure on the Dept of Planning and Environment to approve this project regardless of its flaws.

No business case was released until late 2015, and was only released after huge public pressure on the NSW Government to do so. Even now, the document released contains so many redactions that it is impossible for anyone to independently assess it – particularly as the key redactions involve the crucial cost and revenue figures. What is the point of releasing a business case that doesn't contain this information? It is little more than yet another expensive piece of publicly funded advertising for this project that adds nothing in the way of accountability.

In fact the whole WestConnex has been characterised by a lack of transparency and accountability and secrecy. This is unacceptable for any project funded by taxpayer money, let alone a massive one that would see communities and endangered species destroyed, thousands of people evicted from their family homes and businesses, and billions of dollars of public money diverted from projects that would benefit NSW more.

It is alarming that costs for this taxpayer-funded project are blowing out at the rate of more than $2 billion a year. When WestConnex was announced in 2012, it was one toll road with a price tag of $10 billion; it is now a series of toll road projects that encompasses WestConnex and additional projects such as the Southern Extension and Sydney Gateway that will now cost $16.8 billion. At this rate the final price tag will be well in excess of $20 billion. The flaws and optimistic assumptions in the traffic modeling also mean that toll revenue is likely to be significantly lower than forecast. AECOM has a history of providing over-optimistic traffic forecasts for toll roads, resulting in previous financial failures (e.g. Clem7 in Brisbane).

It is quite clear that this project will provide no solution to traffic congestion, as the EIS shows that several intersections across the project route will remain at Level of Service F (i.e. the worst possible level, and the one that is indicative of system failure) after the project.

Far from easing congestion, this project will worsen it by pouring traffic onto the local road network in the inner west, western and south-west Sydney. For example, even the project proponents admit that only 80% of the traffic expected to pour out of the St Peters Interchange can be absorbed within the existing road network. No attempt is made in this EIS to assess how this issue will be dealt with if the M4-M5 link, Sydney Gateway and Southern Extension are not built. Considering none of these projects are currently designed, and at least some are unfunded, this is an extremely serious failing.

Independent transport modelling experts have found scores of problems with the application of the WestConnex Road and Traffic Model, which has not been released for scrutiny. It would be negligent for any government to go ahead with a project based on uncertain predictions.

Thousands of residents and workers will be exposed to health impacts in all areas where demolition, earthworks, construction and removal activities. This includes communities in Arncliffe, Kingsgrove, Beverly Hills, St Peters and Alexandria. These health risks are rated as HIGH for all areas. Mitigation is recommended, but no firm information is available about who might receive this and what it might be. Instead, decisions are put off until after approval – and in some cases, the beginning of construction. This is completely indefensible and communities cannot be forced to accept this.

The suggestion that tunneling activities would need to be conducted 24 hours per day, seven days a week – including associated activities such as spoil handling and haulage – is not justified. There are also no clear plans in this EIS to show where millions of cubic metres of spoil will be deposited in communities in western Sydney. None of these communities have been given information or consulted about these impacts. This is unacceptable.

Tunnelling would cause vibration and damage to homes. The EIS says it will only be for a "short period", but does not say what this short period is. In some cases, tunnels and tunnelling would take place around 20m below people's

homes. This is not acceptable, particularly given the collapse of buildings that took place during the Lane Cove Tunnel's construction, and the legal action residents above Brisbane's Airport Link are now being forced to take after experiencing property damage.

The air quality study shows that some communities will be exposed to increased doses of dangerous pollution, especially those living close to surface roads. Many residents along the proposed route are already exposed to levels of PM2.5 particles that exceed national guidelines, yet the EIS predicts that these levels will only worsen. I note that there is no safe level of exposure to fine particulate matter, and I wholeheartedly reject any project that would sacrifice the health of some citizens in order to deliver unproven and highly disputed 'benefits' to others.

Scientific experts agree there is no safe level of fine particle pollution. Rather than aiming to shift dangerous pollution from area to another, the government should be finding cleaner transport solutions that do not leave residents living beside polluted roads or unfiltered pollution stacks – no matter where they live.

The analysis of alternatives provided by AECOM in this EIS provides no solid evidence for the conclusions drawn. No scenarios have been modeled in which alternative solutions such as traffic management, increased public transport, or a combination of such solutions could reduce traffic congestion more effectively than WestConnex.

The noise assessment shows that hundreds of homes will experience noise above acceptable levels. In fact the real impact is likely to be far worse than the results provided in this EIS, because noise monitoring was only done for one location at Beverly Hills and one in St Peters where only 30% of results could be included. Such limited evidence provides the community with no confidence in the conclusions reached in this EIS. Independent experts have also reported that some of the tables are inaccurate in the noise report and are therefore not reliable.

In addition, the noise monitoring performed in this EIS has been too limited to properly assess the massive noise that will be generated by construction and operation of this project, and the impact it will have on the hundreds of thousands of Sydney residents who would be exposed to and affected by it.

The project will cause immense social harm. It will destroy long-established communities. It will cause an increase in air pollution-related deaths and illnesses. The increase in air pollution will inhibit lung and nervous system development in children. There are numerous ways of spending $17 billion that would deliver a much greater social and economic benefit, and would not cause so much destruction. Such alternatives are barely mentioned in this EIS and have certainly not been analysed as required by the project SEARs.

Community parks, an endangered Green and Golden Bell Frog colony, critically endangered Cooks River Castlereagh Ironbark Forest and trees along the M5 East would be destroyed for these projects. Some of these, such as the endangered flora and fauna, were species that the RMS was legally obliged to maintain and protect as part of construction for the M5 East. Others, such as the M5 Linear Park and trees lining the noise walls, are spaces the local community has built up over many years after their community was carved up the M5 East. For all of this to be swept aside for this toll road is not only unacceptable – it is undemocratic and a grave violation of the government's environmental and legal responsibilities.

There is already flooding at St Peters during heavy rainfalls. Councils have already found that the flooding modelling is not acceptable for the M4 East and the same approach has been used for the New M5.

The proponent has lied about how much of Sydney Park was needed for the New M5. It is disgraceful that the City Council only became aware that some of its land would be acquired well after this EIS was lodged. Sydney Park is a crucial regional park and will be significantly impacted by WestConnex New M5. Other parks such as Beverly Grove Park, the M5 Linear Park, Camdenville Park will also be permanently or temporarily destroyed, along with thousands of trees along the route. The NSW government should be preserving green space and vegetation, not destroying it.

I am aware that independent traffic experts have not access to full information about the assumptions on which traffic modelling. The proponents must be instructed to fully respond to independent experts who have been commissioned by Councils or are academic researchers and to make their models available. AECOM and RMS openly admit that they have collaborated on the modelling. Their claims must be fully and independently scrutinised. When the living conditions of thousands of residents and billions of dollars of public money are at stake, it is not acceptable for a government department or private company to keep such a model secret.

The planning processes surrounding this project and WestConnex as a whole have been utterly corrupted. For example, key parts of the business case remain hidden from public scrutiny, even though it is being funded by taxpayer money. Homes and businesses are being forcibly acquired, multi-million and/or billion-dollar contracts have been let, and construction works have occurred place before any planning approvals are granted for this project. The entire WestConnex, including this project, has been characterised by poor governance, and a complete lack of transparency and accountability. Community consultation has also taken place only after detailed plans have been drawn up, so the general public has little to no input on a project that will affect hundreds of thousands of people's lives for many years to come.

If this project and other parts of WestConnex go ahead, western and south-west Sydney residents will be forced into even greater car dependency and paying large tolls to use this road. It is unacceptable that no attempt is made in this EIS to assess the impact alternatives such as increasing public transport capacity and connections within these areas would have on reducing traffic congestion and improving access to jobs for people in these suburbs.

I therefore ask that you reject this proposal, publish my name and submission in accordance with the undertaking on your website, and provide a written response to each of the objections I have raised.

Yours sincerely,

Mike Eng

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Gemma Cruzado [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, 27 January 2016 11:53 PM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

Attn: Secretary, re: WestConnex New M5 EIS, project number SSI 14_6788

I strongly object to this project and the entire WestConnex of which this is part, and ask that you reject this proposal on the basis of this environmental impact statement (EIS).

Global experience and research has shown conclusively that these kinds of toll road mega-projects are hugely expensive and counterproductive. WestConnex will increase air pollution and traffic for thousands of residents and workers, and expose NSW taxpayers to unacceptably high levels of financial risk. Even the EISs produced for the various stages of WestConnex show it is not a long-term solution to Sydney's congestion problem.

I also strongly object to a number of specific aspects of this EIS, and I expect you to publish this submission and send me a written response to each of the objections I have outlined below.

AECOM, which has a record of failed traffic modeling, has been paid $13 million of taxpayer money to complete this EIS even though it has been awarded other WestConnex contracts that depend on the project going ahead. This is an utterly unacceptable conflict of interest. The public cannot trust that this EIS properly and fully investigates the true economic, environmental and social impacts of this project, and indeed the poor quality of this document reflects this. The EIS is riddled with errors, basic omissions, superficial analyses, and opaque modelling, and should be rejected on this basis alone.

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In fact the whole WestConnex has been characterised by a lack of transparency and accountability and secrecy. This is unacceptable for any project funded by taxpayer money, let alone a massive one that would see communities and endangered species destroyed, thousands of people evicted from their family homes and businesses, and billions of dollars of public money diverted from projects that would benefit NSW more.

It is alarming that costs for this taxpayer-funded project are blowing out at the rate of more than $2 billion a year. When WestConnex was announced in 2012, it was one toll road with a price tag of $10 billion; it is now a series of toll road projects that encompasses WestConnex and additional projects such as the Southern Extension and Sydney Gateway that will now cost $16.8 billion. At this rate the final price tag will be well in excess of $20 billion. The flaws and optimistic assumptions in the traffic modeling also mean that toll revenue is likely to be significantly lower than forecast. AECOM has a history of providing over-optimistic traffic forecasts for toll roads, resulting in previous financial failures (e.g. Clem7 in Brisbane).

It is quite clear that this project will provide no solution to traffic congestion, as the EIS shows that several intersections across the project route will remain at Level of Service F (i.e. the worst possible level, and the one that is indicative of system failure) after the project.

Far from easing congestion, this project will worsen it by pouring traffic onto the local road network in the inner west, western and south-west Sydney. For example, even the project proponents admit that only 80% of the traffic expected to pour out of the St Peters Interchange can be absorbed within the existing road network. No attempt is made in this EIS to assess how this issue will be dealt with if the M4-M5 link, Sydney Gateway and Southern Extension are not built. Considering none of these projects are currently designed, and at least some are unfunded, this is an extremely serious failing.

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Yours sincerely,

Gemma Cruzado

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Roy Balsdon [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, 27 January 2016 11:49 PM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

Attn: Secretary, re: WestConnex New M5 EIS, project number SSI 14_6788

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The planning processes surrounding this project and WestConnex as a whole have been utterly corrupted. For example, key parts of the business case remain hidden from public scrutiny, even though it is being funded by taxpayer money. Homes and businesses are being forcibly acquired, multi-million and/or billion-dollar contracts have been let, and construction works have occurred place before any planning approvals are granted for this project. The entire WestConnex, including this project, has been characterised by poor governance, and a complete lack of transparency and accountability. Community consultation has also taken place only after detailed plans have been drawn up, so the general public has little to no input on a project that will affect hundreds of thousands of people's lives for many years to come.

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I therefore ask that you reject this proposal, publish my name and submission in accordance with the undertaking on your website, and provide a written response to each of the objections I have raised.

Yours sincerely,

Roy Balsdon

[redacted]

From: Dale Price [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, 27 January 2016 11:48 PM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

Attn: Secretary, re: WestConnex New M5 EIS, project number SSI 14_6788

I strongly object to this project and the entire WestConnex of which this is part, and ask that you reject this proposal on the basis of this environmental impact statement (EIS).

Global experience and research has shown conclusively that these kinds of toll road mega-projects are hugely expensive and counterproductive. WestConnex will increase air pollution and traffic for thousands of residents and workers, and expose NSW taxpayers to unacceptably high levels of financial risk. Even the EISs produced for the various stages of WestConnex show it is not a long-term solution to Sydney's congestion problem.

I also strongly object to a number of specific aspects of this EIS, and I expect you to publish this submission and send me a written response to each of the objections I have outlined below.

AECOM, which has a record of failed traffic modeling, has been paid $13 million of taxpayer money to complete this EIS even though it has been awarded other WestConnex contracts that depend on the project going ahead. This is an utterly unacceptable conflict of interest. The public cannot trust that this EIS properly and fully investigates the true economic, environmental and social impacts of this project, and indeed the poor quality of this document reflects this. The EIS is riddled with errors, basic omissions, superficial analyses, and opaque modelling, and should be rejected on this basis alone.

Billions of dollars of construction contracts have been let for this project before this EIS was lodged. This casts huge doubts on the legitimacy of the community consultation process, and places unreasonable pressure on the Dept of Planning and Environment to approve this project regardless of its flaws.

No business case was released until late 2015, and was only released after huge public pressure on the NSW Government to do so. Even now, the document released contains so many redactions that it is impossible for anyone to independently assess it – particularly as the key redactions involve the crucial cost and revenue figures. What is the point of releasing a business case that doesn't contain this information? It is little more than yet another expensive piece of publicly funded advertising for this project that adds nothing in the way of accountability.

In fact the whole WestConnex has been characterised by a lack of transparency and accountability and secrecy. This is unacceptable for any project funded by taxpayer money, let alone a massive one that would see communities and endangered species destroyed, thousands of people evicted from their family homes and businesses, and billions of dollars of public money diverted from projects that would benefit NSW more.

It is alarming that costs for this taxpayer-funded project are blowing out at the rate of more than $2 billion a year. When WestConnex was announced in 2012, it was one toll road with a price tag of $10 billion; it is now a series of toll road projects that encompasses WestConnex and additional projects such as the Southern Extension and Sydney Gateway that will now cost $16.8 billion. At this rate the final price tag will be well in excess of $20 billion. The flaws and optimistic assumptions in the traffic modeling also mean that toll revenue is likely to be significantly lower than forecast. AECOM has a history of providing over-optimistic traffic forecasts for toll roads, resulting in previous financial failures (e.g. Clem7 in Brisbane).

It is quite clear that this project will provide no solution to traffic congestion, as the EIS shows that several intersections across the project route will remain at Level of Service F (i.e. the worst possible level, and the one that is indicative of system failure) after the project.

Far from easing congestion, this project will worsen it by pouring traffic onto the local road network in the inner west, western and south-west Sydney. For example, even the project proponents admit that only 80% of the traffic expected to pour out of the St Peters Interchange can be absorbed within the existing road network. No attempt is made in this EIS to assess how this issue will be dealt with if the M4-M5 link, Sydney Gateway and Southern Extension are not built. Considering none of these projects are currently designed, and at least some are unfunded, this is an extremely serious failing.

Independent transport modelling experts have found scores of problems with the application of the WestConnex Road and Traffic Model, which has not been released for scrutiny. It would be negligent for any government to go ahead with a project based on uncertain predictions.

Thousands of residents and workers will be exposed to health impacts in all areas where demolition, earthworks, construction and removal activities. This includes communities in Arncliffe, Kingsgrove, Beverly Hills, St Peters and Alexandria. These health risks are rated as HIGH for all areas. Mitigation is recommended, but no firm information is available about who might receive this and what it might be. Instead, decisions are put off until after approval – and in some cases, the beginning of construction. This is completely indefensible and communities cannot be forced to accept this.

The suggestion that tunneling activities would need to be conducted 24 hours per day, seven days a week – including associated activities such as spoil handling and haulage – is not justified. There are also no clear plans in this EIS to show where millions of cubic metres of spoil will be deposited in communities in western Sydney. None of these communities have been given information or consulted about these impacts. This is unacceptable.

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homes. This is not acceptable, particularly given the collapse of buildings that took place during the Lane Cove Tunnel's construction, and the legal action residents above Brisbane's Airport Link are now being forced to take after experiencing property damage.

The air quality study shows that some communities will be exposed to increased doses of dangerous pollution, especially those living close to surface roads. Many residents along the proposed route are already exposed to levels of PM2.5 particles that exceed national guidelines, yet the EIS predicts that these levels will only worsen. I note that there is no safe level of exposure to fine particulate matter, and I wholeheartedly reject any project that would sacrifice the health of some citizens in order to deliver unproven and highly disputed 'benefits' to others.

Scientific experts agree there is no safe level of fine particle pollution. Rather than aiming to shift dangerous pollution from area to another, the government should be finding cleaner transport solutions that do not leave residents living beside polluted roads or unfiltered pollution stacks – no matter where they live.

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The noise assessment shows that hundreds of homes will experience noise above acceptable levels. In fact the real impact is likely to be far worse than the results provided in this EIS, because noise monitoring was only done for one location at Beverly Hills and one in St Peters where only 30% of results could be included. Such limited evidence provides the community with no confidence in the conclusions reached in this EIS. Independent experts have also reported that some of the tables are inaccurate in the noise report and are therefore not reliable.

In addition, the noise monitoring performed in this EIS has been too limited to properly assess the massive noise that will be generated by construction and operation of this project, and the impact it will have on the hundreds of thousands of Sydney residents who would be exposed to and affected by it.

The project will cause immense social harm. It will destroy long-established communities. It will cause an increase in air pollution-related deaths and illnesses. The increase in air pollution will inhibit lung and nervous system development in children. There are numerous ways of spending $17 billion that would deliver a much greater social and economic benefit, and would not cause so much destruction. Such alternatives are barely mentioned in this EIS and have certainly not been analysed as required by the project SEARs.

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Yours sincerely,

Dale Price

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Cathy Peters [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, 27 January 2016 11:46 PM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

Attn: Secretary, re: WestConnex New M5 EIS, project number SSI 14_6788

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Many local roads that are linked directly to the project scope have not been properly modelled for traffic impacts - some key roads in adjoining suburbs have not been modelled at all. This does not satisfy the demands of the SEARS and fails to give a reliable assessment of the impacts of the proposal.

Independent transport modelling experts have found scores of problems with the application of the WestConnex Road and Traffic Model, which has not been released for scrutiny. It would be negligent for any government to go ahead with a project based on uncertain predictions.

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Yours sincerely,

Cathy Peters

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: mandy assi [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, 27 January 2016 11:42 PM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

Attn: Secretary, re: WestConnex New M5 EIS, project number SSI 14_6788

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The planning processes surrounding this project and WestConnex as a whole have been utterly corrupted. For example, key parts of the business case remain hidden from public scrutiny, even though it is being funded by taxpayer money. Homes and businesses are being forcibly acquired, multi-million and/or billion-dollar contracts have been let, and construction works have occurred place before any planning approvals are granted for this project. The entire WestConnex, including this project, has been characterised by poor governance, and a complete lack of transparency and accountability. Community consultation has also taken place only after detailed plans have been drawn up, so the general public has little to no input on a project that will affect hundreds of thousands of people's lives for many years to come.

If this project and other parts of WestConnex go ahead, western and south-west Sydney residents will be forced into even greater car dependency and paying large tolls to use this road. It is unacceptable that no attempt is made in this EIS to assess the impact alternatives such as increasing public transport capacity and connections within these areas would have on reducing traffic congestion and improving access to jobs for people in these suburbs.

I therefore ask that you reject this proposal, publish my name and submission in accordance with the undertaking on your website, and provide a written response to each of the objections I have raised.

Yours sincerely,

mandy assi

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Kell Derrig-Hall [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, 27 January 2016 11:40 PM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

Attn: Secretary, re: WestConnex New M5 EIS, project number SSI 14_6788

I strongly object to this project and the entire WestConnex of which this is part, and ask that you reject this proposal on the basis of this environmental impact statement (EIS).

Global experience and research has shown conclusively that these kinds of toll road mega-projects are hugely expensive and counterproductive. WestConnex will increase air pollution and traffic for thousands of residents and workers, and expose NSW taxpayers to unacceptably high levels of financial risk. Even the EISs produced for the various stages of WestConnex show it is not a long-term solution to Sydney's congestion problem.

I also strongly object to a number of specific aspects of this EIS, and I expect you to publish this submission and send me a written response to each of the objections I have outlined below.

AECOM, which has a record of failed traffic modeling, has been paid $13 million of taxpayer money to complete this EIS even though it has been awarded other WestConnex contracts that depend on the project going ahead. This is an utterly unacceptable conflict of interest. The public cannot trust that this EIS properly and fully investigates the true economic, environmental and social impacts of this project, and indeed the poor quality of this document reflects this. The EIS is riddled with errors, basic omissions, superficial analyses, and opaque modelling, and should be rejected on this basis alone.

Billions of dollars of construction contracts have been let for this project before this EIS was lodged. This casts huge doubts on the legitimacy of the community consultation process, and places unreasonable pressure on the Dept of Planning and Environment to approve this project regardless of its flaws.

No business case was released until late 2015, and was only released after huge public pressure on the NSW Government to do so. Even now, the document released contains so many redactions that it is impossible for anyone to independently assess it – particularly as the key redactions involve the crucial cost and revenue figures. What is the point of releasing a business case that doesn't contain this information? It is little more than yet another expensive piece of publicly funded advertising for this project that adds nothing in the way of accountability.

In fact the whole WestConnex has been characterised by a lack of transparency and accountability and secrecy. This is unacceptable for any project funded by taxpayer money, let alone a massive one that would see communities and endangered species destroyed, thousands of people evicted from their family homes and businesses, and billions of dollars of public money diverted from projects that would benefit NSW more.

