[redacted]

From: Lorrie Graham [redacted]
Sent: Friday, 29 January 2016 5:30 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

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).

Global experience and research has shown conclusively that these kinds of toll road mega-projects are hugely expensive and provide only short-term relief from traffic congestion. I have yet to hear of an independent transport expert who backs the project. WestConnex will increase air pollution and traffic, 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.

The strategic justification for the New M5 is weak and inconsistent with the NSW Government's strategic planning and policy framework, despite its inclusion in the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy and the Long Term Transport Master Plan. The project as proposed in this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) does not deliver the broader objectives of WestConnex as stated in the Updated Strategic Business Case (November 2015).

There has been no compelling case made for why WestConnex should be built, and the project should not receive approval and not proceed. This EIS and the Updated Strategic Business Case for WestConnex are clear that the benefits accruing from Stage 2 do not outweigh the costs. Benefits are shown to come once the whole WestConnex project is built according to the Updated Strategic Business Case, and that no benefits exist until all three Stages are delivered (WestConnex Full Scheme: Economic Appraisal, KPMG, 19 November 2015). I am aware that even this has now expanded to include other tollways such as the Sydney Gateway, making it even more likely that this project will provide disbenefits to society if it proceeds as proposed in this EIS, i.e. as a standalone project. This is particularly concerning given there is a significant risk that Stage 3 will not be built.

Fundamentally flawed projects like WestConnex do not account for changing work practices supported by technologies such as teleworking, or flexible office spaces, or that car journeys are dropping as workers elect to work closer to home or use public transport, bicycles or car sharing. It also does not account for trends that will substantially change how people choose to travel in future and reduce the number of cars on the road, such as peak car or driverless cars.

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 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 EIS lacks rigour and sound analysis, despite the huge volume of documentation. This lack of rigour and analysis is consistent across all chapters and appendices. The project objectives are biased towards a motorway solution, so that any proposed alternative falls short of the proposed solution. Similarly, the work undertaken in the EIS is highly compliance driven, and fails to take into account opportunities or strategic impacts, and the assessment of cumulative impacts is almost negligent.

WestConnex is presented as a 'transformational' infrastructure project, however, the EIS is not clear on what transformation it will achieve. There is no demonstration that WestConnex delivers transformation in terms of social or economic improvement, or better land use outcomes. To the contrary, WestConnex will deliver a piece of infrastructure that increases traffic on local roads, does not enable value capture or urban renewal, and is not consistent with the government's land use priorities or the proposal in the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy.

Traffic on the existing M5 East exceeded capacity "within months" of opening (New M5 Project Overview, November 2015), including recent road widening. This lack of capacity is, in part, the rationale for the construction of the New M5. Managing demand on the M5 East and providing high quality public transport alternatives for those who can change mode would be a more effective long term solution that simply a 'predict and provide' approach, yet this alternative - along with many others - has not been assessed.

A larger question raised by the proposed New M5 project is what happens if capacity on this motorway is reached? The existing M5 East has proven that a new motorway can easily reach or exceed capacity within a 15 year timeframe. If that outcome is realised for the New M5, Sydney will be left with a transport legacy that cannot support the jobs growth in the west consistent with Government policy. Sydney needs to manage demand for existing road assets to maximise economically productive use and deliver sustainable transport as a real alternative to car travel. International cities such as Los Angeles are moving away from their dominant car-based culture to invest in public transport in order to build the sustainability and attractiveness of their city for residents, businesses and visitors alike.

The New M5 project has only been assessed to 2031, which does not take into account the 45 year concession period for the asset as stated in the WestConnex Updated Strategic Business Case. The assessment does not account for future events that may radically change travel demands or behaviours.

Heritage buildings would be destroyed for this project, while others would be isolated in a flood of traffic. e.g. terraces next to construction compounds and motorway in Campbell Street.

Residents in south west Sydney will suffer a huge loss of amenity as a result of the existing M5 being stripped of its green space and vegetation, particularly when residents fought so hard to get these green spaces established and thriving. I also strongly object to their concrete noise walls being replaced with transparent barriers. These will be right next to hundreds of homes, who will now be forced to look at (as well as listen to and breathe the fumes of) lanes of motorway traffic just over their fences. It is utterly unacceptable to prioritise the views of passing motorists over the privacy and amenity of people who live in an area.

This EIS fails to model traffic beyond two intersections after this project. This deliberately obscures the threat to King Street and roads in Alexandria. I object to exposing King Street and Edgeware Rd to the threat of becoming clearways.

Residents affected by compulsory acquisitions are 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.

I strongly object to the unacceptable impact the project's construction will have on local residents, businesses and schools. Across the route of this project, people face years of having their streets turned into car parks for construction workers; 24/7 construction noise, vibration, and heavy truck movements; exposure to asbestos, construction dust, and toxic materials; and more. Mitigation is recommended in this EIS, but no information is provided 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.

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.

This project deliberately exposes communities in certain areas to increased pollution. Such an approach values the health and safety of people in certain areas of Sydney over others, and is both unjust and unacceptable. In addition, despite there being no safe level of exposure to fine particulate matter, the proponents want to build this project knowing it will increase these pollutants around much of the project route.

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 air quality study shows that dangerous fine particle pollution already exceeds acceptable levels in some areas in the project areas, and will worsen if this project is built. I also object to the way this and other information about air quality and pollution impacts has been provided in this EIS; it is far too dense and opaque for ordinary residents to

understand. It should go without saying that where public health is concerned, information about negative impacts should be provided in a way that affected residents can understand.

The EIS demonstrates that air quality, even at existing levels, is close to the allowable limits, and will only get worse with a major interchange, road upgrades and ventilation stacks implemented at the St Peters Interchange and surrounds. If new air quality standards as proposed by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) in 2012 are implemented, the New M5 would well exceed allowable air pollution levels.

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). I find it completely unacceptable that AECOM has been paid $13 million of taxpayer money to complete this EIS despite this, and despite it being 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. I also object to AECOM doing the EIS when it has contracts in the rest of the project including Stage 2. This conflict of interest needs to be explained and addressed.

Even with these flaws, tolls on these roads are to be in effect for decades. Many Sydneysiders will not see these roads untolled in their lifetimes. Nor will western Sydney or rural and regional NSW see any investment in their communities to create employment opportunities that would circumvent the need to commute long distances by car to jobs in Sydney's CBD, eastern suburbs and inner city.

The New M5 would cause costly traffic chaos throughout the inner west and south-west Sydney. 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. This EIS also 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, Kingsgrove and Brighton-Le-Sands. I object to building a road that the proponent admits will produce such volumes of traffic that such roads will be beyond capacity. Where traffic is already bad, plans should be to reduce it, not make it worse.

Meanwhile, even this EIS 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. This is because even the proponents know that commuters will be unwilling to pay $6 each way to use either of these toll roads, which is in line with figures in WestConnex's Updated Strategic Business Case that show for almost all of potential users, the value of time saved is less than the cost of using WestConnex.

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.

The delivery of the New M5 and in particular the St Peters Interchange, will have a significant impact on residents and businesses. The increased traffic resulting from this project will impact on urban amenity and will limit the ability for public transport services to operate efficiently due to increased local road congestion.

The EIS assumes that by 2031 the full WestConnex project will be complete. This includes the M4-M5 Link (Stage 3), which will have additional significant impacts on residents and businesses. Nowhere in the EIS are these impacts considered, nor information given to the public to fully consider or understand the implications of the whole WestConnex program.

The analysis of alternatives 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.

The evidence provided by the EIS in support of the project is incomplete and unbalanced, selectively including and excluding impacts from subsequent planned stages of the WestConnex project. The analysis of strategic alternatives in the EIS is cursory and fails to demonstrate the New M5 extension is the best option to meet the needs of a growing Sydney population. The EIS also does not take into consideration the travel patterns of residents and businesses in western or south-western Sydney that the New M5 is intended to serve, nor the wider impacts on inner-Sydney communities affected by the WestConnex program.

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.

The social impact study is little more than a 'cut and paste' job and is insulting to communities where hundreds of tenants and owners have lost homes and others will live in decimated communities. The report exaggerates the potential positive aspects of the project, while the negative aspects are either downplayed, insufficiently detailed or omitted altogether. Where negative economic or social impacts are identified in the report, they are inadequately addressed in terms of management or mitigation actions to be taken.

The statement that the New M5 project is an integrated transport project is false and misleading. It is a motorway that does not provide for improved public transport connections and has not fully considered the active transport component in line with government policy. The City's view is that the government could have delivered a better outcome by focusing on ways to "improve access" that is modally agnostic and more consistent with government's land use policies.

Endangered flora and fauna would be destroyed for this project, including the Green and Golden Bell Frog colony at Arncliffe and the critically endangered Cooks River Castlereagh Ironbark Forest at Kingsgrove/Beverly Hills. Saving these species in particular was a condition of the previous M5 motorway; destroying them now makes a mockery of these legal protections. I also object to the unprofessional analysis of the threat posed by the New M5 to these species and to biodiversity in general, as this section of the EIS attempts to downplay the significance of the flora and fauna threatened by this project and the impact of this project on biodiversity overall.

I am also concerned that the EIS suggests that the breeding ponds of the Green and Golden Bell Frog have not been kept healthy in recent years, especially since the RMS was responsible for building these ponds as a condition of the old M5.

Many public parks would be temporarily or permanently destroyed for this project, including parts of Sydney Park and the M5 Linear Park, along with thousands of mature trees along the route. Even if these trees would be reinstated, it will take decades to achieve the level of canopy that exists.

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.

The increase in road capacity on Euston Road from four lanes to between six and eight, and Campbell Road from two lanes to six will have noise impacts on people living in the area and using Sydney Park.

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 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 proponents have failed to consult with local businesses across the route, many of which would be destroyed by the traffic and/or construction impacts of this project.

The proponent has failed to adequately assess and responsibly handle asbestos, including the huge amounts it has removed ahead of this EIS from the Alexandria Landfill and transported through inner Sydney out to the western suburbs. More toxic asbestos is expected to be dug up and transported from various sites along the New M5 for this project, and the numerous breaches of basic health and safety procedures observed by residents in St Peters, Granville and Erskine Park in this regard have not been properly assessed in this EIS.

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,

Lorrie Graham

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Greg Ricketson [redacted]
Sent: Friday, 29 January 2016 5:28 PM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
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Many public parks would be temporarily or permanently destroyed for this project, including parts of Sydney Park and the M5 Linear Park, along with thousands of mature trees along the route. Even if these trees would be reinstated, it will take decades to achieve the level of canopy that exists.

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.

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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 proponents have failed to consult with local businesses across the route, many of which would be destroyed by the traffic and/or construction impacts of this project.

The proponent has failed to adequately assess and responsibly handle asbestos, including the huge amounts it has removed ahead of this EIS from the Alexandria Landfill and transported through inner Sydney out to the western suburbs. More toxic asbestos is expected to be dug up and transported from various sites along the New M5 for this project, and the numerous breaches of basic health and safety procedures observed by residents in St Peters, Granville and Erskine Park in this regard have not been properly assessed in this EIS.

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,

Greg Ricketson

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Sarah Lalor [redacted]
Sent: Friday, 29 January 2016 5:28 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

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).

Global experience and research has shown conclusively that these kinds of toll road mega-projects are hugely expensive and provide only short-term relief from traffic congestion. I have yet to hear of an independent transport expert who backs the project. WestConnex will increase air pollution and traffic, 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.

The strategic justification for the New M5 is weak and inconsistent with the NSW Government's strategic planning and policy framework, despite its inclusion in the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy and the Long Term Transport Master Plan. The project as proposed in this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) does not deliver the broader objectives of WestConnex as stated in the Updated Strategic Business Case (November 2015).

There has been no compelling case made for why WestConnex should be built, and the project should not receive approval and not proceed. This EIS and the Updated Strategic Business Case for WestConnex are clear that the benefits accruing from Stage 2 do not outweigh the costs. Benefits are shown to come once the whole WestConnex project is built according to the Updated Strategic Business Case, and that no benefits exist until all three Stages are delivered (WestConnex Full Scheme: Economic Appraisal, KPMG, 19 November 2015). I am aware that even this has now expanded to include other tollways such as the Sydney Gateway, making it even more likely that this project will provide disbenefits to society if it proceeds as proposed in this EIS, i.e. as a standalone project. This is particularly concerning given there is a significant risk that Stage 3 will not be built.

Fundamentally flawed projects like WestConnex do not account for changing work practices supported by technologies such as teleworking, or flexible office spaces, or that car journeys are dropping as workers elect to work closer to home or use public transport, bicycles or car sharing. It also does not account for trends that will substantially change how people choose to travel in future and reduce the number of cars on the road, such as peak car or driverless cars.

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 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 EIS lacks rigour and sound analysis, despite the huge volume of documentation. This lack of rigour and analysis is consistent across all chapters and appendices. The project objectives are biased towards a motorway solution, so that any proposed alternative falls short of the proposed solution. Similarly, the work undertaken in the EIS is highly compliance driven, and fails to take into account opportunities or strategic impacts, and the assessment of cumulative impacts is almost negligent.

WestConnex is presented as a 'transformational' infrastructure project, however, the EIS is not clear on what transformation it will achieve. There is no demonstration that WestConnex delivers transformation in terms of social or economic improvement, or better land use outcomes. To the contrary, WestConnex will deliver a piece of infrastructure that increases traffic on local roads, does not enable value capture or urban renewal, and is not consistent with the government's land use priorities or the proposal in the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy.

Traffic on the existing M5 East exceeded capacity "within months" of opening (New M5 Project Overview, November 2015), including recent road widening. This lack of capacity is, in part, the rationale for the construction of the New M5. Managing demand on the M5 East and providing high quality public transport alternatives for those who can change mode would be a more effective long term solution that simply a 'predict and provide' approach, yet this alternative - along with many others - has not been assessed.

A larger question raised by the proposed New M5 project is what happens if capacity on this motorway is reached? The existing M5 East has proven that a new motorway can easily reach or exceed capacity within a 15 year timeframe. If that outcome is realised for the New M5, Sydney will be left with a transport legacy that cannot support the jobs growth in the west consistent with Government policy. Sydney needs to manage demand for existing road assets to maximise economically productive use and deliver sustainable transport as a real alternative to car travel. International cities such as Los Angeles are moving away from their dominant car-based culture to invest in public transport in order to build the sustainability and attractiveness of their city for residents, businesses and visitors alike.

The New M5 project has only been assessed to 2031, which does not take into account the 45 year concession period for the asset as stated in the WestConnex Updated Strategic Business Case. The assessment does not account for future events that may radically change travel demands or behaviours.

Heritage buildings would be destroyed for this project, while others would be isolated in a flood of traffic. e.g. terraces next to construction compounds and motorway in Campbell Street.

Residents in south west Sydney will suffer a huge loss of amenity as a result of the existing M5 being stripped of its green space and vegetation, particularly when residents fought so hard to get these green spaces established and thriving. I also strongly object to their concrete noise walls being replaced with transparent barriers. These will be right next to hundreds of homes, who will now be forced to look at (as well as listen to and breathe the fumes of) lanes of motorway traffic just over their fences. It is utterly unacceptable to prioritise the views of passing motorists over the privacy and amenity of people who live in an area.

This EIS fails to model traffic beyond two intersections after this project. This deliberately obscures the threat to King Street and roads in Alexandria. I object to exposing King Street and Edgeware Rd to the threat of becoming clearways.

Residents affected by compulsory acquisitions are 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.

I strongly object to the unacceptable impact the project's construction will have on local residents, businesses and schools. Across the route of this project, people face years of having their streets turned into car parks for construction workers; 24/7 construction noise, vibration, and heavy truck movements; exposure to asbestos, construction dust, and toxic materials; and more. Mitigation is recommended in this EIS, but no information is provided 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.

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.

This project deliberately exposes communities in certain areas to increased pollution. Such an approach values the health and safety of people in certain areas of Sydney over others, and is both unjust and unacceptable. In addition, despite there being no safe level of exposure to fine particulate matter, the proponents want to build this project knowing it will increase these pollutants around much of the project route.

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 air quality study shows that dangerous fine particle pollution already exceeds acceptable levels in some areas in the project areas, and will worsen if this project is built. I also object to the way this and other information about air quality and pollution impacts has been provided in this EIS; it is far too dense and opaque for ordinary residents to

understand. It should go without saying that where public health is concerned, information about negative impacts should be provided in a way that affected residents can understand.

The EIS demonstrates that air quality, even at existing levels, is close to the allowable limits, and will only get worse with a major interchange, road upgrades and ventilation stacks implemented at the St Peters Interchange and surrounds. If new air quality standards as proposed by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) in 2012 are implemented, the New M5 would well exceed allowable air pollution levels.

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). I find it completely unacceptable that AECOM has been paid $13 million of taxpayer money to complete this EIS despite this, and despite it being 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. I also object to AECOM doing the EIS when it has contracts in the rest of the project including Stage 2. This conflict of interest needs to be explained and addressed.

Even with these flaws, tolls on these roads are to be in effect for decades. Many Sydneysiders will not see these roads untolled in their lifetimes. Nor will western Sydney or rural and regional NSW see any investment in their communities to create employment opportunities that would circumvent the need to commute long distances by car to jobs in Sydney's CBD, eastern suburbs and inner city.

The New M5 would cause costly traffic chaos throughout the inner west and south-west Sydney. 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. This EIS also 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, Kingsgrove and Brighton-Le-Sands. I object to building a road that the proponent admits will produce such volumes of traffic that such roads will be beyond capacity. Where traffic is already bad, plans should be to reduce it, not make it worse.

Meanwhile, even this EIS 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. This is because even the proponents know that commuters will be unwilling to pay $6 each way to use either of these toll roads, which is in line with figures in WestConnex's Updated Strategic Business Case that show for almost all of potential users, the value of time saved is less than the cost of using WestConnex.

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.

The delivery of the New M5 and in particular the St Peters Interchange, will have a significant impact on residents and businesses. The increased traffic resulting from this project will impact on urban amenity and will limit the ability for public transport services to operate efficiently due to increased local road congestion.

The EIS assumes that by 2031 the full WestConnex project will be complete. This includes the M4-M5 Link (Stage 3), which will have additional significant impacts on residents and businesses. Nowhere in the EIS are these impacts considered, nor information given to the public to fully consider or understand the implications of the whole WestConnex program.

The analysis of alternatives 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.

The evidence provided by the EIS in support of the project is incomplete and unbalanced, selectively including and excluding impacts from subsequent planned stages of the WestConnex project. The analysis of strategic alternatives in the EIS is cursory and fails to demonstrate the New M5 extension is the best option to meet the needs of a growing Sydney population. The EIS also does not take into consideration the travel patterns of residents and businesses in western or south-western Sydney that the New M5 is intended to serve, nor the wider impacts on inner-Sydney communities affected by the WestConnex program.

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.

The social impact study is little more than a 'cut and paste' job and is insulting to communities where hundreds of tenants and owners have lost homes and others will live in decimated communities. The report exaggerates the potential positive aspects of the project, while the negative aspects are either downplayed, insufficiently detailed or omitted altogether. Where negative economic or social impacts are identified in the report, they are inadequately addressed in terms of management or mitigation actions to be taken.

The statement that the New M5 project is an integrated transport project is false and misleading. It is a motorway that does not provide for improved public transport connections and has not fully considered the active transport component in line with government policy. The City's view is that the government could have delivered a better outcome by focusing on ways to "improve access" that is modally agnostic and more consistent with government's land use policies.

Endangered flora and fauna would be destroyed for this project, including the Green and Golden Bell Frog colony at Arncliffe and the critically endangered Cooks River Castlereagh Ironbark Forest at Kingsgrove/Beverly Hills. Saving these species in particular was a condition of the previous M5 motorway; destroying them now makes a mockery of these legal protections. I also object to the unprofessional analysis of the threat posed by the New M5 to these species and to biodiversity in general, as this section of the EIS attempts to downplay the significance of the flora and fauna threatened by this project and the impact of this project on biodiversity overall.

I am also concerned that the EIS suggests that the breeding ponds of the Green and Golden Bell Frog have not been kept healthy in recent years, especially since the RMS was responsible for building these ponds as a condition of the old M5.

Many public parks would be temporarily or permanently destroyed for this project, including parts of Sydney Park and the M5 Linear Park, along with thousands of mature trees along the route. Even if these trees would be reinstated, it will take decades to achieve the level of canopy that exists.

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.

The increase in road capacity on Euston Road from four lanes to between six and eight, and Campbell Road from two lanes to six will have noise impacts on people living in the area and using Sydney Park.

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 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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The proponent has failed to adequately assess and responsibly handle asbestos, including the huge amounts it has removed ahead of this EIS from the Alexandria Landfill and transported through inner Sydney out to the western suburbs. More toxic asbestos is expected to be dug up and transported from various sites along the New M5 for this project, and the numerous breaches of basic health and safety procedures observed by residents in St Peters, Granville and Erskine Park in this regard have not been properly assessed in this EIS.

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,

Sarah Lalor

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: [redacted]
Sent: Friday, 29 January 2016 2:28 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

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).

Global experience and research has shown conclusively that these kinds of toll road mega-projects are hugely expensive and provide only short-term relief from traffic congestion. I have yet to hear of an independent transport expert who backs the project. WestConnex will increase air pollution and traffic, 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.

The strategic justification for the New M5 is weak and inconsistent with the NSW Government's strategic planning and policy framework, despite its inclusion in the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy and the Long Term Transport Master Plan. The project as proposed in this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) does not deliver the broader objectives of WestConnex as stated in the Updated Strategic Business Case (November 2015).

There has been no compelling case made for why WestConnex should be built, and the project should not receive approval and not proceed. This EIS and the Updated Strategic Business Case for WestConnex are clear that the benefits accruing from Stage 2 do not outweigh the costs. Benefits are shown to come once the whole WestConnex project is built according to the Updated Strategic Business Case, and that no benefits exist until all three Stages are delivered (WestConnex Full Scheme: Economic Appraisal, KPMG, 19 November 2015). I am aware that even this has now expanded to include other tollways such as the Sydney Gateway, making it even more likely that this project will provide disbenefits to society if it proceeds as proposed in this EIS, i.e. as a standalone project. This is particularly concerning given there is a significant risk that Stage 3 will not be built.

Fundamentally flawed projects like WestConnex do not account for changing work practices supported by technologies such as teleworking, or flexible office spaces, or that car journeys are dropping as workers elect to work closer to home or use public transport, bicycles or car sharing. It also does not account for trends that will substantially change how people choose to travel in future and reduce the number of cars on the road, such as peak car or driverless cars.

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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.

The EIS lacks rigour and sound analysis, despite the huge volume of documentation. This lack of rigour and analysis is consistent across all chapters and appendices. The project objectives are biased towards a motorway solution, so that any proposed alternative falls short of the proposed solution. Similarly, the work undertaken in the EIS is highly compliance driven, and fails to take into account opportunities or strategic impacts, and the assessment of cumulative impacts is almost negligent.

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I am also concerned that the EIS suggests that the breeding ponds of the Green and Golden Bell Frog have not been kept healthy in recent years, especially since the RMS was responsible for building these ponds as a condition of the old M5.

Many public parks would be temporarily or permanently destroyed for this project, including parts of Sydney Park and the M5 Linear Park, along with thousands of mature trees along the route. Even if these trees would be reinstated, it will take decades to achieve the level of canopy that exists.

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.

The increase in road capacity on Euston Road from four lanes to between six and eight, and Campbell Road from two lanes to six will have noise impacts on people living in the area and using Sydney Park.

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 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 proponents have failed to consult with local businesses across the route, many of which would be destroyed by the traffic and/or construction impacts of this project.

The proponent has failed to adequately assess and responsibly handle asbestos, including the huge amounts it has removed ahead of this EIS from the Alexandria Landfill and transported through inner Sydney out to the western suburbs. More toxic asbestos is expected to be dug up and transported from various sites along the New M5 for this project, and the numerous breaches of basic health and safety procedures observed by residents in St Peters, Granville and Erskine Park in this regard have not been properly assessed in this EIS.

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: Warren O'Brien [redacted]
Sent: Friday, 29 January 2016 2:28 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

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 am directly affected by this project and am deeply concerned about the impact it will have not just on my family, whose home is being forcibly acquired for the project, but the whole of Sydney/NSW.

Global experience and research has shown conclusively that these kinds of toll road mega-projects are hugely expensive and provide only short-term relief from traffic congestion. I have yet to hear of an independent transport expert who backs the project. WestConnex will increase air pollution and traffic, 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.

The strategic justification for the New M5 is weak and inconsistent with the NSW Government's strategic planning and policy framework, despite its inclusion in the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy and the Long Term Transport Master Plan. The project as proposed in this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) does not deliver the broader objectives of WestConnex as stated in the Updated Strategic Business Case (November 2015).

There has been no compelling case made for why WestConnex should be built, and the project should not receive approval and not proceed. This EIS and the Updated Strategic Business Case for WestConnex are clear that the benefits accruing from Stage 2 do not outweigh the costs. Benefits are shown to come once the whole WestConnex project is built according to the Updated Strategic Business Case, and that no benefits exist until all three Stages are delivered (WestConnex Full Scheme: Economic Appraisal, KPMG, 19 November 2015). I am aware that even this has now expanded to include other tollways such as the Sydney Gateway, making it even more likely that this project will provide disbenefits to society if it proceeds as proposed in this EIS, i.e. as a standalone project. This is particularly concerning given there is a significant risk that Stage 3 will not be built.