It is alarming that costs for this taxpayer-funded project are blowing out at the rate of more than $2 billion a year. When WestConnex was announced in 2012, it was one toll road with a price tag of $10 billion; it is now a series of toll road projects that encompasses WestConnex and additional projects such as the Southern Extension and Sydney Gateway that will now cost $16.8 billion. At this rate the final price tag will be well in excess of $20 billion. The flaws and optimistic assumptions in the traffic modeling also mean that toll revenue is likely to be significantly lower than forecast. AECOM has a history of providing over-optimistic traffic forecasts for toll roads, resulting in previous financial failures (e.g. Clem7 in Brisbane).

It is quite clear that this project will provide no solution to traffic congestion, as the EIS shows that several intersections across the project route will remain at Level of Service F (i.e. the worst possible level, and the one that is indicative of system failure) after the project.

Far from easing congestion, this project will worsen it by pouring traffic onto the local road network in the inner west, western and south-west Sydney. For example, even the project proponents admit that only 80% of the traffic expected to pour out of the St Peters Interchange can be absorbed within the existing road network. No attempt is made in this EIS to assess how this issue will be dealt with if the M4-M5 link, Sydney Gateway and Southern Extension are not built. Considering none of these projects are currently designed, and at least some are unfunded, this is an extremely serious failing.

Independent transport modelling experts have found scores of problems with the application of the WestConnex Road and Traffic Model, which has not been released for scrutiny. It would be negligent for any government to go ahead with a project based on uncertain predictions.

Thousands of residents and workers will be exposed to health impacts in all areas where demolition, earthworks, construction and removal activities. This includes communities in Arncliffe, Kingsgrove, Beverly Hills, St Peters and Alexandria. These health risks are rated as HIGH for all areas. Mitigation is recommended, but no firm information is available about who might receive this and what it might be. Instead, decisions are put off until after approval – and in some cases, the beginning of construction. This is completely indefensible and communities cannot be forced to accept this.

The suggestion that tunneling activities would need to be conducted 24 hours per day, seven days a week – including associated activities such as spoil handling and haulage – is not justified. There are also no clear plans in this EIS to show where millions of cubic metres of spoil will be deposited in communities in western Sydney. None of these communities have been given information or consulted about these impacts. This is unacceptable.

Tunnelling would cause vibration and damage to homes. The EIS says it will only be for a "short period", but does not say what this short period is. In some cases, tunnels and tunnelling would take place around 20m below people's

homes. This is not acceptable, particularly given the collapse of buildings that took place during the Lane Cove Tunnel's construction, and the legal action residents above Brisbane's Airport Link are now being forced to take after experiencing property damage.

The air quality study shows that some communities will be exposed to increased doses of dangerous pollution, especially those living close to surface roads. Many residents along the proposed route are already exposed to levels of PM2.5 particles that exceed national guidelines, yet the EIS predicts that these levels will only worsen. I note that there is no safe level of exposure to fine particulate matter, and I wholeheartedly reject any project that would sacrifice the health of some citizens in order to deliver unproven and highly disputed 'benefits' to others.

Scientific experts agree there is no safe level of fine particle pollution. Rather than aiming to shift dangerous pollution from area to another, the government should be finding cleaner transport solutions that do not leave residents living beside polluted roads or unfiltered pollution stacks – no matter where they live.

The analysis of alternatives provided by AECOM in this EIS provides no solid evidence for the conclusions drawn. No scenarios have been modeled in which alternative solutions such as traffic management, increased public transport, or a combination of such solutions could reduce traffic congestion more effectively than WestConnex.

The noise assessment shows that hundreds of homes will experience noise above acceptable levels. In fact the real impact is likely to be far worse than the results provided in this EIS, because noise monitoring was only done for one location at Beverly Hills and one in St Peters where only 30% of results could be included. Such limited evidence provides the community with no confidence in the conclusions reached in this EIS. Independent experts have also reported that some of the tables are inaccurate in the noise report and are therefore not reliable.

In addition, the noise monitoring performed in this EIS has been too limited to properly assess the massive noise that will be generated by construction and operation of this project, and the impact it will have on the hundreds of thousands of Sydney residents who would be exposed to and affected by it.

The project will cause immense social harm. It will destroy long-established communities. It will cause an increase in air pollution-related deaths and illnesses. The increase in air pollution will inhibit lung and nervous system development in children. There are numerous ways of spending $17 billion that would deliver a much greater social and economic benefit, and would not cause so much destruction. Such alternatives are barely mentioned in this EIS and have certainly not been analysed as required by the project SEARs.

Community parks, an endangered Green and Golden Bell Frog colony, critically endangered Cooks River Castlereagh Ironbark Forest and trees along the M5 East would be destroyed for these projects. Some of these, such as the endangered flora and fauna, were species that the RMS was legally obliged to maintain and protect as part of construction for the M5 East. Others, such as the M5 Linear Park and trees lining the noise walls, are spaces the local community has built up over many years after their community was carved up the M5 East. For all of this to be swept aside for this toll road is not only unacceptable – it is undemocratic and a grave violation of the government's environmental and legal responsibilities.

There is already flooding at St Peters during heavy rainfalls. Councils have already found that the flooding modelling is not acceptable for the M4 East and the same approach has been used for the New M5.

The proponent has lied about how much of Sydney Park was needed for the New M5. It is disgraceful that the City Council only became aware that some of its land would be acquired well after this EIS was lodged. Sydney Park is a crucial regional park and will be significantly impacted by WestConnex New M5. Other parks such as Beverly Grove Park, the M5 Linear Park, Camdenville Park will also be permanently or temporarily destroyed, along with thousands of trees along the route. The NSW government should be preserving green space and vegetation, not destroying it.

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The planning processes surrounding this project and WestConnex as a whole have been utterly corrupted. For example, key parts of the business case remain hidden from public scrutiny, even though it is being funded by taxpayer money. Homes and businesses are being forcibly acquired, multi-million and/or billion-dollar contracts have been let, and construction works have occurred place before any planning approvals are granted for this project. The entire WestConnex, including this project, has been characterised by poor governance, and a complete lack of transparency and accountability. Community consultation has also taken place only after detailed plans have been drawn up, so the general public has little to no input on a project that will affect hundreds of thousands of people's lives for many years to come.

If this project and other parts of WestConnex go ahead, western and south-west Sydney residents will be forced into even greater car dependency and paying large tolls to use this road. It is unacceptable that no attempt is made in this EIS to assess the impact alternatives such as increasing public transport capacity and connections within these areas would have on reducing traffic congestion and improving access to jobs for people in these suburbs.

I therefore ask that you reject this proposal, publish my name and submission in accordance with the undertaking on your website, and provide a written response to each of the objections I have raised.

Yours sincerely,

Kell Derrig-Hall

From: Sammiee Carter [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, 27 January 2016 11:34 PM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

Attn: Secretary, re: WestConnex New M5 EIS, project number SSI 14_6788

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I therefore ask that you reject this proposal, publish my name and submission in accordance with the undertaking on your website, and provide a written response to each of the objections I have raised.

Yours sincerely,

Sammiee Carter

[redacted]

From: Frankie Symes [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, 27 January 2016 11:28 PM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

Attn: Secretary, re: WestConnex New M5 EIS, project number SSI 14_6788

I strongly object to this project and the entire WestConnex of which this is part, and ask that you reject this proposal on the basis of this environmental impact statement (EIS).

Global experience and research has shown conclusively that these kinds of toll road mega-projects are hugely expensive and counterproductive. WestConnex will increase air pollution and traffic for thousands of residents and workers, and expose NSW taxpayers to unacceptably high levels of financial risk. Even the EISs produced for the various stages of WestConnex show it is not a long-term solution to Sydney's congestion problem.

I also strongly object to a number of specific aspects of this EIS, and I expect you to publish this submission and send me a written response to each of the objections I have outlined below.

The flaws and optimistic assumptions in the traffic modelling mean that toll revenue is likely to be significantly lower than forecast. AECOM has a history of providing over-optimistic traffic forecasts for toll roads, resulting in previous financial failures (e.g. Clem7 in Brisbane).

Billions of dollars of construction contracts have been let for this project before this EIS was lodged. This casts huge doubts on the legitimacy of the community consultation process, and places unreasonable pressure on the Dept of Planning and Environment to approve this project regardless of its flaws.

The average daily travel time in Sydney has been stable at about 80 minutes per person for decades, while the average trip distance has increased substantially. In this time, billions have been spent on tollways. Travellers are spending more than ever on tolls, yet are not spending any less time travelling. Instead of encouraging costly road-based sprawl, the NSW Government should be investing in more sustainable transport solutions, and in developing economic opportunities outside of the inner city so that more people who live outside of central Sydney can work closer to home instead of being locked into long commutes.

The New M5 would cause costly traffic chaos throughout the inner west and south-west Sydney. It is unacceptable that no traffic modelling was only done past two intersections after the end of the project.

Experts at the EIS exhibition sessions gave contradictory advice about traffic modelling. All traffic modelling should be transparently and independently tested, particularly because AECOM has a demonstrably poor record in traffic modelling.

Independent transport modelling experts have found scores of problems with the application of the WestConnex Road and Traffic Model, which has not been released for scrutiny. It would be negligent for any government to go ahead with a project based on uncertain predictions.

The roads around the St Peters interchange are already at an unacceptable Level of Service and are getting worse because of in-fill developments not allowed for by the EIS, including Green Square, Ashmore, Waterloo Estate and Central 2 Eveleigh. With an extra 150,000 people in an area of a few square kilometres, this is going to be the most densely populated area in Australia. There is no evidence that this EIS has factored in this huge increase in density.

However, the EIS clearly demonstrates that the traffic on roads around the St Peters Interchange will deteriorate as a result of WestConnex, as well as already heavily congested roads in Bexley, Rockdale and Brighton-Le-Sands. It also projects that the existing M5 and New M5 combined will end up taking less traffic now than the Cross City Tunnel, which was a financial disaster, as drivers 'rat-run' to avoid the tolls.

What is even more worrying is that the proponent now concedes that it cannot make its traffic model work without other, unfunded toll road projects. What happens if or when these projects do not proceed? This EIS does not say, so the public does not have a chance to form a view or comment.

AECOM was paid $13 million of taxpayer money to complete this EIS, despite its conflict of interest (it has other WestConnex contracts that depend on the project going ahead). This is an unacceptable given that this EIS is supposed to provide an objective assessment of the project impacts. The public cannot trust that this EIS properly and fully investigates the true economic, environmental and social impacts of this project, and indeed the poor quality of this document reflects this. It contains many errors, omissions, superficial analyses, and opaque models, and should be rejected on this basis alone.

The suggestion that tunnelling activities would need to be conducted 24 hours per day, seven days a week – including associated activities such as spoil handling and haulage – is not justified. This will place great pressure on significant numbers of nearby residents throughout day and night-time periods.

The EIS repeatedly says that threats to the liveable environment of residents during construction and operation would be subject to plans developed later. Mitigation is recommended in many instances, but no firm information is available about who might receive this and what it might be. Instead, decisions are put off until after approval – and in some cases the beginning of construction. This is completely indefensible and communities cannot be forced to accept this. The whole point of an EIS is to assess the impact of the project, so these plans should have been made available in this EIS.

The method used in this EIS to measure air quality has not been used in Australia before and cannot be verified by the NSW EPA. I note that there will be an increase in dangerous pollution in some areas close to the tollway portals and near roads with increased traffic. It is not acceptable to me that a government should deliberately place the health of citizens in jeopardy.

I particularly object to tollway portals and increased traffic being so close to local schools. I note that fine particle pollution can cause lung cancer and is particularly dangerous for the lungs of growing children. I support the parents of local schools who have requested an extended period of time after school returns at the end of January 2016 in which to seek independent advice.

The whole WestConnex system will increase greenhouse gas emissions in Sydney at a time when we should be doing all we can to reduce them. I am not convinced by a method of analysis that does not look at alternatives but instead compares the New M5 project against a 'do nothing' scenario to claim a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.

No credible authority in the world today would suggest that building huge urban motorways is the solution to cutting national greenhouse emissions, or that increases in vehicle kilometres travelled (VKT) would somehow result in a net reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. Yet this is exactly what the proponent is claiming in this EIS. I object to this flawed analysis.

The analysis of alternatives provided by AECOM in this EIS provides no solid evidence for its conclusions. Potential alternatives that could have provided more effective, sustainable and cost-effective ways of easing congestion have been ignored. This failure to meet the project SEARs should also be reason enough to reject the proposal.

The noise assessment shows that hundreds of homes will experience noise above acceptable levels. The real impact is likely to be far worse, because noise monitoring was only conducted at a very limited level for this EIS in Beverly Hills and St Peters, and did not properly assess the massive noise that will be generated by construction and operation of this project. Independent experts have also reported that some of the tables are inaccurate in the noise report and are therefore not reliable.

The social impact study is little more than a description of the project, rather than an assessment of its impacts. It is insulting to communities where hundreds of tenants and owners have lost homes and businesses, and others will live in decimated communities. For example, the impact of forced acquisition of scores of homes in St Peters on the families affected and the close-knit community that will be fractured as a result is merely briefly described and not assessed. I am not aware of any affected homeowner that was surveyed or even contacted by the authors for this study, which is a gross failing on the part of AECOM.

Residents affected by compulsory acquisitions are also being offered below-market prices for their homes and businesses, which has caused additional and completely unnecessary distress and trauma for the owners. I find it disturbing that the NSW Government was warned three years ago that the compulsory acquisition process was unfair to those whose properties were being forcibly taken, yet has both failed to make the changes recommended and actively suppressed the report that handed down these findings.

Community parks, an endangered Green and Golden Bell Frog colony, critically endangered Cooks River Castlereagh Ironbark Forest and trees along the M5 East would be destroyed for these projects. Some of these, such as the endangered flora and fauna, were species that the RMS was legally obliged to maintain and protect as part of construction for the M5 East. Others, such as the M5 Linear Park and trees lining the noise walls, are spaces the local community has built up over many years after their community was carved up for the M5 East. For all of this to be swept aside for this toll road is not only unacceptable – it is undemocratic and a violation of the government's environmental and legal responsibilities.

The RMS has lied about how much of Sydney Park was needed for the New M5. It is disgraceful that the City Council only became aware that some of its land would be acquired well after this EIS was lodged.

Thousands of trees along the route in Beverly Grove Park, the M5 Linear Park and other areas are also being destroyed to make way for a tollway that even the EIS shows won't solve traffic congestion. The NSW government should be preserving green space and vegetation, not destroying it.

The planning processes surrounding this project and WestConnex as a whole have been utterly corrupted. For example, key parts of the business case remain hidden from public scrutiny, even though it is being funded by taxpayer money. Homes and businesses are being forcibly acquired, multi-million and/or billion-dollar contracts have been let, and construction works have occurred place before any planning approvals are granted for this project. The entire WestConnex, including this project, has been characterised by poor governance, and a complete lack of transparency and accountability. Community consultation has also taken place only after detailed plans have been drawn up, so the general public has little to no input on a project that will affect hundreds of thousands of people's lives for many years to come.

This project will see roads expanded to within metres of residents' homes, which is outrageous. I am aware that in cases in St Peters and Alexandria, roads being widened for WestConnex will be less than two metres of family homes, and that young children will have more than 50,000 cars and trucks a day going right past their windows. This is absolutely unacceptable.

There are no clear plans of where millions of cubic metres of spoil will be deposited in communities in western Sydney. None of these communities have been given information or consulted about these impacts. This is unacceptable.

If this project and other parts of WestConnex go ahead, the residents of western and south-west Sydney will be forced into even greater car dependency and paying large tolls to use this road. It is unacceptable that no attempt is made in this EIS to assess the impact alternatives such as increasing public transport capacity and connections within these areas would have on reducing traffic congestion and improving access to jobs for people in these suburbs.

I therefore ask that you reject this proposal, publish my name and submission in accordance with the undertaking on your website, and provide a written response to each of the objections I have raised.

Yours sincerely,

Frankie Symes

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Mervat Chemuel [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, 27 January 2016 11:23 PM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

Attn: Secretary, re: WestConnex New M5 EIS, project number SSI 14_6788

I strongly object to this project and the entire WestConnex of which this is part, and ask that you reject this proposal on the basis of this environmental impact statement (EIS).

Global experience and research has shown conclusively that these kinds of toll road mega-projects are hugely expensive and counterproductive. WestConnex will increase air pollution and traffic for thousands of residents and workers, and expose NSW taxpayers to unacceptably high levels of financial risk. Even the EISs produced for the various stages of WestConnex show it is not a long-term solution to Sydney's congestion problem.

I also strongly object to a number of specific aspects of this EIS, and I expect you to publish this submission and send me a written response to each of the objections I have outlined below.

AECOM, which has a record of failed traffic modeling, has been paid $13 million of taxpayer money to complete this EIS even though it has been awarded other WestConnex contracts that depend on the project going ahead. This is an utterly unacceptable conflict of interest. The public cannot trust that this EIS properly and fully investigates the true economic, environmental and social impacts of this project, and indeed the poor quality of this document reflects this. The EIS is riddled with errors, basic omissions, superficial analyses, and opaque modelling, and should be rejected on this basis alone.

Billions of dollars of construction contracts have been let for this project before this EIS was lodged. This casts huge doubts on the legitimacy of the community consultation process, and places unreasonable pressure on the Dept of Planning and Environment to approve this project regardless of its flaws.

No business case was released until late 2015, and was only released after huge public pressure on the NSW Government to do so. Even now, the document released contains so many redactions that it is impossible for anyone to independently assess it – particularly as the key redactions involve the crucial cost and revenue figures. What is the point of releasing a business case that doesn't contain this information? It is little more than yet another expensive piece of publicly funded advertising for this project that adds nothing in the way of accountability.

In fact the whole WestConnex has been characterised by a lack of transparency and accountability and secrecy. This is unacceptable for any project funded by taxpayer money, let alone a massive one that would see communities and endangered species destroyed, thousands of people evicted from their family homes and businesses, and billions of dollars of public money diverted from projects that would benefit NSW more.

It is alarming that costs for this taxpayer-funded project are blowing out at the rate of more than $2 billion a year. When WestConnex was announced in 2012, it was one toll road with a price tag of $10 billion; it is now a series of toll road projects that encompasses WestConnex and additional projects such as the Southern Extension and Sydney Gateway that will now cost $16.8 billion. At this rate the final price tag will be well in excess of $20 billion. The flaws and optimistic assumptions in the traffic modeling also mean that toll revenue is likely to be significantly lower than forecast. AECOM has a history of providing over-optimistic traffic forecasts for toll roads, resulting in previous financial failures (e.g. Clem7 in Brisbane).

It is quite clear that this project will provide no solution to traffic congestion, as the EIS shows that several intersections across the project route will remain at Level of Service F (i.e. the worst possible level, and the one that is indicative of system failure) after the project.

Far from easing congestion, this project will worsen it by pouring traffic onto the local road network in the inner west, western and south-west Sydney. For example, even the project proponents admit that only 80% of the traffic expected to pour out of the St Peters Interchange can be absorbed within the existing road network. No attempt is made in this EIS to assess how this issue will be dealt with if the M4-M5 link, Sydney Gateway and Southern Extension are not built. Considering none of these projects are currently designed, and at least some are unfunded, this is an extremely serious failing.

Independent transport modelling experts have found scores of problems with the application of the WestConnex Road and Traffic Model, which has not been released for scrutiny. It would be negligent for any government to go ahead with a project based on uncertain predictions.

Thousands of residents and workers will be exposed to health impacts in all areas where demolition, earthworks, construction and removal activities. This includes communities in Arncliffe, Kingsgrove, Beverly Hills, St Peters and Alexandria. These health risks are rated as HIGH for all areas. Mitigation is recommended, but no firm information is available about who might receive this and what it might be. Instead, decisions are put off until after approval – and in some cases, the beginning of construction. This is completely indefensible and communities cannot be forced to accept this.

The suggestion that tunneling activities would need to be conducted 24 hours per day, seven days a week – including associated activities such as spoil handling and haulage – is not justified. There are also no clear plans in this EIS to show where millions of cubic metres of spoil will be deposited in communities in western Sydney. None of these communities have been given information or consulted about these impacts. This is unacceptable.

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homes. This is not acceptable, particularly given the collapse of buildings that took place during the Lane Cove Tunnel's construction, and the legal action residents above Brisbane's Airport Link are now being forced to take after experiencing property damage.

The air quality study shows that some communities will be exposed to increased doses of dangerous pollution, especially those living close to surface roads. Many residents along the proposed route are already exposed to levels of PM2.5 particles that exceed national guidelines, yet the EIS predicts that these levels will only worsen. I note that there is no safe level of exposure to fine particulate matter, and I wholeheartedly reject any project that would sacrifice the health of some citizens in order to deliver unproven and highly disputed 'benefits' to others.

Scientific experts agree there is no safe level of fine particle pollution. Rather than aiming to shift dangerous pollution from area to another, the government should be finding cleaner transport solutions that do not leave residents living beside polluted roads or unfiltered pollution stacks – no matter where they live.

The analysis of alternatives provided by AECOM in this EIS provides no solid evidence for the conclusions drawn. No scenarios have been modeled in which alternative solutions such as traffic management, increased public transport, or a combination of such solutions could reduce traffic congestion more effectively than WestConnex.

The noise assessment shows that hundreds of homes will experience noise above acceptable levels. In fact the real impact is likely to be far worse than the results provided in this EIS, because noise monitoring was only done for one location at Beverly Hills and one in St Peters where only 30% of results could be included. Such limited evidence provides the community with no confidence in the conclusions reached in this EIS. Independent experts have also reported that some of the tables are inaccurate in the noise report and are therefore not reliable.

In addition, the noise monitoring performed in this EIS has been too limited to properly assess the massive noise that will be generated by construction and operation of this project, and the impact it will have on the hundreds of thousands of Sydney residents who would be exposed to and affected by it.

The project will cause immense social harm. It will destroy long-established communities. It will cause an increase in air pollution-related deaths and illnesses. The increase in air pollution will inhibit lung and nervous system development in children. There are numerous ways of spending $17 billion that would deliver a much greater social and economic benefit, and would not cause so much destruction. Such alternatives are barely mentioned in this EIS and have certainly not been analysed as required by the project SEARs.

Community parks, an endangered Green and Golden Bell Frog colony, critically endangered Cooks River Castlereagh Ironbark Forest and trees along the M5 East would be destroyed for these projects. Some of these, such as the endangered flora and fauna, were species that the RMS was legally obliged to maintain and protect as part of construction for the M5 East. Others, such as the M5 Linear Park and trees lining the noise walls, are spaces the local community has built up over many years after their community was carved up the M5 East. For all of this to be swept aside for this toll road is not only unacceptable – it is undemocratic and a grave violation of the government's environmental and legal responsibilities.

There is already flooding at St Peters during heavy rainfalls. Councils have already found that the flooding modelling is not acceptable for the M4 East and the same approach has been used for the New M5.

The proponent has lied about how much of Sydney Park was needed for the New M5. It is disgraceful that the City Council only became aware that some of its land would be acquired well after this EIS was lodged. Sydney Park is a crucial regional park and will be significantly impacted by WestConnex New M5. Other parks such as Beverly Grove Park, the M5 Linear Park, Camdenville Park will also be permanently or temporarily destroyed, along with thousands of trees along the route. The NSW government should be preserving green space and vegetation, not destroying it.

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The planning processes surrounding this project and WestConnex as a whole have been utterly corrupted. For example, key parts of the business case remain hidden from public scrutiny, even though it is being funded by taxpayer money. Homes and businesses are being forcibly acquired, multi-million and/or billion-dollar contracts have been let, and construction works have occurred place before any planning approvals are granted for this project. The entire WestConnex, including this project, has been characterised by poor governance, and a complete lack of transparency and accountability. Community consultation has also taken place only after detailed plans have been drawn up, so the general public has little to no input on a project that will affect hundreds of thousands of people's lives for many years to come.

If this project and other parts of WestConnex go ahead, western and south-west Sydney residents will be forced into even greater car dependency and paying large tolls to use this road. It is unacceptable that no attempt is made in this EIS to assess the impact alternatives such as increasing public transport capacity and connections within these areas would have on reducing traffic congestion and improving access to jobs for people in these suburbs.

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It beggars belief that this project is still going ahead despite the issues that are listed below which the West Connex Action group have supplied to me.

I draw your attention to Sydney Park an asset that is priceless in an urban area such as the Inner West. People come from near and far to access it's amenities. The NSW government is making decisions that will be hard to rectify and wasting billions in the process and trashing this park, which really is a Sydney icon.

The conflict of interests stated below are despicable and the Mike Baird should be ashamed of this deceit.

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The project will cause immense social harm. It will destroy long-established communities. It will cause an increase in air pollution-related deaths and illnesses. The increase in air pollution will inhibit lung and nervous system development in children. There are numerous ways of spending $17 billion that would deliver a much greater social and economic benefit, and would not cause so much destruction. Such alternatives are barely mentioned in this EIS and have certainly not been analysed as required by the project SEARs.

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Yours sincerely,

Hiske Weijers

[redacted]

From: [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, 27 January 2016 11:08 PM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

Attn: Secretary, re: WestConnex New M5 EIS, project number SSI 14_6788

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[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Fadi Zarka [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, 27 January 2016 11:06 PM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

Attn: Secretary, re: WestConnex New M5 EIS, project number SSI 14_6788

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[redacted]

[redacted]

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Sent: Wednesday, 27 January 2016 11:05 PM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

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It is quite clear that this project will provide no solution to traffic congestion, as the EIS shows that several intersections across the project route will remain at Level of Service F (i.e. the worst possible level, and the one that is indicative of system failure) after the project.

Far from easing congestion, this project will worsen it by pouring traffic onto the local road network in the inner west, western and south-west Sydney. For example, even the project proponents admit that only 80% of the traffic expected to pour out of the St Peters Interchange can be absorbed within the existing road network. No attempt is made in this EIS to assess how this issue will be dealt with if the M4-M5 link, Sydney Gateway and Southern Extension are not built. Considering none of these projects are currently designed, and at least some are unfunded, this is an extremely serious failing.

Independent transport modelling experts have found scores of problems with the application of the WestConnex Road and Traffic Model, which has not been released for scrutiny. It would be negligent for any government to go ahead with a project based on uncertain predictions.

Thousands of residents and workers will be exposed to health impacts in all areas where demolition, earthworks, construction and removal activities. This includes communities in Arncliffe, Kingsgrove, Beverly Hills, St Peters and Alexandria. These health risks are rated as HIGH for all areas. Mitigation is recommended, but no firm information is available about who might receive this and what it might be. Instead, decisions are put off until after approval – and in some cases, the beginning of construction. This is completely indefensible and communities cannot be forced to accept this.

The suggestion that tunneling activities would need to be conducted 24 hours per day, seven days a week – including associated activities such as spoil handling and haulage – is not justified. There are also no clear plans in this EIS to show where millions of cubic metres of spoil will be deposited in communities in western Sydney. None of these communities have been given information or consulted about these impacts. This is unacceptable.

Tunnelling would cause vibration and damage to homes. The EIS says it will only be for a "short period", but does not say what this short period is. In some cases, tunnels and tunnelling would take place around 20m below people's

homes. This is not acceptable, particularly given the collapse of buildings that took place during the Lane Cove Tunnel's construction, and the legal action residents above Brisbane's Airport Link are now being forced to take after experiencing property damage.

The air quality study shows that some communities will be exposed to increased doses of dangerous pollution, especially those living close to surface roads. Many residents along the proposed route are already exposed to levels of PM2.5 particles that exceed national guidelines, yet the EIS predicts that these levels will only worsen. I note that there is no safe level of exposure to fine particulate matter, and I wholeheartedly reject any project that would sacrifice the health of some citizens in order to deliver unproven and highly disputed 'benefits' to others.

Scientific experts agree there is no safe level of fine particle pollution. Rather than aiming to shift dangerous pollution from area to another, the government should be finding cleaner transport solutions that do not leave residents living beside polluted roads or unfiltered pollution stacks – no matter where they live.

The analysis of alternatives provided by AECOM in this EIS provides no solid evidence for the conclusions drawn. No scenarios have been modeled in which alternative solutions such as traffic management, increased public transport, or a combination of such solutions could reduce traffic congestion more effectively than WestConnex.

The noise assessment shows that hundreds of homes will experience noise above acceptable levels. In fact the real impact is likely to be far worse than the results provided in this EIS, because noise monitoring was only done for one location at Beverly Hills and one in St Peters where only 30% of results could be included. Such limited evidence provides the community with no confidence in the conclusions reached in this EIS. Independent experts have also reported that some of the tables are inaccurate in the noise report and are therefore not reliable.

In addition, the noise monitoring performed in this EIS has been too limited to properly assess the massive noise that will be generated by construction and operation of this project, and the impact it will have on the hundreds of thousands of Sydney residents who would be exposed to and affected by it.

The project will cause immense social harm. It will destroy long-established communities. It will cause an increase in air pollution-related deaths and illnesses. The increase in air pollution will inhibit lung and nervous system development in children. There are numerous ways of spending $17 billion that would deliver a much greater social and economic benefit, and would not cause so much destruction. Such alternatives are barely mentioned in this EIS and have certainly not been analysed as required by the project SEARs.

Community parks, an endangered Green and Golden Bell Frog colony, critically endangered Cooks River Castlereagh Ironbark Forest and trees along the M5 East would be destroyed for these projects. Some of these, such as the endangered flora and fauna, were species that the RMS was legally obliged to maintain and protect as part of construction for the M5 East. Others, such as the M5 Linear Park and trees lining the noise walls, are spaces the local community has built up over many years after their community was carved up the M5 East. For all of this to be swept aside for this toll road is not only unacceptable – it is undemocratic and a grave violation of the government's environmental and legal responsibilities.

There is already flooding at St Peters during heavy rainfalls. Councils have already found that the flooding modelling is not acceptable for the M4 East and the same approach has been used for the New M5.

The proponent has lied about how much of Sydney Park was needed for the New M5. It is disgraceful that the City Council only became aware that some of its land would be acquired well after this EIS was lodged. Sydney Park is a crucial regional park and will be significantly impacted by WestConnex New M5. Other parks such as Beverly Grove Park, the M5 Linear Park, Camdenville Park will also be permanently or temporarily destroyed, along with thousands of trees along the route. The NSW government should be preserving green space and vegetation, not destroying it.

I am aware that independent traffic experts have not access to full information about the assumptions on which traffic modelling. The proponents must be instructed to fully respond to independent experts who have been commissioned by Councils or are academic researchers and to make their models available. AECOM and RMS openly admit that they have collaborated on the modelling. Their claims must be fully and independently scrutinised. When the living conditions of thousands of residents and billions of dollars of public money are at stake, it is not acceptable for a government department or private company to keep such a model secret.

The planning processes surrounding this project and WestConnex as a whole have been utterly corrupted. For example, key parts of the business case remain hidden from public scrutiny, even though it is being funded by taxpayer money. Homes and businesses are being forcibly acquired, multi-million and/or billion-dollar contracts have been let, and construction works have occurred place before any planning approvals are granted for this project. The entire WestConnex, including this project, has been characterised by poor governance, and a complete lack of transparency and accountability. Community consultation has also taken place only after detailed plans have been drawn up, so the general public has little to no input on a project that will affect hundreds of thousands of people's lives for many years to come.

If this project and other parts of WestConnex go ahead, western and south-west Sydney residents will be forced into even greater car dependency and paying large tolls to use this road. It is unacceptable that no attempt is made in this EIS to assess the impact alternatives such as increasing public transport capacity and connections within these areas would have on reducing traffic congestion and improving access to jobs for people in these suburbs.

I therefore ask that you reject this proposal, publish my name and submission in accordance with the undertaking on your website, and provide a written response to each of the objections I have raised.

Yours sincerely,

Kylie Ellis

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Rhea Liebmann [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, 27 January 2016 10:58 PM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

Attn: Secretary, re: WestConnex New M5 EIS, project number SSI 14_6788

I strongly object to this project and the entire WestConnex of which this is part, and ask that you reject this proposal on the basis of this environmental impact statement (EIS).

Global experience and research has shown conclusively that these kinds of toll road mega-projects are hugely expensive and counterproductive. WestConnex will increase air pollution and traffic for thousands of residents and workers, and expose NSW taxpayers to unacceptably high levels of financial risk. The EISs produced for the various stages of WestConnex confirm it is not a long-term solution to Sydney's congestion problem.

I also strongly object to a number of specific aspects of this EIS, and I expect you to publish this submission and send me a written response to each of the objections I have outlined below.

The flaws and optimistic assumptions in the traffic modelling mean that toll revenue is likely to be significantly lower than forecast. AECOM has a history of providing over-optimistic traffic forecasts for toll roads, resulting in previous financial failures (e.g. Clem7 in Brisbane).

Billions of dollars of construction contracts have been awarded and hundreds of homes compulsorily acquired for this project before this EIS was lodged. This casts huge doubts on the legitimacy of the community consultation process, and places unreasonable pressure on the Dept of Planning and Environment to approve this project regardless of its flaws.

The average daily travel time in Sydney has been stable at about 80 minutes per person for decades, while the average trip distance has increased substantially. In this time, billions have been spent on tollways. Travellers are spending more than ever on tolls, yet are not spending any less time travelling. Instead of encouraging costly road-based sprawl, the NSW Government should be investing in more sustainable transport solutions, and in developing economic opportunities outside of the inner city so that more people who live outside of central Sydney can work closer to home instead of being locked into long commutes.

The New M5 would cause costly traffic chaos throughout the inner west and south-west Sydney. It is unacceptable that no traffic modelling was done past two intersections after the end of the project.

Experts at the EIS exhibition sessions gave contradictory advice about traffic modelling. All traffic modelling should be transparently and independently tested, particularly because AECOM has a demonstrably poor record in traffic modelling.

Independent transport modelling experts have found scores of problems with the application of the WestConnex Road and Traffic Model, which has not been released for scrutiny. It would be negligent for any government to go ahead with a project based on uncertain predictions.

The roads around the St Peters interchange are already at an unacceptable Level of Service and are getting worse because of in-fill developments not allowed for by the EIS, including Green Square, Ashmore, Waterloo Estate and Central 2 Eveleigh. With an extra 150,000 people in an area of a few square kilometres, this is going to be the most densely populated area in Australia. There is no evidence that this EIS has factored in this huge increase in density.

However, the EIS clearly demonstrates that the traffic on roads around the St Peters Interchange will deteriorate as a result of WestConnex, as well as already heavily congested roads in Bexley, Rockdale and Brighton-Le-Sands. It also projects that the existing M5 and New M5 combined will end up taking less traffic now than the Cross City Tunnel, which was a financial disaster, as drivers 'rat-run' to avoid the tolls.

What is even more worrying is that the proponent now concedes that it cannot make its traffic model work without other, unfunded toll road projects. What happens if or when these projects do not proceed? This EIS does not say, so the public does not have a chance to form a view or comment.

AECOM was paid $13 million of taxpayer money to complete this EIS, despite its conflict of interest (it has other WestConnex contracts that depend on the project going ahead). This is unacceptable given that this EIS is supposed to provide an objective assessment of the project impacts. The public cannot trust that this EIS properly and fully investigates the true economic, environmental and social impacts of this project, and indeed the poor quality of this document reflects this. It contains many errors, omissions, superficial analyses, and opaque models, and should be rejected on this basis alone.

The suggestion that tunnelling activities would need to be conducted 24 hours per day, seven days a week – including associated activities such as spoil handling and haulage – is not justified. This will place great pressure on significant numbers of nearby residents throughout day and night-time periods.

The EIS repeatedly says that threats to the liveable environment of residents during construction and operation would be subject to plans developed later. Mitigation is recommended in many instances, but no firm information is available about who might receive this and what it might be. Instead, decisions are put off until after approval – and in some cases the beginning of construction. This is completely indefensible and communities cannot be forced to accept this. The whole point of an EIS is to assess the impact of the project, so these plans should have been made available in this EIS.

The method used in this EIS to measure air quality has not been used in Australia before and cannot be verified by the NSW EPA. I note that there will be an increase in dangerous pollution in some areas close to the tollway portals and near roads with increased traffic. It is not acceptable to me that a government should deliberately place the health of citizens in jeopardy.

I particularly object to tollway portals and increased traffic being so close to local schools. I note that fine particle pollution can cause lung cancer and is particularly dangerous for the lungs of growing children. I support the parents of local schools who have requested an extended period of time after school returns at the end of January 2016 in which to seek independent advice.

The whole WestConnex system will increase greenhouse gas emissions in Sydney at a time when we should be doing all we can to reduce them. I am not convinced by a method of analysis that does not look at alternatives but instead compares the New M5 project against a 'do nothing' scenario to claim a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.

No credible authority in the world today would suggest that building huge urban motorways is the solution to cutting national greenhouse emissions, or that increases in vehicle kilometres travelled (VKT) would somehow result in a net reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. Yet this is exactly what the proponent is claiming in this EIS. I object to this flawed analysis.

The analysis of alternatives provided by AECOM in this EIS provides no solid evidence for its conclusions. Potential alternatives that could have provided more effective, sustainable and cost-effective ways of easing congestion have been ignored. This failure to meet the project SEARs should also be reason enough to reject the proposal.

The noise assessment shows that hundreds of homes will experience noise above acceptable levels. The real impact is likely to be far worse, because noise monitoring was only conducted at a very limited level for this EIS in Beverly Hills and St Peters, and did not properly assess the massive noise that will be generated by construction and operation of this project. Independent experts have also reported that some of the tables are inaccurate in the noise report and are therefore not reliable.

The social impact study is little more than a description of the project, rather than an assessment of its impacts. It is insulting to communities where hundreds of tenants and owners have lost homes and businesses, and others will live in decimated communities. For example, the impact of forced acquisition of scores of homes in St Peters on the families affected and the close-knit community that will be fractured as a result is merely briefly described and not assessed. I am not aware of any affected homeowner that was surveyed or even contacted by the authors for this study, which is a gross failing on the part of AECOM.

Residents affected by compulsory acquisitions are also being offered below-market prices for their homes and businesses, which has caused additional and completely unnecessary distress and trauma for the owners. I find it disturbing that the NSW Government was warned three years ago that the compulsory acquisition process was

unfair to those whose properties were being forcibly taken, yet has both failed to make the changes recommended and actively suppressed the report that handed down these findings.

Community parks, an endangered Green and Golden Bell Frog colony, critically endangered Cooks River Castlereagh Ironbark Forest and trees along the M5 East would be destroyed for these projects. Some of these, such as the endangered flora and fauna, were species that the RMS was legally obliged to maintain and protect as part of construction for the M5 East. Others, such as the M5 Linear Park and trees lining the noise walls, are spaces the local community has built up over many years after their community was carved up for the M5 East. For all of this to be swept aside for this toll road is not only unacceptable – it is undemocratic and a violation of the government's environmental and legal responsibilities.

The RMS has lied about how much of Sydney Park was needed for the New M5. It is disgraceful that the City Council only became aware that some of its land would be acquired well after this EIS was lodged.

Thousands of trees along the route in Beverly Grove Park, the M5 Linear Park and other areas are also being destroyed to make way for a tollway that even the EIS shows won't solve traffic congestion. The NSW government should be preserving green space and vegetation, not destroying it.

The planning processes surrounding this project and WestConnex as a whole have been utterly corrupted. For example, key parts of the business case remain hidden from public scrutiny, even though it is being funded by taxpayer money. Homes and businesses are being forcibly acquired, multi-million and/or billion-dollar contracts have been let, and construction works have occurred place before any planning approvals are granted for this project. The entire WestConnex, including this project, has been characterised by poor governance, and a complete lack of transparency and accountability. Community consultation has also taken place only after detailed plans have been drawn up, so the general public has little to no input on a project that will affect hundreds of thousands of people's lives for many years to come.

This project will see roads expanded to within metres of residents' homes, which is outrageous. I am aware that in cases in St Peters and Alexandria, roads being widened for WestConnex will be less than two metres of family homes, and that young children will have more than 50,000 cars and trucks a day going right past their windows. This is absolutely unacceptable.

There are no clear plans of where millions of cubic metres of spoil will be deposited in communities in western Sydney. None of these communities have been given information or consulted about these impacts. This is unacceptable.

If this project and other parts of WestConnex go ahead, the residents of western and south-west Sydney will be forced into even greater car dependency and paying large tolls to use this road. It is unacceptable that no attempt is made in this EIS to assess the impact alternatives such as increasing public transport capacity and connections within these areas would have on reducing traffic congestion and improving access to jobs for people in these suburbs.

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Yours sincerely,

Rhea Liebmann

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Chris Ellis [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, 27 January 2016 10:56 PM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

Attn: Secretary, re: WestConnex New M5 EIS, project number SSI 14_6788

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Billions of dollars of construction contracts have been let for this project before this EIS was lodged. This casts huge doubts on the legitimacy of the community consultation process, and places unreasonable pressure on the Dept of Planning and Environment to approve this project regardless of its flaws.

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Yours sincerely,

Chris Ellis

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Liliane Malki [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, 27 January 2016 10:56 PM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

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Residents affected by compulsory acquisitions are also being offered below-market prices for their homes and businesses, which has caused additional and completely unnecessary distress and trauma for the owners. I find it disturbing that the NSW Government was warned three years ago that the compulsory acquisition process was unfair to those whose properties were being forcibly taken, yet has both failed to make the changes recommended and actively suppressed the report that handed down these findings.

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The planning processes surrounding this project and WestConnex as a whole have been utterly corrupted. For example, key parts of the business case remain hidden from public scrutiny, even though it is being funded by taxpayer money. Homes and businesses are being forcibly acquired, multi-million and/or billion-dollar contracts have been let, and construction works have occurred place before any planning approvals are granted for this project. The entire WestConnex, including this project, has been characterised by poor governance, and a complete lack of transparency and accountability. Community consultation has also taken place only after detailed plans have been drawn up, so the general public has little to no input on a project that will affect hundreds of thousands of people's lives for many years to come.

This project will see roads expanded to within metres of residents' homes, which is outrageous. I am aware that in cases in St Peters and Alexandria, roads being widened for WestConnex will be less than two metres of family homes, and that young children will have more than 50,000 cars and trucks a day going right past their windows. This is absolutely unacceptable.

There are no clear plans of where millions of cubic metres of spoil will be deposited in communities in western Sydney. None of these communities have been given information or consulted about these impacts. This is unacceptable.