Fundamentally flawed projects like WestConnex do not account for changing work practices supported by technologies such as teleworking, or flexible office spaces, or that car journeys are dropping as workers elect to work closer to home or use public transport, bicycles or car sharing. It also does not account for trends that will

substantially change how people choose to travel in future and reduce the number of cars on the road, such as peak car or driverless cars.

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 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 EIS lacks rigour and sound analysis, despite the huge volume of documentation. This lack of rigour and analysis is consistent across all chapters and appendices. The project objectives are biased towards a motorway solution, so that any proposed alternative falls short of the proposed solution. Similarly, the work undertaken in the EIS is highly compliance driven, and fails to take into account opportunities or strategic impacts, and the assessment of cumulative impacts is almost negligent.

WestConnex is presented as a 'transformational' infrastructure project, however, the EIS is not clear on what transformation it will achieve. There is no demonstration that WestConnex delivers transformation in terms of social or economic improvement, or better land use outcomes. To the contrary, WestConnex will deliver a piece of infrastructure that increases traffic on local roads, does not enable value capture or urban renewal, and is not consistent with the government's land use priorities or the proposal in the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy.

Traffic on the existing M5 East exceeded capacity "within months" of opening (New M5 Project Overview, November 2015), including recent road widening. This lack of capacity is, in part, the rationale for the construction of the New M5. Managing demand on the M5 East and providing high quality public transport alternatives for those who can change mode would be a more effective long term solution that simply a 'predict and provide' approach, yet this alternative - along with many others - has not been assessed.

A larger question raised by the proposed New M5 project is what happens if capacity on this motorway is reached? The existing M5 East has proven that a new motorway can easily reach or exceed capacity within a 15 year timeframe. If that outcome is realised for the New M5, Sydney will be left with a transport legacy that cannot support the jobs growth in the west consistent with Government policy. Sydney needs to manage demand for existing road assets to maximise economically productive use and deliver sustainable transport as a real alternative to car travel. International cities such as Los Angeles are moving away from their dominant car-based culture to invest in public transport in order to build the sustainability and attractiveness of their city for residents, businesses and visitors alike.

The New M5 project has only been assessed to 2031, which does not take into account the 45 year concession period for the asset as stated in the WestConnex Updated Strategic Business Case. The assessment does not account for future events that may radically change travel demands or behaviours.

Heritage buildings would be destroyed for this project, while others would be isolated in a flood of traffic. e.g. terraces next to construction compounds and motorway in Campbell Street.

Residents in south west Sydney will suffer a huge loss of amenity as a result of the existing M5 being stripped of its green space and vegetation, particularly when residents fought so hard to get these green spaces established and thriving. I also strongly object to their concrete noise walls being replaced with transparent barriers. These will be right next to hundreds of homes, who will now be forced to look at (as well as listen to and breathe the fumes of) lanes of motorway traffic just over their fences. It is utterly unacceptable to prioritise the views of passing motorists over the privacy and amenity of people who live in an area.

This EIS fails to model traffic beyond two intersections after this project. This deliberately obscures the threat to King Street and roads in Alexandria. I object to exposing King Street and Edgeware Rd to the threat of becoming clearways.

Residents affected by compulsory acquisitions are 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.

I strongly object to the unacceptable impact the project's construction will have on local residents, businesses and schools. Across the route of this project, people face years of having their streets turned into car parks for construction workers; 24/7 construction noise, vibration, and heavy truck movements; exposure to asbestos, construction dust, and toxic materials; and more. Mitigation is recommended in this EIS, but no information is provided 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.

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.

This project deliberately exposes communities in certain areas to increased pollution. Such an approach values the health and safety of people in certain areas of Sydney over others, and is both unjust and unacceptable. In addition, despite there being no safe level of exposure to fine particulate matter, the proponents want to build this project knowing it will increase these pollutants around much of the project route.

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 air quality study shows that dangerous fine particle pollution already exceeds acceptable levels in some areas in the project areas, and will worsen if this project is built. I also object to the way this and other information about air quality and pollution impacts has been provided in this EIS; it is far too dense and opaque for ordinary residents to understand. It should go without saying that where public health is concerned, information about negative impacts should be provided in a way that affected residents can understand.

The EIS demonstrates that air quality, even at existing levels, is close to the allowable limits, and will only get worse with a major interchange, road upgrades and ventilation stacks implemented at the St Peters Interchange and surrounds. If new air quality standards as proposed by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) in 2012 are implemented, the New M5 would well exceed allowable air pollution levels.

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). I find it completely unacceptable that AECOM has been paid $13 million of taxpayer money to complete this EIS despite this, and despite it being 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. I also object to AECOM doing the EIS when it has contracts in the rest of the project including Stage 2. This conflict of interest needs to be explained and addressed.

Even with these flaws, tolls on these roads are to be in effect for decades. Many Sydneysiders will not see these roads untolled in their lifetimes. Nor will western Sydney or rural and regional NSW see any investment in their communities to create employment opportunities that would circumvent the need to commute long distances by car to jobs in Sydney's CBD, eastern suburbs and inner city.

The New M5 would cause costly traffic chaos throughout the inner west and south-west Sydney. 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. This EIS also 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, Kingsgrove and Brighton-Le-Sands. I object to building a road that the proponent admits will produce such volumes of traffic that such roads will be beyond capacity. Where traffic is already bad, plans should be to reduce it, not make it worse.

Meanwhile, even this EIS 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. This is because even the proponents know that commuters will be unwilling to pay $6 each way to use either of these toll roads, which is in line with figures in WestConnex's Updated Strategic Business Case that show for almost all of potential users, the value of time saved is less than the cost of using WestConnex.

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.

The delivery of the New M5 and in particular the St Peters Interchange, will have a significant impact on residents and businesses. The increased traffic resulting from this project will impact on urban amenity and will limit the ability for public transport services to operate efficiently due to increased local road congestion.

The EIS assumes that by 2031 the full WestConnex project will be complete. This includes the M4-M5 Link (Stage 3), which will have additional significant impacts on residents and businesses. Nowhere in the EIS are these impacts considered, nor information given to the public to fully consider or understand the implications of the whole WestConnex program.

The analysis of alternatives 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.

The evidence provided by the EIS in support of the project is incomplete and unbalanced, selectively including and excluding impacts from subsequent planned stages of the WestConnex project. The analysis of strategic alternatives in the EIS is cursory and fails to demonstrate the New M5 extension is the best option to meet the needs of a growing Sydney population. The EIS also does not take into consideration the travel patterns of residents and businesses in western or south-western Sydney that the New M5 is intended to serve, nor the wider impacts on inner-Sydney communities affected by the WestConnex program.

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.

The social impact study is little more than a 'cut and paste' job and is insulting to communities where hundreds of tenants and owners have lost homes and others will live in decimated communities. The report exaggerates the potential positive aspects of the project, while the negative aspects are either downplayed, insufficiently detailed or omitted altogether. Where negative economic or social impacts are identified in the report, they are inadequately addressed in terms of management or mitigation actions to be taken.

The statement that the New M5 project is an integrated transport project is false and misleading. It is a motorway that does not provide for improved public transport connections and has not fully considered the active transport

component in line with government policy. The City's view is that the government could have delivered a better outcome by focusing on ways to "improve access" that is modally agnostic and more consistent with government's land use policies.

Endangered flora and fauna would be destroyed for this project, including the Green and Golden Bell Frog colony at Arncliffe and the critically endangered Cooks River Castlereagh Ironbark Forest at Kingsgrove/Beverly Hills. Saving these species in particular was a condition of the previous M5 motorway; destroying them now makes a mockery of these legal protections. I also object to the unprofessional analysis of the threat posed by the New M5 to these species and to biodiversity in general, as this section of the EIS attempts to downplay the significance of the flora and fauna threatened by this project and the impact of this project on biodiversity overall.

I am also concerned that the EIS suggests that the breeding ponds of the Green and Golden Bell Frog have not been kept healthy in recent years, especially since the RMS was responsible for building these ponds as a condition of the old M5.

Many public parks would be temporarily or permanently destroyed for this project, including parts of Sydney Park and the M5 Linear Park, along with thousands of mature trees along the route. Even if these trees would be reinstated, it will take decades to achieve the level of canopy that exists.

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.

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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 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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The proponent has failed to adequately assess and responsibly handle asbestos, including the huge amounts it has removed ahead of this EIS from the Alexandria Landfill and transported through inner Sydney out to the western suburbs. More toxic asbestos is expected to be dug up and transported from various sites along the New M5 for this project, and the numerous breaches of basic health and safety procedures observed by residents in St Peters, Granville and Erskine Park in this regard have not been properly assessed in this EIS.

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,

Warren O'Brien

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: [redacted]
Sent: Friday, 29 January 2016 2:26 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

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 am directly affected by this project and am deeply concerned about the impact it will have not just on my family, whose home is being forcibly acquired for the project, but the whole of Sydney.

Global experience and research has shown conclusively that these kinds of toll road mega-projects are hugely expensive and provide only short-term relief from traffic congestion. I have yet to hear of an independent transport expert who backs the project. WestConnex will increase air pollution and traffic, 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.

The strategic justification for the New M5 is weak and inconsistent with the NSW Government's strategic planning and policy framework, despite its inclusion in the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy and the Long Term Transport Master Plan. The project as proposed in this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) does not deliver the broader objectives of WestConnex as stated in the Updated Strategic Business Case (November 2015).

There has been no compelling case made for why WestConnex should be built, and the project should not receive approval and not proceed. This EIS and the Updated Strategic Business Case for WestConnex are clear that the benefits accruing from Stage 2 do not outweigh the costs. Benefits are shown to come once the whole WestConnex project is built according to the Updated Strategic Business Case, and that no benefits exist until all three Stages are delivered (WestConnex Full Scheme: Economic Appraisal, KPMG, 19 November 2015). I am aware that even this has now expanded to include other tollways such as the Sydney Gateway, making it even more likely that this project will provide disbenefits to society if it proceeds as proposed in this EIS, i.e. as a standalone project. This is particularly concerning given there is a significant risk that Stage 3 will not be built.

Fundamentally flawed projects like WestConnex do not account for changing work practices supported by technologies such as teleworking, or flexible office spaces, or that car journeys are dropping as workers elect to work closer to home or use public transport, bicycles or car sharing. It also does not account for trends that will

substantially change how people choose to travel in future and reduce the number of cars on the road, such as peak car or driverless cars.

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 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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A larger question raised by the proposed New M5 project is what happens if capacity on this motorway is reached? The existing M5 East has proven that a new motorway can easily reach or exceed capacity within a 15 year timeframe. If that outcome is realised for the New M5, Sydney will be left with a transport legacy that cannot support the jobs growth in the west consistent with Government policy. Sydney needs to manage demand for existing road assets to maximise economically productive use and deliver sustainable transport as a real alternative to car travel. International cities such as Los Angeles are moving away from their dominant car-based culture to invest in public transport in order to build the sustainability and attractiveness of their city for residents, businesses and visitors alike.

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This EIS fails to model traffic beyond two intersections after this project. This deliberately obscures the threat to King Street and roads in Alexandria. I object to exposing King Street and Edgeware Rd to the threat of becoming clearways.

Residents affected by compulsory acquisitions are 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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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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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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Even with these flaws, tolls on these roads are to be in effect for decades. Many Sydneysiders will not see these roads untolled in their lifetimes. Nor will western Sydney or rural and regional NSW see any investment in their communities to create employment opportunities that would circumvent the need to commute long distances by car to jobs in Sydney's CBD, eastern suburbs and inner city.

The New M5 would cause costly traffic chaos throughout the inner west and south-west Sydney. 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. This EIS also 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, Kingsgrove and Brighton-Le-Sands. I object to building a road that the proponent admits will produce such volumes of traffic that such roads will be beyond capacity. Where traffic is already bad, plans should be to reduce it, not make it worse.

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The delivery of the New M5 and in particular the St Peters Interchange, will have a significant impact on residents and businesses. The increased traffic resulting from this project will impact on urban amenity and will limit the ability for public transport services to operate efficiently due to increased local road congestion.

The EIS assumes that by 2031 the full WestConnex project will be complete. This includes the M4-M5 Link (Stage 3), which will have additional significant impacts on residents and businesses. Nowhere in the EIS are these impacts considered, nor information given to the public to fully consider or understand the implications of the whole WestConnex program.

The analysis of alternatives 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.

The evidence provided by the EIS in support of the project is incomplete and unbalanced, selectively including and excluding impacts from subsequent planned stages of the WestConnex project. The analysis of strategic alternatives in the EIS is cursory and fails to demonstrate the New M5 extension is the best option to meet the needs of a growing Sydney population. The EIS also does not take into consideration the travel patterns of residents and businesses in western or south-western Sydney that the New M5 is intended to serve, nor the wider impacts on inner-Sydney communities affected by the WestConnex program.

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.

The social impact study is little more than a 'cut and paste' job and is insulting to communities where hundreds of tenants and owners have lost homes and others will live in decimated communities. The report exaggerates the potential positive aspects of the project, while the negative aspects are either downplayed, insufficiently detailed or omitted altogether. Where negative economic or social impacts are identified in the report, they are inadequately addressed in terms of management or mitigation actions to be taken.

The statement that the New M5 project is an integrated transport project is false and misleading. It is a motorway that does not provide for improved public transport connections and has not fully considered the active transport

component in line with government policy. The City's view is that the government could have delivered a better outcome by focusing on ways to "improve access" that is modally agnostic and more consistent with government's land use policies.

Endangered flora and fauna would be destroyed for this project, including the Green and Golden Bell Frog colony at Arncliffe and the critically endangered Cooks River Castlereagh Ironbark Forest at Kingsgrove/Beverly Hills. Saving these species in particular was a condition of the previous M5 motorway; destroying them now makes a mockery of these legal protections. I also object to the unprofessional analysis of the threat posed by the New M5 to these species and to biodiversity in general, as this section of the EIS attempts to downplay the significance of the flora and fauna threatened by this project and the impact of this project on biodiversity overall.

I am also concerned that the EIS suggests that the breeding ponds of the Green and Golden Bell Frog have not been kept healthy in recent years, especially since the RMS was responsible for building these ponds as a condition of the old M5.

Many public parks would be temporarily or permanently destroyed for this project, including parts of Sydney Park and the M5 Linear Park, along with thousands of mature trees along the route. Even if these trees would be reinstated, it will take decades to achieve the level of canopy that exists.

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.

The increase in road capacity on Euston Road from four lanes to between six and eight, and Campbell Road from two lanes to six will have noise impacts on people living in the area and using Sydney Park.

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 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 proponents have failed to consult with local businesses across the route, many of which would be destroyed by the traffic and/or construction impacts of this project.

The proponent has failed to adequately assess and responsibly handle asbestos, including the huge amounts it has removed ahead of this EIS from the Alexandria Landfill and transported through inner Sydney out to the western suburbs. More toxic asbestos is expected to be dug up and transported from various sites along the New M5 for this project, and the numerous breaches of basic health and safety procedures observed by residents in St Peters, Granville and Erskine Park in this regard have not been properly assessed in this EIS.

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: Michelle Nash [redacted]
Sent: Friday, 29 January 2016 2:23 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

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).

Global experience and research has shown conclusively that these kinds of toll road mega-projects are hugely expensive and provide only short-term relief from traffic congestion. I have yet to hear of an independent transport expert who backs the project. WestConnex will increase air pollution and traffic, 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.

The strategic justification for the New M5 is weak and inconsistent with the NSW Government's strategic planning and policy framework, despite its inclusion in the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy and the Long Term Transport Master Plan. The project as proposed in this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) does not deliver the broader objectives of WestConnex as stated in the Updated Strategic Business Case (November 2015).

There has been no compelling case made for why WestConnex should be built, and the project should not receive approval and not proceed. This EIS and the Updated Strategic Business Case for WestConnex are clear that the benefits accruing from Stage 2 do not outweigh the costs. Benefits are shown to come once the whole WestConnex project is built according to the Updated Strategic Business Case, and that no benefits exist until all three Stages are delivered (WestConnex Full Scheme: Economic Appraisal, KPMG, 19 November 2015). I am aware that even this has now expanded to include other tollways such as the Sydney Gateway, making it even more likely that this project will provide disbenefits to society if it proceeds as proposed in this EIS, i.e. as a standalone project. This is particularly concerning given there is a significant risk that Stage 3 will not be built.

Fundamentally flawed projects like WestConnex do not account for changing work practices supported by technologies such as teleworking, or flexible office spaces, or that car journeys are dropping as workers elect to work closer to home or use public transport, bicycles or car sharing. It also does not account for trends that will substantially change how people choose to travel in future and reduce the number of cars on the road, such as peak car or driverless cars.

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 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 EIS lacks rigour and sound analysis, despite the huge volume of documentation. This lack of rigour and analysis is consistent across all chapters and appendices. The project objectives are biased towards a motorway solution, so that any proposed alternative falls short of the proposed solution. Similarly, the work undertaken in the EIS is highly compliance driven, and fails to take into account opportunities or strategic impacts, and the assessment of cumulative impacts is almost negligent.

WestConnex is presented as a 'transformational' infrastructure project, however, the EIS is not clear on what transformation it will achieve. There is no demonstration that WestConnex delivers transformation in terms of social or economic improvement, or better land use outcomes. To the contrary, WestConnex will deliver a piece of infrastructure that increases traffic on local roads, does not enable value capture or urban renewal, and is not consistent with the government's land use priorities or the proposal in the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy.

Traffic on the existing M5 East exceeded capacity "within months" of opening (New M5 Project Overview, November 2015), including recent road widening. This lack of capacity is, in part, the rationale for the construction of the New M5. Managing demand on the M5 East and providing high quality public transport alternatives for those who can change mode would be a more effective long term solution that simply a 'predict and provide' approach, yet this alternative - along with many others - has not been assessed.

A larger question raised by the proposed New M5 project is what happens if capacity on this motorway is reached? The existing M5 East has proven that a new motorway can easily reach or exceed capacity within a 15 year timeframe. If that outcome is realised for the New M5, Sydney will be left with a transport legacy that cannot support the jobs growth in the west consistent with Government policy. Sydney needs to manage demand for existing road assets to maximise economically productive use and deliver sustainable transport as a real alternative to car travel. International cities such as Los Angeles are moving away from their dominant car-based culture to invest in public transport in order to build the sustainability and attractiveness of their city for residents, businesses and visitors alike.

The New M5 project has only been assessed to 2031, which does not take into account the 45 year concession period for the asset as stated in the WestConnex Updated Strategic Business Case. The assessment does not account for future events that may radically change travel demands or behaviours.

I object the destruction of heritage buildings for this project. I also object to leaving other heritage buildings isolated in a flood of traffic. e.g. terraces next to construction compounds and motorway in Campbell Street.

I object to residents in south west Sydney suffering a huge loss of amenity as a result of the existing M5 being stripped of its green space and vegetation, particularly when residents fought so hard to get these green spaces established and thriving. I also strongly object to their concrete noise walls being replaced with transparent barriers. These will be right next to hundreds of homes, who will now be forced to look at (as well as listen to and breathe the fumes of) lanes of motorway traffic just over their fences. It is utterly unacceptable to prioritise the views of passing motorists over the privacy and amenity of people who live in an area.

I object to not modelling beyond two intersections after this project. This deliberately obscures the threat to King Street and roads in Alexandria. I object to exposing King Street and Edgeware Rd to the threat of becoming clearways.

Residents affected by compulsory acquisitions are 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.

I strongly object to the unacceptable impact the project's construction will have on local residents, businesses and schools. Across the route of this project, people face years of having their streets turned into car parks for construction workers; 24/7 construction noise, vibration, and heavy truck movements; exposure to asbestos, construction dust, and toxic materials; and more. Mitigation is recommended in this EIS, but no information is provided 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.

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.

I strongly object to the manner in which this project deliberately exposes communities in certain areas to increased pollution. Such an approach values the health and safety of people in certain areas of Sydney over others, and is both unjust and unacceptable. In addition, despite there being no safe level of exposure to fine particulate matter, the proponents want to build this project knowing it will increase these pollutants around much of the project route.

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 air quality study shows that dangerous fine particle pollution already exceeds acceptable levels in some areas in the project areas, and will worsen if this project is built. I also object to the way this and other information about air quality and pollution impacts has been provided in this EIS; it is far too dense and opaque for ordinary residents to

understand. It should go without saying that where public health is concerned, information about negative impacts should be provided in a way that affected residents can understand.

The EIS demonstrates that air quality, even at existing levels, is close to the allowable limits, and will only get worse with a major interchange, road upgrades and ventilation stacks implemented at the St Peters Interchange and surrounds. If new air quality standards as proposed by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) in 2012 are implemented, the New M5 would well exceed allowable air pollution levels.

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). I find it completely unacceptable that AECOM has been paid $13 million of taxpayer money to complete this EIS despite this, and despite it being 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. I also object to AECOM doing the EIS when it has contracts in the rest of the project including Stage 2. This conflict of interest needs to be explained and addressed.

Even with these flaws, tolls on these roads are to be in effect for decades. Many Sydneysiders will not see these roads untolled in their lifetimes. Nor will western Sydney or rural and regional NSW see any investment in their communities to create employment opportunities that would circumvent the need to commute long distances by car to jobs in Sydney's CBD, eastern suburbs and inner city.

The New M5 would cause costly traffic chaos throughout the inner west and south-west Sydney. 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. This EIS also 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, Kingsgrove and Brighton-Le-Sands. I object to building a road that the proponent admits will produce such volumes of traffic that such roads will be beyond capacity. Where traffic is already bad, plans should be to reduce it, not make it worse.

Meanwhile, even this EIS 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. This is because even the proponents know that commuters will be unwilling to pay $6 each way to use either of these toll roads, which is in line with figures in WestConnex's Updated Strategic Business Case that show for almost all of potential users, the value of time saved is less than the cost of using WestConnex.

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.

The delivery of the New M5 and in particular the St Peters Interchange, will have a significant impact on residents and businesses. The increased traffic resulting from this project will impact on urban amenity and will limit the ability for public transport services to operate efficiently due to increased local road congestion.

The EIS assumes that by 2031 the full WestConnex project will be complete. This includes the M4-M5 Link (Stage 3), which will have additional significant impacts on residents and businesses. Nowhere in the EIS are these impacts considered, nor information given to the public to fully consider or understand the implications of the whole WestConnex program.

The analysis of alternatives 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.

The evidence provided by the EIS in support of the project is incomplete and unbalanced, selectively including and excluding impacts from subsequent planned stages of the WestConnex project. The analysis of strategic alternatives in the EIS is cursory and fails to demonstrate the New M5 extension is the best option to meet the needs of a growing Sydney population. The EIS also does not take into consideration the travel patterns of residents and businesses in western or south-western Sydney that the New M5 is intended to serve, nor the wider impacts on inner-Sydney communities affected by the WestConnex program.

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.

The social impact study is little more than a 'cut and paste' job and is insulting to communities where hundreds of tenants and owners have lost homes and others will live in decimated communities. The report exaggerates the potential positive aspects of the project, while the negative aspects are either downplayed, insufficiently detailed or omitted altogether. Where negative economic or social impacts are identified in the report, they are inadequately addressed in terms of management or mitigation actions to be taken.

The statement that the New M5 project is an integrated transport project is false and misleading. It is a motorway that does not provide for improved public transport connections and has not fully considered the active transport component in line with government policy. The City's view is that the government could have delivered a better outcome by focusing on ways to "improve access" that is modally agnostic and more consistent with government's land use policies.

Endangered flora and fauna would be destroyed for this project, including the Green and Golden Bell Frog colony at Arncliffe and the critically endangered Cooks River Castlereagh Ironbark Forest at Kingsgrove/Beverly Hills. Saving these species in particular was a condition of the previous M5 motorway; destroying them now makes a mockery of these legal protections. I also object to the unprofessional analysis of the threat posed by the New M5 to these species and to biodiversity in general, as this section of the EIS attempts to downplay the significance of the flora and fauna threatened by this project and the impact of this project on biodiversity overall.

I am concerned that the EIS suggests that the breeding ponds of the Green and Golden Bell Frog have not been kept healthy in recent years, especially since the RMS was responsible for building these ponds as a condition of the old M5.

Many public parks would be temporarily or permanently destroyed for this project, including parts of Sydney Park and the M5 Linear Park, along with thousands of mature trees along the route. Even if these trees would be reinstated, it will take decades to achieve the level of canopy that exists.

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.

The increase in road capacity on Euston Road from four lanes to between six and eight, and Campbell Road from two lanes to six will have noise impacts on people living in the area and using Sydney Park.

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 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.

I strongly object to the complete failure to consult with local businesses across the route, many of which would be destroyed by the traffic and/or construction impacts of this project.

I strongly object to WestConnex's failure to adequately assess and responsibly handle asbestos, including the huge amounts it has removed ahead of this EIS from the Alexandria Landfill and transported through inner Sydney out to the western suburbs. More toxic asbestos is expected to be dug up and transported from various sites along the New M5 for this project, and the numerous breaches of basic health and safety procedures observed by residents in St Peters, Granville and Erskine Park in this regard have not been properly assessed in this EIS.

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,

Pamela Eastwell

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Cameron Burgess [redacted]
Sent: Friday, 29 January 2016 2:21 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

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).

Global experience and research has shown conclusively that these kinds of toll road mega-projects are hugely expensive and provide only short-term relief from traffic congestion. I have yet to hear of an independent transport expert who backs the project. WestConnex will increase air pollution and traffic, 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.

The strategic justification for the New M5 is weak and inconsistent with the NSW Government's strategic planning and policy framework, despite its inclusion in the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy and the Long Term Transport Master Plan. The project as proposed in this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) does not deliver the broader objectives of WestConnex as stated in the Updated Strategic Business Case (November 2015).

There has been no compelling case made for why WestConnex should be built, and the project should not receive approval and not proceed. This EIS and the Updated Strategic Business Case for WestConnex are clear that the benefits accruing from Stage 2 do not outweigh the costs. Benefits are shown to come once the whole WestConnex project is built according to the Updated Strategic Business Case, and that no benefits exist until all three Stages are delivered (WestConnex Full Scheme: Economic Appraisal, KPMG, 19 November 2015). I am aware that even this has now expanded to include other tollways such as the Sydney Gateway, making it even more likely that this project will provide disbenefits to society if it proceeds as proposed in this EIS, i.e. as a standalone project. This is particularly concerning given there is a significant risk that Stage 3 will not be built.

Fundamentally flawed projects like WestConnex do not account for changing work practices supported by technologies such as teleworking, or flexible office spaces, or that car journeys are dropping as workers elect to work closer to home or use public transport, bicycles or car sharing. It also does not account for trends that will substantially change how people choose to travel in future and reduce the number of cars on the road, such as peak car or driverless cars.

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 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 EIS lacks rigour and sound analysis, despite the huge volume of documentation. This lack of rigour and analysis is consistent across all chapters and appendices. The project objectives are biased towards a motorway solution, so that any proposed alternative falls short of the proposed solution. Similarly, the work undertaken in the EIS is highly compliance driven, and fails to take into account opportunities or strategic impacts, and the assessment of cumulative impacts is almost negligent.

WestConnex is presented as a 'transformational' infrastructure project, however, the EIS is not clear on what transformation it will achieve. There is no demonstration that WestConnex delivers transformation in terms of social or economic improvement, or better land use outcomes. To the contrary, WestConnex will deliver a piece of infrastructure that increases traffic on local roads, does not enable value capture or urban renewal, and is not consistent with the government's land use priorities or the proposal in the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy.

Traffic on the existing M5 East exceeded capacity "within months" of opening (New M5 Project Overview, November 2015), including recent road widening. This lack of capacity is, in part, the rationale for the construction of the New M5. Managing demand on the M5 East and providing high quality public transport alternatives for those who can change mode would be a more effective long term solution that simply a 'predict and provide' approach, yet this alternative - along with many others - has not been assessed.

A larger question raised by the proposed New M5 project is what happens if capacity on this motorway is reached? The existing M5 East has proven that a new motorway can easily reach or exceed capacity within a 15 year timeframe. If that outcome is realised for the New M5, Sydney will be left with a transport legacy that cannot support the jobs growth in the west consistent with Government policy. Sydney needs to manage demand for existing road assets to maximise economically productive use and deliver sustainable transport as a real alternative to car travel. International cities such as Los Angeles are moving away from their dominant car-based culture to invest in public transport in order to build the sustainability and attractiveness of their city for residents, businesses and visitors alike.

The New M5 project has only been assessed to 2031, which does not take into account the 45 year concession period for the asset as stated in the WestConnex Updated Strategic Business Case. The assessment does not account for future events that may radically change travel demands or behaviours.

Heritage buildings would be destroyed for this project, while others would be isolated in a flood of traffic. e.g. terraces next to construction compounds and motorway in Campbell Street.

Residents in south west Sydney will suffer a huge loss of amenity as a result of the existing M5 being stripped of its green space and vegetation, particularly when residents fought so hard to get these green spaces established and thriving. I also strongly object to their concrete noise walls being replaced with transparent barriers. These will be right next to hundreds of homes, who will now be forced to look at (as well as listen to and breathe the fumes of) lanes of motorway traffic just over their fences. It is utterly unacceptable to prioritise the views of passing motorists over the privacy and amenity of people who live in an area.

This EIS fails to model traffic beyond two intersections after this project. This deliberately obscures the threat to King Street and roads in Alexandria. I object to exposing King Street and Edgeware Rd to the threat of becoming clearways.

Residents affected by compulsory acquisitions are 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.

I strongly object to the unacceptable impact the project's construction will have on local residents, businesses and schools. Across the route of this project, people face years of having their streets turned into car parks for construction workers; 24/7 construction noise, vibration, and heavy truck movements; exposure to asbestos, construction dust, and toxic materials; and more. Mitigation is recommended in this EIS, but no information is provided 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.

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.

This project deliberately exposes communities in certain areas to increased pollution. Such an approach values the health and safety of people in certain areas of Sydney over others, and is both unjust and unacceptable. In addition, despite there being no safe level of exposure to fine particulate matter, the proponents want to build this project knowing it will increase these pollutants around much of the project route.

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 air quality study shows that dangerous fine particle pollution already exceeds acceptable levels in some areas in the project areas, and will worsen if this project is built. I also object to the way this and other information about air quality and pollution impacts has been provided in this EIS; it is far too dense and opaque for ordinary residents to

understand. It should go without saying that where public health is concerned, information about negative impacts should be provided in a way that affected residents can understand.

The EIS demonstrates that air quality, even at existing levels, is close to the allowable limits, and will only get worse with a major interchange, road upgrades and ventilation stacks implemented at the St Peters Interchange and surrounds. If new air quality standards as proposed by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) in 2012 are implemented, the New M5 would well exceed allowable air pollution levels.

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). I find it completely unacceptable that AECOM has been paid $13 million of taxpayer money to complete this EIS despite this, and despite it being 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. I also object to AECOM doing the EIS when it has contracts in the rest of the project including Stage 2. This conflict of interest needs to be explained and addressed.

Even with these flaws, tolls on these roads are to be in effect for decades. Many Sydneysiders will not see these roads untolled in their lifetimes. Nor will western Sydney or rural and regional NSW see any investment in their communities to create employment opportunities that would circumvent the need to commute long distances by car to jobs in Sydney's CBD, eastern suburbs and inner city.

The New M5 would cause costly traffic chaos throughout the inner west and south-west Sydney. 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. This EIS also 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, Kingsgrove and Brighton-Le-Sands. I object to building a road that the proponent admits will produce such volumes of traffic that such roads will be beyond capacity. Where traffic is already bad, plans should be to reduce it, not make it worse.

Meanwhile, even this EIS 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. This is because even the proponents know that commuters will be unwilling to pay $6 each way to use either of these toll roads, which is in line with figures in WestConnex's Updated Strategic Business Case that show for almost all of potential users, the value of time saved is less than the cost of using WestConnex.

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.

The delivery of the New M5 and in particular the St Peters Interchange, will have a significant impact on residents and businesses. The increased traffic resulting from this project will impact on urban amenity and will limit the ability for public transport services to operate efficiently due to increased local road congestion.

The EIS assumes that by 2031 the full WestConnex project will be complete. This includes the M4-M5 Link (Stage 3), which will have additional significant impacts on residents and businesses. Nowhere in the EIS are these impacts considered, nor information given to the public to fully consider or understand the implications of the whole WestConnex program.

The analysis of alternatives 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.

The evidence provided by the EIS in support of the project is incomplete and unbalanced, selectively including and excluding impacts from subsequent planned stages of the WestConnex project. The analysis of strategic alternatives in the EIS is cursory and fails to demonstrate the New M5 extension is the best option to meet the needs of a growing Sydney population. The EIS also does not take into consideration the travel patterns of residents and businesses in western or south-western Sydney that the New M5 is intended to serve, nor the wider impacts on inner-Sydney communities affected by the WestConnex program.

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.

The social impact study is little more than a 'cut and paste' job and is insulting to communities where hundreds of tenants and owners have lost homes and others will live in decimated communities. The report exaggerates the potential positive aspects of the project, while the negative aspects are either downplayed, insufficiently detailed or omitted altogether. Where negative economic or social impacts are identified in the report, they are inadequately addressed in terms of management or mitigation actions to be taken.

The statement that the New M5 project is an integrated transport project is false and misleading. It is a motorway that does not provide for improved public transport connections and has not fully considered the active transport component in line with government policy. The City's view is that the government could have delivered a better outcome by focusing on ways to "improve access" that is modally agnostic and more consistent with government's land use policies.

Endangered flora and fauna would be destroyed for this project, including the Green and Golden Bell Frog colony at Arncliffe and the critically endangered Cooks River Castlereagh Ironbark Forest at Kingsgrove/Beverly Hills. Saving these species in particular was a condition of the previous M5 motorway; destroying them now makes a mockery of these legal protections. I also object to the unprofessional analysis of the threat posed by the New M5 to these species and to biodiversity in general, as this section of the EIS attempts to downplay the significance of the flora and fauna threatened by this project and the impact of this project on biodiversity overall.

I am also concerned that the EIS suggests that the breeding ponds of the Green and Golden Bell Frog have not been kept healthy in recent years, especially since the RMS was responsible for building these ponds as a condition of the old M5.

Many public parks would be temporarily or permanently destroyed for this project, including parts of Sydney Park and the M5 Linear Park, along with thousands of mature trees along the route. Even if these trees would be reinstated, it will take decades to achieve the level of canopy that exists.

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.

The increase in road capacity on Euston Road from four lanes to between six and eight, and Campbell Road from two lanes to six will have noise impacts on people living in the area and using Sydney Park.

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 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 proponents have failed to consult with local businesses across the route, many of which would be destroyed by the traffic and/or construction impacts of this project.

The proponent has failed to adequately assess and responsibly handle asbestos, including the huge amounts it has removed ahead of this EIS from the Alexandria Landfill and transported through inner Sydney out to the western suburbs. More toxic asbestos is expected to be dug up and transported from various sites along the New M5 for this project, and the numerous breaches of basic health and safety procedures observed by residents in St Peters, Granville and Erskine Park in this regard have not been properly assessed in this EIS.

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,

Cameron Burgess

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Pamela Eastwell [redacted]
Sent: Friday, 29 January 2016 2:21 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

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).

Global experience and research has shown conclusively that these kinds of toll road mega-projects are hugely expensive and provide only short-term relief from traffic congestion. I have yet to hear of an independent transport expert who backs the project. WestConnex will increase air pollution and traffic, 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.

The strategic justification for the New M5 is weak and inconsistent with the NSW Government's strategic planning and policy framework, despite its inclusion in the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy and the Long Term Transport Master Plan. The project as proposed in this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) does not deliver the broader objectives of WestConnex as stated in the Updated Strategic Business Case (November 2015).

There has been no compelling case made for why WestConnex should be built, and the project should not receive approval and not proceed. This EIS and the Updated Strategic Business Case for WestConnex are clear that the benefits accruing from Stage 2 do not outweigh the costs. Benefits are shown to come once the whole WestConnex project is built according to the Updated Strategic Business Case, and that no benefits exist until all three Stages are delivered (WestConnex Full Scheme: Economic Appraisal, KPMG, 19 November 2015). I am aware that even this has now expanded to include other tollways such as the Sydney Gateway, making it even more likely that this project will provide disbenefits to society if it proceeds as proposed in this EIS, i.e. as a standalone project. This is particularly concerning given there is a significant risk that Stage 3 will not be built.

Fundamentally flawed projects like WestConnex do not account for changing work practices supported by technologies such as teleworking, or flexible office spaces, or that car journeys are dropping as workers elect to work closer to home or use public transport, bicycles or car sharing. It also does not account for trends that will substantially change how people choose to travel in future and reduce the number of cars on the road, such as peak car or driverless cars.

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 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 EIS lacks rigour and sound analysis, despite the huge volume of documentation. This lack of rigour and analysis is consistent across all chapters and appendices. The project objectives are biased towards a motorway solution, so that any proposed alternative falls short of the proposed solution. Similarly, the work undertaken in the EIS is highly compliance driven, and fails to take into account opportunities or strategic impacts, and the assessment of cumulative impacts is almost negligent.

WestConnex is presented as a 'transformational' infrastructure project, however, the EIS is not clear on what transformation it will achieve. There is no demonstration that WestConnex delivers transformation in terms of social or economic improvement, or better land use outcomes. To the contrary, WestConnex will deliver a piece of infrastructure that increases traffic on local roads, does not enable value capture or urban renewal, and is not consistent with the government's land use priorities or the proposal in the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy.

Traffic on the existing M5 East exceeded capacity "within months" of opening (New M5 Project Overview, November 2015), including recent road widening. This lack of capacity is, in part, the rationale for the construction of the New M5. Managing demand on the M5 East and providing high quality public transport alternatives for those who can change mode would be a more effective long term solution that simply a 'predict and provide' approach, yet this alternative - along with many others - has not been assessed.

A larger question raised by the proposed New M5 project is what happens if capacity on this motorway is reached? The existing M5 East has proven that a new motorway can easily reach or exceed capacity within a 15 year timeframe. If that outcome is realised for the New M5, Sydney will be left with a transport legacy that cannot support the jobs growth in the west consistent with Government policy. Sydney needs to manage demand for existing road assets to maximise economically productive use and deliver sustainable transport as a real alternative to car travel. International cities such as Los Angeles are moving away from their dominant car-based culture to invest in public transport in order to build the sustainability and attractiveness of their city for residents, businesses and visitors alike.

The New M5 project has only been assessed to 2031, which does not take into account the 45 year concession period for the asset as stated in the WestConnex Updated Strategic Business Case. The assessment does not account for future events that may radically change travel demands or behaviours.

I object the destruction of heritage buildings for this project. I also object to leaving other heritage buildings isolated in a flood of traffic. e.g. terraces next to construction compounds and motorway in Campbell Street.

I object to residents in south west Sydney suffering a huge loss of amenity as a result of the existing M5 being stripped of its green space and vegetation, particularly when residents fought so hard to get these green spaces established and thriving. I also strongly object to their concrete noise walls being replaced with transparent barriers. These will be right next to hundreds of homes, who will now be forced to look at (as well as listen to and breathe the fumes of) lanes of motorway traffic just over their fences. It is utterly unacceptable to prioritise the views of passing motorists over the privacy and amenity of people who live in an area.

I object to not modelling beyond two intersections after this project. This deliberately obscures the threat to King Street and roads in Alexandria. I object to exposing King Street and Edgeware Rd to the threat of becoming clearways.

Residents affected by compulsory acquisitions are 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.

I strongly object to the unacceptable impact the project's construction will have on local residents, businesses and schools. Across the route of this project, people face years of having their streets turned into car parks for construction workers; 24/7 construction noise, vibration, and heavy truck movements; exposure to asbestos, construction dust, and toxic materials; and more. Mitigation is recommended in this EIS, but no information is provided 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.

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.

I strongly object to the manner in which this project deliberately exposes communities in certain areas to increased pollution. Such an approach values the health and safety of people in certain areas of Sydney over others, and is both unjust and unacceptable. In addition, despite there being no safe level of exposure to fine particulate matter, the proponents want to build this project knowing it will increase these pollutants around much of the project route.

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 air quality study shows that dangerous fine particle pollution already exceeds acceptable levels in some areas in the project areas, and will worsen if this project is built. I also object to the way this and other information about air quality and pollution impacts has been provided in this EIS; it is far too dense and opaque for ordinary residents to

understand. It should go without saying that where public health is concerned, information about negative impacts should be provided in a way that affected residents can understand.

The EIS demonstrates that air quality, even at existing levels, is close to the allowable limits, and will only get worse with a major interchange, road upgrades and ventilation stacks implemented at the St Peters Interchange and surrounds. If new air quality standards as proposed by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) in 2012 are implemented, the New M5 would well exceed allowable air pollution levels.

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). I find it completely unacceptable that AECOM has been paid $13 million of taxpayer money to complete this EIS despite this, and despite it being 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. I also object to AECOM doing the EIS when it has contracts in the rest of the project including Stage 2. This conflict of interest needs to be explained and addressed.

Even with these flaws, tolls on these roads are to be in effect for decades. Many Sydneysiders will not see these roads untolled in their lifetimes. Nor will western Sydney or rural and regional NSW see any investment in their communities to create employment opportunities that would circumvent the need to commute long distances by car to jobs in Sydney's CBD, eastern suburbs and inner city.

The New M5 would cause costly traffic chaos throughout the inner west and south-west Sydney. 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. This EIS also 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, Kingsgrove and Brighton-Le-Sands. I object to building a road that the proponent admits will produce such volumes of traffic that such roads will be beyond capacity. Where traffic is already bad, plans should be to reduce it, not make it worse.

Meanwhile, even this EIS 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. This is because even the proponents know that commuters will be unwilling to pay $6 each way to use either of these toll roads, which is in line with figures in WestConnex's Updated Strategic Business Case that show for almost all of potential users, the value of time saved is less than the cost of using WestConnex.

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.

The delivery of the New M5 and in particular the St Peters Interchange, will have a significant impact on residents and businesses. The increased traffic resulting from this project will impact on urban amenity and will limit the ability for public transport services to operate efficiently due to increased local road congestion.

The EIS assumes that by 2031 the full WestConnex project will be complete. This includes the M4-M5 Link (Stage 3), which will have additional significant impacts on residents and businesses. Nowhere in the EIS are these impacts considered, nor information given to the public to fully consider or understand the implications of the whole WestConnex program.

The analysis of alternatives 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.

The evidence provided by the EIS in support of the project is incomplete and unbalanced, selectively including and excluding impacts from subsequent planned stages of the WestConnex project. The analysis of strategic alternatives in the EIS is cursory and fails to demonstrate the New M5 extension is the best option to meet the needs of a growing Sydney population. The EIS also does not take into consideration the travel patterns of residents and businesses in western or south-western Sydney that the New M5 is intended to serve, nor the wider impacts on inner-Sydney communities affected by the WestConnex program.

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.

The social impact study is little more than a 'cut and paste' job and is insulting to communities where hundreds of tenants and owners have lost homes and others will live in decimated communities. The report exaggerates the potential positive aspects of the project, while the negative aspects are either downplayed, insufficiently detailed or omitted altogether. Where negative economic or social impacts are identified in the report, they are inadequately addressed in terms of management or mitigation actions to be taken.

The statement that the New M5 project is an integrated transport project is false and misleading. It is a motorway that does not provide for improved public transport connections and has not fully considered the active transport component in line with government policy. The City's view is that the government could have delivered a better outcome by focusing on ways to "improve access" that is modally agnostic and more consistent with government's land use policies.

Endangered flora and fauna would be destroyed for this project, including the Green and Golden Bell Frog colony at Arncliffe and the critically endangered Cooks River Castlereagh Ironbark Forest at Kingsgrove/Beverly Hills. Saving these species in particular was a condition of the previous M5 motorway; destroying them now makes a mockery of these legal protections. I also object to the unprofessional analysis of the threat posed by the New M5 to these species and to biodiversity in general, as this section of the EIS attempts to downplay the significance of the flora and fauna threatened by this project and the impact of this project on biodiversity overall.

I am concerned that the EIS suggests that the breeding ponds of the Green and Golden Bell Frog have not been kept healthy in recent years, especially since the RMS was responsible for building these ponds as a condition of the old M5.

Many public parks would be temporarily or permanently destroyed for this project, including parts of Sydney Park and the M5 Linear Park, along with thousands of mature trees along the route. Even if these trees would be reinstated, it will take decades to achieve the level of canopy that exists.

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.

The increase in road capacity on Euston Road from four lanes to between six and eight, and Campbell Road from two lanes to six will have noise impacts on people living in the area and using Sydney Park.

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 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.

I strongly object to the complete failure to consult with local businesses across the route, many of which would be destroyed by the traffic and/or construction impacts of this project.

I strongly object to WestConnex's failure to adequately assess and responsibly handle asbestos, including the huge amounts it has removed ahead of this EIS from the Alexandria Landfill and transported through inner Sydney out to the western suburbs. More toxic asbestos is expected to be dug up and transported from various sites along the New M5 for this project, and the numerous breaches of basic health and safety procedures observed by residents in St Peters, Granville and Erskine Park in this regard have not been properly assessed in this EIS.

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,

Pamela Eastwell

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Joshua Wilkinson [redacted]
Sent: Friday, 29 January 2016 5:27 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

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).

Global experience and research has shown conclusively that these kinds of toll road mega-projects are hugely expensive and provide only short-term relief from traffic congestion. I have yet to hear of an independent transport expert who backs the project. WestConnex will increase air pollution and traffic, 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.

The strategic justification for the New M5 is weak and inconsistent with the NSW Government's strategic planning and policy framework, despite its inclusion in the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy and the Long Term Transport Master Plan. The project as proposed in this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) does not deliver the broader objectives of WestConnex as stated in the Updated Strategic Business Case (November 2015).

There has been no compelling case made for why WestConnex should be built, and the project should not receive approval and not proceed. This EIS and the Updated Strategic Business Case for WestConnex are clear that the benefits accruing from Stage 2 do not outweigh the costs. Benefits are shown to come once the whole WestConnex project is built according to the Updated Strategic Business Case, and that no benefits exist until all three Stages are delivered (WestConnex Full Scheme: Economic Appraisal, KPMG, 19 November 2015). I am aware that even this has now expanded to include other tollways such as the Sydney Gateway, making it even more likely that this project will provide disbenefits to society if it proceeds as proposed in this EIS, i.e. as a standalone project. This is particularly concerning given there is a significant risk that Stage 3 will not be built.

Fundamentally flawed projects like WestConnex do not account for changing work practices supported by technologies such as teleworking, or flexible office spaces, or that car journeys are dropping as workers elect to work closer to home or use public transport, bicycles or car sharing. It also does not account for trends that will substantially change how people choose to travel in future and reduce the number of cars on the road, such as peak car or driverless cars.

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 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 EIS lacks rigour and sound analysis, despite the huge volume of documentation. This lack of rigour and analysis is consistent across all chapters and appendices. The project objectives are biased towards a motorway solution, so that any proposed alternative falls short of the proposed solution. Similarly, the work undertaken in the EIS is highly compliance driven, and fails to take into account opportunities or strategic impacts, and the assessment of cumulative impacts is almost negligent.

WestConnex is presented as a 'transformational' infrastructure project, however, the EIS is not clear on what transformation it will achieve. There is no demonstration that WestConnex delivers transformation in terms of social or economic improvement, or better land use outcomes. To the contrary, WestConnex will deliver a piece of infrastructure that increases traffic on local roads, does not enable value capture or urban renewal, and is not consistent with the government's land use priorities or the proposal in the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy.

Traffic on the existing M5 East exceeded capacity "within months" of opening (New M5 Project Overview, November 2015), including recent road widening. This lack of capacity is, in part, the rationale for the construction of the New M5. Managing demand on the M5 East and providing high quality public transport alternatives for those who can change mode would be a more effective long term solution that simply a 'predict and provide' approach, yet this alternative - along with many others - has not been assessed.

A larger question raised by the proposed New M5 project is what happens if capacity on this motorway is reached? The existing M5 East has proven that a new motorway can easily reach or exceed capacity within a 15 year timeframe. If that outcome is realised for the New M5, Sydney will be left with a transport legacy that cannot support the jobs growth in the west consistent with Government policy. Sydney needs to manage demand for existing road assets to maximise economically productive use and deliver sustainable transport as a real alternative to car travel. International cities such as Los Angeles are moving away from their dominant car-based culture to invest in public transport in order to build the sustainability and attractiveness of their city for residents, businesses and visitors alike.

The New M5 project has only been assessed to 2031, which does not take into account the 45 year concession period for the asset as stated in the WestConnex Updated Strategic Business Case. The assessment does not account for future events that may radically change travel demands or behaviours.

Heritage buildings would be destroyed for this project, while others would be isolated in a flood of traffic. e.g. terraces next to construction compounds and motorway in Campbell Street.

Residents in south west Sydney will suffer a huge loss of amenity as a result of the existing M5 being stripped of its green space and vegetation, particularly when residents fought so hard to get these green spaces established and thriving. I also strongly object to their concrete noise walls being replaced with transparent barriers. These will be right next to hundreds of homes, who will now be forced to look at (as well as listen to and breathe the fumes of) lanes of motorway traffic just over their fences. It is utterly unacceptable to prioritise the views of passing motorists over the privacy and amenity of people who live in an area.

This EIS fails to model traffic beyond two intersections after this project. This deliberately obscures the threat to King Street and roads in Alexandria. I object to exposing King Street and Edgeware Rd to the threat of becoming clearways.

Residents affected by compulsory acquisitions are 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.

I strongly object to the unacceptable impact the project's construction will have on local residents, businesses and schools. Across the route of this project, people face years of having their streets turned into car parks for construction workers; 24/7 construction noise, vibration, and heavy truck movements; exposure to asbestos, construction dust, and toxic materials; and more. Mitigation is recommended in this EIS, but no information is provided 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.

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.

This project deliberately exposes communities in certain areas to increased pollution. Such an approach values the health and safety of people in certain areas of Sydney over others, and is both unjust and unacceptable. In addition, despite there being no safe level of exposure to fine particulate matter, the proponents want to build this project knowing it will increase these pollutants around much of the project route.

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 air quality study shows that dangerous fine particle pollution already exceeds acceptable levels in some areas in the project areas, and will worsen if this project is built. I also object to the way this and other information about air quality and pollution impacts has been provided in this EIS; it is far too dense and opaque for ordinary residents to

understand. It should go without saying that where public health is concerned, information about negative impacts should be provided in a way that affected residents can understand.

The EIS demonstrates that air quality, even at existing levels, is close to the allowable limits, and will only get worse with a major interchange, road upgrades and ventilation stacks implemented at the St Peters Interchange and surrounds. If new air quality standards as proposed by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) in 2012 are implemented, the New M5 would well exceed allowable air pollution levels.

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). I find it completely unacceptable that AECOM has been paid $13 million of taxpayer money to complete this EIS despite this, and despite it being 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. I also object to AECOM doing the EIS when it has contracts in the rest of the project including Stage 2. This conflict of interest needs to be explained and addressed.