If this project and other parts of WestConnex go ahead, the residents of western and south-west Sydney will be forced into even greater car dependency and paying large tolls to use this road. It is unacceptable that no attempt is made in this EIS to assess the impact alternatives such as increasing public transport capacity and connections within these areas would have on reducing traffic congestion and improving access to jobs for people in these suburbs.

I therefore ask that you reject this proposal, publish my name and submission in accordance with the undertaking on your website, and provide a written response to each of the objections I have raised.

Yours sincerely,

Liliane Malki

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Samantha Sinnayah [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, 27 January 2016 10:53 PM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

Attn: Secretary, re: WestConnex New M5 EIS, project number SSI 14_6788

I strongly object to this project and the entire WestConnex of which this is part, and ask that you reject this proposal on the basis of this environmental impact statement (EIS).

Beside the following statements below from the West Connex Action Group, I personally feel you have given no real thought to how traffic will move through Alexandria. I feel the whole project and it's reporting it's unclear and hidden in long reports. How about some clear and simple community discussions and realistic assessments of what traffic can feasibly pass through the area. Must a whole suburb pay just because you guys can't come up with a better solution?

Global experience and research has shown conclusively that these kinds of toll road mega-projects are hugely expensive and counterproductive. WestConnex will increase air pollution and traffic for thousands of residents and workers, and expose NSW taxpayers to unacceptably high levels of financial risk. Even the EISs produced for the various stages of WestConnex show it is not a long-term solution to Sydney's congestion problem.

I also strongly object to a number of specific aspects of this EIS, and I expect you to publish this submission and send me a written response to each of the objections I have outlined below.

The flaws and optimistic assumptions in the traffic modelling mean that toll revenue is likely to be significantly lower than forecast. AECOM has a history of providing over-optimistic traffic forecasts for toll roads, resulting in previous financial failures (e.g. Clem7 in Brisbane).

Billions of dollars of construction contracts have been let for this project before this EIS was lodged. This casts huge doubts on the legitimacy of the community consultation process, and places unreasonable pressure on the Dept of Planning and Environment to approve this project regardless of its flaws.

The average daily travel time in Sydney has been stable at about 80 minutes per person for decades, while the average trip distance has increased substantially. In this time, billions have been spent on tollways. Travellers are spending more than ever on tolls, yet are not spending any less time travelling. Instead of encouraging costly road-based sprawl, the NSW Government should be investing in more sustainable transport solutions, and in developing

economic opportunities outside of the inner city so that more people who live outside of central Sydney can work closer to home instead of being locked into long commutes.

The New M5 would cause costly traffic chaos throughout the inner west and south-west Sydney. It is unacceptable that no traffic modelling was only done past two intersections after the end of the project.

Experts at the EIS exhibition sessions gave contradictory advice about traffic modelling. All traffic modelling should be transparently and independently tested, particularly because AECOM has a demonstrably poor record in traffic modelling.

Independent transport modelling experts have found scores of problems with the application of the WestConnex Road and Traffic Model, which has not been released for scrutiny. It would be negligent for any government to go ahead with a project based on uncertain predictions.

The roads around the St Peters interchange are already at an unacceptable Level of Service and are getting worse because of in-fill developments not allowed for by the EIS, including Green Square, Ashmore, Waterloo Estate and Central 2 Eveleigh. With an extra 150,000 people in an area of a few square kilometres, this is going to be the most densely populated area in Australia. There is no evidence that this EIS has factored in this huge increase in density.

However, the EIS clearly demonstrates that the traffic on roads around the St Peters Interchange will deteriorate as a result of WestConnex, as well as already heavily congested roads in Bexley, Rockdale and Brighton-Le-Sands. It also projects that the existing M5 and New M5 combined will end up taking less traffic now than the Cross City Tunnel, which was a financial disaster, as drivers 'rat-run' to avoid the tolls.

What is even more worrying is that the proponent now concedes that it cannot make its traffic model work without other, unfunded toll road projects. What happens if or when these projects do not proceed? This EIS does not say, so the public does not have a chance to form a view or comment.

AECOM was paid $13 million of taxpayer money to complete this EIS, despite its conflict of interest (it has other WestConnex contracts that depend on the project going ahead). This is an unacceptable given that this EIS is supposed to provide an objective assessment of the project impacts. The public cannot trust that this EIS properly and fully investigates the true economic, environmental and social impacts of this project, and indeed the poor quality of this document reflects this. It contains many errors, omissions, superficial analyses, and opaque models, and should be rejected on this basis alone.

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Yours sincerely,

Samantha Sinnayah

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Maria Venerina Pedavoli [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, 27 January 2016 10:52 PM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

Attn: Secretary, re: WestConnex New M5 EIS, project number SSI 14_6788

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Sent: Wednesday, 27 January 2016 10:50 PM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

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This project will see roads expanded to within metres of residents' homes, which is outrageous. I am aware that in cases in St Peters and Alexandria, roads being widened for WestConnex will be less than two metres of family homes, and that young children will have more than 50,000 cars and trucks a day going right past their windows. This is absolutely unacceptable.

There are no clear plans of where millions of cubic metres of spoil will be deposited in communities in western Sydney. None of these communities have been given information or consulted about these impacts. This is unacceptable.

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I therefore ask that you reject this proposal, publish my name and submission in accordance with the undertaking on your website, and provide a written response to each of the objections I have raised.

Yours sincerely,

Imran Shahid

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Anthony Krithinakis [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, 27 January 2016 10:44 PM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

Attn: Secretary, re: WestConnex New M5 EIS, project number SSI 14_6788

I strongly object to this project and the entire WestConnex of which this is part, and ask that you reject this proposal on the basis of this environmental impact statement (EIS).

Global experience and research has shown conclusively that these kinds of toll road mega-projects are hugely expensive and counterproductive. WestConnex will increase air pollution and traffic for thousands of residents and workers, and expose NSW taxpayers to unacceptably high levels of financial risk. Even the EISs produced for the various stages of WestConnex show it is not a long-term solution to Sydney's congestion problem.

I also strongly object to a number of specific aspects of this EIS, and I expect you to publish this submission and send me a written response to each of the objections I have outlined below.

The flaws and optimistic assumptions in the traffic modelling mean that toll revenue is likely to be significantly lower than forecast. AECOM has a history of providing over-optimistic traffic forecasts for toll roads, resulting in previous financial failures (e.g. Clem7 in Brisbane).

Billions of dollars of construction contracts have been let for this project before this EIS was lodged. This casts huge doubts on the legitimacy of the community consultation process, and places unreasonable pressure on the Dept of Planning and Environment to approve this project regardless of its flaws.

The average daily travel time in Sydney has been stable at about 80 minutes per person for decades, while the average trip distance has increased substantially. In this time, billions have been spent on tollways. Travellers are spending more than ever on tolls, yet are not spending any less time travelling. Instead of encouraging costly road-based sprawl, the NSW Government should be investing in more sustainable transport solutions, and in developing economic opportunities outside of the inner city so that more people who live outside of central Sydney can work closer to home instead of being locked into long commutes.

The New M5 would cause costly traffic chaos throughout the inner west and south-west Sydney. It is unacceptable that no traffic modelling was only done past two intersections after the end of the project.

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However, the EIS clearly demonstrates that the traffic on roads around the St Peters Interchange will deteriorate as a result of WestConnex, as well as already heavily congested roads in Bexley, Rockdale and Brighton-Le-Sands. It also projects that the existing M5 and New M5 combined will end up taking less traffic now than the Cross City Tunnel, which was a financial disaster, as drivers 'rat-run' to avoid the tolls.

What is even more worrying is that the proponent now concedes that it cannot make its traffic model work without other, unfunded toll road projects. What happens if or when these projects do not proceed? This EIS does not say, so the public does not have a chance to form a view or comment.

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The suggestion that tunnelling activities would need to be conducted 24 hours per day, seven days a week – including associated activities such as spoil handling and haulage – is not justified. This will place great pressure on significant numbers of nearby residents throughout day and night-time periods.

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[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Michelle Ormsby [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, 27 January 2016 10:43 PM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

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Yours sincerely,

Michelle Ormsby

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: vanessa omorogbe [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, 27 January 2016 10:42 PM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

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There are no clear plans of where millions of cubic metres of spoil will be deposited in communities in western Sydney. None of these communities have been given information or consulted about these impacts. This is unacceptable.

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Yours sincerely,

vanessa omorogbe

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Joanna O'Bryan [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, 27 January 2016 10:42 PM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

Attn: Secretary, re: WestConnex New M5 EIS, project number SSI 14_6788

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Global experience and research has shown conclusively that these kinds of toll road mega-projects are hugely expensive and counterproductive. WestConnex will increase air pollution and traffic for thousands of residents and workers, and expose NSW taxpayers to unacceptably high levels of financial risk. Even the EISs produced for the various stages of WestConnex show it is not a long-term solution to Sydney's congestion problem.

I also strongly object to a number of specific aspects of this EIS, and I expect you to publish this submission and send me a written response to each of the objections I have outlined below.

The flaws and optimistic assumptions in the traffic modelling mean that toll revenue is likely to be significantly lower than forecast. AECOM has a history of providing over-optimistic traffic forecasts for toll roads, resulting in previous financial failures (e.g. Clem7 in Brisbane).

Billions of dollars of construction contracts have been let for this project before this EIS was lodged. This casts huge doubts on the legitimacy of the community consultation process, and places unreasonable pressure on the Dept of Planning and Environment to approve this project regardless of its flaws.

The average daily travel time in Sydney has been stable at about 80 minutes per person for decades, while the average trip distance has increased substantially. In this time, billions have been spent on tollways. Travellers are spending more than ever on tolls, yet are not spending any less time travelling. Instead of encouraging costly road-based sprawl, the NSW Government should be investing in more sustainable transport solutions, and in developing economic opportunities outside of the inner city so that more people who live outside of central Sydney can work closer to home instead of being locked into long commutes.

The New M5 would cause costly traffic chaos throughout the inner west and south-west Sydney. It is unacceptable that no traffic modelling was only done past two intersections after the end of the project.

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Independent transport modelling experts have found scores of problems with the application of the WestConnex Road and Traffic Model, which has not been released for scrutiny. It would be negligent for any government to go ahead with a project based on uncertain predictions.

The roads around the St Peters interchange are already at an unacceptable Level of Service and are getting worse because of in-fill developments not allowed for by the EIS, including Green Square, Ashmore, Waterloo Estate and Central 2 Eveleigh. With an extra 150,000 people in an area of a few square kilometres, this is going to be the most densely populated area in Australia. There is no evidence that this EIS has factored in this huge increase in density.

However, the EIS clearly demonstrates that the traffic on roads around the St Peters Interchange will deteriorate as a result of WestConnex, as well as already heavily congested roads in Bexley, Rockdale and Brighton-Le-Sands. It also projects that the existing M5 and New M5 combined will end up taking less traffic now than the Cross City Tunnel, which was a financial disaster, as drivers 'rat-run' to avoid the tolls.

What is even more worrying is that the proponent now concedes that it cannot make its traffic model work without other, unfunded toll road projects. What happens if or when these projects do not proceed? This EIS does not say, so the public does not have a chance to form a view or comment.

AECOM was paid $13 million of taxpayer money to complete this EIS, despite its conflict of interest (it has other WestConnex contracts that depend on the project going ahead). This is an unacceptable given that this EIS is supposed to provide an objective assessment of the project impacts. The public cannot trust that this EIS properly and fully investigates the true economic, environmental and social impacts of this project, and indeed the poor quality of this document reflects this. It contains many errors, omissions, superficial analyses, and opaque models, and should be rejected on this basis alone.

The suggestion that tunnelling activities would need to be conducted 24 hours per day, seven days a week – including associated activities such as spoil handling and haulage – is not justified. This will place great pressure on significant numbers of nearby residents throughout day and night-time periods.

The EIS repeatedly says that threats to the liveable environment of residents during construction and operation would be subject to plans developed later. Mitigation is recommended in many instances, but no firm information is available about who might receive this and what it might be. Instead, decisions are put off until after approval – and in some cases the beginning of construction. This is completely indefensible and communities cannot be forced to accept this. The whole point of an EIS is to assess the impact of the project, so these plans should have been made available in this EIS.

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Yours sincerely,

Joanna O'Bryan

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Victoria Musa [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, 27 January 2016 10:40 PM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

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Victoria Musa

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, 27 January 2016 10:38 PM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

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I therefore ask that you reject this proposal, publish my name and submission in accordance with the undertaking on your website, and provide a written response to each of the objections I have raised.

[redacted]

From: David Sippel [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, 27 January 2016 10:37 PM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

Attn: Secretary, re: WestConnex New M5 EIS, project number SSI 14_6788

I strongly object to this project and the entire WestConnex of which this is part, and ask that you reject this proposal on the basis of this environmental impact statement (EIS).

Global experience and research has shown conclusively that these kinds of toll road mega-projects are hugely expensive and counterproductive. WestConnex will increase air pollution and traffic for thousands of residents and workers, and expose NSW taxpayers to unacceptably high levels of financial risk. Even the EISs produced for the various stages of WestConnex show it is not a long-term solution to Sydney's congestion problem.

I also strongly object to a number of specific aspects of this EIS, and I expect you to publish this submission and send me a written response to each of the objections I have outlined below.

The flaws and optimistic assumptions in the traffic modelling mean that toll revenue is likely to be significantly lower than forecast. AECOM has a history of providing over-optimistic traffic forecasts for toll roads, resulting in previous financial failures (e.g. Clem7 in Brisbane).

Billions of dollars of construction contracts have been let for this project before this EIS was lodged. This casts huge doubts on the legitimacy of the community consultation process, and places unreasonable pressure on the Dept of Planning and Environment to approve this project regardless of its flaws.

The average daily travel time in Sydney has been stable at about 80 minutes per person for decades, while the average trip distance has increased substantially. In this time, billions have been spent on tollways. Travellers are spending more than ever on tolls, yet are not spending any less time travelling. Instead of encouraging costly road-based sprawl, the NSW Government should be investing in more sustainable transport solutions, and in developing economic opportunities outside of the inner city so that more people who live outside of central Sydney can work closer to home instead of being locked into long commutes.

The New M5 would cause costly traffic chaos throughout the inner west and south-west Sydney. It is unacceptable that no traffic modelling was only done past two intersections after the end of the project.

Experts at the EIS exhibition sessions gave contradictory advice about traffic modelling. All traffic modelling should be transparently and independently tested, particularly because AECOM has a demonstrably poor record in traffic modelling.

Independent transport modelling experts have found scores of problems with the application of the WestConnex Road and Traffic Model, which has not been released for scrutiny. It would be negligent for any government to go ahead with a project based on uncertain predictions.

The roads around the St Peters interchange are already at an unacceptable Level of Service and are getting worse because of in-fill developments not allowed for by the EIS, including Green Square, Ashmore, Waterloo Estate and Central 2 Eveleigh. With an extra 150,000 people in an area of a few square kilometres, this is going to be the most densely populated area in Australia. There is no evidence that this EIS has factored in this huge increase in density.

However, the EIS clearly demonstrates that the traffic on roads around the St Peters Interchange will deteriorate as a result of WestConnex, as well as already heavily congested roads in Bexley, Rockdale and Brighton-Le-Sands. It also projects that the existing M5 and New M5 combined will end up taking less traffic now than the Cross City Tunnel, which was a financial disaster, as drivers 'rat-run' to avoid the tolls.

What is even more worrying is that the proponent now concedes that it cannot make its traffic model work without other, unfunded toll road projects. What happens if or when these projects do not proceed? This EIS does not say, so the public does not have a chance to form a view or comment.

AECOM was paid $13 million of taxpayer money to complete this EIS, despite its conflict of interest (it has other WestConnex contracts that depend on the project going ahead). This is an unacceptable given that this EIS is supposed to provide an objective assessment of the project impacts. The public cannot trust that this EIS properly and fully investigates the true economic, environmental and social impacts of this project, and indeed the poor quality of this document reflects this. It contains many errors, omissions, superficial analyses, and opaque models, and should be rejected on this basis alone.

The suggestion that tunnelling activities would need to be conducted 24 hours per day, seven days a week – including associated activities such as spoil handling and haulage – is not justified. This will place great pressure on significant numbers of nearby residents throughout day and night-time periods.

The EIS repeatedly says that threats to the liveable environment of residents during construction and operation would be subject to plans developed later. Mitigation is recommended in many instances, but no firm information is available about who might receive this and what it might be. Instead, decisions are put off until after approval – and in some cases the beginning of construction. This is completely indefensible and communities cannot be forced to accept this. The whole point of an EIS is to assess the impact of the project, so these plans should have been made available in this EIS.

The method used in this EIS to measure air quality has not been used in Australia before and cannot be verified by the NSW EPA. I note that there will be an increase in dangerous pollution in some areas close to the tollway portals and near roads with increased traffic. It is not acceptable to me that a government should deliberately place the health of citizens in jeopardy.

I particularly object to tollway portals and increased traffic being so close to local schools. I note that fine particle pollution can cause lung cancer and is particularly dangerous for the lungs of growing children. I support the parents of local schools who have requested an extended period of time after school returns at the end of January 2016 in which to seek independent advice.

The whole WestConnex system will increase greenhouse gas emissions in Sydney at a time when we should be doing all we can to reduce them. I am not convinced by a method of analysis that does not look at alternatives but instead compares the New M5 project against a 'do nothing' scenario to claim a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.

No credible authority in the world today would suggest that building huge urban motorways is the solution to cutting national greenhouse emissions, or that increases in vehicle kilometres travelled (VKT) would somehow result in a net reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. Yet this is exactly what the proponent is claiming in this EIS. I object to this flawed analysis.

The analysis of alternatives provided by AECOM in this EIS provides no solid evidence for its conclusions. Potential alternatives that could have provided more effective, sustainable and cost-effective ways of easing congestion have been ignored. This failure to meet the project SEARs should also be reason enough to reject the proposal.

The noise assessment shows that hundreds of homes will experience noise above acceptable levels. The real impact is likely to be far worse, because noise monitoring was only conducted at a very limited level for this EIS in Beverly Hills and St Peters, and did not properly assess the massive noise that will be generated by construction and operation of this project. Independent experts have also reported that some of the tables are inaccurate in the noise report and are therefore not reliable.

The social impact study is little more than a description of the project, rather than an assessment of its impacts. It is insulting to communities where hundreds of tenants and owners have lost homes and businesses, and others will live in decimated communities. For example, the impact of forced acquisition of scores of homes in St Peters on the families affected and the close-knit community that will be fractured as a result is merely briefly described and not assessed. I am not aware of any affected homeowner that was surveyed or even contacted by the authors for this study, which is a gross failing on the part of AECOM.

Residents affected by compulsory acquisitions are also being offered below-market prices for their homes and businesses, which has caused additional and completely unnecessary distress and trauma for the owners. I find it disturbing that the NSW Government was warned three years ago that the compulsory acquisition process was unfair to those whose properties were being forcibly taken, yet has both failed to make the changes recommended and actively suppressed the report that handed down these findings.

Community parks, an endangered Green and Golden Bell Frog colony, critically endangered Cooks River Castlereagh Ironbark Forest and trees along the M5 East would be destroyed for these projects. Some of these, such as the endangered flora and fauna, were species that the RMS was legally obliged to maintain and protect as part of construction for the M5 East. Others, such as the M5 Linear Park and trees lining the noise walls, are spaces the local community has built up over many years after their community was carved up for the M5 East. For all of this to be swept aside for this toll road is not only unacceptable – it is undemocratic and a violation of the government's environmental and legal responsibilities.

The RMS has lied about how much of Sydney Park was needed for the New M5. It is disgraceful that the City Council only became aware that some of its land would be acquired well after this EIS was lodged.

Thousands of trees along the route in Beverly Grove Park, the M5 Linear Park and other areas are also being destroyed to make way for a tollway that even the EIS shows won't solve traffic congestion. The NSW government should be preserving green space and vegetation, not destroying it.

The planning processes surrounding this project and WestConnex as a whole have been utterly corrupted. For example, key parts of the business case remain hidden from public scrutiny, even though it is being funded by taxpayer money. Homes and businesses are being forcibly acquired, multi-million and/or billion-dollar contracts have been let, and construction works have occurred place before any planning approvals are granted for this project. The entire WestConnex, including this project, has been characterised by poor governance, and a complete lack of transparency and accountability. Community consultation has also taken place only after detailed plans have been drawn up, so the general public has little to no input on a project that will affect hundreds of thousands of people's lives for many years to come.

This project will see roads expanded to within metres of residents' homes, which is outrageous. I am aware that in cases in St Peters and Alexandria, roads being widened for WestConnex will be less than two metres of family homes, and that young children will have more than 50,000 cars and trucks a day going right past their windows. This is absolutely unacceptable.

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Yours sincerely,

David Sippel

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Cheryl James [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, 27 January 2016 10:35 PM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

Attn: Secretary, re: WestConnex New M5 EIS, project number SSI 14_6788

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Yours sincerely,

Cheryl James

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Kate Ashton [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, 27 January 2016 10:31 PM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

Attn: Secretary, re: WestConnex New M5 EIS, project number SSI 14_6788

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I therefore ask that you reject this proposal, publish my name and submission in accordance with the undertaking on your website, and provide a written response to each of the objections I have raised.

Yours sincerely,

Kate Ashton

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Todd Hammond [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, 27 January 2016 10:27 PM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

Attn: Secretary, re: WestConnex New M5 EIS, project number SSI 14_6788

I strongly object to this project and the entire WestConnex of which this is part, and ask that you reject this proposal on the basis of this environmental impact statement (EIS).

In addition to this, the redirection of a much higher quantity of vehicles onto Maddox street Alexandria will put the safety of local children in this area at risk. Maddox street is already highly used and often the speed limit on this street is broken by motorists. Adding more vehicles to this road will increase the dangers and likely hood of a serious, potentially fatal accident.

Global experience and research has shown conclusively that these kinds of toll road mega-projects are hugely expensive and counterproductive. WestConnex will increase air pollution and traffic for thousands of residents and workers, and expose NSW taxpayers to unacceptably high levels of financial risk. Even the EISs produced for the various stages of WestConnex show it is not a long-term solution to Sydney's congestion problem.

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Todd Hammond

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

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Sent: Wednesday, 27 January 2016 10:26 PM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

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To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
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Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

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Yours sincerely,

james Ward-Collins

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted] 12570

From: Vivian stefadouros [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, 27 January 2016 10:24 PM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

Attn: Secretary, re: WestConnex New M5 EIS, project number SSI 14_6788

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Sent: Wednesday, 27 January 2016 10:24 PM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

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Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

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The whole WestConnex system will increase greenhouse gas emissions in Sydney at a time when we should be doing all we can to reduce them. I am not convinced by a method of analysis that does not look at alternatives but instead compares the New M5 project against a 'do nothing' scenario to claim a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.

No credible authority in the world today would suggest that building huge urban motorways is the solution to cutting national greenhouse emissions, or that increases in vehicle kilometres travelled (VKT) would somehow result in a net reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. Yet this is exactly what the proponent is claiming in this EIS. I object to this flawed analysis.

The analysis of alternatives provided by AECOM in this EIS provides no solid evidence for its conclusions. Potential alternatives that could have provided more effective, sustainable and cost-effective ways of easing congestion have been ignored. This failure to meet the project SEARs should also be reason enough to reject the proposal.

The noise assessment shows that hundreds of homes will experience noise above acceptable levels. The real impact is likely to be far worse, because noise monitoring was only conducted at a very limited level for this EIS in Beverly Hills and St Peters, and did not properly assess the massive noise that will be generated by construction and operation of this project. Independent experts have also reported that some of the tables are inaccurate in the noise report and are therefore not reliable.

The social impact study is little more than a description of the project, rather than an assessment of its impacts. It is insulting to communities where hundreds of tenants and owners have lost homes and businesses, and others will live in decimated communities. For example, the impact of forced acquisition of scores of homes in St Peters on the families affected and the close-knit community that will be fractured as a result is merely briefly described and not assessed. I am not aware of any affected homeowner that was surveyed or even contacted by the authors for this study, which is a gross failing on the part of AECOM.

Residents affected by compulsory acquisitions are also being offered below-market prices for their homes and businesses, which has caused additional and completely unnecessary distress and trauma for the owners. I find it disturbing that the NSW Government was warned three years ago that the compulsory acquisition process was unfair to those whose properties were being forcibly taken, yet has both failed to make the changes recommended and actively suppressed the report that handed down these findings.

Community parks, an endangered Green and Golden Bell Frog colony, critically endangered Cooks River Castlereagh Ironbark Forest and trees along the M5 East would be destroyed for these projects. Some of these, such as the endangered flora and fauna, were species that the RMS was legally obliged to maintain and protect as part of construction for the M5 East. Others, such as the M5 Linear Park and trees lining the noise walls, are spaces the local community has built up over many years after their community was carved up for the M5 East. For all of this to be swept aside for this toll road is not only unacceptable – it is undemocratic and a violation of the government's environmental and legal responsibilities.

The RMS has lied about how much of Sydney Park was needed for the New M5. It is disgraceful that the City Council only became aware that some of its land would be acquired well after this EIS was lodged.

Thousands of trees along the route in Beverly Grove Park, the M5 Linear Park and other areas are also being destroyed to make way for a tollway that even the EIS shows won't solve traffic congestion. The NSW government should be preserving green space and vegetation, not destroying it.

The planning processes surrounding this project and WestConnex as a whole have been utterly corrupted. For example, key parts of the business case remain hidden from public scrutiny, even though it is being funded by taxpayer money. Homes and businesses are being forcibly acquired, multi-million and/or billion-dollar contracts have been let, and construction works have occurred place before any planning approvals are granted for this project. The entire WestConnex, including this project, has been characterised by poor governance, and a complete lack of transparency and accountability. Community consultation has also taken place only after detailed plans have been drawn up, so the general public has little to no input on a project that will affect hundreds of thousands of people's lives for many years to come.

This project will see roads expanded to within metres of residents' homes, which is outrageous. I am aware that in cases in St Peters and Alexandria, roads being widened for WestConnex will be less than two metres of family homes, and that young children will have more than 50,000 cars and trucks a day going right past their windows. This is absolutely unacceptable.

There are no clear plans of where millions of cubic metres of spoil will be deposited in communities in western Sydney. None of these communities have been given information or consulted about these impacts. This is unacceptable.

If this project and other parts of WestConnex go ahead, the residents of western and south-west Sydney will be forced into even greater car dependency and paying large tolls to use this road. It is unacceptable that no attempt is made in this EIS to assess the impact alternatives such as increasing public transport capacity and connections within these areas would have on reducing traffic congestion and improving access to jobs for people in these suburbs.

I therefore ask that you reject this proposal, publish my name and submission in accordance with the undertaking on your website, and provide a written response to each of the objections I have raised.

Yours sincerely,

Vicky Panas

[redacted]

From: Todd Clarke [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 7:19 AM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

Attn: Secretary, re: WestConnex New M5 EIS, project number SSI 14_6788

I strongly object to this project and the entire WestConnex of which this is part, and ask that you reject this proposal on the basis of this environmental impact statement (EIS).

Global experience and research has shown conclusively that these kinds of toll road mega-projects are hugely expensive and counterproductive. WestConnex will increase air pollution and traffic for thousands of residents and workers, and expose NSW taxpayers to unacceptably high levels of financial risk. Even the EISs produced for the various stages of WestConnex show it is not a long-term solution to Sydney's congestion problem.

I also strongly object to a number of specific aspects of this EIS, and I expect you to publish this submission and send me a written response to each of the objections I have outlined below.

AECOM, which has a record of failed traffic modeling, has been paid $13 million of taxpayer money to complete this EIS even though it has been awarded other WestConnex contracts that depend on the project going ahead. This is an utterly unacceptable conflict of interest. The public cannot trust that this EIS properly and fully investigates the true economic, environmental and social impacts of this project, and indeed the poor quality of this document reflects this. The EIS is riddled with errors, basic omissions, superficial analyses, and opaque modelling, and should be rejected on this basis alone.

Billions of dollars of construction contracts have been let for this project before this EIS was lodged. This casts huge doubts on the legitimacy of the community consultation process, and places unreasonable pressure on the Dept of Planning and Environment to approve this project regardless of its flaws.

No business case was released until late 2015, and was only released after huge public pressure on the NSW Government to do so. Even now, the document released contains so many redactions that it is impossible for anyone to independently assess it – particularly as the key redactions involve the crucial cost and revenue figures. What is the point of releasing a business case that doesn't contain this information? It is little more than yet another expensive piece of publicly funded advertising for this project that adds nothing in the way of accountability.

In fact the whole WestConnex has been characterised by a lack of transparency and accountability and secrecy. This is unacceptable for any project funded by taxpayer money, let alone a massive one that would see communities and endangered species destroyed, thousands of people evicted from their family homes and businesses, and billions of dollars of public money diverted from projects that would benefit NSW more.

It is alarming that costs for this taxpayer-funded project are blowing out at the rate of more than $2 billion a year. When WestConnex was announced in 2012, it was one toll road with a price tag of $10 billion; it is now a series of toll road projects that encompasses WestConnex and additional projects such as the Southern Extension and Sydney Gateway that will now cost $16.8 billion. At this rate the final price tag will be well in excess of $20 billion. The flaws and optimistic assumptions in the traffic modeling also mean that toll revenue is likely to be significantly lower than forecast. AECOM has a history of providing over-optimistic traffic forecasts for toll roads, resulting in previous financial failures (e.g. Clem7 in Brisbane).

It is quite clear that this project will provide no solution to traffic congestion, as the EIS shows that several intersections across the project route will remain at Level of Service F (i.e. the worst possible level, and the one that is indicative of system failure) after the project.

Far from easing congestion, this project will worsen it by pouring traffic onto the local road network in the inner west, western and south-west Sydney. For example, even the project proponents admit that only 80% of the traffic expected to pour out of the St Peters Interchange can be absorbed within the existing road network. No attempt is made in this EIS to assess how this issue will be dealt with if the M4-M5 link, Sydney Gateway and Southern Extension are not built. Considering none of these projects are currently designed, and at least some are unfunded, this is an extremely serious failing.

Independent transport modelling experts have found scores of problems with the application of the WestConnex Road and Traffic Model, which has not been released for scrutiny. It would be negligent for any government to go ahead with a project based on uncertain predictions.

Thousands of residents and workers will be exposed to health impacts in all areas where demolition, earthworks, construction and removal activities. This includes communities in Arncliffe, Kingsgrove, Beverly Hills, St Peters and Alexandria. These health risks are rated as HIGH for all areas. Mitigation is recommended, but no firm information is available about who might receive this and what it might be. Instead, decisions are put off until after approval – and in some cases, the beginning of construction. This is completely indefensible and communities cannot be forced to accept this.

The suggestion that tunneling activities would need to be conducted 24 hours per day, seven days a week – including associated activities such as spoil handling and haulage – is not justified. There are also no clear plans in this EIS to show where millions of cubic metres of spoil will be deposited in communities in western Sydney. None of these communities have been given information or consulted about these impacts. This is unacceptable.

Tunnelling would cause vibration and damage to homes. The EIS says it will only be for a "short period", but does not say what this short period is. In some cases, tunnels and tunnelling would take place around 20m below people's

homes. This is not acceptable, particularly given the collapse of buildings that took place during the Lane Cove Tunnel's construction, and the legal action residents above Brisbane's Airport Link are now being forced to take after experiencing property damage.

The air quality study shows that some communities will be exposed to increased doses of dangerous pollution, especially those living close to surface roads. Many residents along the proposed route are already exposed to levels of PM2.5 particles that exceed national guidelines, yet the EIS predicts that these levels will only worsen. I note that there is no safe level of exposure to fine particulate matter, and I wholeheartedly reject any project that would sacrifice the health of some citizens in order to deliver unproven and highly disputed 'benefits' to others.

Scientific experts agree there is no safe level of fine particle pollution. Rather than aiming to shift dangerous pollution from area to another, the government should be finding cleaner transport solutions that do not leave residents living beside polluted roads or unfiltered pollution stacks – no matter where they live.

The analysis of alternatives provided by AECOM in this EIS provides no solid evidence for the conclusions drawn. No scenarios have been modeled in which alternative solutions such as traffic management, increased public transport, or a combination of such solutions could reduce traffic congestion more effectively than WestConnex.

The noise assessment shows that hundreds of homes will experience noise above acceptable levels. In fact the real impact is likely to be far worse than the results provided in this EIS, because noise monitoring was only done for one location at Beverly Hills and one in St Peters where only 30% of results could be included. Such limited evidence provides the community with no confidence in the conclusions reached in this EIS. Independent experts have also reported that some of the tables are inaccurate in the noise report and are therefore not reliable.

In addition, the noise monitoring performed in this EIS has been too limited to properly assess the massive noise that will be generated by construction and operation of this project, and the impact it will have on the hundreds of thousands of Sydney residents who would be exposed to and affected by it.

The project will cause immense social harm. It will destroy long-established communities. It will cause an increase in air pollution-related deaths and illnesses. The increase in air pollution will inhibit lung and nervous system development in children. There are numerous ways of spending $17 billion that would deliver a much greater social and economic benefit, and would not cause so much destruction. Such alternatives are barely mentioned in this EIS and have certainly not been analysed as required by the project SEARs.

Community parks, an endangered Green and Golden Bell Frog colony, critically endangered Cooks River Castlereagh Ironbark Forest and trees along the M5 East would be destroyed for these projects. Some of these, such as the endangered flora and fauna, were species that the RMS was legally obliged to maintain and protect as part of construction for the M5 East. Others, such as the M5 Linear Park and trees lining the noise walls, are spaces the local community has built up over many years after their community was carved up the M5 East. For all of this to be swept aside for this toll road is not only unacceptable – it is undemocratic and a grave violation of the government's environmental and legal responsibilities.

There is already flooding at St Peters during heavy rainfalls. Councils have already found that the flooding modelling is not acceptable for the M4 East and the same approach has been used for the New M5.

The proponent has lied about how much of Sydney Park was needed for the New M5. It is disgraceful that the City Council only became aware that some of its land would be acquired well after this EIS was lodged. Sydney Park is a crucial regional park and will be significantly impacted by WestConnex New M5. Other parks such as Beverly Grove Park, the M5 Linear Park, Camdenville Park will also be permanently or temporarily destroyed, along with thousands of trees along the route. The NSW government should be preserving green space and vegetation, not destroying it.

I am aware that independent traffic experts have not access to full information about the assumptions on which traffic modelling. The proponents must be instructed to fully respond to independent experts who have been commissioned by Councils or are academic researchers and to make their models available. AECOM and RMS openly admit that they have collaborated on the modelling. Their claims must be fully and independently scrutinised. When the living conditions of thousands of residents and billions of dollars of public money are at stake, it is not acceptable for a government department or private company to keep such a model secret.

The planning processes surrounding this project and WestConnex as a whole have been utterly corrupted. For example, key parts of the business case remain hidden from public scrutiny, even though it is being funded by taxpayer money. Homes and businesses are being forcibly acquired, multi-million and/or billion-dollar contracts have been let, and construction works have occurred place before any planning approvals are granted for this project. The entire WestConnex, including this project, has been characterised by poor governance, and a complete lack of transparency and accountability. Community consultation has also taken place only after detailed plans have been drawn up, so the general public has little to no input on a project that will affect hundreds of thousands of people's lives for many years to come.

If this project and other parts of WestConnex go ahead, western and south-west Sydney residents will be forced into even greater car dependency and paying large tolls to use this road. It is unacceptable that no attempt is made in this EIS to assess the impact alternatives such as increasing public transport capacity and connections within these areas would have on reducing traffic congestion and improving access to jobs for people in these suburbs.

I therefore ask that you reject this proposal, publish my name and submission in accordance with the undertaking on your website, and provide a written response to each of the objections I have raised.

Yours sincerely,

Todd Clarke

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Paul Awramenko [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 7:18 AM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

Attn: Secretary, re: WestConnex New M5 EIS, project number SSI 14_6788

I strongly object to this project and the entire WestConnex of which this is part, and ask that you reject this proposal on the basis of this environmental impact statement (EIS).

Global experience and research has shown conclusively that these kinds of toll road mega-projects are hugely expensive and counterproductive. WestConnex will increase air pollution and traffic for thousands of residents and workers, and expose NSW taxpayers to unacceptably high levels of financial risk. Even the EISs produced for the various stages of WestConnex show it is not a long-term solution to Sydney's congestion problem.

I also strongly object to a number of specific aspects of this EIS, and I expect you to publish this submission and send me a written response to each of the objections I have outlined below.

AECOM, which has a record of failed traffic modeling, has been paid $13 million of taxpayer money to complete this EIS even though it has been awarded other WestConnex contracts that depend on the project going ahead. This is an utterly unacceptable conflict of interest. The public cannot trust that this EIS properly and fully investigates the true economic, environmental and social impacts of this project, and indeed the poor quality of this document reflects this. The EIS is riddled with errors, basic omissions, superficial analyses, and opaque modelling, and should be rejected on this basis alone.

Billions of dollars of construction contracts have been let for this project before this EIS was lodged. This casts huge doubts on the legitimacy of the community consultation process, and places unreasonable pressure on the Dept of Planning and Environment to approve this project regardless of its flaws.

No business case was released until late 2015, and was only released after huge public pressure on the NSW Government to do so. Even now, the document released contains so many redactions that it is impossible for anyone to independently assess it – particularly as the key redactions involve the crucial cost and revenue figures. What is the point of releasing a business case that doesn't contain this information? It is little more than yet another expensive piece of publicly funded advertising for this project that adds nothing in the way of accountability.

In fact the whole WestConnex has been characterised by a lack of transparency and accountability and secrecy. This is unacceptable for any project funded by taxpayer money, let alone a massive one that would see communities and endangered species destroyed, thousands of people evicted from their family homes and businesses, and billions of dollars of public money diverted from projects that would benefit NSW more.

It is alarming that costs for this taxpayer-funded project are blowing out at the rate of more than $2 billion a year. When WestConnex was announced in 2012, it was one toll road with a price tag of $10 billion; it is now a series of toll road projects that encompasses WestConnex and additional projects such as the Southern Extension and Sydney Gateway that will now cost $16.8 billion. At this rate the final price tag will be well in excess of $20 billion. The flaws and optimistic assumptions in the traffic modeling also mean that toll revenue is likely to be significantly lower than forecast. AECOM has a history of providing over-optimistic traffic forecasts for toll roads, resulting in previous financial failures (e.g. Clem7 in Brisbane).

It is quite clear that this project will provide no solution to traffic congestion, as the EIS shows that several intersections across the project route will remain at Level of Service F (i.e. the worst possible level, and the one that is indicative of system failure) after the project.

Far from easing congestion, this project will worsen it by pouring traffic onto the local road network in the inner west, western and south-west Sydney. For example, even the project proponents admit that only 80% of the traffic expected to pour out of the St Peters Interchange can be absorbed within the existing road network. No attempt is made in this EIS to assess how this issue will be dealt with if the M4-M5 link, Sydney Gateway and Southern Extension are not built. Considering none of these projects are currently designed, and at least some are unfunded, this is an extremely serious failing.

Independent transport modelling experts have found scores of problems with the application of the WestConnex Road and Traffic Model, which has not been released for scrutiny. It would be negligent for any government to go ahead with a project based on uncertain predictions.

Thousands of residents and workers will be exposed to health impacts in all areas where demolition, earthworks, construction and removal activities. This includes communities in Arncliffe, Kingsgrove, Beverly Hills, St Peters and Alexandria. These health risks are rated as HIGH for all areas. Mitigation is recommended, but no firm information is available about who might receive this and what it might be. Instead, decisions are put off until after approval – and in some cases, the beginning of construction. This is completely indefensible and communities cannot be forced to accept this.

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Scientific experts agree there is no safe level of fine particle pollution. Rather than aiming to shift dangerous pollution from area to another, the government should be finding cleaner transport solutions that do not leave residents living beside polluted roads or unfiltered pollution stacks – no matter where they live.

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I therefore ask that you reject this proposal, publish my name and submission in accordance with the undertaking on your website, and provide a written response to each of the objections I have raised.

Yours sincerely,

Paul Awramenko

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: John Kenny [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 7:14 AM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

Attn: Secretary, re: WestConnex New M5 EIS, project number SSI 14_6788

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In addition, the noise monitoring performed in this EIS has been too limited to properly assess the massive noise that will be generated by construction and operation of this project, and the impact it will have on the hundreds of thousands of Sydney residents who would be exposed to and affected by it.

The project will cause immense social harm. It will destroy long-established communities. It will cause an increase in air pollution-related deaths and illnesses. The increase in air pollution will inhibit lung and nervous system development in children. There are numerous ways of spending $17 billion that would deliver a much greater social and economic benefit, and would not cause so much destruction. Such alternatives are barely mentioned in this EIS and have certainly not been analysed as required by the project SEARs.

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I am aware that independent traffic experts have not access to full information about the assumptions on which traffic modelling. The proponents must be instructed to fully respond to independent experts who have been commissioned by Councils or are academic researchers and to make their models available. AECOM and RMS openly admit that they have collaborated on the modelling. Their claims must be fully and independently scrutinised. When the living conditions of thousands of residents and billions of dollars of public money are at stake, it is not acceptable for a government department or private company to keep such a model secret.

The planning processes surrounding this project and WestConnex as a whole have been utterly corrupted. For example, key parts of the business case remain hidden from public scrutiny, even though it is being funded by taxpayer money. Homes and businesses are being forcibly acquired, multi-million and/or billion-dollar contracts have been let, and construction works have occurred place before any planning approvals are granted for this project. The entire WestConnex, including this project, has been characterised by poor governance, and a complete lack of transparency and accountability. Community consultation has also taken place only after detailed plans have been drawn up, so the general public has little to no input on a project that will affect hundreds of thousands of people's lives for many years to come.

If this project and other parts of WestConnex go ahead, western and south-west Sydney residents will be forced into even greater car dependency and paying large tolls to use this road. It is unacceptable that no attempt is made in this EIS to assess the impact alternatives such as increasing public transport capacity and connections within these areas would have on reducing traffic congestion and improving access to jobs for people in these suburbs.

I therefore ask that you reject this proposal, publish my name and submission in accordance with the undertaking on your website, and provide a written response to each of the objections I have raised.

Yours sincerely,

John Kenny

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Cody Westaway [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 7:01 AM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

Attn: Secretary, re: WestConnex New M5 EIS, project number SSI 14_6788

I strongly object to this project and the entire WestConnex of which this is part, and ask that you reject this proposal on the basis of this environmental impact statement (EIS).

Global experience and research has shown conclusively that these kinds of toll road mega-projects are hugely expensive and counterproductive. WestConnex will increase air pollution and traffic for thousands of residents and workers, and expose NSW taxpayers to unacceptably high levels of financial risk. Even the EISs produced for the various stages of WestConnex show it is not a long-term solution to Sydney's congestion problem.