Even with these flaws, tolls on these roads are to be in effect for decades. Many Sydneysiders will not see these roads untolled in their lifetimes. Nor will western Sydney or rural and regional NSW see any investment in their communities to create employment opportunities that would circumvent the need to commute long distances by car to jobs in Sydney's CBD, eastern suburbs and inner city.

The New M5 would cause costly traffic chaos throughout the inner west and south-west Sydney. 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. This EIS also 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, Kingsgrove and Brighton-Le-Sands. I object to building a road that the proponent admits will produce such volumes of traffic that such roads will be beyond capacity. Where traffic is already bad, plans should be to reduce it, not make it worse.

Meanwhile, even this EIS 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. This is because even the proponents know that commuters will be unwilling to pay $6 each way to use either of these toll roads, which is in line with figures in WestConnex's Updated Strategic Business Case that show for almost all of potential users, the value of time saved is less than the cost of using WestConnex.

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.

The delivery of the New M5 and in particular the St Peters Interchange, will have a significant impact on residents and businesses. The increased traffic resulting from this project will impact on urban amenity and will limit the ability for public transport services to operate efficiently due to increased local road congestion.

The EIS assumes that by 2031 the full WestConnex project will be complete. This includes the M4-M5 Link (Stage 3), which will have additional significant impacts on residents and businesses. Nowhere in the EIS are these impacts considered, nor information given to the public to fully consider or understand the implications of the whole WestConnex program.

The analysis of alternatives 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.

The evidence provided by the EIS in support of the project is incomplete and unbalanced, selectively including and excluding impacts from subsequent planned stages of the WestConnex project. The analysis of strategic alternatives in the EIS is cursory and fails to demonstrate the New M5 extension is the best option to meet the needs of a growing Sydney population. The EIS also does not take into consideration the travel patterns of residents and businesses in western or south-western Sydney that the New M5 is intended to serve, nor the wider impacts on inner-Sydney communities affected by the WestConnex program.

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.

The social impact study is little more than a 'cut and paste' job and is insulting to communities where hundreds of tenants and owners have lost homes and others will live in decimated communities. The report exaggerates the potential positive aspects of the project, while the negative aspects are either downplayed, insufficiently detailed or omitted altogether. Where negative economic or social impacts are identified in the report, they are inadequately addressed in terms of management or mitigation actions to be taken.

The statement that the New M5 project is an integrated transport project is false and misleading. It is a motorway that does not provide for improved public transport connections and has not fully considered the active transport component in line with government policy. The City's view is that the government could have delivered a better outcome by focusing on ways to "improve access" that is modally agnostic and more consistent with government's land use policies.

Endangered flora and fauna would be destroyed for this project, including the Green and Golden Bell Frog colony at Arncliffe and the critically endangered Cooks River Castlereagh Ironbark Forest at Kingsgrove/Beverly Hills. Saving these species in particular was a condition of the previous M5 motorway; destroying them now makes a mockery of these legal protections. I also object to the unprofessional analysis of the threat posed by the New M5 to these species and to biodiversity in general, as this section of the EIS attempts to downplay the significance of the flora and fauna threatened by this project and the impact of this project on biodiversity overall.

I am also concerned that the EIS suggests that the breeding ponds of the Green and Golden Bell Frog have not been kept healthy in recent years, especially since the RMS was responsible for building these ponds as a condition of the old M5.

Many public parks would be temporarily or permanently destroyed for this project, including parts of Sydney Park and the M5 Linear Park, along with thousands of mature trees along the route. Even if these trees would be reinstated, it will take decades to achieve the level of canopy that exists.

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.

The increase in road capacity on Euston Road from four lanes to between six and eight, and Campbell Road from two lanes to six will have noise impacts on people living in the area and using Sydney Park.

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 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 proponents have failed to consult with local businesses across the route, many of which would be destroyed by the traffic and/or construction impacts of this project.

The proponent has failed to adequately assess and responsibly handle asbestos, including the huge amounts it has removed ahead of this EIS from the Alexandria Landfill and transported through inner Sydney out to the western suburbs. More toxic asbestos is expected to be dug up and transported from various sites along the New M5 for this project, and the numerous breaches of basic health and safety procedures observed by residents in St Peters, Granville and Erskine Park in this regard have not been properly assessed in this EIS.

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,

Joshua Wilkinson

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Georgia Brown [redacted]
Sent: Friday, 29 January 2016 5:24 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

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).

Global experience and research has shown conclusively that these kinds of toll road mega-projects are hugely expensive and provide only short-term relief from traffic congestion. I have yet to hear of an independent transport expert who backs the project. WestConnex will increase air pollution and traffic, 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.

The strategic justification for the New M5 is weak and inconsistent with the NSW Government's strategic planning and policy framework, despite its inclusion in the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy and the Long Term Transport Master Plan. The project as proposed in this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) does not deliver the broader objectives of WestConnex as stated in the Updated Strategic Business Case (November 2015).

There has been no compelling case made for why WestConnex should be built, and the project should not receive approval and not proceed. This EIS and the Updated Strategic Business Case for WestConnex are clear that the benefits accruing from Stage 2 do not outweigh the costs. Benefits are shown to come once the whole WestConnex project is built according to the Updated Strategic Business Case, and that no benefits exist until all three Stages are delivered (WestConnex Full Scheme: Economic Appraisal, KPMG, 19 November 2015). I am aware that even this has now expanded to include other tollways such as the Sydney Gateway, making it even more likely that this project will provide disbenefits to society if it proceeds as proposed in this EIS, i.e. as a standalone project. This is particularly concerning given there is a significant risk that Stage 3 will not be built.

Fundamentally flawed projects like WestConnex do not account for changing work practices supported by technologies such as teleworking, or flexible office spaces, or that car journeys are dropping as workers elect to work closer to home or use public transport, bicycles or car sharing. It also does not account for trends that will substantially change how people choose to travel in future and reduce the number of cars on the road, such as peak car or driverless cars.

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 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 EIS lacks rigour and sound analysis, despite the huge volume of documentation. This lack of rigour and analysis is consistent across all chapters and appendices. The project objectives are biased towards a motorway solution, so that any proposed alternative falls short of the proposed solution. Similarly, the work undertaken in the EIS is highly compliance driven, and fails to take into account opportunities or strategic impacts, and the assessment of cumulative impacts is almost negligent.

WestConnex is presented as a 'transformational' infrastructure project, however, the EIS is not clear on what transformation it will achieve. There is no demonstration that WestConnex delivers transformation in terms of social or economic improvement, or better land use outcomes. To the contrary, WestConnex will deliver a piece of infrastructure that increases traffic on local roads, does not enable value capture or urban renewal, and is not consistent with the government's land use priorities or the proposal in the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy.

Traffic on the existing M5 East exceeded capacity "within months" of opening (New M5 Project Overview, November 2015), including recent road widening. This lack of capacity is, in part, the rationale for the construction of the New M5. Managing demand on the M5 East and providing high quality public transport alternatives for those who can change mode would be a more effective long term solution that simply a 'predict and provide' approach, yet this alternative - along with many others - has not been assessed.

A larger question raised by the proposed New M5 project is what happens if capacity on this motorway is reached? The existing M5 East has proven that a new motorway can easily reach or exceed capacity within a 15 year timeframe. If that outcome is realised for the New M5, Sydney will be left with a transport legacy that cannot support the jobs growth in the west consistent with Government policy. Sydney needs to manage demand for existing road assets to maximise economically productive use and deliver sustainable transport as a real alternative to car travel. International cities such as Los Angeles are moving away from their dominant car-based culture to invest in public transport in order to build the sustainability and attractiveness of their city for residents, businesses and visitors alike.

The New M5 project has only been assessed to 2031, which does not take into account the 45 year concession period for the asset as stated in the WestConnex Updated Strategic Business Case. The assessment does not account for future events that may radically change travel demands or behaviours.

Heritage buildings would be destroyed for this project, while others would be isolated in a flood of traffic. e.g. terraces next to construction compounds and motorway in Campbell Street.

Residents in south west Sydney will suffer a huge loss of amenity as a result of the existing M5 being stripped of its green space and vegetation, particularly when residents fought so hard to get these green spaces established and thriving. I also strongly object to their concrete noise walls being replaced with transparent barriers. These will be right next to hundreds of homes, who will now be forced to look at (as well as listen to and breathe the fumes of) lanes of motorway traffic just over their fences. It is utterly unacceptable to prioritise the views of passing motorists over the privacy and amenity of people who live in an area.

This EIS fails to model traffic beyond two intersections after this project. This deliberately obscures the threat to King Street and roads in Alexandria. I object to exposing King Street and Edgeware Rd to the threat of becoming clearways.

Residents affected by compulsory acquisitions are 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.

I strongly object to the unacceptable impact the project's construction will have on local residents, businesses and schools. Across the route of this project, people face years of having their streets turned into car parks for construction workers; 24/7 construction noise, vibration, and heavy truck movements; exposure to asbestos, construction dust, and toxic materials; and more. Mitigation is recommended in this EIS, but no information is provided 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.

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.

This project deliberately exposes communities in certain areas to increased pollution. Such an approach values the health and safety of people in certain areas of Sydney over others, and is both unjust and unacceptable. In addition, despite there being no safe level of exposure to fine particulate matter, the proponents want to build this project knowing it will increase these pollutants around much of the project route.

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 air quality study shows that dangerous fine particle pollution already exceeds acceptable levels in some areas in the project areas, and will worsen if this project is built. I also object to the way this and other information about air quality and pollution impacts has been provided in this EIS; it is far too dense and opaque for ordinary residents to

understand. It should go without saying that where public health is concerned, information about negative impacts should be provided in a way that affected residents can understand.

The EIS demonstrates that air quality, even at existing levels, is close to the allowable limits, and will only get worse with a major interchange, road upgrades and ventilation stacks implemented at the St Peters Interchange and surrounds. If new air quality standards as proposed by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) in 2012 are implemented, the New M5 would well exceed allowable air pollution levels.

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). I find it completely unacceptable that AECOM has been paid $13 million of taxpayer money to complete this EIS despite this, and despite it being 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. I also object to AECOM doing the EIS when it has contracts in the rest of the project including Stage 2. This conflict of interest needs to be explained and addressed.

Even with these flaws, tolls on these roads are to be in effect for decades. Many Sydneysiders will not see these roads untolled in their lifetimes. Nor will western Sydney or rural and regional NSW see any investment in their communities to create employment opportunities that would circumvent the need to commute long distances by car to jobs in Sydney's CBD, eastern suburbs and inner city.

The New M5 would cause costly traffic chaos throughout the inner west and south-west Sydney. 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. This EIS also 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, Kingsgrove and Brighton-Le-Sands. I object to building a road that the proponent admits will produce such volumes of traffic that such roads will be beyond capacity. Where traffic is already bad, plans should be to reduce it, not make it worse.

Meanwhile, even this EIS 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. This is because even the proponents know that commuters will be unwilling to pay $6 each way to use either of these toll roads, which is in line with figures in WestConnex's Updated Strategic Business Case that show for almost all of potential users, the value of time saved is less than the cost of using WestConnex.

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.

The delivery of the New M5 and in particular the St Peters Interchange, will have a significant impact on residents and businesses. The increased traffic resulting from this project will impact on urban amenity and will limit the ability for public transport services to operate efficiently due to increased local road congestion.

The EIS assumes that by 2031 the full WestConnex project will be complete. This includes the M4-M5 Link (Stage 3), which will have additional significant impacts on residents and businesses. Nowhere in the EIS are these impacts considered, nor information given to the public to fully consider or understand the implications of the whole WestConnex program.

The analysis of alternatives 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.

The evidence provided by the EIS in support of the project is incomplete and unbalanced, selectively including and excluding impacts from subsequent planned stages of the WestConnex project. The analysis of strategic alternatives in the EIS is cursory and fails to demonstrate the New M5 extension is the best option to meet the needs of a growing Sydney population. The EIS also does not take into consideration the travel patterns of residents and businesses in western or south-western Sydney that the New M5 is intended to serve, nor the wider impacts on inner-Sydney communities affected by the WestConnex program.

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The statement that the New M5 project is an integrated transport project is false and misleading. It is a motorway that does not provide for improved public transport connections and has not fully considered the active transport component in line with government policy. The City's view is that the government could have delivered a better outcome by focusing on ways to "improve access" that is modally agnostic and more consistent with government's land use policies.

Endangered flora and fauna would be destroyed for this project, including the Green and Golden Bell Frog colony at Arncliffe and the critically endangered Cooks River Castlereagh Ironbark Forest at Kingsgrove/Beverly Hills. Saving these species in particular was a condition of the previous M5 motorway; destroying them now makes a mockery of these legal protections. I also object to the unprofessional analysis of the threat posed by the New M5 to these species and to biodiversity in general, as this section of the EIS attempts to downplay the significance of the flora and fauna threatened by this project and the impact of this project on biodiversity overall.

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Many public parks would be temporarily or permanently destroyed for this project, including parts of Sydney Park and the M5 Linear Park, along with thousands of mature trees along the route. Even if these trees would be reinstated, it will take decades to achieve the level of canopy that exists.

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.

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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 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 proponents have failed to consult with local businesses across the route, many of which would be destroyed by the traffic and/or construction impacts of this project.

The proponent has failed to adequately assess and responsibly handle asbestos, including the huge amounts it has removed ahead of this EIS from the Alexandria Landfill and transported through inner Sydney out to the western suburbs. More toxic asbestos is expected to be dug up and transported from various sites along the New M5 for this project, and the numerous breaches of basic health and safety procedures observed by residents in St Peters, Granville and Erskine Park in this regard have not been properly assessed in this EIS.

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,

Georgia Brown

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Lucie Brown [redacted]
Sent: Friday, 29 January 2016 5:19 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

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).

Global experience and research has shown conclusively that these kinds of toll road mega-projects are hugely expensive and provide only short-term relief from traffic congestion. I have yet to hear of an independent transport expert who backs the project. WestConnex will increase air pollution and traffic, 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.

The strategic justification for the New M5 is weak and inconsistent with the NSW Government's strategic planning and policy framework, despite its inclusion in the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy and the Long Term Transport Master Plan. The project as proposed in this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) does not deliver the broader objectives of WestConnex as stated in the Updated Strategic Business Case (November 2015).

There has been no compelling case made for why WestConnex should be built, and the project should not receive approval and not proceed. This EIS and the Updated Strategic Business Case for WestConnex are clear that the benefits accruing from Stage 2 do not outweigh the costs. Benefits are shown to come once the whole WestConnex project is built according to the Updated Strategic Business Case, and that no benefits exist until all three Stages are delivered (WestConnex Full Scheme: Economic Appraisal, KPMG, 19 November 2015). I am aware that even this has now expanded to include other tollways such as the Sydney Gateway, making it even more likely that this project will provide disbenefits to society if it proceeds as proposed in this EIS, i.e. as a standalone project. This is particularly concerning given there is a significant risk that Stage 3 will not be built.

Fundamentally flawed projects like WestConnex do not account for changing work practices supported by technologies such as teleworking, or flexible office spaces, or that car journeys are dropping as workers elect to work closer to home or use public transport, bicycles or car sharing. It also does not account for trends that will substantially change how people choose to travel in future and reduce the number of cars on the road, such as peak car or driverless cars.

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 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 EIS lacks rigour and sound analysis, despite the huge volume of documentation. This lack of rigour and analysis is consistent across all chapters and appendices. The project objectives are biased towards a motorway solution, so that any proposed alternative falls short of the proposed solution. Similarly, the work undertaken in the EIS is highly compliance driven, and fails to take into account opportunities or strategic impacts, and the assessment of cumulative impacts is almost negligent.

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Traffic on the existing M5 East exceeded capacity "within months" of opening (New M5 Project Overview, November 2015), including recent road widening. This lack of capacity is, in part, the rationale for the construction of the New M5. Managing demand on the M5 East and providing high quality public transport alternatives for those who can change mode would be a more effective long term solution that simply a 'predict and provide' approach, yet this alternative - along with many others - has not been assessed.

A larger question raised by the proposed New M5 project is what happens if capacity on this motorway is reached? The existing M5 East has proven that a new motorway can easily reach or exceed capacity within a 15 year timeframe. If that outcome is realised for the New M5, Sydney will be left with a transport legacy that cannot support the jobs growth in the west consistent with Government policy. Sydney needs to manage demand for existing road assets to maximise economically productive use and deliver sustainable transport as a real alternative to car travel. International cities such as Los Angeles are moving away from their dominant car-based culture to invest in public transport in order to build the sustainability and attractiveness of their city for residents, businesses and visitors alike.

The New M5 project has only been assessed to 2031, which does not take into account the 45 year concession period for the asset as stated in the WestConnex Updated Strategic Business Case. The assessment does not account for future events that may radically change travel demands or behaviours.

Heritage buildings would be destroyed for this project, while others would be isolated in a flood of traffic. e.g. terraces next to construction compounds and motorway in Campbell Street.

Residents in south west Sydney will suffer a huge loss of amenity as a result of the existing M5 being stripped of its green space and vegetation, particularly when residents fought so hard to get these green spaces established and thriving. I also strongly object to their concrete noise walls being replaced with transparent barriers. These will be right next to hundreds of homes, who will now be forced to look at (as well as listen to and breathe the fumes of) lanes of motorway traffic just over their fences. It is utterly unacceptable to prioritise the views of passing motorists over the privacy and amenity of people who live in an area.

This EIS fails to model traffic beyond two intersections after this project. This deliberately obscures the threat to King Street and roads in Alexandria. I object to exposing King Street and Edgeware Rd to the threat of becoming clearways.

Residents affected by compulsory acquisitions are 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.

I strongly object to the unacceptable impact the project's construction will have on local residents, businesses and schools. Across the route of this project, people face years of having their streets turned into car parks for construction workers; 24/7 construction noise, vibration, and heavy truck movements; exposure to asbestos, construction dust, and toxic materials; and more. Mitigation is recommended in this EIS, but no information is provided 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.

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.

This project deliberately exposes communities in certain areas to increased pollution. Such an approach values the health and safety of people in certain areas of Sydney over others, and is both unjust and unacceptable. In addition, despite there being no safe level of exposure to fine particulate matter, the proponents want to build this project knowing it will increase these pollutants around much of the project route.

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 air quality study shows that dangerous fine particle pollution already exceeds acceptable levels in some areas in the project areas, and will worsen if this project is built. I also object to the way this and other information about air quality and pollution impacts has been provided in this EIS; it is far too dense and opaque for ordinary residents to

understand. It should go without saying that where public health is concerned, information about negative impacts should be provided in a way that affected residents can understand.

The EIS demonstrates that air quality, even at existing levels, is close to the allowable limits, and will only get worse with a major interchange, road upgrades and ventilation stacks implemented at the St Peters Interchange and surrounds. If new air quality standards as proposed by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) in 2012 are implemented, the New M5 would well exceed allowable air pollution levels.

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). I find it completely unacceptable that AECOM has been paid $13 million of taxpayer money to complete this EIS despite this, and despite it being 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. I also object to AECOM doing the EIS when it has contracts in the rest of the project including Stage 2. This conflict of interest needs to be explained and addressed.

Even with these flaws, tolls on these roads are to be in effect for decades. Many Sydneysiders will not see these roads untolled in their lifetimes. Nor will western Sydney or rural and regional NSW see any investment in their communities to create employment opportunities that would circumvent the need to commute long distances by car to jobs in Sydney's CBD, eastern suburbs and inner city.

The New M5 would cause costly traffic chaos throughout the inner west and south-west Sydney. 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. This EIS also 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, Kingsgrove and Brighton-Le-Sands. I object to building a road that the proponent admits will produce such volumes of traffic that such roads will be beyond capacity. Where traffic is already bad, plans should be to reduce it, not make it worse.

Meanwhile, even this EIS 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. This is because even the proponents know that commuters will be unwilling to pay $6 each way to use either of these toll roads, which is in line with figures in WestConnex's Updated Strategic Business Case that show for almost all of potential users, the value of time saved is less than the cost of using WestConnex.

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.

The delivery of the New M5 and in particular the St Peters Interchange, will have a significant impact on residents and businesses. The increased traffic resulting from this project will impact on urban amenity and will limit the ability for public transport services to operate efficiently due to increased local road congestion.

The EIS assumes that by 2031 the full WestConnex project will be complete. This includes the M4-M5 Link (Stage 3), which will have additional significant impacts on residents and businesses. Nowhere in the EIS are these impacts considered, nor information given to the public to fully consider or understand the implications of the whole WestConnex program.

The analysis of alternatives 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.

The evidence provided by the EIS in support of the project is incomplete and unbalanced, selectively including and excluding impacts from subsequent planned stages of the WestConnex project. The analysis of strategic alternatives in the EIS is cursory and fails to demonstrate the New M5 extension is the best option to meet the needs of a growing Sydney population. The EIS also does not take into consideration the travel patterns of residents and businesses in western or south-western Sydney that the New M5 is intended to serve, nor the wider impacts on inner-Sydney communities affected by the WestConnex program.

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.

The social impact study is little more than a 'cut and paste' job and is insulting to communities where hundreds of tenants and owners have lost homes and others will live in decimated communities. The report exaggerates the potential positive aspects of the project, while the negative aspects are either downplayed, insufficiently detailed or omitted altogether. Where negative economic or social impacts are identified in the report, they are inadequately addressed in terms of management or mitigation actions to be taken.

The statement that the New M5 project is an integrated transport project is false and misleading. It is a motorway that does not provide for improved public transport connections and has not fully considered the active transport component in line with government policy. The City's view is that the government could have delivered a better outcome by focusing on ways to "improve access" that is modally agnostic and more consistent with government's land use policies.

Endangered flora and fauna would be destroyed for this project, including the Green and Golden Bell Frog colony at Arncliffe and the critically endangered Cooks River Castlereagh Ironbark Forest at Kingsgrove/Beverly Hills. Saving these species in particular was a condition of the previous M5 motorway; destroying them now makes a mockery of these legal protections. I also object to the unprofessional analysis of the threat posed by the New M5 to these species and to biodiversity in general, as this section of the EIS attempts to downplay the significance of the flora and fauna threatened by this project and the impact of this project on biodiversity overall.

I am also concerned that the EIS suggests that the breeding ponds of the Green and Golden Bell Frog have not been kept healthy in recent years, especially since the RMS was responsible for building these ponds as a condition of the old M5.

Many public parks would be temporarily or permanently destroyed for this project, including parts of Sydney Park and the M5 Linear Park, along with thousands of mature trees along the route. Even if these trees would be reinstated, it will take decades to achieve the level of canopy that exists.

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.

The increase in road capacity on Euston Road from four lanes to between six and eight, and Campbell Road from two lanes to six will have noise impacts on people living in the area and using Sydney Park. I am one of these people living on Campbell Rd.

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 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 proponents have failed to consult with local businesses across the route, many of which would be destroyed by the traffic and/or construction impacts of this project.

The proponent has failed to adequately assess and responsibly handle asbestos, including the huge amounts it has removed ahead of this EIS from the Alexandria Landfill and transported through inner Sydney out to the western suburbs. More toxic asbestos is expected to be dug up and transported from various sites along the New M5 for this project, and the numerous breaches of basic health and safety procedures observed by residents in St Peters, Granville and Erskine Park in this regard have not been properly assessed in this EIS.

As I live at 14 Campbell Rd we have not been contacted about the direct impact this will make on us and it is huge. There is no plan for a sound wall or private road to access our houses. The pedestrian over pass is a terrible invasion of our privacy as it is the same level as our front bedrooms. I am very concern about the health impacts before during and after construction. My son has asthma and is allergic to dust. We have already had to increase medication recently when westconnex started concrete crushing in Alexandria land fill. This project is already affecting people's lives creating more illness and stress.

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,

Lucie Brown

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Diane Fieldes [redacted]
Sent: Friday, 29 January 2016 5:19 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

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

I feel especially strongly for those whose quality of life will be ruined by both the construction and operation of this huge gift to the construction companies, developers and other corporate parasites. I lived on South Dowling Street the entire time the Eastern Distributor was being built. These days I get to sit in the traffic jams it created.

So I strongly object to this new 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 provide only short-term relief from traffic congestion. I have yet to hear of an independent transport expert who backs the project. WestConnex will increase air pollution and traffic, 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.

The strategic justification for the New M5 is weak and inconsistent with the NSW Government's strategic planning and policy framework, despite its inclusion in the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy and the Long Term Transport Master Plan. The project as proposed in this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) does not deliver the broader objectives of WestConnex as stated in the Updated Strategic Business Case (November 2015).

There has been no compelling case made for why WestConnex should be built, and the project should not receive approval and not proceed. This EIS and the Updated Strategic Business Case for WestConnex are clear that the benefits accruing from Stage 2 do not outweigh the costs. Benefits are shown to come once the whole WestConnex project is built according to the Updated Strategic Business Case, and that no benefits exist until all three Stages are delivered (WestConnex Full Scheme: Economic Appraisal, KPMG, 19 November 2015). I am aware that even this has now expanded to include other tollways such as the Sydney Gateway, making it even more likely that this project will provide disbenefits to society if it proceeds as proposed in this EIS, i.e. as a standalone project. This is particularly concerning given there is a significant risk that Stage 3 will not be built.

Fundamentally flawed projects like WestConnex do not account for changing work practices supported by technologies such as teleworking, or flexible office spaces, or that car journeys are dropping as workers elect to

work closer to home or use public transport, bicycles or car sharing. It also does not account for trends that will substantially change how people choose to travel in future and reduce the number of cars on the road, such as peak car or driverless cars.