I also strongly object to a number of specific aspects of this EIS, and I expect you to publish this submission and send me a written response to each of the objections I have outlined below.

AECOM, which has a record of failed traffic modeling, has been paid $13 million of taxpayer money to complete this EIS even though it has been awarded other WestConnex contracts that depend on the project going ahead. This is an utterly unacceptable conflict of interest. The public cannot trust that this EIS properly and fully investigates the true economic, environmental and social impacts of this project, and indeed the poor quality of this document reflects this. The EIS is riddled with errors, basic omissions, superficial analyses, and opaque modelling, and should be rejected on this basis alone.

Billions of dollars of construction contracts have been let for this project before this EIS was lodged. This casts huge doubts on the legitimacy of the community consultation process, and places unreasonable pressure on the Dept of Planning and Environment to approve this project regardless of its flaws.

No business case was released until late 2015, and was only released after huge public pressure on the NSW Government to do so. Even now, the document released contains so many redactions that it is impossible for anyone to independently assess it – particularly as the key redactions involve the crucial cost and revenue figures. What is the point of releasing a business case that doesn't contain this information? It is little more than yet another expensive piece of publicly funded advertising for this project that adds nothing in the way of accountability.

In fact the whole WestConnex has been characterised by a lack of transparency and accountability and secrecy. This is unacceptable for any project funded by taxpayer money, let alone a massive one that would see communities and endangered species destroyed, thousands of people evicted from their family homes and businesses, and billions of dollars of public money diverted from projects that would benefit NSW more.

It is alarming that costs for this taxpayer-funded project are blowing out at the rate of more than $2 billion a year. When WestConnex was announced in 2012, it was one toll road with a price tag of $10 billion; it is now a series of toll road projects that encompasses WestConnex and additional projects such as the Southern Extension and Sydney Gateway that will now cost $16.8 billion. At this rate the final price tag will be well in excess of $20 billion. The flaws and optimistic assumptions in the traffic modeling also mean that toll revenue is likely to be significantly lower than forecast. AECOM has a history of providing over-optimistic traffic forecasts for toll roads, resulting in previous financial failures (e.g. Clem7 in Brisbane).

It is quite clear that this project will provide no solution to traffic congestion, as the EIS shows that several intersections across the project route will remain at Level of Service F (i.e. the worst possible level, and the one that is indicative of system failure) after the project.

Far from easing congestion, this project will worsen it by pouring traffic onto the local road network in the inner west, western and south-west Sydney. For example, even the project proponents admit that only 80% of the traffic expected to pour out of the St Peters Interchange can be absorbed within the existing road network. No attempt is made in this EIS to assess how this issue will be dealt with if the M4-M5 link, Sydney Gateway and Southern Extension are not built. Considering none of these projects are currently designed, and at least some are unfunded, this is an extremely serious failing.

Independent transport modelling experts have found scores of problems with the application of the WestConnex Road and Traffic Model, which has not been released for scrutiny. It would be negligent for any government to go ahead with a project based on uncertain predictions.

Thousands of residents and workers will be exposed to health impacts in all areas where demolition, earthworks, construction and removal activities. This includes communities in Arncliffe, Kingsgrove, Beverly Hills, St Peters and Alexandria. These health risks are rated as HIGH for all areas. Mitigation is recommended, but no firm information is available about who might receive this and what it might be. Instead, decisions are put off until after approval – and in some cases, the beginning of construction. This is completely indefensible and communities cannot be forced to accept this.

The suggestion that tunneling activities would need to be conducted 24 hours per day, seven days a week – including associated activities such as spoil handling and haulage – is not justified. There are also no clear plans in this EIS to show where millions of cubic metres of spoil will be deposited in communities in western Sydney. None of these communities have been given information or consulted about these impacts. This is unacceptable.

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Scientific experts agree there is no safe level of fine particle pollution. Rather than aiming to shift dangerous pollution from area to another, the government should be finding cleaner transport solutions that do not leave residents living beside polluted roads or unfiltered pollution stacks – no matter where they live.

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Yours sincerely,

Cody Westaway

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 6:39 AM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

Attn: Secretary, re: WestConnex New M5 EIS, project number SSI 14_6788

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I therefore ask that you reject this proposal, publish my name and submission in accordance with the undertaking on your website, and provide a written response to each of the objections I have raised.

Yours sincerely,

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Bronwyn White [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 6:35 AM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

Attn: Secretary, re: WestConnex New M5 EIS, project number SSI 14_6788

I strongly object to this project and the entire WestConnex of which this is part, and ask that you reject this proposal on the basis of this environmental impact statement (EIS).

There is overwhelming evidence to suggest this is NOT a good solution for Sydneys future generations.

My family is mostly concerned with the shroud of secrecy and lack of transparency to the business case.

I am concerned with contracts being awarded before the EIS was lodged - to me this was a corrupt process. Was the EIS tokenism?

I wonder if we are living in a NSW dictatorship. There seems to be a severe lack of evidence based decision making on this project. Any evidence negative tot he project is ignored. And decisions are made on the opinions of a few politicians.

Can you please tell me why the NSW government ignores the opinion of experts - pollution, traffic, planning etc?

Can you please tell me why we are building this road when only 6% of vehicle registrations are commercial and car ownership particularly of younger demographics is trending down. The younger demographics show a preference for public transport. This is indicated clearly in our own ABS data.

Can you please tell me why the contracts were awarded ahead of the EIS? And tell me why this practice was not corrupt?

Can you please tell me why the NSW government has decided to build this road when the rest of the world is clearly inclining toward public transport?

I would like to also know specifically what modelling you have done on the flooding issues around Campbell Street at the junction of Unwins Bridge Road.

Evidence and research has shown conclusively that these kinds of toll road mega-projects are hugely expensive and counterproductive. WestConnex will increase air pollution and traffic for thousands of residents and workers, and expose NSW taxpayers to unacceptably high levels of financial risk. Even the EISs produced for the various stages of WestConnex show it is not a long-term solution to Sydney's congestion problem.

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Yours sincerely,

Bronwyn White

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Julie Viglino [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 6:32 AM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

Attn: Secretary, re: WestConnex New M5 EIS, project number SSI 14_6788

I strongly object to this project and the entire WestConnex of which this is part, and ask that you reject this proposal on the basis of this environmental impact statement (EIS).

Global experience and research has shown conclusively that these kinds of toll road mega-projects are hugely expensive and counterproductive. WestConnex will increase air pollution and traffic for thousands of residents and workers, and expose NSW taxpayers to unacceptably high levels of financial risk. Even the EISs produced for the various stages of WestConnex show it is not a long-term solution to Sydney's congestion problem.

I also strongly object to a number of specific aspects of this EIS, and I expect you to publish this submission and send me a written response to each of the objections I have outlined below.

AECOM, which has a record of failed traffic modeling, has been paid $13 million of taxpayer money to complete this EIS even though it has been awarded other WestConnex contracts that depend on the project going ahead. This is an utterly unacceptable conflict of interest. The public cannot trust that this EIS properly and fully investigates the true economic, environmental and social impacts of this project, and indeed the poor quality of this document reflects this. The EIS is riddled with errors, basic omissions, superficial analyses, and opaque modelling, and should be rejected on this basis alone.

Billions of dollars of construction contracts have been let for this project before this EIS was lodged. This casts huge doubts on the legitimacy of the community consultation process, and places unreasonable pressure on the Dept of Planning and Environment to approve this project regardless of its flaws.

No business case was released until late 2015, and was only released after huge public pressure on the NSW Government to do so. Even now, the document released contains so many redactions that it is impossible for anyone to independently assess it – particularly as the key redactions involve the crucial cost and revenue figures. What is the point of releasing a business case that doesn't contain this information? It is little more than yet another expensive piece of publicly funded advertising for this project that adds nothing in the way of accountability.

In fact the whole WestConnex has been characterised by a lack of transparency and accountability and secrecy. This is unacceptable for any project funded by taxpayer money, let alone a massive one that would see communities and endangered species destroyed, thousands of people evicted from their family homes and businesses, and billions of dollars of public money diverted from projects that would benefit NSW more.

It is alarming that costs for this taxpayer-funded project are blowing out at the rate of more than $2 billion a year. When WestConnex was announced in 2012, it was one toll road with a price tag of $10 billion; it is now a series of toll road projects that encompasses WestConnex and additional projects such as the Southern Extension and Sydney Gateway that will now cost $16.8 billion. At this rate the final price tag will be well in excess of $20 billion. The flaws and optimistic assumptions in the traffic modeling also mean that toll revenue is likely to be significantly lower than forecast. AECOM has a history of providing over-optimistic traffic forecasts for toll roads, resulting in previous financial failures (e.g. Clem7 in Brisbane).

It is quite clear that this project will provide no solution to traffic congestion, as the EIS shows that several intersections across the project route will remain at Level of Service F (i.e. the worst possible level, and the one that is indicative of system failure) after the project.

Far from easing congestion, this project will worsen it by pouring traffic onto the local road network in the inner west, western and south-west Sydney. For example, even the project proponents admit that only 80% of the traffic expected to pour out of the St Peters Interchange can be absorbed within the existing road network. No attempt is made in this EIS to assess how this issue will be dealt with if the M4-M5 link, Sydney Gateway and Southern Extension are not built. Considering none of these projects are currently designed, and at least some are unfunded, this is an extremely serious failing.

Independent transport modelling experts have found scores of problems with the application of the WestConnex Road and Traffic Model, which has not been released for scrutiny. It would be negligent for any government to go ahead with a project based on uncertain predictions.

Thousands of residents and workers will be exposed to health impacts in all areas where demolition, earthworks, construction and removal activities. This includes communities in Arncliffe, Kingsgrove, Beverly Hills, St Peters and Alexandria. These health risks are rated as HIGH for all areas. Mitigation is recommended, but no firm information is available about who might receive this and what it might be. Instead, decisions are put off until after approval – and in some cases, the beginning of construction. This is completely indefensible and communities cannot be forced to accept this.

The suggestion that tunneling activities would need to be conducted 24 hours per day, seven days a week – including associated activities such as spoil handling and haulage – is not justified. There are also no clear plans in this EIS to show where millions of cubic metres of spoil will be deposited in communities in western Sydney. None of these communities have been given information or consulted about these impacts. This is unacceptable.

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Yours sincerely,

Julie Viglino

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Melanie Elphick [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 6:32 AM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

Attn: Secretary, re: WestConnex New M5 EIS, project number SSI 14_6788

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Melanie Elphick

[redacted]

From: Deanna McAsey [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 6:28 AM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

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Yours sincerely,

Deanna McAsey

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 6:21 AM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

Attn: Secretary, re: WestConnex New M5 EIS, project number SSI 14_6788

I strongly object to this project and the entire WestConnex of which this is part, and ask that you reject this proposal on the basis of this environmental impact statement (EIS).

Global experience and research has shown conclusively that these kinds of toll road mega-projects are hugely expensive and counterproductive. WestConnex will increase air pollution and traffic for thousands of residents and workers, and expose NSW taxpayers to unacceptably high levels of financial risk. Even the EISs produced for the various stages of WestConnex show it is not a long-term solution to Sydney's congestion problem.

I also strongly object to a number of specific aspects of this EIS, and I expect you to publish this submission and send me a written response to each of the objections I have outlined below.

AECOM, which has a record of failed traffic modeling, has been paid $13 million of taxpayer money to complete this EIS even though it has been awarded other WestConnex contracts that depend on the project going ahead. This is an utterly unacceptable conflict of interest. The public cannot trust that this EIS properly and fully investigates the true economic, environmental and social impacts of this project, and indeed the poor quality of this document reflects this. The EIS is riddled with errors, basic omissions, superficial analyses, and opaque modelling, and should be rejected on this basis alone.

Billions of dollars of construction contracts have been let for this project before this EIS was lodged. This casts huge doubts on the legitimacy of the community consultation process, and places unreasonable pressure on the Dept of Planning and Environment to approve this project regardless of its flaws.

No business case was released until late 2015, and was only released after huge public pressure on the NSW Government to do so. Even now, the document released contains so many redactions that it is impossible for anyone to independently assess it – particularly as the key redactions involve the crucial cost and revenue figures. What is the point of releasing a business case that doesn't contain this information? It is little more than yet another expensive piece of publicly funded advertising for this project that adds nothing in the way of accountability.

In fact the whole WestConnex has been characterised by a lack of transparency and accountability and secrecy. This is unacceptable for any project funded by taxpayer money, let alone a massive one that would see communities and endangered species destroyed, thousands of people evicted from their family homes and businesses, and billions of dollars of public money diverted from projects that would benefit NSW more.

It is alarming that costs for this taxpayer-funded project are blowing out at the rate of more than $2 billion a year. When WestConnex was announced in 2012, it was one toll road with a price tag of $10 billion; it is now a series of toll road projects that encompasses WestConnex and additional projects such as the Southern Extension and Sydney Gateway that will now cost $16.8 billion. At this rate the final price tag will be well in excess of $20 billion. The flaws and optimistic assumptions in the traffic modeling also mean that toll revenue is likely to be significantly lower than forecast. AECOM has a history of providing over-optimistic traffic forecasts for toll roads, resulting in previous financial failures (e.g. Clem7 in Brisbane).

It is quite clear that this project will provide no solution to traffic congestion, as the EIS shows that several intersections across the project route will remain at Level of Service F (i.e. the worst possible level, and the one that is indicative of system failure) after the project.

Far from easing congestion, this project will worsen it by pouring traffic onto the local road network in the inner west, western and south-west Sydney. For example, even the project proponents admit that only 80% of the traffic expected to pour out of the St Peters Interchange can be absorbed within the existing road network. No attempt is made in this EIS to assess how this issue will be dealt with if the M4-M5 link, Sydney Gateway and Southern Extension are not built. Considering none of these projects are currently designed, and at least some are unfunded, this is an extremely serious failing.

Independent transport modelling experts have found scores of problems with the application of the WestConnex Road and Traffic Model, which has not been released for scrutiny. It would be negligent for any government to go ahead with a project based on uncertain predictions.

Thousands of residents and workers will be exposed to health impacts in all areas where demolition, earthworks, construction and removal activities. This includes communities in Arncliffe, Kingsgrove, Beverly Hills, St Peters and Alexandria. These health risks are rated as HIGH for all areas. Mitigation is recommended, but no firm information is available about who might receive this and what it might be. Instead, decisions are put off until after approval – and in some cases, the beginning of construction. This is completely indefensible and communities cannot be forced to accept this.

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Scientific experts agree there is no safe level of fine particle pollution. Rather than aiming to shift dangerous pollution from area to another, the government should be finding cleaner transport solutions that do not leave residents living beside polluted roads or unfiltered pollution stacks – no matter where they live.

The analysis of alternatives provided by AECOM in this EIS provides no solid evidence for the conclusions drawn. No scenarios have been modeled in which alternative solutions such as traffic management, increased public transport, or a combination of such solutions could reduce traffic congestion more effectively than WestConnex.

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In addition, the noise monitoring performed in this EIS has been too limited to properly assess the massive noise that will be generated by construction and operation of this project, and the impact it will have on the hundreds of thousands of Sydney residents who would be exposed to and affected by it.

The project will cause immense social harm. It will destroy long-established communities. It will cause an increase in air pollution-related deaths and illnesses. The increase in air pollution will inhibit lung and nervous system development in children. There are numerous ways of spending $17 billion that would deliver a much greater social and economic benefit, and would not cause so much destruction. Such alternatives are barely mentioned in this EIS and have certainly not been analysed as required by the project SEARs.

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_____

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Evelene Safadi [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 6:19 AM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

Attn: Secretary, re: WestConnex New M5 EIS, project number SSI 14_6788

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Evelene Safadi

[redacted]

[redacted]

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To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

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[redacted]

From: Sadie Hamblin [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 5:32 AM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

Attn: Secretary, re: WestConnex New M5 EIS, project number SSI 14_6788

I strongly object to this project and the entire WestConnex of which this is part, and ask that you reject this proposal on the basis of this environmental impact statement (EIS).

Global experience and research has shown conclusively that these kinds of toll road mega-projects are hugely expensive and counterproductive. WestConnex will increase air pollution and traffic for thousands of residents and workers, and expose NSW taxpayers to unacceptably high levels of financial risk. Even the EISs produced for the various stages of WestConnex show it is not a long-term solution to Sydney's congestion problem.

I also strongly object to a number of specific aspects of this EIS, and I expect you to publish this submission and send me a written response to each of the objections I have outlined below.

AECOM, which has a record of failed traffic modeling, has been paid $13 million of taxpayer money to complete this EIS even though it has been awarded other WestConnex contracts that depend on the project going ahead. This is an utterly unacceptable conflict of interest. The public cannot trust that this EIS properly and fully investigates the true economic, environmental and social impacts of this project, and indeed the poor quality of this document reflects this. The EIS is riddled with errors, basic omissions, superficial analyses, and opaque modelling, and should be rejected on this basis alone.

Billions of dollars of construction contracts have been let for this project before this EIS was lodged. This casts huge doubts on the legitimacy of the community consultation process, and places unreasonable pressure on the Dept of Planning and Environment to approve this project regardless of its flaws.

No business case was released until late 2015, and was only released after huge public pressure on the NSW Government to do so. Even now, the document released contains so many redactions that it is impossible for anyone to independently assess it – particularly as the key redactions involve the crucial cost and revenue figures. What is the point of releasing a business case that doesn't contain this information? It is little more than yet another expensive piece of publicly funded advertising for this project that adds nothing in the way of accountability.

In fact the whole WestConnex has been characterised by a lack of transparency and accountability and secrecy. This is unacceptable for any project funded by taxpayer money, let alone a massive one that would see communities and endangered species destroyed, thousands of people evicted from their family homes and businesses, and billions of dollars of public money diverted from projects that would benefit NSW more.

It is alarming that costs for this taxpayer-funded project are blowing out at the rate of more than $2 billion a year. When WestConnex was announced in 2012, it was one toll road with a price tag of $10 billion; it is now a series of toll road projects that encompasses WestConnex and additional projects such as the Southern Extension and Sydney Gateway that will now cost $16.8 billion. At this rate the final price tag will be well in excess of $20 billion. The flaws and optimistic assumptions in the traffic modeling also mean that toll revenue is likely to be significantly lower than forecast. AECOM has a history of providing over-optimistic traffic forecasts for toll roads, resulting in previous financial failures (e.g. Clem7 in Brisbane).

It is quite clear that this project will provide no solution to traffic congestion, as the EIS shows that several intersections across the project route will remain at Level of Service F (i.e. the worst possible level, and the one that is indicative of system failure) after the project.

Far from easing congestion, this project will worsen it by pouring traffic onto the local road network in the inner west, western and south-west Sydney. For example, even the project proponents admit that only 80% of the traffic expected to pour out of the St Peters Interchange can be absorbed within the existing road network. No attempt is made in this EIS to assess how this issue will be dealt with if the M4-M5 link, Sydney Gateway and Southern Extension are not built. Considering none of these projects are currently designed, and at least some are unfunded, this is an extremely serious failing.

Independent transport modelling experts have found scores of problems with the application of the WestConnex Road and Traffic Model, which has not been released for scrutiny. It would be negligent for any government to go ahead with a project based on uncertain predictions.

Thousands of residents and workers will be exposed to health impacts in all areas where demolition, earthworks, construction and removal activities. This includes communities in Arncliffe, Kingsgrove, Beverly Hills, St Peters and Alexandria. These health risks are rated as HIGH for all areas. Mitigation is recommended, but no firm information is available about who might receive this and what it might be. Instead, decisions are put off until after approval – and in some cases, the beginning of construction. This is completely indefensible and communities cannot be forced to accept this.

The suggestion that tunneling activities would need to be conducted 24 hours per day, seven days a week – including associated activities such as spoil handling and haulage – is not justified. There are also no clear plans in this EIS to show where millions of cubic metres of spoil will be deposited in communities in western Sydney. None of these communities have been given information or consulted about these impacts. This is unacceptable.

Tunnelling would cause vibration and damage to homes. The EIS says it will only be for a "short period", but does not say what this short period is. In some cases, tunnels and tunnelling would take place around 20m below people's

homes. This is not acceptable, particularly given the collapse of buildings that took place during the Lane Cove Tunnel's construction, and the legal action residents above Brisbane's Airport Link are now being forced to take after experiencing property damage.

The air quality study shows that some communities will be exposed to increased doses of dangerous pollution, especially those living close to surface roads. Many residents along the proposed route are already exposed to levels of PM2.5 particles that exceed national guidelines, yet the EIS predicts that these levels will only worsen. I note that there is no safe level of exposure to fine particulate matter, and I wholeheartedly reject any project that would sacrifice the health of some citizens in order to deliver unproven and highly disputed 'benefits' to others.

Scientific experts agree there is no safe level of fine particle pollution. Rather than aiming to shift dangerous pollution from area to another, the government should be finding cleaner transport solutions that do not leave residents living beside polluted roads or unfiltered pollution stacks – no matter where they live.

The analysis of alternatives provided by AECOM in this EIS provides no solid evidence for the conclusions drawn. No scenarios have been modeled in which alternative solutions such as traffic management, increased public transport, or a combination of such solutions could reduce traffic congestion more effectively than WestConnex.