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 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 EIS lacks rigour and sound analysis, despite the huge volume of documentation. This lack of rigour and analysis is consistent across all chapters and appendices. The project objectives are biased towards a motorway solution, so that any proposed alternative falls short of the proposed solution. Similarly, the work undertaken in the EIS is highly compliance driven, and fails to take into account opportunities or strategic impacts, and the assessment of cumulative impacts is almost negligent.

WestConnex is presented as a 'transformational' infrastructure project, however, the EIS is not clear on what transformation it will achieve. There is no demonstration that WestConnex delivers transformation in terms of social or economic improvement, or better land use outcomes. To the contrary, WestConnex will deliver a piece of infrastructure that increases traffic on local roads, does not enable value capture or urban renewal, and is not consistent with the government's land use priorities or the proposal in the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy.

Traffic on the existing M5 East exceeded capacity "within months" of opening (New M5 Project Overview, November 2015), including recent road widening. This lack of capacity is, in part, the rationale for the construction of the New M5. Managing demand on the M5 East and providing high quality public transport alternatives for those who can change mode would be a more effective long term solution that simply a 'predict and provide' approach, yet this alternative - along with many others - has not been assessed.

A larger question raised by the proposed New M5 project is what happens if capacity on this motorway is reached? The existing M5 East has proven that a new motorway can easily reach or exceed capacity within a 15 year timeframe. If that outcome is realised for the New M5, Sydney will be left with a transport legacy that cannot support the jobs growth in the west consistent with Government policy. Sydney needs to manage demand for existing road assets to maximise economically productive use and deliver sustainable transport as a real alternative to car travel. International cities such as Los Angeles are moving away from their dominant car-based culture to invest in public transport in order to build the sustainability and attractiveness of their city for residents, businesses and visitors alike.

The New M5 project has only been assessed to 2031, which does not take into account the 45 year concession period for the asset as stated in the WestConnex Updated Strategic Business Case. The assessment does not account for future events that may radically change travel demands or behaviours.

Heritage buildings would be destroyed for this project, while others would be isolated in a flood of traffic. e.g. terraces next to construction compounds and motorway in Campbell Street.

Residents in south west Sydney will suffer a huge loss of amenity as a result of the existing M5 being stripped of its green space and vegetation, particularly when residents fought so hard to get these green spaces established and thriving. I also strongly object to their concrete noise walls being replaced with transparent barriers. These will be right next to hundreds of homes, who will now be forced to look at (as well as listen to and breathe the fumes of) lanes of motorway traffic just over their fences. It is utterly unacceptable to prioritise the views of passing motorists over the privacy and amenity of people who live in an area.

This EIS fails to model traffic beyond two intersections after this project. This deliberately obscures the threat to King Street and roads in Alexandria. I object to exposing King Street and Edgeware Rd to the threat of becoming clearways.

Residents affected by compulsory acquisitions are 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.

I strongly object to the unacceptable impact the project's construction will have on local residents, businesses and schools. Across the route of this project, people face years of having their streets turned into car parks for construction workers; 24/7 construction noise, vibration, and heavy truck movements; exposure to asbestos, construction dust, and toxic materials; and more. Mitigation is recommended in this EIS, but no information is provided 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.

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.

This project deliberately exposes communities in certain areas to increased pollution. Such an approach values the health and safety of people in certain areas of Sydney over others, and is both unjust and unacceptable. In addition, despite there being no safe level of exposure to fine particulate matter, the proponents want to build this project knowing it will increase these pollutants around much of the project route.

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 air quality study shows that dangerous fine particle pollution already exceeds acceptable levels in some areas in the project areas, and will worsen if this project is built. I also object to the way this and other information about air quality and pollution impacts has been provided in this EIS; it is far too dense and opaque for ordinary residents to understand. It should go without saying that where public health is concerned, information about negative impacts should be provided in a way that affected residents can understand.

The EIS demonstrates that air quality, even at existing levels, is close to the allowable limits, and will only get worse with a major interchange, road upgrades and ventilation stacks implemented at the St Peters Interchange and surrounds. If new air quality standards as proposed by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) in 2012 are implemented, the New M5 would well exceed allowable air pollution levels.

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Even with these flaws, tolls on these roads are to be in effect for decades. Many Sydneysiders will not see these roads untolled in their lifetimes. Nor will western Sydney or rural and regional NSW see any investment in their communities to create employment opportunities that would circumvent the need to commute long distances by car to jobs in Sydney's CBD, eastern suburbs and inner city.

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Meanwhile, even this EIS 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. This is because even the proponents know that commuters will be unwilling to pay $6 each way to use either of these toll roads, which is in line with figures in WestConnex's Updated Strategic Business Case that show for almost all of potential users, the value of time saved is less than the cost of using WestConnex.

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.

The delivery of the New M5 and in particular the St Peters Interchange, will have a significant impact on residents and businesses. The increased traffic resulting from this project will impact on urban amenity and will limit the ability for public transport services to operate efficiently due to increased local road congestion.

The EIS assumes that by 2031 the full WestConnex project will be complete. This includes the M4-M5 Link (Stage 3), which will have additional significant impacts on residents and businesses. Nowhere in the EIS are these impacts considered, nor information given to the public to fully consider or understand the implications of the whole WestConnex program.

The analysis of alternatives 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.

The evidence provided by the EIS in support of the project is incomplete and unbalanced, selectively including and excluding impacts from subsequent planned stages of the WestConnex project. The analysis of strategic alternatives in the EIS is cursory and fails to demonstrate the New M5 extension is the best option to meet the needs of a growing Sydney population. The EIS also does not take into consideration the travel patterns of residents and businesses in western or south-western Sydney that the New M5 is intended to serve, nor the wider impacts on inner-Sydney communities affected by the WestConnex program.

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.

The social impact study is little more than a 'cut and paste' job and is insulting to communities where hundreds of tenants and owners have lost homes and others will live in decimated communities. The report exaggerates the potential positive aspects of the project, while the negative aspects are either downplayed, insufficiently detailed or omitted altogether. Where negative economic or social impacts are identified in the report, they are inadequately addressed in terms of management or mitigation actions to be taken.

The statement that the New M5 project is an integrated transport project is false and misleading. It is a motorway that does not provide for improved public transport connections and has not fully considered the active transport component in line with government policy. The City's view is that the government could have delivered a better outcome by focusing on ways to "improve access" that is modally agnostic and more consistent with government's land use policies.

Endangered flora and fauna would be destroyed for this project, including the Green and Golden Bell Frog colony at Arncliffe and the critically endangered Cooks River Castlereagh Ironbark Forest at Kingsgrove/Beverly Hills. Saving these species in particular was a condition of the previous M5 motorway; destroying them now makes a mockery of these legal protections. I also object to the unprofessional analysis of the threat posed by the New M5 to these species and to biodiversity in general, as this section of the EIS attempts to downplay the significance of the flora and fauna threatened by this project and the impact of this project on biodiversity overall.

I am also concerned that the EIS suggests that the breeding ponds of the Green and Golden Bell Frog have not been kept healthy in recent years, especially since the RMS was responsible for building these ponds as a condition of the old M5.

Many public parks would be temporarily or permanently destroyed for this project, including parts of Sydney Park and the M5 Linear Park, along with thousands of mature trees along the route. Even if these trees would be reinstated, it will take decades to achieve the level of canopy that exists.

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.

The increase in road capacity on Euston Road from four lanes to between six and eight, and Campbell Road from two lanes to six will have noise impacts on people living in the area and using Sydney Park.

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 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 proponents have failed to consult with local businesses across the route, many of which would be destroyed by the traffic and/or construction impacts of this project.

The proponent has failed to adequately assess and responsibly handle asbestos, including the huge amounts it has removed ahead of this EIS from the Alexandria Landfill and transported through inner Sydney out to the western suburbs. More toxic asbestos is expected to be dug up and transported from various sites along the New M5 for this project, and the numerous breaches of basic health and safety procedures observed by residents in St Peters, Granville and Erskine Park in this regard have not been properly assessed in this EIS.

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,

Diane Fieldes

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Stacey Baines [redacted]
Sent: Friday, 29 January 2016 5:18 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

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).

Global experience and research has shown conclusively that these kinds of toll road mega-projects are hugely expensive and provide only short-term relief from traffic congestion. I have yet to hear of an independent transport expert who backs the project. WestConnex will increase air pollution and traffic, 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.

The strategic justification for the New M5 is weak and inconsistent with the NSW Government's strategic planning and policy framework, despite its inclusion in the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy and the Long Term Transport Master Plan. The project as proposed in this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) does not deliver the broader objectives of WestConnex as stated in the Updated Strategic Business Case (November 2015).

There has been no compelling case made for why WestConnex should be built, and the project should not receive approval and not proceed. This EIS and the Updated Strategic Business Case for WestConnex are clear that the benefits accruing from Stage 2 do not outweigh the costs. Benefits are shown to come once the whole WestConnex project is built according to the Updated Strategic Business Case, and that no benefits exist until all three Stages are delivered (WestConnex Full Scheme: Economic Appraisal, KPMG, 19 November 2015). I am aware that even this has now expanded to include other tollways such as the Sydney Gateway, making it even more likely that this project will provide disbenefits to society if it proceeds as proposed in this EIS, i.e. as a standalone project. This is particularly concerning given there is a significant risk that Stage 3 will not be built.

Fundamentally flawed projects like WestConnex do not account for changing work practices supported by technologies such as teleworking, or flexible office spaces, or that car journeys are dropping as workers elect to work closer to home or use public transport, bicycles or car sharing. It also does not account for trends that will substantially change how people choose to travel in future and reduce the number of cars on the road, such as peak car or driverless cars.

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 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 EIS lacks rigour and sound analysis, despite the huge volume of documentation. This lack of rigour and analysis is consistent across all chapters and appendices. The project objectives are biased towards a motorway solution, so that any proposed alternative falls short of the proposed solution. Similarly, the work undertaken in the EIS is highly compliance driven, and fails to take into account opportunities or strategic impacts, and the assessment of cumulative impacts is almost negligent.

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A larger question raised by the proposed New M5 project is what happens if capacity on this motorway is reached? The existing M5 East has proven that a new motorway can easily reach or exceed capacity within a 15 year timeframe. If that outcome is realised for the New M5, Sydney will be left with a transport legacy that cannot support the jobs growth in the west consistent with Government policy. Sydney needs to manage demand for existing road assets to maximise economically productive use and deliver sustainable transport as a real alternative to car travel. International cities such as Los Angeles are moving away from their dominant car-based culture to invest in public transport in order to build the sustainability and attractiveness of their city for residents, businesses and visitors alike.

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This EIS fails to model traffic beyond two intersections after this project. This deliberately obscures the threat to King Street and roads in Alexandria. I object to exposing King Street and Edgeware Rd to the threat of becoming clearways.

Residents affected by compulsory acquisitions are 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.

I strongly object to the unacceptable impact the project's construction will have on local residents, businesses and schools. Across the route of this project, people face years of having their streets turned into car parks for construction workers; 24/7 construction noise, vibration, and heavy truck movements; exposure to asbestos, construction dust, and toxic materials; and more. Mitigation is recommended in this EIS, but no information is provided 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.

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.

This project deliberately exposes communities in certain areas to increased pollution. Such an approach values the health and safety of people in certain areas of Sydney over others, and is both unjust and unacceptable. In addition, despite there being no safe level of exposure to fine particulate matter, the proponents want to build this project knowing it will increase these pollutants around much of the project route.

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 air quality study shows that dangerous fine particle pollution already exceeds acceptable levels in some areas in the project areas, and will worsen if this project is built. I also object to the way this and other information about air quality and pollution impacts has been provided in this EIS; it is far too dense and opaque for ordinary residents to

understand. It should go without saying that where public health is concerned, information about negative impacts should be provided in a way that affected residents can understand.

The EIS demonstrates that air quality, even at existing levels, is close to the allowable limits, and will only get worse with a major interchange, road upgrades and ventilation stacks implemented at the St Peters Interchange and surrounds. If new air quality standards as proposed by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) in 2012 are implemented, the New M5 would well exceed allowable air pollution levels.

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). I find it completely unacceptable that AECOM has been paid $13 million of taxpayer money to complete this EIS despite this, and despite it being 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. I also object to AECOM doing the EIS when it has contracts in the rest of the project including Stage 2. This conflict of interest needs to be explained and addressed.

Even with these flaws, tolls on these roads are to be in effect for decades. Many Sydneysiders will not see these roads untolled in their lifetimes. Nor will western Sydney or rural and regional NSW see any investment in their communities to create employment opportunities that would circumvent the need to commute long distances by car to jobs in Sydney's CBD, eastern suburbs and inner city.

The New M5 would cause costly traffic chaos throughout the inner west and south-west Sydney. 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. This EIS also 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, Kingsgrove and Brighton-Le-Sands. I object to building a road that the proponent admits will produce such volumes of traffic that such roads will be beyond capacity. Where traffic is already bad, plans should be to reduce it, not make it worse.

Meanwhile, even this EIS 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. This is because even the proponents know that commuters will be unwilling to pay $6 each way to use either of these toll roads, which is in line with figures in WestConnex's Updated Strategic Business Case that show for almost all of potential users, the value of time saved is less than the cost of using WestConnex.

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.

The delivery of the New M5 and in particular the St Peters Interchange, will have a significant impact on residents and businesses. The increased traffic resulting from this project will impact on urban amenity and will limit the ability for public transport services to operate efficiently due to increased local road congestion.

The EIS assumes that by 2031 the full WestConnex project will be complete. This includes the M4-M5 Link (Stage 3), which will have additional significant impacts on residents and businesses. Nowhere in the EIS are these impacts considered, nor information given to the public to fully consider or understand the implications of the whole WestConnex program.

The analysis of alternatives 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.

The evidence provided by the EIS in support of the project is incomplete and unbalanced, selectively including and excluding impacts from subsequent planned stages of the WestConnex project. The analysis of strategic alternatives in the EIS is cursory and fails to demonstrate the New M5 extension is the best option to meet the needs of a growing Sydney population. The EIS also does not take into consideration the travel patterns of residents and businesses in western or south-western Sydney that the New M5 is intended to serve, nor the wider impacts on inner-Sydney communities affected by the WestConnex program.

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.

The social impact study is little more than a 'cut and paste' job and is insulting to communities where hundreds of tenants and owners have lost homes and others will live in decimated communities. The report exaggerates the potential positive aspects of the project, while the negative aspects are either downplayed, insufficiently detailed or omitted altogether. Where negative economic or social impacts are identified in the report, they are inadequately addressed in terms of management or mitigation actions to be taken.

The statement that the New M5 project is an integrated transport project is false and misleading. It is a motorway that does not provide for improved public transport connections and has not fully considered the active transport component in line with government policy. The City's view is that the government could have delivered a better outcome by focusing on ways to "improve access" that is modally agnostic and more consistent with government's land use policies.

Endangered flora and fauna would be destroyed for this project, including the Green and Golden Bell Frog colony at Arncliffe and the critically endangered Cooks River Castlereagh Ironbark Forest at Kingsgrove/Beverly Hills. Saving these species in particular was a condition of the previous M5 motorway; destroying them now makes a mockery of these legal protections. I also object to the unprofessional analysis of the threat posed by the New M5 to these species and to biodiversity in general, as this section of the EIS attempts to downplay the significance of the flora and fauna threatened by this project and the impact of this project on biodiversity overall.

I am also concerned that the EIS suggests that the breeding ponds of the Green and Golden Bell Frog have not been kept healthy in recent years, especially since the RMS was responsible for building these ponds as a condition of the old M5.

Many public parks would be temporarily or permanently destroyed for this project, including parts of Sydney Park and the M5 Linear Park, along with thousands of mature trees along the route. Even if these trees would be reinstated, it will take decades to achieve the level of canopy that exists.

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.

The increase in road capacity on Euston Road from four lanes to between six and eight, and Campbell Road from two lanes to six will have noise impacts on people living in the area and using Sydney Park.

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 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 proponents have failed to consult with local businesses across the route, many of which would be destroyed by the traffic and/or construction impacts of this project.

The proponent has failed to adequately assess and responsibly handle asbestos, including the huge amounts it has removed ahead of this EIS from the Alexandria Landfill and transported through inner Sydney out to the western suburbs. More toxic asbestos is expected to be dug up and transported from various sites along the New M5 for this project, and the numerous breaches of basic health and safety procedures observed by residents in St Peters, Granville and Erskine Park in this regard have not been properly assessed in this EIS.

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,

Stacey Baines

[redacted]

[redacted] 12414

From: Lorna Pringle [redacted]
Sent: Friday, 29 January 2016 5:13 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

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).

Global experience and research has shown conclusively that these kinds of toll road mega-projects are hugely expensive and provide only short-term relief from traffic congestion. I have yet to hear of an independent transport expert who backs the project. WestConnex will increase air pollution and traffic, 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.

The strategic justification for the New M5 is weak and inconsistent with the NSW Government's strategic planning and policy framework, despite its inclusion in the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy and the Long Term Transport Master Plan. The project as proposed in this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) does not deliver the broader objectives of WestConnex as stated in the Updated Strategic Business Case (November 2015).

There has been no compelling case made for why WestConnex should be built, and the project should not receive approval and not proceed. This EIS and the Updated Strategic Business Case for WestConnex are clear that the benefits accruing from Stage 2 do not outweigh the costs. Benefits are shown to come once the whole WestConnex project is built according to the Updated Strategic Business Case, and that no benefits exist until all three Stages are delivered (WestConnex Full Scheme: Economic Appraisal, KPMG, 19 November 2015). I am aware that even this has now expanded to include other tollways such as the Sydney Gateway, making it even more likely that this project will provide disbenefits to society if it proceeds as proposed in this EIS, i.e. as a standalone project. This is particularly concerning given there is a significant risk that Stage 3 will not be built.

Fundamentally flawed projects like WestConnex do not account for changing work practices supported by technologies such as teleworking, or flexible office spaces, or that car journeys are dropping as workers elect to work closer to home or use public transport, bicycles or car sharing. It also does not account for trends that will substantially change how people choose to travel in future and reduce the number of cars on the road, such as peak car or driverless cars.

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 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 EIS lacks rigour and sound analysis, despite the huge volume of documentation. This lack of rigour and analysis is consistent across all chapters and appendices. The project objectives are biased towards a motorway solution, so that any proposed alternative falls short of the proposed solution. Similarly, the work undertaken in the EIS is highly compliance driven, and fails to take into account opportunities or strategic impacts, and the assessment of cumulative impacts is almost negligent.

WestConnex is presented as a 'transformational' infrastructure project, however, the EIS is not clear on what transformation it will achieve. There is no demonstration that WestConnex delivers transformation in terms of social or economic improvement, or better land use outcomes. To the contrary, WestConnex will deliver a piece of infrastructure that increases traffic on local roads, does not enable value capture or urban renewal, and is not consistent with the government's land use priorities or the proposal in the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy.

Traffic on the existing M5 East exceeded capacity "within months" of opening (New M5 Project Overview, November 2015), including recent road widening. This lack of capacity is, in part, the rationale for the construction of the New M5. Managing demand on the M5 East and providing high quality public transport alternatives for those who can change mode would be a more effective long term solution that simply a 'predict and provide' approach, yet this alternative - along with many others - has not been assessed.

A larger question raised by the proposed New M5 project is what happens if capacity on this motorway is reached? The existing M5 East has proven that a new motorway can easily reach or exceed capacity within a 15 year timeframe. If that outcome is realised for the New M5, Sydney will be left with a transport legacy that cannot support the jobs growth in the west consistent with Government policy. Sydney needs to manage demand for existing road assets to maximise economically productive use and deliver sustainable transport as a real alternative to car travel. International cities such as Los Angeles are moving away from their dominant car-based culture to invest in public transport in order to build the sustainability and attractiveness of their city for residents, businesses and visitors alike.

The New M5 project has only been assessed to 2031, which does not take into account the 45 year concession period for the asset as stated in the WestConnex Updated Strategic Business Case. The assessment does not account for future events that may radically change travel demands or behaviours.

Heritage buildings would be destroyed for this project, while others would be isolated in a flood of traffic. e.g. terraces next to construction compounds and motorway in Campbell Street.

Residents in south west Sydney will suffer a huge loss of amenity as a result of the existing M5 being stripped of its green space and vegetation, particularly when residents fought so hard to get these green spaces established and thriving. I also strongly object to their concrete noise walls being replaced with transparent barriers. These will be right next to hundreds of homes, who will now be forced to look at (as well as listen to and breathe the fumes of) lanes of motorway traffic just over their fences. It is utterly unacceptable to prioritise the views of passing motorists over the privacy and amenity of people who live in an area.

This EIS fails to model traffic beyond two intersections after this project. This deliberately obscures the threat to King Street and roads in Alexandria. I object to exposing King Street and Edgeware Rd to the threat of becoming clearways.

Residents affected by compulsory acquisitions are 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 analysis of alternatives 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.

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Many public parks would be temporarily or permanently destroyed for this project, including parts of Sydney Park and the M5 Linear Park, along with thousands of mature trees along the route. Even if these trees would be reinstated, it will take decades to achieve the level of canopy that exists.

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.

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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 proponents have failed to consult with local businesses across the route, many of which would be destroyed by the traffic and/or construction impacts of this project.

The proponent has failed to adequately assess and responsibly handle asbestos, including the huge amounts it has removed ahead of this EIS from the Alexandria Landfill and transported through inner Sydney out to the western suburbs. More toxic asbestos is expected to be dug up and transported from various sites along the New M5 for this project, and the numerous breaches of basic health and safety procedures observed by residents in St Peters, Granville and Erskine Park in this regard have not been properly assessed in this EIS.

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,

Lorna Pringle

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Clare Munro [redacted]
Sent: Friday, 29 January 2016 5:10 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

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).

Global experience and research has shown conclusively that these kinds of toll road mega-projects are hugely expensive and provide only short-term relief from traffic congestion. I have yet to hear of an independent transport expert who backs the project. WestConnex will increase air pollution and traffic, 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.

The strategic justification for the New M5 is weak and inconsistent with the NSW Government's strategic planning and policy framework, despite its inclusion in the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy and the Long Term Transport Master Plan. The project as proposed in this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) does not deliver the broader objectives of WestConnex as stated in the Updated Strategic Business Case (November 2015).

There has been no compelling case made for why WestConnex should be built, and the project should not receive approval and not proceed. This EIS and the Updated Strategic Business Case for WestConnex are clear that the benefits accruing from Stage 2 do not outweigh the costs. Benefits are shown to come once the whole WestConnex project is built according to the Updated Strategic Business Case, and that no benefits exist until all three Stages are delivered (WestConnex Full Scheme: Economic Appraisal, KPMG, 19 November 2015). I am aware that even this has now expanded to include other tollways such as the Sydney Gateway, making it even more likely that this project will provide disbenefits to society if it proceeds as proposed in this EIS, i.e. as a standalone project. This is particularly concerning given there is a significant risk that Stage 3 will not be built.

Fundamentally flawed projects like WestConnex do not account for changing work practices supported by technologies such as teleworking, or flexible office spaces, or that car journeys are dropping as workers elect to work closer to home or use public transport, bicycles or car sharing. It also does not account for trends that will substantially change how people choose to travel in future and reduce the number of cars on the road, such as peak car or driverless cars.

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 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 EIS lacks rigour and sound analysis, despite the huge volume of documentation. This lack of rigour and analysis is consistent across all chapters and appendices. The project objectives are biased towards a motorway solution, so that any proposed alternative falls short of the proposed solution. Similarly, the work undertaken in the EIS is highly compliance driven, and fails to take into account opportunities or strategic impacts, and the assessment of cumulative impacts is almost negligent.

WestConnex is presented as a 'transformational' infrastructure project, however, the EIS is not clear on what transformation it will achieve. There is no demonstration that WestConnex delivers transformation in terms of social or economic improvement, or better land use outcomes. To the contrary, WestConnex will deliver a piece of infrastructure that increases traffic on local roads, does not enable value capture or urban renewal, and is not consistent with the government's land use priorities or the proposal in the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy.

Traffic on the existing M5 East exceeded capacity "within months" of opening (New M5 Project Overview, November 2015), including recent road widening. This lack of capacity is, in part, the rationale for the construction of the New M5. Managing demand on the M5 East and providing high quality public transport alternatives for those who can change mode would be a more effective long term solution that simply a 'predict and provide' approach, yet this alternative - along with many others - has not been assessed.

A larger question raised by the proposed New M5 project is what happens if capacity on this motorway is reached? The existing M5 East has proven that a new motorway can easily reach or exceed capacity within a 15 year timeframe. If that outcome is realised for the New M5, Sydney will be left with a transport legacy that cannot support the jobs growth in the west consistent with Government policy. Sydney needs to manage demand for existing road assets to maximise economically productive use and deliver sustainable transport as a real alternative to car travel. International cities such as Los Angeles are moving away from their dominant car-based culture to invest in public transport in order to build the sustainability and attractiveness of their city for residents, businesses and visitors alike.

The New M5 project has only been assessed to 2031, which does not take into account the 45 year concession period for the asset as stated in the WestConnex Updated Strategic Business Case. The assessment does not account for future events that may radically change travel demands or behaviours.

Heritage buildings would be destroyed for this project, while others would be isolated in a flood of traffic. e.g. terraces next to construction compounds and motorway in Campbell Street.

Residents in south west Sydney will suffer a huge loss of amenity as a result of the existing M5 being stripped of its green space and vegetation, particularly when residents fought so hard to get these green spaces established and thriving. I also strongly object to their concrete noise walls being replaced with transparent barriers. These will be right next to hundreds of homes, who will now be forced to look at (as well as listen to and breathe the fumes of) lanes of motorway traffic just over their fences. It is utterly unacceptable to prioritise the views of passing motorists over the privacy and amenity of people who live in an area.

This EIS fails to model traffic beyond two intersections after this project. This deliberately obscures the threat to King Street and roads in Alexandria. I object to exposing King Street and Edgeware Rd to the threat of becoming clearways.

Residents affected by compulsory acquisitions are 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.

I strongly object to the unacceptable impact the project's construction will have on local residents, businesses and schools. Across the route of this project, people face years of having their streets turned into car parks for construction workers; 24/7 construction noise, vibration, and heavy truck movements; exposure to asbestos, construction dust, and toxic materials; and more. Mitigation is recommended in this EIS, but no information is provided 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.

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.

This project deliberately exposes communities in certain areas to increased pollution. Such an approach values the health and safety of people in certain areas of Sydney over others, and is both unjust and unacceptable. In addition, despite there being no safe level of exposure to fine particulate matter, the proponents want to build this project knowing it will increase these pollutants around much of the project route.

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 air quality study shows that dangerous fine particle pollution already exceeds acceptable levels in some areas in the project areas, and will worsen if this project is built. I also object to the way this and other information about air quality and pollution impacts has been provided in this EIS; it is far too dense and opaque for ordinary residents to

understand. It should go without saying that where public health is concerned, information about negative impacts should be provided in a way that affected residents can understand.

The EIS demonstrates that air quality, even at existing levels, is close to the allowable limits, and will only get worse with a major interchange, road upgrades and ventilation stacks implemented at the St Peters Interchange and surrounds. If new air quality standards as proposed by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) in 2012 are implemented, the New M5 would well exceed allowable air pollution levels.

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). I find it completely unacceptable that AECOM has been paid $13 million of taxpayer money to complete this EIS despite this, and despite it being 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. I also object to AECOM doing the EIS when it has contracts in the rest of the project including Stage 2. This conflict of interest needs to be explained and addressed.

Even with these flaws, tolls on these roads are to be in effect for decades. Many Sydneysiders will not see these roads untolled in their lifetimes. Nor will western Sydney or rural and regional NSW see any investment in their communities to create employment opportunities that would circumvent the need to commute long distances by car to jobs in Sydney's CBD, eastern suburbs and inner city.

The New M5 would cause costly traffic chaos throughout the inner west and south-west Sydney. 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. This EIS also 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, Kingsgrove and Brighton-Le-Sands. I object to building a road that the proponent admits will produce such volumes of traffic that such roads will be beyond capacity. Where traffic is already bad, plans should be to reduce it, not make it worse.

Meanwhile, even this EIS 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. This is because even the proponents know that commuters will be unwilling to pay $6 each way to use either of these toll roads, which is in line with figures in WestConnex's Updated Strategic Business Case that show for almost all of potential users, the value of time saved is less than the cost of using WestConnex.

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.

The delivery of the New M5 and in particular the St Peters Interchange, will have a significant impact on residents and businesses. The increased traffic resulting from this project will impact on urban amenity and will limit the ability for public transport services to operate efficiently due to increased local road congestion.

The EIS assumes that by 2031 the full WestConnex project will be complete. This includes the M4-M5 Link (Stage 3), which will have additional significant impacts on residents and businesses. Nowhere in the EIS are these impacts considered, nor information given to the public to fully consider or understand the implications of the whole WestConnex program.

The analysis of alternatives 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.

The evidence provided by the EIS in support of the project is incomplete and unbalanced, selectively including and excluding impacts from subsequent planned stages of the WestConnex project. The analysis of strategic alternatives in the EIS is cursory and fails to demonstrate the New M5 extension is the best option to meet the needs of a growing Sydney population. The EIS also does not take into consideration the travel patterns of residents and businesses in western or south-western Sydney that the New M5 is intended to serve, nor the wider impacts on inner-Sydney communities affected by the WestConnex program.

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.

The social impact study is little more than a 'cut and paste' job and is insulting to communities where hundreds of tenants and owners have lost homes and others will live in decimated communities. The report exaggerates the potential positive aspects of the project, while the negative aspects are either downplayed, insufficiently detailed or omitted altogether. Where negative economic or social impacts are identified in the report, they are inadequately addressed in terms of management or mitigation actions to be taken.

The statement that the New M5 project is an integrated transport project is false and misleading. It is a motorway that does not provide for improved public transport connections and has not fully considered the active transport component in line with government policy. The City's view is that the government could have delivered a better outcome by focusing on ways to "improve access" that is modally agnostic and more consistent with government's land use policies.

Endangered flora and fauna would be destroyed for this project, including the Green and Golden Bell Frog colony at Arncliffe and the critically endangered Cooks River Castlereagh Ironbark Forest at Kingsgrove/Beverly Hills. Saving these species in particular was a condition of the previous M5 motorway; destroying them now makes a mockery of these legal protections. I also object to the unprofessional analysis of the threat posed by the New M5 to these species and to biodiversity in general, as this section of the EIS attempts to downplay the significance of the flora and fauna threatened by this project and the impact of this project on biodiversity overall.

I am also concerned that the EIS suggests that the breeding ponds of the Green and Golden Bell Frog have not been kept healthy in recent years, especially since the RMS was responsible for building these ponds as a condition of the old M5.

Many public parks would be temporarily or permanently destroyed for this project, including parts of Sydney Park and the M5 Linear Park, along with thousands of mature trees along the route. Even if these trees would be reinstated, it will take decades to achieve the level of canopy that exists.

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.

The increase in road capacity on Euston Road from four lanes to between six and eight, and Campbell Road from two lanes to six will have noise impacts on people living in the area and using Sydney Park.

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 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 proponents have failed to consult with local businesses across the route, many of which would be destroyed by the traffic and/or construction impacts of this project.

The proponent has failed to adequately assess and responsibly handle asbestos, including the huge amounts it has removed ahead of this EIS from the Alexandria Landfill and transported through inner Sydney out to the western suburbs. More toxic asbestos is expected to be dug up and transported from various sites along the New M5 for this project, and the numerous breaches of basic health and safety procedures observed by residents in St Peters, Granville and Erskine Park in this regard have not been properly assessed in this EIS.

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,

Clare Munro

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: melissa parker [redacted]
Sent: Friday, 29 January 2016 5:09 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

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).

Global experience and research has shown conclusively that these kinds of toll road mega-projects are hugely expensive and provide only short-term relief from traffic congestion. I have yet to hear of an independent transport expert who backs the project. WestConnex will increase air pollution and traffic, 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.

The strategic justification for the New M5 is weak and inconsistent with the NSW Government's strategic planning and policy framework, despite its inclusion in the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy and the Long Term Transport Master Plan. The project as proposed in this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) does not deliver the broader objectives of WestConnex as stated in the Updated Strategic Business Case (November 2015).

There has been no compelling case made for why WestConnex should be built, and the project should not receive approval and not proceed. This EIS and the Updated Strategic Business Case for WestConnex are clear that the benefits accruing from Stage 2 do not outweigh the costs. Benefits are shown to come once the whole WestConnex project is built according to the Updated Strategic Business Case, and that no benefits exist until all three Stages are delivered (WestConnex Full Scheme: Economic Appraisal, KPMG, 19 November 2015). I am aware that even this has now expanded to include other tollways such as the Sydney Gateway, making it even more likely that this project will provide disbenefits to society if it proceeds as proposed in this EIS, i.e. as a standalone project. This is particularly concerning given there is a significant risk that Stage 3 will not be built.

Fundamentally flawed projects like WestConnex do not account for changing work practices supported by technologies such as teleworking, or flexible office spaces, or that car journeys are dropping as workers elect to work closer to home or use public transport, bicycles or car sharing. It also does not account for trends that will substantially change how people choose to travel in future and reduce the number of cars on the road, such as peak car or driverless cars.

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 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 EIS lacks rigour and sound analysis, despite the huge volume of documentation. This lack of rigour and analysis is consistent across all chapters and appendices. The project objectives are biased towards a motorway solution, so that any proposed alternative falls short of the proposed solution. Similarly, the work undertaken in the EIS is highly compliance driven, and fails to take into account opportunities or strategic impacts, and the assessment of cumulative impacts is almost negligent.

WestConnex is presented as a 'transformational' infrastructure project, however, the EIS is not clear on what transformation it will achieve. There is no demonstration that WestConnex delivers transformation in terms of social or economic improvement, or better land use outcomes. To the contrary, WestConnex will deliver a piece of infrastructure that increases traffic on local roads, does not enable value capture or urban renewal, and is not consistent with the government's land use priorities or the proposal in the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy.

Traffic on the existing M5 East exceeded capacity "within months" of opening (New M5 Project Overview, November 2015), including recent road widening. This lack of capacity is, in part, the rationale for the construction of the New M5. Managing demand on the M5 East and providing high quality public transport alternatives for those who can change mode would be a more effective long term solution that simply a 'predict and provide' approach, yet this alternative - along with many others - has not been assessed.

A larger question raised by the proposed New M5 project is what happens if capacity on this motorway is reached? The existing M5 East has proven that a new motorway can easily reach or exceed capacity within a 15 year timeframe. If that outcome is realised for the New M5, Sydney will be left with a transport legacy that cannot support the jobs growth in the west consistent with Government policy. Sydney needs to manage demand for existing road assets to maximise economically productive use and deliver sustainable transport as a real alternative to car travel. International cities such as Los Angeles are moving away from their dominant car-based culture to invest in public transport in order to build the sustainability and attractiveness of their city for residents, businesses and visitors alike.

The New M5 project has only been assessed to 2031, which does not take into account the 45 year concession period for the asset as stated in the WestConnex Updated Strategic Business Case. The assessment does not account for future events that may radically change travel demands or behaviours.

Heritage buildings would be destroyed for this project, while others would be isolated in a flood of traffic. e.g. terraces next to construction compounds and motorway in Campbell Street.

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The EIS assumes that by 2031 the full WestConnex project will be complete. This includes the M4-M5 Link (Stage 3), which will have additional significant impacts on residents and businesses. Nowhere in the EIS are these impacts considered, nor information given to the public to fully consider or understand the implications of the whole WestConnex program.

The analysis of alternatives 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.

The evidence provided by the EIS in support of the project is incomplete and unbalanced, selectively including and excluding impacts from subsequent planned stages of the WestConnex project. The analysis of strategic alternatives in the EIS is cursory and fails to demonstrate the New M5 extension is the best option to meet the needs of a growing Sydney population. The EIS also does not take into consideration the travel patterns of residents and businesses in western or south-western Sydney that the New M5 is intended to serve, nor the wider impacts on inner-Sydney communities affected by the WestConnex program.

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.

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The statement that the New M5 project is an integrated transport project is false and misleading. It is a motorway that does not provide for improved public transport connections and has not fully considered the active transport component in line with government policy. The City's view is that the government could have delivered a better outcome by focusing on ways to "improve access" that is modally agnostic and more consistent with government's land use policies.

Endangered flora and fauna would be destroyed for this project, including the Green and Golden Bell Frog colony at Arncliffe and the critically endangered Cooks River Castlereagh Ironbark Forest at Kingsgrove/Beverly Hills. Saving these species in particular was a condition of the previous M5 motorway; destroying them now makes a mockery of these legal protections. I also object to the unprofessional analysis of the threat posed by the New M5 to these species and to biodiversity in general, as this section of the EIS attempts to downplay the significance of the flora and fauna threatened by this project and the impact of this project on biodiversity overall.

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Many public parks would be temporarily or permanently destroyed for this project, including parts of Sydney Park and the M5 Linear Park, along with thousands of mature trees along the route. Even if these trees would be reinstated, it will take decades to achieve the level of canopy that exists.

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.

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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 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 proponents have failed to consult with local businesses across the route, many of which would be destroyed by the traffic and/or construction impacts of this project.

The proponent has failed to adequately assess and responsibly handle asbestos, including the huge amounts it has removed ahead of this EIS from the Alexandria Landfill and transported through inner Sydney out to the western suburbs. More toxic asbestos is expected to be dug up and transported from various sites along the New M5 for this project, and the numerous breaches of basic health and safety procedures observed by residents in St Peters, Granville and Erskine Park in this regard have not been properly assessed in this EIS.

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,

melissa parker

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted] 12417

From: Vanamali Hermans [redacted]
Sent: Friday, 29 January 2016 5:03 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

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).

Global experience and research has shown conclusively that these kinds of toll road mega-projects are hugely expensive and provide only short-term relief from traffic congestion. I have yet to hear of an independent transport expert who backs the project. WestConnex will increase air pollution and traffic, 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.

The strategic justification for the New M5 is weak and inconsistent with the NSW Government's strategic planning and policy framework, despite its inclusion in the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy and the Long Term Transport Master Plan. The project as proposed in this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) does not deliver the broader objectives of WestConnex as stated in the Updated Strategic Business Case (November 2015).

There has been no compelling case made for why WestConnex should be built, and the project should not receive approval and not proceed. This EIS and the Updated Strategic Business Case for WestConnex are clear that the benefits accruing from Stage 2 do not outweigh the costs. Benefits are shown to come once the whole WestConnex project is built according to the Updated Strategic Business Case, and that no benefits exist until all three Stages are delivered (WestConnex Full Scheme: Economic Appraisal, KPMG, 19 November 2015). I am aware that even this has now expanded to include other tollways such as the Sydney Gateway, making it even more likely that this project will provide disbenefits to society if it proceeds as proposed in this EIS, i.e. as a standalone project. This is particularly concerning given there is a significant risk that Stage 3 will not be built.

Fundamentally flawed projects like WestConnex do not account for changing work practices supported by technologies such as teleworking, or flexible office spaces, or that car journeys are dropping as workers elect to work closer to home or use public transport, bicycles or car sharing. It also does not account for trends that will substantially change how people choose to travel in future and reduce the number of cars on the road, such as peak car or driverless cars.

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 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 EIS lacks rigour and sound analysis, despite the huge volume of documentation. This lack of rigour and analysis is consistent across all chapters and appendices. The project objectives are biased towards a motorway solution, so that any proposed alternative falls short of the proposed solution. Similarly, the work undertaken in the EIS is highly compliance driven, and fails to take into account opportunities or strategic impacts, and the assessment of cumulative impacts is almost negligent.

WestConnex is presented as a 'transformational' infrastructure project, however, the EIS is not clear on what transformation it will achieve. There is no demonstration that WestConnex delivers transformation in terms of social or economic improvement, or better land use outcomes. To the contrary, WestConnex will deliver a piece of infrastructure that increases traffic on local roads, does not enable value capture or urban renewal, and is not consistent with the government's land use priorities or the proposal in the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy.

Traffic on the existing M5 East exceeded capacity "within months" of opening (New M5 Project Overview, November 2015), including recent road widening. This lack of capacity is, in part, the rationale for the construction of the New M5. Managing demand on the M5 East and providing high quality public transport alternatives for those who can change mode would be a more effective long term solution that simply a 'predict and provide' approach, yet this alternative - along with many others - has not been assessed.

A larger question raised by the proposed New M5 project is what happens if capacity on this motorway is reached? The existing M5 East has proven that a new motorway can easily reach or exceed capacity within a 15 year timeframe. If that outcome is realised for the New M5, Sydney will be left with a transport legacy that cannot support the jobs growth in the west consistent with Government policy. Sydney needs to manage demand for existing road assets to maximise economically productive use and deliver sustainable transport as a real alternative to car travel. International cities such as Los Angeles are moving away from their dominant car-based culture to invest in public transport in order to build the sustainability and attractiveness of their city for residents, businesses and visitors alike.

The New M5 project has only been assessed to 2031, which does not take into account the 45 year concession period for the asset as stated in the WestConnex Updated Strategic Business Case. The assessment does not account for future events that may radically change travel demands or behaviours.

Heritage buildings would be destroyed for this project, while others would be isolated in a flood of traffic. e.g. terraces next to construction compounds and motorway in Campbell Street.

Residents in south west Sydney will suffer a huge loss of amenity as a result of the existing M5 being stripped of its green space and vegetation, particularly when residents fought so hard to get these green spaces established and thriving. I also strongly object to their concrete noise walls being replaced with transparent barriers. These will be right next to hundreds of homes, who will now be forced to look at (as well as listen to and breathe the fumes of) lanes of motorway traffic just over their fences. It is utterly unacceptable to prioritise the views of passing motorists over the privacy and amenity of people who live in an area.

This EIS fails to model traffic beyond two intersections after this project. This deliberately obscures the threat to King Street and roads in Alexandria. I object to exposing King Street and Edgeware Rd to the threat of becoming clearways.

Residents affected by compulsory acquisitions are 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.

I strongly object to the unacceptable impact the project's construction will have on local residents, businesses and schools. Across the route of this project, people face years of having their streets turned into car parks for construction workers; 24/7 construction noise, vibration, and heavy truck movements; exposure to asbestos, construction dust, and toxic materials; and more. Mitigation is recommended in this EIS, but no information is provided 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.

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.

This project deliberately exposes communities in certain areas to increased pollution. Such an approach values the health and safety of people in certain areas of Sydney over others, and is both unjust and unacceptable. In addition, despite there being no safe level of exposure to fine particulate matter, the proponents want to build this project knowing it will increase these pollutants around much of the project route.

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 air quality study shows that dangerous fine particle pollution already exceeds acceptable levels in some areas in the project areas, and will worsen if this project is built. I also object to the way this and other information about air quality and pollution impacts has been provided in this EIS; it is far too dense and opaque for ordinary residents to

understand. It should go without saying that where public health is concerned, information about negative impacts should be provided in a way that affected residents can understand.

The EIS demonstrates that air quality, even at existing levels, is close to the allowable limits, and will only get worse with a major interchange, road upgrades and ventilation stacks implemented at the St Peters Interchange and surrounds. If new air quality standards as proposed by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) in 2012 are implemented, the New M5 would well exceed allowable air pollution levels.

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). I find it completely unacceptable that AECOM has been paid $13 million of taxpayer money to complete this EIS despite this, and despite it being 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. I also object to AECOM doing the EIS when it has contracts in the rest of the project including Stage 2. This conflict of interest needs to be explained and addressed.

Even with these flaws, tolls on these roads are to be in effect for decades. Many Sydneysiders will not see these roads untolled in their lifetimes. Nor will western Sydney or rural and regional NSW see any investment in their communities to create employment opportunities that would circumvent the need to commute long distances by car to jobs in Sydney's CBD, eastern suburbs and inner city.

The New M5 would cause costly traffic chaos throughout the inner west and south-west Sydney. 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. This EIS also 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, Kingsgrove and Brighton-Le-Sands. I object to building a road that the proponent admits will produce such volumes of traffic that such roads will be beyond capacity. Where traffic is already bad, plans should be to reduce it, not make it worse.

Meanwhile, even this EIS 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. This is because even the proponents know that commuters will be unwilling to pay $6 each way to use either of these toll roads, which is in line with figures in WestConnex's Updated Strategic Business Case that show for almost all of potential users, the value of time saved is less than the cost of using WestConnex.

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.

The delivery of the New M5 and in particular the St Peters Interchange, will have a significant impact on residents and businesses. The increased traffic resulting from this project will impact on urban amenity and will limit the ability for public transport services to operate efficiently due to increased local road congestion.

The EIS assumes that by 2031 the full WestConnex project will be complete. This includes the M4-M5 Link (Stage 3), which will have additional significant impacts on residents and businesses. Nowhere in the EIS are these impacts considered, nor information given to the public to fully consider or understand the implications of the whole WestConnex program.

The analysis of alternatives 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.

The evidence provided by the EIS in support of the project is incomplete and unbalanced, selectively including and excluding impacts from subsequent planned stages of the WestConnex project. The analysis of strategic alternatives in the EIS is cursory and fails to demonstrate the New M5 extension is the best option to meet the needs of a growing Sydney population. The EIS also does not take into consideration the travel patterns of residents and businesses in western or south-western Sydney that the New M5 is intended to serve, nor the wider impacts on inner-Sydney communities affected by the WestConnex program.

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.

The social impact study is little more than a 'cut and paste' job and is insulting to communities where hundreds of tenants and owners have lost homes and others will live in decimated communities. The report exaggerates the potential positive aspects of the project, while the negative aspects are either downplayed, insufficiently detailed or omitted altogether. Where negative economic or social impacts are identified in the report, they are inadequately addressed in terms of management or mitigation actions to be taken.

The statement that the New M5 project is an integrated transport project is false and misleading. It is a motorway that does not provide for improved public transport connections and has not fully considered the active transport component in line with government policy. The City's view is that the government could have delivered a better outcome by focusing on ways to "improve access" that is modally agnostic and more consistent with government's land use policies.

Endangered flora and fauna would be destroyed for this project, including the Green and Golden Bell Frog colony at Arncliffe and the critically endangered Cooks River Castlereagh Ironbark Forest at Kingsgrove/Beverly Hills. Saving these species in particular was a condition of the previous M5 motorway; destroying them now makes a mockery of these legal protections. I also object to the unprofessional analysis of the threat posed by the New M5 to these species and to biodiversity in general, as this section of the EIS attempts to downplay the significance of the flora and fauna threatened by this project and the impact of this project on biodiversity overall.

I am also concerned that the EIS suggests that the breeding ponds of the Green and Golden Bell Frog have not been kept healthy in recent years, especially since the RMS was responsible for building these ponds as a condition of the old M5.

Many public parks would be temporarily or permanently destroyed for this project, including parts of Sydney Park and the M5 Linear Park, along with thousands of mature trees along the route. Even if these trees would be reinstated, it will take decades to achieve the level of canopy that exists.

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.

The increase in road capacity on Euston Road from four lanes to between six and eight, and Campbell Road from two lanes to six will have noise impacts on people living in the area and using Sydney Park.

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 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 proponents have failed to consult with local businesses across the route, many of which would be destroyed by the traffic and/or construction impacts of this project.

The proponent has failed to adequately assess and responsibly handle asbestos, including the huge amounts it has removed ahead of this EIS from the Alexandria Landfill and transported through inner Sydney out to the western suburbs. More toxic asbestos is expected to be dug up and transported from various sites along the New M5 for this project, and the numerous breaches of basic health and safety procedures observed by residents in St Peters, Granville and Erskine Park in this regard have not been properly assessed in this EIS.

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,

Vanamali Hermans

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Jennifer Kent [redacted]
Sent: Friday, 29 January 2016 5:02 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

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).

Global experience and research has shown conclusively that these kinds of toll road mega-projects are hugely expensive and provide only short-term relief from traffic congestion. I have yet to hear of an independent transport expert who backs the project. WestConnex will increase air pollution and traffic, 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.

The strategic justification for the New M5 is weak and inconsistent with the NSW Government's strategic planning and policy framework, despite its inclusion in the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy and the Long Term Transport Master Plan. The project as proposed in this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) does not deliver the broader objectives of WestConnex as stated in the Updated Strategic Business Case (November 2015).

There has been no compelling case made for why WestConnex should be built, and the project should not receive approval and not proceed. This EIS and the Updated Strategic Business Case for WestConnex are clear that the benefits accruing from Stage 2 do not outweigh the costs. Benefits are shown to come once the whole WestConnex project is built according to the Updated Strategic Business Case, and that no benefits exist until all three Stages are delivered (WestConnex Full Scheme: Economic Appraisal, KPMG, 19 November 2015). I am aware that even this has now expanded to include other tollways such as the Sydney Gateway, making it even more likely that this project will provide disbenefits to society if it proceeds as proposed in this EIS, i.e. as a standalone project. This is particularly concerning given there is a significant risk that Stage 3 will not be built.

Fundamentally flawed projects like WestConnex do not account for changing work practices supported by technologies such as teleworking, or flexible office spaces, or that car journeys are dropping as workers elect to work closer to home or use public transport, bicycles or car sharing. It also does not account for trends that will substantially change how people choose to travel in future and reduce the number of cars on the road, such as peak car or driverless cars.

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 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 EIS lacks rigour and sound analysis, despite the huge volume of documentation. This lack of rigour and analysis is consistent across all chapters and appendices. The project objectives are biased towards a motorway solution, so that any proposed alternative falls short of the proposed solution. Similarly, the work undertaken in the EIS is highly compliance driven, and fails to take into account opportunities or strategic impacts, and the assessment of cumulative impacts is almost negligent.

WestConnex is presented as a 'transformational' infrastructure project, however, the EIS is not clear on what transformation it will achieve. There is no demonstration that WestConnex delivers transformation in terms of social or economic improvement, or better land use outcomes. To the contrary, WestConnex will deliver a piece of infrastructure that increases traffic on local roads, does not enable value capture or urban renewal, and is not consistent with the government's land use priorities or the proposal in the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy.

Traffic on the existing M5 East exceeded capacity "within months" of opening (New M5 Project Overview, November 2015), including recent road widening. This lack of capacity is, in part, the rationale for the construction of the New M5. Managing demand on the M5 East and providing high quality public transport alternatives for those who can change mode would be a more effective long term solution that simply a 'predict and provide' approach, yet this alternative - along with many others - has not been assessed.

A larger question raised by the proposed New M5 project is what happens if capacity on this motorway is reached? The existing M5 East has proven that a new motorway can easily reach or exceed capacity within a 15 year timeframe. If that outcome is realised for the New M5, Sydney will be left with a transport legacy that cannot support the jobs growth in the west consistent with Government policy. Sydney needs to manage demand for existing road assets to maximise economically productive use and deliver sustainable transport as a real alternative to car travel. International cities such as Los Angeles are moving away from their dominant car-based culture to invest in public transport in order to build the sustainability and attractiveness of their city for residents, businesses and visitors alike.