The noise assessment shows that hundreds of homes will experience noise above acceptable levels. In fact the real impact is likely to be far worse than the results provided in this EIS, because noise monitoring was only done for one location at Beverly Hills and one in St Peters where only 30% of results could be included. Such limited evidence provides the community with no confidence in the conclusions reached in this EIS. Independent experts have also reported that some of the tables are inaccurate in the noise report and are therefore not reliable.

In addition, the noise monitoring performed in this EIS has been too limited to properly assess the massive noise that will be generated by construction and operation of this project, and the impact it will have on the hundreds of thousands of Sydney residents who would be exposed to and affected by it.

The project will cause immense social harm. It will destroy long-established communities. It will cause an increase in air pollution-related deaths and illnesses. The increase in air pollution will inhibit lung and nervous system development in children. There are numerous ways of spending $17 billion that would deliver a much greater social and economic benefit, and would not cause so much destruction. Such alternatives are barely mentioned in this EIS and have certainly not been analysed as required by the project SEARs.

Community parks, an endangered Green and Golden Bell Frog colony, critically endangered Cooks River Castlereagh Ironbark Forest and trees along the M5 East would be destroyed for these projects. Some of these, such as the endangered flora and fauna, were species that the RMS was legally obliged to maintain and protect as part of construction for the M5 East. Others, such as the M5 Linear Park and trees lining the noise walls, are spaces the local community has built up over many years after their community was carved up the M5 East. For all of this to be swept aside for this toll road is not only unacceptable – it is undemocratic and a grave violation of the government's environmental and legal responsibilities.

There is already flooding at St Peters during heavy rainfalls. Councils have already found that the flooding modelling is not acceptable for the M4 East and the same approach has been used for the New M5.

The proponent has lied about how much of Sydney Park was needed for the New M5. It is disgraceful that the City Council only became aware that some of its land would be acquired well after this EIS was lodged. Sydney Park is a crucial regional park and will be significantly impacted by WestConnex New M5. Other parks such as Beverly Grove Park, the M5 Linear Park, Camdenville Park will also be permanently or temporarily destroyed, along with thousands of trees along the route. The NSW government should be preserving green space and vegetation, not destroying it.

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The planning processes surrounding this project and WestConnex as a whole have been utterly corrupted. For example, key parts of the business case remain hidden from public scrutiny, even though it is being funded by taxpayer money. Homes and businesses are being forcibly acquired, multi-million and/or billion-dollar contracts have been let, and construction works have occurred place before any planning approvals are granted for this project. The entire WestConnex, including this project, has been characterised by poor governance, and a complete lack of transparency and accountability. Community consultation has also taken place only after detailed plans have been drawn up, so the general public has little to no input on a project that will affect hundreds of thousands of people's lives for many years to come.

If this project and other parts of WestConnex go ahead, western and south-west Sydney residents will be forced into even greater car dependency and paying large tolls to use this road. It is unacceptable that no attempt is made in this EIS to assess the impact alternatives such as increasing public transport capacity and connections within these areas would have on reducing traffic congestion and improving access to jobs for people in these suburbs.

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Yours sincerely,

Sadie Hamblin

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Monique Hardy [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 5:07 AM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

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I therefore ask that you reject this proposal, publish my name and submission in accordance with the undertaking on your website, and provide a written response to each of the objections I have raised.

Yours sincerely,

Monique Hardy

[redacted]

[redacted] 12587

From: [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 5:04 AM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

Attn: Secretary, re: WestConnex New M5 EIS, project number SSI 14_6788

The Westconnex project is one of the most outdated and short sighted infrastructure concepts of recent years.

I strongly object to this project and the entire WestConnex of which this is part, and ask that you reject this proposal on the basis of this environmental impact statement (EIS).

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[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Karen Aulsberry [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 4:05 AM
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In fact the whole WestConnex has been characterised by a lack of transparency and accountability and secrecy. This is unacceptable for any project funded by taxpayer money, let alone a massive one that would see communities and endangered species destroyed, thousands of people evicted from their family homes and businesses, and billions of dollars of public money diverted from projects that would benefit NSW more.

It is alarming that costs for this taxpayer-funded project are blowing out at the rate of more than $2 billion a year. When WestConnex was announced in 2012, it was one toll road with a price tag of $10 billion; it is now a series of toll road projects that encompasses WestConnex and additional projects such as the Southern Extension and Sydney Gateway that will now cost $16.8 billion. At this rate the final price tag will be well in excess of $20 billion. The flaws and optimistic assumptions in the traffic modeling also mean that toll revenue is likely to be significantly lower than forecast. AECOM has a history of providing over-optimistic traffic forecasts for toll roads, resulting in previous financial failures (e.g. Clem7 in Brisbane).

It is quite clear that this project will provide no solution to traffic congestion, as the EIS shows that several intersections across the project route will remain at Level of Service F (i.e. the worst possible level, and the one that is indicative of system failure) after the project.

Far from easing congestion, this project will worsen it by pouring traffic onto the local road network in the inner west, western and south-west Sydney. For example, even the project proponents admit that only 80% of the traffic expected to pour out of the St Peters Interchange can be absorbed within the existing road network. No attempt is made in this EIS to assess how this issue will be dealt with if the M4-M5 link, Sydney Gateway and Southern Extension are not built. Considering none of these projects are currently designed, and at least some are unfunded, this is an extremely serious failing.

Independent transport modelling experts have found scores of problems with the application of the WestConnex Road and Traffic Model, which has not been released for scrutiny. It would be negligent for any government to go ahead with a project based on uncertain predictions.

Thousands of residents and workers will be exposed to health impacts in all areas where demolition, earthworks, construction and removal activities. This includes communities in Arncliffe, Kingsgrove, Beverly Hills, St Peters and Alexandria. These health risks are rated as HIGH for all areas. Mitigation is recommended, but no firm information is available about who might receive this and what it might be. Instead, decisions are put off until after approval – and in some cases, the beginning of construction. This is completely indefensible and communities cannot be forced to accept this.

The suggestion that tunneling activities would need to be conducted 24 hours per day, seven days a week – including associated activities such as spoil handling and haulage – is not justified. There are also no clear plans in this EIS to show where millions of cubic metres of spoil will be deposited in communities in western Sydney. None of these communities have been given information or consulted about these impacts. This is unacceptable.

Tunnelling would cause vibration and damage to homes. The EIS says it will only be for a "short period", but does not say what this short period is. In some cases, tunnels and tunnelling would take place around 20m below people's

homes. This is not acceptable, particularly given the collapse of buildings that took place during the Lane Cove Tunnel's construction, and the legal action residents above Brisbane's Airport Link are now being forced to take after experiencing property damage.

The air quality study shows that some communities will be exposed to increased doses of dangerous pollution, especially those living close to surface roads. Many residents along the proposed route are already exposed to levels of PM2.5 particles that exceed national guidelines, yet the EIS predicts that these levels will only worsen. I note that there is no safe level of exposure to fine particulate matter, and I wholeheartedly reject any project that would sacrifice the health of some citizens in order to deliver unproven and highly disputed 'benefits' to others.

Scientific experts agree there is no safe level of fine particle pollution. Rather than aiming to shift dangerous pollution from area to another, the government should be finding cleaner transport solutions that do not leave residents living beside polluted roads or unfiltered pollution stacks – no matter where they live.

The analysis of alternatives provided by AECOM in this EIS provides no solid evidence for the conclusions drawn. No scenarios have been modeled in which alternative solutions such as traffic management, increased public transport, or a combination of such solutions could reduce traffic congestion more effectively than WestConnex.

The noise assessment shows that hundreds of homes will experience noise above acceptable levels. In fact the real impact is likely to be far worse than the results provided in this EIS, because noise monitoring was only done for one location at Beverly Hills and one in St Peters where only 30% of results could be included. Such limited evidence provides the community with no confidence in the conclusions reached in this EIS. Independent experts have also reported that some of the tables are inaccurate in the noise report and are therefore not reliable.

In addition, the noise monitoring performed in this EIS has been too limited to properly assess the massive noise that will be generated by construction and operation of this project, and the impact it will have on the hundreds of thousands of Sydney residents who would be exposed to and affected by it.

The project will cause immense social harm. It will destroy long-established communities. It will cause an increase in air pollution-related deaths and illnesses. The increase in air pollution will inhibit lung and nervous system development in children. There are numerous ways of spending $17 billion that would deliver a much greater social and economic benefit, and would not cause so much destruction. Such alternatives are barely mentioned in this EIS and have certainly not been analysed as required by the project SEARs.

Community parks, an endangered Green and Golden Bell Frog colony, critically endangered Cooks River Castlereagh Ironbark Forest and trees along the M5 East would be destroyed for these projects. Some of these, such as the endangered flora and fauna, were species that the RMS was legally obliged to maintain and protect as part of construction for the M5 East. Others, such as the M5 Linear Park and trees lining the noise walls, are spaces the local community has built up over many years after their community was carved up the M5 East. For all of this to be swept aside for this toll road is not only unacceptable – it is undemocratic and a grave violation of the government's environmental and legal responsibilities.

There is already flooding at St Peters during heavy rainfalls. Councils have already found that the flooding modelling is not acceptable for the M4 East and the same approach has been used for the New M5.

The proponent has lied about how much of Sydney Park was needed for the New M5. It is disgraceful that the City Council only became aware that some of its land would be acquired well after this EIS was lodged. Sydney Park is a crucial regional park and will be significantly impacted by WestConnex New M5. Other parks such as Beverly Grove Park, the M5 Linear Park, Camdenville Park will also be permanently or temporarily destroyed, along with thousands of trees along the route. The NSW government should be preserving green space and vegetation, not destroying it.

I am aware that independent traffic experts have not access to full information about the assumptions on which traffic modelling. The proponents must be instructed to fully respond to independent experts who have been commissioned by Councils or are academic researchers and to make their models available. AECOM and RMS openly admit that they have collaborated on the modelling. Their claims must be fully and independently scrutinised. When the living conditions of thousands of residents and billions of dollars of public money are at stake, it is not acceptable for a government department or private company to keep such a model secret.

The planning processes surrounding this project and WestConnex as a whole have been utterly corrupted. For example, key parts of the business case remain hidden from public scrutiny, even though it is being funded by taxpayer money. Homes and businesses are being forcibly acquired, multi-million and/or billion-dollar contracts have been let, and construction works have occurred place before any planning approvals are granted for this project. The entire WestConnex, including this project, has been characterised by poor governance, and a complete lack of transparency and accountability. Community consultation has also taken place only after detailed plans have been drawn up, so the general public has little to no input on a project that will affect hundreds of thousands of people's lives for many years to come.

If this project and other parts of WestConnex go ahead, western and south-west Sydney residents will be forced into even greater car dependency and paying large tolls to use this road. It is unacceptable that no attempt is made in this EIS to assess the impact alternatives such as increasing public transport capacity and connections within these areas would have on reducing traffic congestion and improving access to jobs for people in these suburbs.

I therefore ask that you reject this proposal, publish my name and submission in accordance with the undertaking on your website, and provide a written response to each of the objections I have raised.

Yours sincerely,

Karen Aulsberry

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 4:02 AM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

Attn: Secretary, re: WestConnex New M5 EIS, project number SSI 14_6788

I strongly object to this project and the entire WestConnex of which this is part, and ask that you reject this proposal on the basis of this environmental impact statement (EIS).

Global experience and research has shown conclusively that these kinds of toll road mega-projects are hugely expensive and counterproductive. WestConnex will increase air pollution and traffic for thousands of residents and workers, and expose NSW taxpayers to unacceptably high levels of financial risk. Even the EISs produced for the various stages of WestConnex show it is not a long-term solution to Sydney's congestion problem.

I also strongly object to a number of specific aspects of this EIS, and I expect you to publish this submission and send me a written response to each of the objections I have outlined below.

The flaws and optimistic assumptions in the traffic modelling mean that toll revenue is likely to be significantly lower than forecast. AECOM has a history of providing over-optimistic traffic forecasts for toll roads, resulting in previous financial failures (e.g. Clem7 in Brisbane).

Billions of dollars of construction contracts have been let for this project before this EIS was lodged. This casts huge doubts on the legitimacy of the community consultation process, and places unreasonable pressure on the Dept of Planning and Environment to approve this project regardless of its flaws.

The average daily travel time in Sydney has been stable at about 80 minutes per person for decades, while the average trip distance has increased substantially. In this time, billions have been spent on tollways. Travellers are spending more than ever on tolls, yet are not spending any less time travelling. Instead of encouraging costly road-based sprawl, the NSW Government should be investing in more sustainable transport solutions, and in developing economic opportunities outside of the inner city so that more people who live outside of central Sydney can work closer to home instead of being locked into long commutes.

The New M5 would cause costly traffic chaos throughout the inner west and south-west Sydney. It is unacceptable that no traffic modelling was only done past two intersections after the end of the project.

Experts at the EIS exhibition sessions gave contradictory advice about traffic modelling. All traffic modelling should be transparently and independently tested, particularly because AECOM has a demonstrably poor record in traffic modelling.

Independent transport modelling experts have found scores of problems with the application of the WestConnex Road and Traffic Model, which has not been released for scrutiny. It would be negligent for any government to go ahead with a project based on uncertain predictions.

The roads around the St Peters interchange are already at an unacceptable Level of Service and are getting worse because of in-fill developments not allowed for by the EIS, including Green Square, Ashmore, Waterloo Estate and Central 2 Eveleigh. With an extra 150,000 people in an area of a few square kilometres, this is going to be the most densely populated area in Australia. There is no evidence that this EIS has factored in this huge increase in density.

However, the EIS clearly demonstrates that the traffic on roads around the St Peters Interchange will deteriorate as a result of WestConnex, as well as already heavily congested roads in Bexley, Rockdale and Brighton-Le-Sands. It also projects that the existing M5 and New M5 combined will end up taking less traffic now than the Cross City Tunnel, which was a financial disaster, as drivers 'rat-run' to avoid the tolls.

What is even more worrying is that the proponent now concedes that it cannot make its traffic model work without other, unfunded toll road projects. What happens if or when these projects do not proceed? This EIS does not say, so the public does not have a chance to form a view or comment.

AECOM was paid $13 million of taxpayer money to complete this EIS, despite its conflict of interest (it has other WestConnex contracts that depend on the project going ahead). This is an unacceptable given that this EIS is supposed to provide an objective assessment of the project impacts. The public cannot trust that this EIS properly and fully investigates the true economic, environmental and social impacts of this project, and indeed the poor quality of this document reflects this. It contains many errors, omissions, superficial analyses, and opaque models, and should be rejected on this basis alone.

The suggestion that tunnelling activities would need to be conducted 24 hours per day, seven days a week – including associated activities such as spoil handling and haulage – is not justified. This will place great pressure on significant numbers of nearby residents throughout day and night-time periods.

The EIS repeatedly says that threats to the liveable environment of residents during construction and operation would be subject to plans developed later. Mitigation is recommended in many instances, but no firm information is available about who might receive this and what it might be. Instead, decisions are put off until after approval – and in some cases the beginning of construction. This is completely indefensible and communities cannot be forced to accept this. The whole point of an EIS is to assess the impact of the project, so these plans should have been made available in this EIS.

The method used in this EIS to measure air quality has not been used in Australia before and cannot be verified by the NSW EPA. I note that there will be an increase in dangerous pollution in some areas close to the tollway portals and near roads with increased traffic. It is not acceptable to me that a government should deliberately place the health of citizens in jeopardy.

I particularly object to tollway portals and increased traffic being so close to local schools. I note that fine particle pollution can cause lung cancer and is particularly dangerous for the lungs of growing children. I support the parents of local schools who have requested an extended period of time after school returns at the end of January 2016 in which to seek independent advice.

The whole WestConnex system will increase greenhouse gas emissions in Sydney at a time when we should be doing all we can to reduce them. I am not convinced by a method of analysis that does not look at alternatives but instead compares the New M5 project against a 'do nothing' scenario to claim a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.

No credible authority in the world today would suggest that building huge urban motorways is the solution to cutting national greenhouse emissions, or that increases in vehicle kilometres travelled (VKT) would somehow result in a net reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. Yet this is exactly what the proponent is claiming in this EIS. I object to this flawed analysis.

The analysis of alternatives provided by AECOM in this EIS provides no solid evidence for its conclusions. Potential alternatives that could have provided more effective, sustainable and cost-effective ways of easing congestion have been ignored. This failure to meet the project SEARs should also be reason enough to reject the proposal.

The noise assessment shows that hundreds of homes will experience noise above acceptable levels. The real impact is likely to be far worse, because noise monitoring was only conducted at a very limited level for this EIS in Beverly Hills and St Peters, and did not properly assess the massive noise that will be generated by construction and operation of this project. Independent experts have also reported that some of the tables are inaccurate in the noise report and are therefore not reliable.

The social impact study is little more than a description of the project, rather than an assessment of its impacts. It is insulting to communities where hundreds of tenants and owners have lost homes and businesses, and others will live in decimated communities. For example, the impact of forced acquisition of scores of homes in St Peters on the families affected and the close-knit community that will be fractured as a result is merely briefly described and not assessed. I am not aware of any affected homeowner that was surveyed or even contacted by the authors for this study, which is a gross failing on the part of AECOM.

Residents affected by compulsory acquisitions are also being offered below-market prices for their homes and businesses, which has caused additional and completely unnecessary distress and trauma for the owners. I find it disturbing that the NSW Government was warned three years ago that the compulsory acquisition process was unfair to those whose properties were being forcibly taken, yet has both failed to make the changes recommended and actively suppressed the report that handed down these findings.

Community parks, an endangered Green and Golden Bell Frog colony, critically endangered Cooks River Castlereagh Ironbark Forest and trees along the M5 East would be destroyed for these projects. Some of these, such as the endangered flora and fauna, were species that the RMS was legally obliged to maintain and protect as part of construction for the M5 East. Others, such as the M5 Linear Park and trees lining the noise walls, are spaces the local community has built up over many years after their community was carved up for the M5 East. For all of this to be swept aside for this toll road is not only unacceptable – it is undemocratic and a violation of the government's environmental and legal responsibilities.

The RMS has lied about how much of Sydney Park was needed for the New M5. It is disgraceful that the City Council only became aware that some of its land would be acquired well after this EIS was lodged.

Thousands of trees along the route in Beverly Grove Park, the M5 Linear Park and other areas are also being destroyed to make way for a tollway that even the EIS shows won't solve traffic congestion. The NSW government should be preserving green space and vegetation, not destroying it.

The planning processes surrounding this project and WestConnex as a whole have been utterly corrupted. For example, key parts of the business case remain hidden from public scrutiny, even though it is being funded by taxpayer money. Homes and businesses are being forcibly acquired, multi-million and/or billion-dollar contracts have been let, and construction works have occurred place before any planning approvals are granted for this project. The entire WestConnex, including this project, has been characterised by poor governance, and a complete lack of transparency and accountability. Community consultation has also taken place only after detailed plans have been drawn up, so the general public has little to no input on a project that will affect hundreds of thousands of people's lives for many years to come.

This project will see roads expanded to within metres of residents' homes, which is outrageous. I am aware that in cases in St Peters and Alexandria, roads being widened for WestConnex will be less than two metres of family homes, and that young children will have more than 50,000 cars and trucks a day going right past their windows. This is absolutely unacceptable.

There are no clear plans of where millions of cubic metres of spoil will be deposited in communities in western Sydney. None of these communities have been given information or consulted about these impacts. This is unacceptable.

If this project and other parts of WestConnex go ahead, the residents of western and south-west Sydney will be forced into even greater car dependency and paying large tolls to use this road. It is unacceptable that no attempt is made in this EIS to assess the impact alternatives such as increasing public transport capacity and connections within these areas would have on reducing traffic congestion and improving access to jobs for people in these suburbs.

I therefore ask that you reject this proposal, publish my name and submission in accordance with the undertaking on your website, and provide a written response to each of the objections I have raised.

_____

[redacted]

From: fatima hahe [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 2:33 AM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

Attn: Secretary, re: WestConnex New M5 EIS, project number SSI 14_6788

I strongly object to this project and the entire WestConnex of which this is part, and ask that you reject this proposal on the basis of this environmental impact statement (EIS).

Global experience and research has shown conclusively that these kinds of toll road mega-projects are hugely expensive and counterproductive. WestConnex will increase air pollution and traffic for thousands of residents and workers, and expose NSW taxpayers to unacceptably high levels of financial risk. Even the EISs produced for the various stages of WestConnex show it is not a long-term solution to Sydney's congestion problem.

I also strongly object to a number of specific aspects of this EIS, and I expect you to publish this submission and send me a written response to each of the objections I have outlined below.

AECOM, which has a record of failed traffic modeling, has been paid $13 million of taxpayer money to complete this EIS even though it has been awarded other WestConnex contracts that depend on the project going ahead. This is an utterly unacceptable conflict of interest. The public cannot trust that this EIS properly and fully investigates the true economic, environmental and social impacts of this project, and indeed the poor quality of this document reflects this. The EIS is riddled with errors, basic omissions, superficial analyses, and opaque modelling, and should be rejected on this basis alone.

Billions of dollars of construction contracts have been let for this project before this EIS was lodged. This casts huge doubts on the legitimacy of the community consultation process, and places unreasonable pressure on the Dept of Planning and Environment to approve this project regardless of its flaws.

No business case was released until late 2015, and was only released after huge public pressure on the NSW Government to do so. Even now, the document released contains so many redactions that it is impossible for anyone to independently assess it – particularly as the key redactions involve the crucial cost and revenue figures. What is the point of releasing a business case that doesn't contain this information? It is little more than yet another expensive piece of publicly funded advertising for this project that adds nothing in the way of accountability.