The New M5 project has only been assessed to 2031, which does not take into account the 45 year concession period for the asset as stated in the WestConnex Updated Strategic Business Case. The assessment does not account for future events that may radically change travel demands or behaviours.

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I strongly object to the unacceptable impact the project's construction will have on local residents, businesses and schools. Across the route of this project, people face years of having their streets turned into car parks for construction workers; 24/7 construction noise, vibration, and heavy truck movements; exposure to asbestos, construction dust, and toxic materials; and more. Mitigation is recommended in this EIS, but no information is provided 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.

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.

This project deliberately exposes communities in certain areas to increased pollution. Such an approach values the health and safety of people in certain areas of Sydney over others, and is both unjust and unacceptable. In addition, despite there being no safe level of exposure to fine particulate matter, the proponents want to build this project knowing it will increase these pollutants around much of the project route.

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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Even with these flaws, tolls on these roads are to be in effect for decades. Many Sydneysiders will not see these roads untolled in their lifetimes. Nor will western Sydney or rural and regional NSW see any investment in their communities to create employment opportunities that would circumvent the need to commute long distances by car to jobs in Sydney's CBD, eastern suburbs and inner city.

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Meanwhile, even this EIS 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. This is because even the proponents know that commuters will be unwilling to pay $6 each way to use either of these toll roads, which is in line with figures in WestConnex's Updated Strategic Business Case that show for almost all of potential users, the value of time saved is less than the cost of using WestConnex.

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.

The delivery of the New M5 and in particular the St Peters Interchange, will have a significant impact on residents and businesses. The increased traffic resulting from this project will impact on urban amenity and will limit the ability for public transport services to operate efficiently due to increased local road congestion.

The EIS assumes that by 2031 the full WestConnex project will be complete. This includes the M4-M5 Link (Stage 3), which will have additional significant impacts on residents and businesses. Nowhere in the EIS are these impacts considered, nor information given to the public to fully consider or understand the implications of the whole WestConnex program.

The analysis of alternatives 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.

The evidence provided by the EIS in support of the project is incomplete and unbalanced, selectively including and excluding impacts from subsequent planned stages of the WestConnex project. The analysis of strategic alternatives in the EIS is cursory and fails to demonstrate the New M5 extension is the best option to meet the needs of a growing Sydney population. The EIS also does not take into consideration the travel patterns of residents and businesses in western or south-western Sydney that the New M5 is intended to serve, nor the wider impacts on inner-Sydney communities affected by the WestConnex program.

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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The statement that the New M5 project is an integrated transport project is false and misleading. It is a motorway that does not provide for improved public transport connections and has not fully considered the active transport component in line with government policy. The City's view is that the government could have delivered a better outcome by focusing on ways to "improve access" that is modally agnostic and more consistent with government's land use policies.

Endangered flora and fauna would be destroyed for this project, including the Green and Golden Bell Frog colony at Arncliffe and the critically endangered Cooks River Castlereagh Ironbark Forest at Kingsgrove/Beverly Hills. Saving these species in particular was a condition of the previous M5 motorway; destroying them now makes a mockery of these legal protections. I also object to the unprofessional analysis of the threat posed by the New M5 to these species and to biodiversity in general, as this section of the EIS attempts to downplay the significance of the flora and fauna threatened by this project and the impact of this project on biodiversity overall.

I am also concerned that the EIS suggests that the breeding ponds of the Green and Golden Bell Frog have not been kept healthy in recent years, especially since the RMS was responsible for building these ponds as a condition of the old M5.

Many public parks would be temporarily or permanently destroyed for this project, including parts of Sydney Park and the M5 Linear Park, along with thousands of mature trees along the route. Even if these trees would be reinstated, it will take decades to achieve the level of canopy that exists.

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.

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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 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 proponents have failed to consult with local businesses across the route, many of which would be destroyed by the traffic and/or construction impacts of this project.

The proponent has failed to adequately assess and responsibly handle asbestos, including the huge amounts it has removed ahead of this EIS from the Alexandria Landfill and transported through inner Sydney out to the western suburbs. More toxic asbestos is expected to be dug up and transported from various sites along the New M5 for this project, and the numerous breaches of basic health and safety procedures observed by residents in St Peters, Granville and Erskine Park in this regard have not been properly assessed in this EIS.

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,

Jennifer Kent

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Colin Clifford [redacted]
Sent: Friday, 29 January 2016 5:01 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

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).

Global experience and research has shown conclusively that these kinds of toll road mega-projects are hugely expensive and provide only short-term relief from traffic congestion. I have yet to hear of an independent transport expert who backs the project. WestConnex will increase air pollution and traffic, 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.

The strategic justification for the New M5 is weak and inconsistent with the NSW Government's strategic planning and policy framework, despite its inclusion in the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy and the Long Term Transport Master Plan. The project as proposed in this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) does not deliver the broader objectives of WestConnex as stated in the Updated Strategic Business Case (November 2015).

There has been no compelling case made for why WestConnex should be built, and the project should not receive approval and not proceed. This EIS and the Updated Strategic Business Case for WestConnex are clear that the benefits accruing from Stage 2 do not outweigh the costs. Benefits are shown to come once the whole WestConnex project is built according to the Updated Strategic Business Case, and that no benefits exist until all three Stages are delivered (WestConnex Full Scheme: Economic Appraisal, KPMG, 19 November 2015). I am aware that even this has now expanded to include other tollways such as the Sydney Gateway, making it even more likely that this project will provide disbenefits to society if it proceeds as proposed in this EIS, i.e. as a standalone project. This is particularly concerning given there is a significant risk that Stage 3 will not be built.

Fundamentally flawed projects like WestConnex do not account for changing work practices supported by technologies such as teleworking, or flexible office spaces, or that car journeys are dropping as workers elect to work closer to home or use public transport, bicycles or car sharing. It also does not account for trends that will substantially change how people choose to travel in future and reduce the number of cars on the road, such as peak car or driverless cars.

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 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 EIS lacks rigour and sound analysis, despite the huge volume of documentation. This lack of rigour and analysis is consistent across all chapters and appendices. The project objectives are biased towards a motorway solution, so that any proposed alternative falls short of the proposed solution. Similarly, the work undertaken in the EIS is highly compliance driven, and fails to take into account opportunities or strategic impacts, and the assessment of cumulative impacts is almost negligent.

WestConnex is presented as a 'transformational' infrastructure project, however, the EIS is not clear on what transformation it will achieve. There is no demonstration that WestConnex delivers transformation in terms of social or economic improvement, or better land use outcomes. To the contrary, WestConnex will deliver a piece of infrastructure that increases traffic on local roads, does not enable value capture or urban renewal, and is not consistent with the government's land use priorities or the proposal in the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy.

Traffic on the existing M5 East exceeded capacity "within months" of opening (New M5 Project Overview, November 2015), including recent road widening. This lack of capacity is, in part, the rationale for the construction of the New M5. Managing demand on the M5 East and providing high quality public transport alternatives for those who can change mode would be a more effective long term solution that simply a 'predict and provide' approach, yet this alternative - along with many others - has not been assessed.

A larger question raised by the proposed New M5 project is what happens if capacity on this motorway is reached? The existing M5 East has proven that a new motorway can easily reach or exceed capacity within a 15 year timeframe. If that outcome is realised for the New M5, Sydney will be left with a transport legacy that cannot support the jobs growth in the west consistent with Government policy. Sydney needs to manage demand for existing road assets to maximise economically productive use and deliver sustainable transport as a real alternative to car travel. International cities such as Los Angeles are moving away from their dominant car-based culture to invest in public transport in order to build the sustainability and attractiveness of their city for residents, businesses and visitors alike.

The New M5 project has only been assessed to 2031, which does not take into account the 45 year concession period for the asset as stated in the WestConnex Updated Strategic Business Case. The assessment does not account for future events that may radically change travel demands or behaviours.

Heritage buildings would be destroyed for this project, while others would be isolated in a flood of traffic. e.g. terraces next to construction compounds and motorway in Campbell Street.

Residents in south west Sydney will suffer a huge loss of amenity as a result of the existing M5 being stripped of its green space and vegetation, particularly when residents fought so hard to get these green spaces established and thriving. I also strongly object to their concrete noise walls being replaced with transparent barriers. These will be right next to hundreds of homes, who will now be forced to look at (as well as listen to and breathe the fumes of) lanes of motorway traffic just over their fences. It is utterly unacceptable to prioritise the views of passing motorists over the privacy and amenity of people who live in an area.

This EIS fails to model traffic beyond two intersections after this project. This deliberately obscures the threat to King Street and roads in Alexandria. I object to exposing King Street and Edgeware Rd to the threat of becoming clearways.

Residents affected by compulsory acquisitions are 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.

I strongly object to the unacceptable impact the project's construction will have on local residents, businesses and schools. Across the route of this project, people face years of having their streets turned into car parks for construction workers; 24/7 construction noise, vibration, and heavy truck movements; exposure to asbestos, construction dust, and toxic materials; and more. Mitigation is recommended in this EIS, but no information is provided 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.

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.

This project deliberately exposes communities in certain areas to increased pollution. Such an approach values the health and safety of people in certain areas of Sydney over others, and is both unjust and unacceptable. In addition, despite there being no safe level of exposure to fine particulate matter, the proponents want to build this project knowing it will increase these pollutants around much of the project route.

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 air quality study shows that dangerous fine particle pollution already exceeds acceptable levels in some areas in the project areas, and will worsen if this project is built. I also object to the way this and other information about air quality and pollution impacts has been provided in this EIS; it is far too dense and opaque for ordinary residents to

understand. It should go without saying that where public health is concerned, information about negative impacts should be provided in a way that affected residents can understand.

The EIS demonstrates that air quality, even at existing levels, is close to the allowable limits, and will only get worse with a major interchange, road upgrades and ventilation stacks implemented at the St Peters Interchange and surrounds. If new air quality standards as proposed by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) in 2012 are implemented, the New M5 would well exceed allowable air pollution levels.

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). I find it completely unacceptable that AECOM has been paid $13 million of taxpayer money to complete this EIS despite this, and despite it being 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. I also object to AECOM doing the EIS when it has contracts in the rest of the project including Stage 2. This conflict of interest needs to be explained and addressed.

Even with these flaws, tolls on these roads are to be in effect for decades. Many Sydneysiders will not see these roads untolled in their lifetimes. Nor will western Sydney or rural and regional NSW see any investment in their communities to create employment opportunities that would circumvent the need to commute long distances by car to jobs in Sydney's CBD, eastern suburbs and inner city.

The New M5 would cause costly traffic chaos throughout the inner west and south-west Sydney. 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. This EIS also 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, Kingsgrove and Brighton-Le-Sands. I object to building a road that the proponent admits will produce such volumes of traffic that such roads will be beyond capacity. Where traffic is already bad, plans should be to reduce it, not make it worse.

Meanwhile, even this EIS 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. This is because even the proponents know that commuters will be unwilling to pay $6 each way to use either of these toll roads, which is in line with figures in WestConnex's Updated Strategic Business Case that show for almost all of potential users, the value of time saved is less than the cost of using WestConnex.

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.

The delivery of the New M5 and in particular the St Peters Interchange, will have a significant impact on residents and businesses. The increased traffic resulting from this project will impact on urban amenity and will limit the ability for public transport services to operate efficiently due to increased local road congestion.

The EIS assumes that by 2031 the full WestConnex project will be complete. This includes the M4-M5 Link (Stage 3), which will have additional significant impacts on residents and businesses. Nowhere in the EIS are these impacts considered, nor information given to the public to fully consider or understand the implications of the whole WestConnex program.

The analysis of alternatives 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.

The evidence provided by the EIS in support of the project is incomplete and unbalanced, selectively including and excluding impacts from subsequent planned stages of the WestConnex project. The analysis of strategic alternatives in the EIS is cursory and fails to demonstrate the New M5 extension is the best option to meet the needs of a growing Sydney population. The EIS also does not take into consideration the travel patterns of residents and businesses in western or south-western Sydney that the New M5 is intended to serve, nor the wider impacts on inner-Sydney communities affected by the WestConnex program.

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.

The social impact study is little more than a 'cut and paste' job and is insulting to communities where hundreds of tenants and owners have lost homes and others will live in decimated communities. The report exaggerates the potential positive aspects of the project, while the negative aspects are either downplayed, insufficiently detailed or omitted altogether. Where negative economic or social impacts are identified in the report, they are inadequately addressed in terms of management or mitigation actions to be taken.

The statement that the New M5 project is an integrated transport project is false and misleading. It is a motorway that does not provide for improved public transport connections and has not fully considered the active transport component in line with government policy. The City's view is that the government could have delivered a better outcome by focusing on ways to "improve access" that is modally agnostic and more consistent with government's land use policies.

Endangered flora and fauna would be destroyed for this project, including the Green and Golden Bell Frog colony at Arncliffe and the critically endangered Cooks River Castlereagh Ironbark Forest at Kingsgrove/Beverly Hills. Saving these species in particular was a condition of the previous M5 motorway; destroying them now makes a mockery of these legal protections. I also object to the unprofessional analysis of the threat posed by the New M5 to these species and to biodiversity in general, as this section of the EIS attempts to downplay the significance of the flora and fauna threatened by this project and the impact of this project on biodiversity overall.

I am also concerned that the EIS suggests that the breeding ponds of the Green and Golden Bell Frog have not been kept healthy in recent years, especially since the RMS was responsible for building these ponds as a condition of the old M5.

Many public parks would be temporarily or permanently destroyed for this project, including parts of Sydney Park and the M5 Linear Park, along with thousands of mature trees along the route. Even if these trees would be reinstated, it will take decades to achieve the level of canopy that exists.

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.

The increase in road capacity on Euston Road from four lanes to between six and eight, and Campbell Road from two lanes to six will have noise impacts on people living in the area and using Sydney Park.

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 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 proponents have failed to consult with local businesses across the route, many of which would be destroyed by the traffic and/or construction impacts of this project.

The proponent has failed to adequately assess and responsibly handle asbestos, including the huge amounts it has removed ahead of this EIS from the Alexandria Landfill and transported through inner Sydney out to the western suburbs. More toxic asbestos is expected to be dug up and transported from various sites along the New M5 for this project, and the numerous breaches of basic health and safety procedures observed by residents in St Peters, Granville and Erskine Park in this regard have not been properly assessed in this EIS.

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,

Colin Clifford

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted] 12420

From: [redacted]
Sent: Friday, 29 January 2016 3:05 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

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).

Global experience and research has shown conclusively that these kinds of toll road mega-projects are hugely expensive and provide only short-term relief from traffic congestion. I have yet to hear of an independent transport expert who backs the project. WestConnex will increase air pollution and traffic, 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.

The strategic justification for the New M5 is weak and inconsistent with the NSW Government's strategic planning and policy framework, despite its inclusion in the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy and the Long Term Transport Master Plan. The project as proposed in this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) does not deliver the broader objectives of WestConnex as stated in the Updated Strategic Business Case (November 2015).

There has been no compelling case made for why WestConnex should be built, and the project should not receive approval and not proceed. This EIS and the Updated Strategic Business Case for WestConnex are clear that the benefits accruing from Stage 2 do not outweigh the costs. Benefits are shown to come once the whole WestConnex project is built according to the Updated Strategic Business Case, and that no benefits exist until all three Stages are delivered (WestConnex Full Scheme: Economic Appraisal, KPMG, 19 November 2015). I am aware that even this has now expanded to include other tollways such as the Sydney Gateway, making it even more likely that this project will provide disbenefits to society if it proceeds as proposed in this EIS, i.e. as a standalone project. This is particularly concerning given there is a significant risk that Stage 3 will not be built.

Fundamentally flawed projects like WestConnex do not account for changing work practices supported by technologies such as teleworking, or flexible office spaces, or that car journeys are dropping as workers elect to work closer to home or use public transport, bicycles or car sharing. It also does not account for trends that will substantially change how people choose to travel in future and reduce the number of cars on the road, such as peak car or driverless cars.

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 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 EIS lacks rigour and sound analysis, despite the huge volume of documentation. This lack of rigour and analysis is consistent across all chapters and appendices. The project objectives are biased towards a motorway solution, so that any proposed alternative falls short of the proposed solution. Similarly, the work undertaken in the EIS is highly compliance driven, and fails to take into account opportunities or strategic impacts, and the assessment of cumulative impacts is almost negligent.

WestConnex is presented as a 'transformational' infrastructure project, however, the EIS is not clear on what transformation it will achieve. There is no demonstration that WestConnex delivers transformation in terms of social or economic improvement, or better land use outcomes. To the contrary, WestConnex will deliver a piece of infrastructure that increases traffic on local roads, does not enable value capture or urban renewal, and is not consistent with the government's land use priorities or the proposal in the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy.

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A larger question raised by the proposed New M5 project is what happens if capacity on this motorway is reached? The existing M5 East has proven that a new motorway can easily reach or exceed capacity within a 15 year timeframe. If that outcome is realised for the New M5, Sydney will be left with a transport legacy that cannot support the jobs growth in the west consistent with Government policy. Sydney needs to manage demand for existing road assets to maximise economically productive use and deliver sustainable transport as a real alternative to car travel. International cities such as Los Angeles are moving away from their dominant car-based culture to invest in public transport in order to build the sustainability and attractiveness of their city for residents, businesses and visitors alike.

The New M5 project has only been assessed to 2031, which does not take into account the 45 year concession period for the asset as stated in the WestConnex Updated Strategic Business Case. The assessment does not account for future events that may radically change travel demands or behaviours.

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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.

The delivery of the New M5 and in particular the St Peters Interchange, will have a significant impact on residents and businesses. The increased traffic resulting from this project will impact on urban amenity and will limit the ability for public transport services to operate efficiently due to increased local road congestion.

The EIS assumes that by 2031 the full WestConnex project will be complete. This includes the M4-M5 Link (Stage 3), which will have additional significant impacts on residents and businesses. Nowhere in the EIS are these impacts considered, nor information given to the public to fully consider or understand the implications of the whole WestConnex program.

The analysis of alternatives 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.

The evidence provided by the EIS in support of the project is incomplete and unbalanced, selectively including and excluding impacts from subsequent planned stages of the WestConnex project. The analysis of strategic alternatives in the EIS is cursory and fails to demonstrate the New M5 extension is the best option to meet the needs of a growing Sydney population. The EIS also does not take into consideration the travel patterns of residents and businesses in western or south-western Sydney that the New M5 is intended to serve, nor the wider impacts on inner-Sydney communities affected by the WestConnex program.

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.

The social impact study is little more than a 'cut and paste' job and is insulting to communities where hundreds of tenants and owners have lost homes and others will live in decimated communities. The report exaggerates the potential positive aspects of the project, while the negative aspects are either downplayed, insufficiently detailed or omitted altogether. Where negative economic or social impacts are identified in the report, they are inadequately addressed in terms of management or mitigation actions to be taken.

The statement that the New M5 project is an integrated transport project is false and misleading. It is a motorway that does not provide for improved public transport connections and has not fully considered the active transport component in line with government policy. The City's view is that the government could have delivered a better outcome by focusing on ways to "improve access" that is modally agnostic and more consistent with government's land use policies.

Endangered flora and fauna would be destroyed for this project, including the Green and Golden Bell Frog colony at Arncliffe and the critically endangered Cooks River Castlereagh Ironbark Forest at Kingsgrove/Beverly Hills. Saving these species in particular was a condition of the previous M5 motorway; destroying them now makes a mockery of these legal protections. I also object to the unprofessional analysis of the threat posed by the New M5 to these species and to biodiversity in general, as this section of the EIS attempts to downplay the significance of the flora and fauna threatened by this project and the impact of this project on biodiversity overall.

I am also concerned that the EIS suggests that the breeding ponds of the Green and Golden Bell Frog have not been kept healthy in recent years, especially since the RMS was responsible for building these ponds as a condition of the old M5.

Many public parks would be temporarily or permanently destroyed for this project, including parts of Sydney Park and the M5 Linear Park, along with thousands of mature trees along the route. Even if these trees would be reinstated, it will take decades to achieve the level of canopy that exists.

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.

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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 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 proponents have failed to consult with local businesses across the route, many of which would be destroyed by the traffic and/or construction impacts of this project.

The proponent has failed to adequately assess and responsibly handle asbestos, including the huge amounts it has removed ahead of this EIS from the Alexandria Landfill and transported through inner Sydney out to the western suburbs. More toxic asbestos is expected to be dug up and transported from various sites along the New M5 for this project, and the numerous breaches of basic health and safety procedures observed by residents in St Peters, Granville and Erskine Park in this regard have not been properly assessed in this EIS.

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: Kathryn Calman [redacted]
Sent: Friday, 29 January 2016 3:05 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

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).

Global experience and research has shown conclusively that these kinds of toll road mega-projects are hugely expensive and provide only short-term relief from traffic congestion. I have yet to hear of an independent transport expert who backs the project. WestConnex will increase air pollution and traffic, 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.

The strategic justification for the New M5 is weak and inconsistent with the NSW Government's strategic planning and policy framework, despite its inclusion in the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy and the Long Term Transport Master Plan. The project as proposed in this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) does not deliver the broader objectives of WestConnex as stated in the Updated Strategic Business Case (November 2015).

There has been no compelling case made for why WestConnex should be built, and the project should not receive approval and not proceed. This EIS and the Updated Strategic Business Case for WestConnex are clear that the benefits accruing from Stage 2 do not outweigh the costs. Benefits are shown to come once the whole WestConnex project is built according to the Updated Strategic Business Case, and that no benefits exist until all three Stages are delivered (WestConnex Full Scheme: Economic Appraisal, KPMG, 19 November 2015). I am aware that even this has now expanded to include other tollways such as the Sydney Gateway, making it even more likely that this project will provide disbenefits to society if it proceeds as proposed in this EIS, i.e. as a standalone project. This is particularly concerning given there is a significant risk that Stage 3 will not be built.

Fundamentally flawed projects like WestConnex do not account for changing work practices supported by technologies such as teleworking, or flexible office spaces, or that car journeys are dropping as workers elect to work closer to home or use public transport, bicycles or car sharing. It also does not account for trends that will substantially change how people choose to travel in future and reduce the number of cars on the road, such as peak car or driverless cars.

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 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 EIS lacks rigour and sound analysis, despite the huge volume of documentation. This lack of rigour and analysis is consistent across all chapters and appendices. The project objectives are biased towards a motorway solution, so that any proposed alternative falls short of the proposed solution. Similarly, the work undertaken in the EIS is highly compliance driven, and fails to take into account opportunities or strategic impacts, and the assessment of cumulative impacts is almost negligent.

WestConnex is presented as a 'transformational' infrastructure project, however, the EIS is not clear on what transformation it will achieve. There is no demonstration that WestConnex delivers transformation in terms of social or economic improvement, or better land use outcomes. To the contrary, WestConnex will deliver a piece of infrastructure that increases traffic on local roads, does not enable value capture or urban renewal, and is not consistent with the government's land use priorities or the proposal in the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy.

Traffic on the existing M5 East exceeded capacity "within months" of opening (New M5 Project Overview, November 2015), including recent road widening. This lack of capacity is, in part, the rationale for the construction of the New M5. Managing demand on the M5 East and providing high quality public transport alternatives for those who can change mode would be a more effective long term solution that simply a 'predict and provide' approach, yet this alternative - along with many others - has not been assessed.

A larger question raised by the proposed New M5 project is what happens if capacity on this motorway is reached? The existing M5 East has proven that a new motorway can easily reach or exceed capacity within a 15 year timeframe. If that outcome is realised for the New M5, Sydney will be left with a transport legacy that cannot support the jobs growth in the west consistent with Government policy. Sydney needs to manage demand for existing road assets to maximise economically productive use and deliver sustainable transport as a real alternative to car travel. International cities such as Los Angeles are moving away from their dominant car-based culture to invest in public transport in order to build the sustainability and attractiveness of their city for residents, businesses and visitors alike.

The New M5 project has only been assessed to 2031, which does not take into account the 45 year concession period for the asset as stated in the WestConnex Updated Strategic Business Case. The assessment does not account for future events that may radically change travel demands or behaviours.

Heritage buildings would be destroyed for this project, while others would be isolated in a flood of traffic. e.g. terraces next to construction compounds and motorway in Campbell Street.

Residents in south west Sydney will suffer a huge loss of amenity as a result of the existing M5 being stripped of its green space and vegetation, particularly when residents fought so hard to get these green spaces established and thriving. I also strongly object to their concrete noise walls being replaced with transparent barriers. These will be right next to hundreds of homes, who will now be forced to look at (as well as listen to and breathe the fumes of) lanes of motorway traffic just over their fences. It is utterly unacceptable to prioritise the views of passing motorists over the privacy and amenity of people who live in an area.

I ABSOLUTELY REJECT TRANSPARENT NOISE WALLS AS UNREASONABLE TO THRUST UPON HIGHLY IMPACTED RESIDENTS.

This EIS fails to model traffic beyond two intersections after this project. This deliberately obscures the threat to King Street and roads in Alexandria. I object to exposing King Street and Edgeware Rd to the threat of becoming clearways.

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I strongly object to the unacceptable impact the project's construction will have on local residents, businesses and schools. Across the route of this project, people face years of having their streets turned into car parks for construction workers; 24/7 construction noise, vibration, and heavy truck movements; exposure to asbestos, construction dust, and toxic materials; and more. Mitigation is recommended in this EIS, but no information is provided 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.

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.