In fact the whole WestConnex has been characterised by a lack of transparency and accountability and secrecy. This is unacceptable for any project funded by taxpayer money, let alone a massive one that would see communities and endangered species destroyed, thousands of people evicted from their family homes and businesses, and billions of dollars of public money diverted from projects that would benefit NSW more.

It is alarming that costs for this taxpayer-funded project are blowing out at the rate of more than $2 billion a year. When WestConnex was announced in 2012, it was one toll road with a price tag of $10 billion; it is now a series of toll road projects that encompasses WestConnex and additional projects such as the Southern Extension and Sydney Gateway that will now cost $16.8 billion. At this rate the final price tag will be well in excess of $20 billion. The flaws and optimistic assumptions in the traffic modeling also mean that toll revenue is likely to be significantly lower than forecast. AECOM has a history of providing over-optimistic traffic forecasts for toll roads, resulting in previous financial failures (e.g. Clem7 in Brisbane).

It is quite clear that this project will provide no solution to traffic congestion, as the EIS shows that several intersections across the project route will remain at Level of Service F (i.e. the worst possible level, and the one that is indicative of system failure) after the project.

Far from easing congestion, this project will worsen it by pouring traffic onto the local road network in the inner west, western and south-west Sydney. For example, even the project proponents admit that only 80% of the traffic expected to pour out of the St Peters Interchange can be absorbed within the existing road network. No attempt is made in this EIS to assess how this issue will be dealt with if the M4-M5 link, Sydney Gateway and Southern Extension are not built. Considering none of these projects are currently designed, and at least some are unfunded, this is an extremely serious failing.

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Thousands of residents and workers will be exposed to health impacts in all areas where demolition, earthworks, construction and removal activities. This includes communities in Arncliffe, Kingsgrove, Beverly Hills, St Peters and Alexandria. These health risks are rated as HIGH for all areas. Mitigation is recommended, but no firm information is available about who might receive this and what it might be. Instead, decisions are put off until after approval – and in some cases, the beginning of construction. This is completely indefensible and communities cannot be forced to accept this.

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homes. This is not acceptable, particularly given the collapse of buildings that took place during the Lane Cove Tunnel's construction, and the legal action residents above Brisbane's Airport Link are now being forced to take after experiencing property damage.

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Scientific experts agree there is no safe level of fine particle pollution. Rather than aiming to shift dangerous pollution from area to another, the government should be finding cleaner transport solutions that do not leave residents living beside polluted roads or unfiltered pollution stacks – no matter where they live.

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In addition, the noise monitoring performed in this EIS has been too limited to properly assess the massive noise that will be generated by construction and operation of this project, and the impact it will have on the hundreds of thousands of Sydney residents who would be exposed to and affected by it.

The project will cause immense social harm. It will destroy long-established communities. It will cause an increase in air pollution-related deaths and illnesses. The increase in air pollution will inhibit lung and nervous system development in children. There are numerous ways of spending $17 billion that would deliver a much greater social and economic benefit, and would not cause so much destruction. Such alternatives are barely mentioned in this EIS and have certainly not been analysed as required by the project SEARs.

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I therefore ask that you reject this proposal, publish my name and submission in accordance with the undertaking on your website, and provide a written response to each of the objections I have raised.

Yours sincerely,

fatima hahe

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Kathryn Chessell [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 2:31 AM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

Attn: Secretary, re: WestConnex New M5 EIS, project number SSI 14_6788

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I also strongly object to a number of specific aspects of this EIS, and I expect you to publish this submission and send me a written response to each of the objections I have outlined below.

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The suggestion that tunneling activities would need to be conducted 24 hours per day, seven days a week – including associated activities such as spoil handling and haulage – is not justified. There are also no clear plans in this EIS to show where millions of cubic metres of spoil will be deposited in communities in western Sydney. None of these communities have been given information or consulted about these impacts. This is unacceptable.

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Scientific experts agree there is no safe level of fine particle pollution. Rather than aiming to shift dangerous pollution from area to another, the government should be finding cleaner transport solutions that do not leave residents living beside polluted roads or unfiltered pollution stacks – no matter where they live.

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In addition, the noise monitoring performed in this EIS has been too limited to properly assess the massive noise that will be generated by construction and operation of this project, and the impact it will have on the hundreds of thousands of Sydney residents who would be exposed to and affected by it.

The project will cause immense social harm. It will destroy long-established communities. It will cause an increase in air pollution-related deaths and illnesses. The increase in air pollution will inhibit lung and nervous system development in children. There are numerous ways of spending $17 billion that would deliver a much greater social and economic benefit, and would not cause so much destruction. Such alternatives are barely mentioned in this EIS and have certainly not been analysed as required by the project SEARs.

Community parks, an endangered Green and Golden Bell Frog colony, critically endangered Cooks River Castlereagh Ironbark Forest and trees along the M5 East would be destroyed for these projects. Some of these, such as the endangered flora and fauna, were species that the RMS was legally obliged to maintain and protect as part of construction for the M5 East. Others, such as the M5 Linear Park and trees lining the noise walls, are spaces the local community has built up over many years after their community was carved up the M5 East. For all of this to be swept aside for this toll road is not only unacceptable – it is undemocratic and a grave violation of the government's environmental and legal responsibilities.

There is already flooding at St Peters during heavy rainfalls. Councils have already found that the flooding modelling is not acceptable for the M4 East and the same approach has been used for the New M5.

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The planning processes surrounding this project and WestConnex as a whole have been utterly corrupted. For example, key parts of the business case remain hidden from public scrutiny, even though it is being funded by taxpayer money. Homes and businesses are being forcibly acquired, multi-million and/or billion-dollar contracts have been let, and construction works have occurred place before any planning approvals are granted for this project. The entire WestConnex, including this project, has been characterised by poor governance, and a complete lack of transparency and accountability. Community consultation has also taken place only after detailed plans have been drawn up, so the general public has little to no input on a project that will affect hundreds of thousands of people's lives for many years to come.

If this project and other parts of WestConnex go ahead, western and south-west Sydney residents will be forced into even greater car dependency and paying large tolls to use this road. It is unacceptable that no attempt is made in this EIS to assess the impact alternatives such as increasing public transport capacity and connections within these areas would have on reducing traffic congestion and improving access to jobs for people in these suburbs.

I therefore ask that you reject this proposal, publish my name and submission in accordance with the undertaking on your website, and provide a written response to each of the objections I have raised.

Yours sincerely,

Kathryn Chessell

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Robert Tilley [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 2:24 AM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

Attn: Secretary, re: WestConnex New M5 EIS, project number SSI 14_6788

I strongly object to this project and the entire WestConnex of which this is part, and ask that you reject this proposal on the basis of this environmental impact statement (EIS).

Global experience and research has shown conclusively that these kinds of toll road mega-projects are hugely expensive and counterproductive. WestConnex will increase air pollution and traffic for thousands of residents and workers, and expose NSW taxpayers to unacceptably high levels of financial risk. Even the EISs produced for the various stages of WestConnex show it is not a long-term solution to Sydney's congestion problem.

There must be greater investment in localised public transport and business decentralisation. Fossil fuelled personal transport must be discouraged and consideration given to narrow corridor.mass transit and delivery systems.

I also strongly object to a number of specific aspects of this EIS, and I expect you to publish this submission and send me a written response to each of the objections I have outlined below.

AECOM, which has a record of failed traffic modeling, has been paid $13 million of taxpayer money to complete this EIS even though it has been awarded other WestConnex contracts that depend on the project going ahead. This is an utterly unacceptable conflict of interest. The public cannot trust that this EIS properly and fully investigates the true economic, environmental and social impacts of this project, and indeed the poor quality of this document reflects this. The EIS is riddled with errors, basic omissions, superficial analyses, and opaque modelling, and should be rejected on this basis alone.

Billions of dollars of construction contracts have been let for this project before this EIS was lodged. This casts huge doubts on the legitimacy of the community consultation process, and places unreasonable pressure on the Dept of Planning and Environment to approve this project regardless of its flaws.

No business case was released until late 2015, and was only released after huge public pressure on the NSW Government to do so. Even now, the document released contains so many redactions that it is impossible for anyone to independently assess it – particularly as the key redactions involve the crucial cost and revenue figures. What is the point of releasing a business case that doesn't contain this information? It is little more than yet another expensive piece of publicly funded advertising for this project that adds nothing in the way of accountability.

In fact the whole WestConnex has been characterised by a lack of transparency and accountability and secrecy. This is unacceptable for any project funded by taxpayer money, let alone a massive one that would see communities and endangered species destroyed, thousands of people evicted from their family homes and businesses, and billions of dollars of public money diverted from projects that would benefit NSW more.

It is alarming that costs for this taxpayer-funded project are blowing out at the rate of more than $2 billion a year. When WestConnex was announced in 2012, it was one toll road with a price tag of $10 billion; it is now a series of toll road projects that encompasses WestConnex and additional projects such as the Southern Extension and Sydney Gateway that will now cost $16.8 billion. At this rate the final price tag will be well in excess of $20 billion. The flaws and optimistic assumptions in the traffic modeling also mean that toll revenue is likely to be significantly lower than forecast. AECOM has a history of providing over-optimistic traffic forecasts for toll roads, resulting in previous financial failures (e.g. Clem7 in Brisbane).

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Yours sincerely,

Robert Tilley

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Kate Chessell [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 2:23 AM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

Attn: Secretary, re: WestConnex New M5 EIS, project number SSI 14_6788

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Kate Chessell

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Sandy Suardi [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 12:56 AM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

Attn: Secretary, re: WestConnex New M5 EIS, project number SSI 14_6788

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The project will cause immense social harm. It will destroy long-established communities. It will cause an increase in air pollution-related deaths and illnesses. The increase in air pollution will inhibit lung and nervous system development in children. There are numerous ways of spending $17 billion that would deliver a much greater social and economic benefit, and would not cause so much destruction. Such alternatives are barely mentioned in this EIS and have certainly not been analysed as required by the project SEARs.

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I therefore ask that you reject this proposal, publish my name and submission in accordance with the undertaking on your website, and provide a written response to each of the objections I have raised.

Yours sincerely,

Sandy Suardi

From: Margery Smith [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 12:52 AM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

Attn: Secretary, re: WestConnex New M5 EIS, project number SSI 14_6788

I strongly object to this project and the entire WestConnex of which this is part, and ask that you reject this proposal on the basis of this environmental impact statement (EIS).

Global experience and research has shown conclusively that these kinds of toll road mega-projects are hugely expensive and counterproductive. WestConnex will increase air pollution and traffic for thousands of residents and workers, and expose NSW taxpayers to unacceptably high levels of financial risk. Even the EISs produced for the various stages of WestConnex show it is not a long-term solution to Sydney's congestion problem.

I also strongly object to a number of specific aspects of this EIS, and I expect you to publish this submission and send me a written response to each of the objections I have outlined below.

AECOM, which has a record of failed traffic modeling, has been paid $13 million of taxpayer money to complete this EIS even though it has been awarded other WestConnex contracts that depend on the project going ahead. This is an utterly unacceptable conflict of interest. The public cannot trust that this EIS properly and fully investigates the true economic, environmental and social impacts of this project, and indeed the poor quality of this document reflects this. The EIS is riddled with errors, basic omissions, superficial analyses, and opaque modelling, and should be rejected on this basis alone.

Billions of dollars of construction contracts have been let for this project before this EIS was lodged. This casts huge doubts on the legitimacy of the community consultation process, and places unreasonable pressure on the Dept of Planning and Environment to approve this project regardless of its flaws.

No business case was released until late 2015, and was only released after huge public pressure on the NSW Government to do so. Even now, the document released contains so many redactions that it is impossible for anyone to independently assess it – particularly as the key redactions involve the crucial cost and revenue figures. What is the point of releasing a business case that doesn't contain this information? It is little more than yet another expensive piece of publicly funded advertising for this project that adds nothing in the way of accountability.

In fact the whole WestConnex has been characterised by a lack of transparency and accountability and secrecy. This is unacceptable for any project funded by taxpayer money, let alone a massive one that would see communities and endangered species destroyed, thousands of people evicted from their family homes and businesses, and billions of dollars of public money diverted from projects that would benefit NSW more.

It is alarming that costs for this taxpayer-funded project are blowing out at the rate of more than $2 billion a year. When WestConnex was announced in 2012, it was one toll road with a price tag of $10 billion; it is now a series of toll road projects that encompasses WestConnex and additional projects such as the Southern Extension and Sydney Gateway that will now cost $16.8 billion. At this rate the final price tag will be well in excess of $20 billion. The flaws and optimistic assumptions in the traffic modeling also mean that toll revenue is likely to be significantly lower than forecast. AECOM has a history of providing over-optimistic traffic forecasts for toll roads, resulting in previous financial failures (e.g. Clem7 in Brisbane).

It is quite clear that this project will provide no solution to traffic congestion, as the EIS shows that several intersections across the project route will remain at Level of Service F (i.e. the worst possible level, and the one that is indicative of system failure) after the project.

Far from easing congestion, this project will worsen it by pouring traffic onto the local road network in the inner west, western and south-west Sydney. For example, even the project proponents admit that only 80% of the traffic expected to pour out of the St Peters Interchange can be absorbed within the existing road network. No attempt is made in this EIS to assess how this issue will be dealt with if the M4-M5 link, Sydney Gateway and Southern Extension are not built. Considering none of these projects are currently designed, and at least some are unfunded, this is an extremely serious failing.

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Yours sincerely,

Margery Smith

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: chris johns [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 12:41 AM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

Attn: Secretary, re: WestConnex New M5 EIS, project number SSI 14_6788

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chris johns

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Alex Kwan [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 12:37 AM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

Attn: Secretary, re: WestConnex New M5 EIS, project number SSI 14_6788

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The project will cause immense social harm. It will destroy long-established communities. It will cause an increase in air pollution-related deaths and illnesses. The increase in air pollution will inhibit lung and nervous system development in children. There are numerous ways of spending $17 billion that would deliver a much greater social and economic benefit, and would not cause so much destruction. Such alternatives are barely mentioned in this EIS and have certainly not been analysed as required by the project SEARs.

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I am aware that independent traffic experts have not access to full information about the assumptions on which traffic modelling. The proponents must be instructed to fully respond to independent experts who have been commissioned by Councils or are academic researchers and to make their models available. AECOM and RMS openly admit that they have collaborated on the modelling. Their claims must be fully and independently scrutinised. When the living conditions of thousands of residents and billions of dollars of public money are at stake, it is not acceptable for a government department or private company to keep such a model secret.

The planning processes surrounding this project and WestConnex as a whole have been utterly corrupted. For example, key parts of the business case remain hidden from public scrutiny, even though it is being funded by taxpayer money. Homes and businesses are being forcibly acquired, multi-million and/or billion-dollar contracts have been let, and construction works have occurred place before any planning approvals are granted for this project. The entire WestConnex, including this project, has been characterised by poor governance, and a complete lack of transparency and accountability. Community consultation has also taken place only after detailed plans have been drawn up, so the general public has little to no input on a project that will affect hundreds of thousands of people's lives for many years to come.

If this project and other parts of WestConnex go ahead, western and south-west Sydney residents will be forced into even greater car dependency and paying large tolls to use this road. It is unacceptable that no attempt is made in this EIS to assess the impact alternatives such as increasing public transport capacity and connections within these areas would have on reducing traffic congestion and improving access to jobs for people in these suburbs.

I therefore ask that you reject this proposal, publish my name and submission in accordance with the undertaking on your website, and provide a written response to each of the objections I have raised.

Yours sincerely,

Alex Kwan

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Marita McMahon [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 12:32 AM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

Attn: Secretary, re: WestConnex New M5 EIS, project number SSI 14_6788

I strongly object to this project and the entire WestConnex of which this is part, and ask that you reject this proposal on the basis of this environmental impact statement (EIS).

Global experience and research has shown conclusively that these kinds of toll road mega-projects are hugely expensive and counterproductive. WestConnex will increase air pollution and traffic for thousands of residents and workers, and expose NSW taxpayers to unacceptably high levels of financial risk. Even the EISs produced for the various stages of WestConnex show it is not a long-term solution to Sydney's congestion problem.

I also strongly object to a number of specific aspects of this EIS, and I expect you to publish this submission and send me a written response to each of the objections I have outlined below.

AECOM, which has a record of failed traffic modeling, has been paid $13 million of taxpayer money to complete this EIS even though it has been awarded other WestConnex contracts that depend on the project going ahead. This is an utterly unacceptable conflict of interest. The public cannot trust that this EIS properly and fully investigates the true economic, environmental and social impacts of this project, and indeed the poor quality of this document reflects this. The EIS is riddled with errors, basic omissions, superficial analyses, and opaque modelling, and should be rejected on this basis alone.

Billions of dollars of construction contracts have been let for this project before this EIS was lodged. This casts huge doubts on the legitimacy of the community consultation process, and places unreasonable pressure on the Dept of Planning and Environment to approve this project regardless of its flaws.

No business case was released until late 2015, and was only released after huge public pressure on the NSW Government to do so. Even now, the document released contains so many redactions that it is impossible for anyone to independently assess it – particularly as the key redactions involve the crucial cost and revenue figures. What is the point of releasing a business case that doesn't contain this information? It is little more than yet another expensive piece of publicly funded advertising for this project that adds nothing in the way of accountability.

In fact the whole WestConnex has been characterised by a lack of transparency and accountability and secrecy. This is unacceptable for any project funded by taxpayer money, let alone a massive one that would see communities and endangered species destroyed, thousands of people evicted from their family homes and businesses, and billions of dollars of public money diverted from projects that would benefit NSW more.

It is alarming that costs for this taxpayer-funded project are blowing out at the rate of more than $2 billion a year. When WestConnex was announced in 2012, it was one toll road with a price tag of $10 billion; it is now a series of toll road projects that encompasses WestConnex and additional projects such as the Southern Extension and Sydney Gateway that will now cost $16.8 billion. At this rate the final price tag will be well in excess of $20 billion. The flaws and optimistic assumptions in the traffic modeling also mean that toll revenue is likely to be significantly lower than forecast. AECOM has a history of providing over-optimistic traffic forecasts for toll roads, resulting in previous financial failures (e.g. Clem7 in Brisbane).

It is quite clear that this project will provide no solution to traffic congestion, as the EIS shows that several intersections across the project route will remain at Level of Service F (i.e. the worst possible level, and the one that is indicative of system failure) after the project.

Far from easing congestion, this project will worsen it by pouring traffic onto the local road network in the inner west, western and south-west Sydney. For example, even the project proponents admit that only 80% of the traffic expected to pour out of the St Peters Interchange can be absorbed within the existing road network. No attempt is made in this EIS to assess how this issue will be dealt with if the M4-M5 link, Sydney Gateway and Southern Extension are not built. Considering none of these projects are currently designed, and at least some are unfunded, this is an extremely serious failing.

Independent transport modelling experts have found scores of problems with the application of the WestConnex Road and Traffic Model, which has not been released for scrutiny. It would be negligent for any government to go ahead with a project based on uncertain predictions.

Thousands of residents and workers will be exposed to health impacts in all areas where demolition, earthworks, construction and removal activities. This includes communities in Arncliffe, Kingsgrove, Beverly Hills, St Peters and Alexandria. These health risks are rated as HIGH for all areas. Mitigation is recommended, but no firm information is available about who might receive this and what it might be. Instead, decisions are put off until after approval – and in some cases, the beginning of construction. This is completely indefensible and communities cannot be forced to accept this.

The suggestion that tunneling activities would need to be conducted 24 hours per day, seven days a week – including associated activities such as spoil handling and haulage – is not justified. There are also no clear plans in this EIS to show where millions of cubic metres of spoil will be deposited in communities in western Sydney. None of these communities have been given information or consulted about these impacts. This is unacceptable.

Tunnelling would cause vibration and damage to homes. The EIS says it will only be for a "short period", but does not say what this short period is. In some cases, tunnels and tunnelling would take place around 20m below people's

homes. This is not acceptable, particularly given the collapse of buildings that took place during the Lane Cove Tunnel's construction, and the legal action residents above Brisbane's Airport Link are now being forced to take after experiencing property damage.

The air quality study shows that some communities will be exposed to increased doses of dangerous pollution, especially those living close to surface roads. Many residents along the proposed route are already exposed to levels of PM2.5 particles that exceed national guidelines, yet the EIS predicts that these levels will only worsen. I note that there is no safe level of exposure to fine particulate matter, and I wholeheartedly reject any project that would sacrifice the health of some citizens in order to deliver unproven and highly disputed 'benefits' to others.

Scientific experts agree there is no safe level of fine particle pollution. Rather than aiming to shift dangerous pollution from area to another, the government should be finding cleaner transport solutions that do not leave residents living beside polluted roads or unfiltered pollution stacks – no matter where they live.

The analysis of alternatives provided by AECOM in this EIS provides no solid evidence for the conclusions drawn. No scenarios have been modeled in which alternative solutions such as traffic management, increased public transport, or a combination of such solutions could reduce traffic congestion more effectively than WestConnex.

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Yours sincerely,

Marita McMahon

[redacted]

From: Mike Pierce [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 12:25 AM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

Attn: Secretary, re: WestConnex New M5 EIS, project number SSI 14_6788

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Yours sincerely,

Mike Pierce

[redacted]