This project deliberately exposes communities in certain areas to increased pollution. Such an approach values the health and safety of people in certain areas of Sydney over others, and is both unjust and unacceptable. In addition, despite there being no safe level of exposure to fine particulate matter, the proponents want to build this project knowing it will increase these pollutants around much of the project route.

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 air quality study shows that dangerous fine particle pollution already exceeds acceptable levels in some areas in the project areas, and will worsen if this project is built. I also object to the way this and other information about air quality and pollution impacts has been provided in this EIS; it is far too dense and opaque for ordinary residents to understand. It should go without saying that where public health is concerned, information about negative impacts should be provided in a way that affected residents can understand.

The EIS demonstrates that air quality, even at existing levels, is close to the allowable limits, and will only get worse with a major interchange, road upgrades and ventilation stacks implemented at the St Peters Interchange and surrounds. If new air quality standards as proposed by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) in 2012 are implemented, the New M5 would well exceed allowable air pollution levels.

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). I find it completely unacceptable that AECOM has been paid $13 million of taxpayer money to complete this EIS despite this, and despite it being 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. I also object to AECOM doing the EIS when it has contracts in the rest of the project including Stage 2. This conflict of interest needs to be explained and addressed.

Even with these flaws, tolls on these roads are to be in effect for decades. Many Sydneysiders will not see these roads untolled in their lifetimes. Nor will western Sydney or rural and regional NSW see any investment in their communities to create employment opportunities that would circumvent the need to commute long distances by car to jobs in Sydney's CBD, eastern suburbs and inner city.

The New M5 would cause costly traffic chaos throughout the inner west and south-west Sydney. 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. This EIS also 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, Kingsgrove and Brighton-Le-Sands. I object to building a road that the proponent admits will produce such volumes of traffic that such roads will be beyond capacity. Where traffic is already bad, plans should be to reduce it, not make it worse.

Meanwhile, even this EIS 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. This is because even the proponents know that commuters will be unwilling to pay $6 each way to use either of these toll roads, which is in line with figures in WestConnex's Updated Strategic Business Case that show for almost all of potential users, the value of time saved is less than the cost of using WestConnex.

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.

The delivery of the New M5 and in particular the St Peters Interchange, will have a significant impact on residents and businesses. The increased traffic resulting from this project will impact on urban amenity and will limit the ability for public transport services to operate efficiently due to increased local road congestion.

The EIS assumes that by 2031 the full WestConnex project will be complete. This includes the M4-M5 Link (Stage 3), which will have additional significant impacts on residents and businesses. Nowhere in the EIS are these impacts considered, nor information given to the public to fully consider or understand the implications of the whole WestConnex program.

The analysis of alternatives 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.

The evidence provided by the EIS in support of the project is incomplete and unbalanced, selectively including and excluding impacts from subsequent planned stages of the WestConnex project. The analysis of strategic alternatives in the EIS is cursory and fails to demonstrate the New M5 extension is the best option to meet the needs of a growing Sydney population. The EIS also does not take into consideration the travel patterns of residents and businesses in western or south-western Sydney that the New M5 is intended to serve, nor the wider impacts on inner-Sydney communities affected by the WestConnex program.

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.

The social impact study is little more than a 'cut and paste' job and is insulting to communities where hundreds of tenants and owners have lost homes and others will live in decimated communities. The report exaggerates the potential positive aspects of the project, while the negative aspects are either downplayed, insufficiently detailed or omitted altogether. Where negative economic or social impacts are identified in the report, they are inadequately addressed in terms of management or mitigation actions to be taken.

The statement that the New M5 project is an integrated transport project is false and misleading. It is a motorway that does not provide for improved public transport connections and has not fully considered the active transport

component in line with government policy. The City's view is that the government could have delivered a better outcome by focusing on ways to "improve access" that is modally agnostic and more consistent with government's land use policies.

Endangered flora and fauna would be destroyed for this project, including the Green and Golden Bell Frog colony at Arncliffe and the critically endangered Cooks River Castlereagh Ironbark Forest at Kingsgrove/Beverly Hills. Saving these species in particular was a condition of the previous M5 motorway; destroying them now makes a mockery of these legal protections. I also object to the unprofessional analysis of the threat posed by the New M5 to these species and to biodiversity in general, as this section of the EIS attempts to downplay the significance of the flora and fauna threatened by this project and the impact of this project on biodiversity overall.

I am also concerned that the EIS suggests that the breeding ponds of the Green and Golden Bell Frog have not been kept healthy in recent years, especially since the RMS was responsible for building these ponds as a condition of the old M5.

Many public parks would be temporarily or permanently destroyed for this project, including parts of Sydney Park and the M5 Linear Park, along with thousands of mature trees along the route. Even if these trees would be reinstated, it will take decades to achieve the level of canopy that exists.

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.

The increase in road capacity on Euston Road from four lanes to between six and eight, and Campbell Road from two lanes to six will have noise impacts on people living in the area and using Sydney Park.

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 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 proponents have failed to consult with local businesses across the route, many of which would be destroyed by the traffic and/or construction impacts of this project.

The proponent has failed to adequately assess and responsibly handle asbestos, including the huge amounts it has removed ahead of this EIS from the Alexandria Landfill and transported through inner Sydney out to the western suburbs. More toxic asbestos is expected to be dug up and transported from various sites along the New M5 for this project, and the numerous breaches of basic health and safety procedures observed by residents in St Peters, Granville and Erskine Park in this regard have not been properly assessed in this EIS.

I am very concerned that the Earth Mound at Kingsgrove will have its asbestos removed carelessly, as witnessed at St Peters. This is unacceptable.

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 Calman

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: [redacted]
Sent: Friday, 29 January 2016 3:04 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

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).

Global experience and research has shown conclusively that these kinds of toll road mega-projects are hugely expensive and provide only short-term relief from traffic congestion. I have yet to hear of an independent transport expert who backs the project. WestConnex will increase air pollution and traffic, 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.

The strategic justification for the New M5 is weak and inconsistent with the NSW Government's strategic planning and policy framework, despite its inclusion in the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy and the Long Term Transport Master Plan. The project as proposed in this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) does not deliver the broader objectives of WestConnex as stated in the Updated Strategic Business Case (November 2015).

There has been no compelling case made for why WestConnex should be built, and the project should not receive approval and not proceed. This EIS and the Updated Strategic Business Case for WestConnex are clear that the benefits accruing from Stage 2 do not outweigh the costs. Benefits are shown to come once the whole WestConnex project is built according to the Updated Strategic Business Case, and that no benefits exist until all three Stages are delivered (WestConnex Full Scheme: Economic Appraisal, KPMG, 19 November 2015). I am aware that even this has now expanded to include other tollways such as the Sydney Gateway, making it even more likely that this project will provide disbenefits to society if it proceeds as proposed in this EIS, i.e. as a standalone project. This is particularly concerning given there is a significant risk that Stage 3 will not be built.

Fundamentally flawed projects like WestConnex do not account for changing work practices supported by technologies such as teleworking, or flexible office spaces, or that car journeys are dropping as workers elect to work closer to home or use public transport, bicycles or car sharing. It also does not account for trends that will substantially change how people choose to travel in future and reduce the number of cars on the road, such as peak car or driverless cars.

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I am also concerned that the EIS suggests that the breeding ponds of the Green and Golden Bell Frog have not been kept healthy in recent years, especially since the RMS was responsible for building these ponds as a condition of the old M5.

Many public parks would be temporarily or permanently destroyed for this project, including parts of Sydney Park and the M5 Linear Park, along with thousands of mature trees along the route. Even if these trees would be reinstated, it will take decades to achieve the level of canopy that exists.

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.

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The proponents have failed to consult with local businesses across the route, many of which would be destroyed by the traffic and/or construction impacts of this project.

The proponent has failed to adequately assess and responsibly handle asbestos, including the huge amounts it has removed ahead of this EIS from the Alexandria Landfill and transported through inner Sydney out to the western suburbs. More toxic asbestos is expected to be dug up and transported from various sites along the New M5 for this project, and the numerous breaches of basic health and safety procedures observed by residents in St Peters, Granville and Erskine Park in this regard have not been properly assessed in this EIS.

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]

12423

From: chris degueron [redacted]
Sent: Friday, 29 January 2016 3:04 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

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).

Global experience and research has shown conclusively that these kinds of toll road mega-projects are hugely expensive and provide only short-term relief from traffic congestion. I have yet to hear of an independent transport expert who backs the project. WestConnex will increase air pollution and traffic, 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.

The strategic justification for the New M5 is weak and inconsistent with the NSW Government's strategic planning and policy framework, despite its inclusion in the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy and the Long Term Transport Master Plan. The project as proposed in this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) does not deliver the broader objectives of WestConnex as stated in the Updated Strategic Business Case (November 2015).

There has been no compelling case made for why WestConnex should be built, and the project should not receive approval and not proceed. This EIS and the Updated Strategic Business Case for WestConnex are clear that the benefits accruing from Stage 2 do not outweigh the costs. Benefits are shown to come once the whole WestConnex project is built according to the Updated Strategic Business Case, and that no benefits exist until all three Stages are delivered (WestConnex Full Scheme: Economic Appraisal, KPMG, 19 November 2015). I am aware that even this has now expanded to include other tollways such as the Sydney Gateway, making it even more likely that this project will provide disbenefits to society if it proceeds as proposed in this EIS, i.e. as a standalone project. This is particularly concerning given there is a significant risk that Stage 3 will not be built.

Fundamentally flawed projects like WestConnex do not account for changing work practices supported by technologies such as teleworking, or flexible office spaces, or that car journeys are dropping as workers elect to work closer to home or use public transport, bicycles or car sharing. It also does not account for trends that will substantially change how people choose to travel in future and reduce the number of cars on the road, such as peak car or driverless cars.

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 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 EIS lacks rigour and sound analysis, despite the huge volume of documentation. This lack of rigour and analysis is consistent across all chapters and appendices. The project objectives are biased towards a motorway solution, so that any proposed alternative falls short of the proposed solution. Similarly, the work undertaken in the EIS is highly compliance driven, and fails to take into account opportunities or strategic impacts, and the assessment of cumulative impacts is almost negligent.

WestConnex is presented as a 'transformational' infrastructure project, however, the EIS is not clear on what transformation it will achieve. There is no demonstration that WestConnex delivers transformation in terms of social or economic improvement, or better land use outcomes. To the contrary, WestConnex will deliver a piece of infrastructure that increases traffic on local roads, does not enable value capture or urban renewal, and is not consistent with the government's land use priorities or the proposal in the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy.

Traffic on the existing M5 East exceeded capacity "within months" of opening (New M5 Project Overview, November 2015), including recent road widening. This lack of capacity is, in part, the rationale for the construction of the New M5. Managing demand on the M5 East and providing high quality public transport alternatives for those who can change mode would be a more effective long term solution that simply a 'predict and provide' approach, yet this alternative - along with many others - has not been assessed.

A larger question raised by the proposed New M5 project is what happens if capacity on this motorway is reached? The existing M5 East has proven that a new motorway can easily reach or exceed capacity within a 15 year timeframe. If that outcome is realised for the New M5, Sydney will be left with a transport legacy that cannot support the jobs growth in the west consistent with Government policy. Sydney needs to manage demand for existing road assets to maximise economically productive use and deliver sustainable transport as a real alternative to car travel. International cities such as Los Angeles are moving away from their dominant car-based culture to invest in public transport in order to build the sustainability and attractiveness of their city for residents, businesses and visitors alike.

The New M5 project has only been assessed to 2031, which does not take into account the 45 year concession period for the asset as stated in the WestConnex Updated Strategic Business Case. The assessment does not account for future events that may radically change travel demands or behaviours.

Heritage buildings would be destroyed for this project, while others would be isolated in a flood of traffic. e.g. terraces next to construction compounds and motorway in Campbell Street.

Residents in south west Sydney will suffer a huge loss of amenity as a result of the existing M5 being stripped of its green space and vegetation, particularly when residents fought so hard to get these green spaces established and thriving. I also strongly object to their concrete noise walls being replaced with transparent barriers. These will be right next to hundreds of homes, who will now be forced to look at (as well as listen to and breathe the fumes of) lanes of motorway traffic just over their fences. It is utterly unacceptable to prioritise the views of passing motorists over the privacy and amenity of people who live in an area.

This EIS fails to model traffic beyond two intersections after this project. This deliberately obscures the threat to King Street and roads in Alexandria. I object to exposing King Street and Edgeware Rd to the threat of becoming clearways.

Residents affected by compulsory acquisitions are 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.

I strongly object to the unacceptable impact the project's construction will have on local residents, businesses and schools. Across the route of this project, people face years of having their streets turned into car parks for construction workers; 24/7 construction noise, vibration, and heavy truck movements; exposure to asbestos, construction dust, and toxic materials; and more. Mitigation is recommended in this EIS, but no information is provided 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.

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.

This project deliberately exposes communities in certain areas to increased pollution. Such an approach values the health and safety of people in certain areas of Sydney over others, and is both unjust and unacceptable. In addition, despite there being no safe level of exposure to fine particulate matter, the proponents want to build this project knowing it will increase these pollutants around much of the project route.

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 air quality study shows that dangerous fine particle pollution already exceeds acceptable levels in some areas in the project areas, and will worsen if this project is built. I also object to the way this and other information about air quality and pollution impacts has been provided in this EIS; it is far too dense and opaque for ordinary residents to

understand. It should go without saying that where public health is concerned, information about negative impacts should be provided in a way that affected residents can understand.

The EIS demonstrates that air quality, even at existing levels, is close to the allowable limits, and will only get worse with a major interchange, road upgrades and ventilation stacks implemented at the St Peters Interchange and surrounds. If new air quality standards as proposed by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) in 2012 are implemented, the New M5 would well exceed allowable air pollution levels.

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). I find it completely unacceptable that AECOM has been paid $13 million of taxpayer money to complete this EIS despite this, and despite it being 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. I also object to AECOM doing the EIS when it has contracts in the rest of the project including Stage 2. This conflict of interest needs to be explained and addressed.

Even with these flaws, tolls on these roads are to be in effect for decades. Many Sydneysiders will not see these roads untolled in their lifetimes. Nor will western Sydney or rural and regional NSW see any investment in their communities to create employment opportunities that would circumvent the need to commute long distances by car to jobs in Sydney's CBD, eastern suburbs and inner city.

The New M5 would cause costly traffic chaos throughout the inner west and south-west Sydney. 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. This EIS also 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, Kingsgrove and Brighton-Le-Sands. I object to building a road that the proponent admits will produce such volumes of traffic that such roads will be beyond capacity. Where traffic is already bad, plans should be to reduce it, not make it worse.

Meanwhile, even this EIS 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. This is because even the proponents know that commuters will be unwilling to pay $6 each way to use either of these toll roads, which is in line with figures in WestConnex's Updated Strategic Business Case that show for almost all of potential users, the value of time saved is less than the cost of using WestConnex.

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.

The delivery of the New M5 and in particular the St Peters Interchange, will have a significant impact on residents and businesses. The increased traffic resulting from this project will impact on urban amenity and will limit the ability for public transport services to operate efficiently due to increased local road congestion.

The EIS assumes that by 2031 the full WestConnex project will be complete. This includes the M4-M5 Link (Stage 3), which will have additional significant impacts on residents and businesses. Nowhere in the EIS are these impacts considered, nor information given to the public to fully consider or understand the implications of the whole WestConnex program.

The analysis of alternatives 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.

The evidence provided by the EIS in support of the project is incomplete and unbalanced, selectively including and excluding impacts from subsequent planned stages of the WestConnex project. The analysis of strategic alternatives in the EIS is cursory and fails to demonstrate the New M5 extension is the best option to meet the needs of a growing Sydney population. The EIS also does not take into consideration the travel patterns of residents and businesses in western or south-western Sydney that the New M5 is intended to serve, nor the wider impacts on inner-Sydney communities affected by the WestConnex program.

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.

The social impact study is little more than a 'cut and paste' job and is insulting to communities where hundreds of tenants and owners have lost homes and others will live in decimated communities. The report exaggerates the potential positive aspects of the project, while the negative aspects are either downplayed, insufficiently detailed or omitted altogether. Where negative economic or social impacts are identified in the report, they are inadequately addressed in terms of management or mitigation actions to be taken.

The statement that the New M5 project is an integrated transport project is false and misleading. It is a motorway that does not provide for improved public transport connections and has not fully considered the active transport component in line with government policy. The City's view is that the government could have delivered a better outcome by focusing on ways to "improve access" that is modally agnostic and more consistent with government's land use policies.

Endangered flora and fauna would be destroyed for this project, including the Green and Golden Bell Frog colony at Arncliffe and the critically endangered Cooks River Castlereagh Ironbark Forest at Kingsgrove/Beverly Hills. Saving these species in particular was a condition of the previous M5 motorway; destroying them now makes a mockery of these legal protections. I also object to the unprofessional analysis of the threat posed by the New M5 to these species and to biodiversity in general, as this section of the EIS attempts to downplay the significance of the flora and fauna threatened by this project and the impact of this project on biodiversity overall.

I am also concerned that the EIS suggests that the breeding ponds of the Green and Golden Bell Frog have not been kept healthy in recent years, especially since the RMS was responsible for building these ponds as a condition of the old M5.

Many public parks would be temporarily or permanently destroyed for this project, including parts of Sydney Park and the M5 Linear Park, along with thousands of mature trees along the route. Even if these trees would be reinstated, it will take decades to achieve the level of canopy that exists.

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.

The increase in road capacity on Euston Road from four lanes to between six and eight, and Campbell Road from two lanes to six will have noise impacts on people living in the area and using Sydney Park.

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 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 proponents have failed to consult with local businesses across the route, many of which would be destroyed by the traffic and/or construction impacts of this project.

The proponent has failed to adequately assess and responsibly handle asbestos, including the huge amounts it has removed ahead of this EIS from the Alexandria Landfill and transported through inner Sydney out to the western suburbs. More toxic asbestos is expected to be dug up and transported from various sites along the New M5 for this project, and the numerous breaches of basic health and safety procedures observed by residents in St Peters, Granville and Erskine Park in this regard have not been properly assessed in this EIS.

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 degueron

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Michael Rogers [redacted]
Sent: Friday, 29 January 2016 2:59 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

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).

Global experience and research has shown conclusively that these kinds of toll road mega-projects are hugely expensive and provide only short-term relief from traffic congestion. I have yet to hear of an independent transport expert who backs the project. WestConnex will increase air pollution and traffic, 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.

The strategic justification for the New M5 is weak and inconsistent with the NSW Government's strategic planning and policy framework, despite its inclusion in the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy and the Long Term Transport Master Plan. The project as proposed in this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) does not deliver the broader objectives of WestConnex as stated in the Updated Strategic Business Case (November 2015).

There has been no compelling case made for why WestConnex should be built, and the project should not receive approval and not proceed. This EIS and the Updated Strategic Business Case for WestConnex are clear that the benefits accruing from Stage 2 do not outweigh the costs. Benefits are shown to come once the whole WestConnex project is built according to the Updated Strategic Business Case, and that no benefits exist until all three Stages are delivered (WestConnex Full Scheme: Economic Appraisal, KPMG, 19 November 2015). I am aware that even this has now expanded to include other tollways such as the Sydney Gateway, making it even more likely that this project will provide disbenefits to society if it proceeds as proposed in this EIS, i.e. as a standalone project. This is particularly concerning given there is a significant risk that Stage 3 will not be built.

Fundamentally flawed projects like WestConnex do not account for changing work practices supported by technologies such as teleworking, or flexible office spaces, or that car journeys are dropping as workers elect to work closer to home or use public transport, bicycles or car sharing. It also does not account for trends that will substantially change how people choose to travel in future and reduce the number of cars on the road, such as peak car or driverless cars.

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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.

The EIS lacks rigour and sound analysis, despite the huge volume of documentation. This lack of rigour and analysis is consistent across all chapters and appendices. The project objectives are biased towards a motorway solution, so that any proposed alternative falls short of the proposed solution. Similarly, the work undertaken in the EIS is highly compliance driven, and fails to take into account opportunities or strategic impacts, and the assessment of cumulative impacts is almost negligent.

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The EIS assumes that by 2031 the full WestConnex project will be complete. This includes the M4-M5 Link (Stage 3), which will have additional significant impacts on residents and businesses. Nowhere in the EIS are these impacts considered, nor information given to the public to fully consider or understand the implications of the whole WestConnex program.

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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 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.

The increase in road capacity on Euston Road from four lanes to between six and eight, and Campbell Road from two lanes to six will have noise impacts on people living in the area and using Sydney Park.

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 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 proponents have failed to consult with local businesses across the route, many of which would be destroyed by the traffic and/or construction impacts of this project.

The proponent has failed to adequately assess and responsibly handle asbestos, including the huge amounts it has removed ahead of this EIS from the Alexandria Landfill and transported through inner Sydney out to the western suburbs. More toxic asbestos is expected to be dug up and transported from various sites along the New M5 for this project, and the numerous breaches of basic health and safety procedures observed by residents in St Peters, Granville and Erskine Park in this regard have not been properly assessed in this EIS.

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,

Michael Rogers

From: Amelie Auzou [redacted]
Sent: Friday, 29 January 2016 2:58 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

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).

Global experience and research has shown conclusively that these kinds of toll road mega-projects are hugely expensive and provide only short-term relief from traffic congestion. I have yet to hear of an independent transport expert who backs the project. WestConnex will increase air pollution and traffic, 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.

The strategic justification for the New M5 is weak and inconsistent with the NSW Government's strategic planning and policy framework, despite its inclusion in the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy and the Long Term Transport Master Plan. The project as proposed in this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) does not deliver the broader objectives of WestConnex as stated in the Updated Strategic Business Case (November 2015).

There has been no compelling case made for why WestConnex should be built, and the project should not receive approval and not proceed. This EIS and the Updated Strategic Business Case for WestConnex are clear that the benefits accruing from Stage 2 do not outweigh the costs. Benefits are shown to come once the whole WestConnex project is built according to the Updated Strategic Business Case, and that no benefits exist until all three Stages are delivered (WestConnex Full Scheme: Economic Appraisal, KPMG, 19 November 2015). I am aware that even this has now expanded to include other tollways such as the Sydney Gateway, making it even more likely that this project will provide disbenefits to society if it proceeds as proposed in this EIS, i.e. as a standalone project. This is particularly concerning given there is a significant risk that Stage 3 will not be built.

Fundamentally flawed projects like WestConnex do not account for changing work practices supported by technologies such as teleworking, or flexible office spaces, or that car journeys are dropping as workers elect to work closer to home or use public transport, bicycles or car sharing. It also does not account for trends that will substantially change how people choose to travel in future and reduce the number of cars on the road, such as peak car or driverless cars.

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 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 EIS lacks rigour and sound analysis, despite the huge volume of documentation. This lack of rigour and analysis is consistent across all chapters and appendices. The project objectives are biased towards a motorway solution, so that any proposed alternative falls short of the proposed solution. Similarly, the work undertaken in the EIS is highly compliance driven, and fails to take into account opportunities or strategic impacts, and the assessment of cumulative impacts is almost negligent.

WestConnex is presented as a 'transformational' infrastructure project, however, the EIS is not clear on what transformation it will achieve. There is no demonstration that WestConnex delivers transformation in terms of social or economic improvement, or better land use outcomes. To the contrary, WestConnex will deliver a piece of infrastructure that increases traffic on local roads, does not enable value capture or urban renewal, and is not consistent with the government's land use priorities or the proposal in the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy.

Traffic on the existing M5 East exceeded capacity "within months" of opening (New M5 Project Overview, November 2015), including recent road widening. This lack of capacity is, in part, the rationale for the construction of the New M5. Managing demand on the M5 East and providing high quality public transport alternatives for those who can change mode would be a more effective long term solution that simply a 'predict and provide' approach, yet this alternative - along with many others - has not been assessed.

A larger question raised by the proposed New M5 project is what happens if capacity on this motorway is reached? The existing M5 East has proven that a new motorway can easily reach or exceed capacity within a 15 year timeframe. If that outcome is realised for the New M5, Sydney will be left with a transport legacy that cannot support the jobs growth in the west consistent with Government policy. Sydney needs to manage demand for existing road assets to maximise economically productive use and deliver sustainable transport as a real alternative to car travel. International cities such as Los Angeles are moving away from their dominant car-based culture to invest in public transport in order to build the sustainability and attractiveness of their city for residents, businesses and visitors alike.

The New M5 project has only been assessed to 2031, which does not take into account the 45 year concession period for the asset as stated in the WestConnex Updated Strategic Business Case. The assessment does not account for future events that may radically change travel demands or behaviours.

Heritage buildings would be destroyed for this project, while others would be isolated in a flood of traffic. e.g. terraces next to construction compounds and motorway in Campbell Street.

Residents in south west Sydney will suffer a huge loss of amenity as a result of the existing M5 being stripped of its green space and vegetation, particularly when residents fought so hard to get these green spaces established and thriving. I also strongly object to their concrete noise walls being replaced with transparent barriers. These will be right next to hundreds of homes, who will now be forced to look at (as well as listen to and breathe the fumes of) lanes of motorway traffic just over their fences. It is utterly unacceptable to prioritise the views of passing motorists over the privacy and amenity of people who live in an area.

This EIS fails to model traffic beyond two intersections after this project. This deliberately obscures the threat to King Street and roads in Alexandria. I object to exposing King Street and Edgeware Rd to the threat of becoming clearways.

Residents affected by compulsory acquisitions are 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.

I strongly object to the unacceptable impact the project's construction will have on local residents, businesses and schools. Across the route of this project, people face years of having their streets turned into car parks for construction workers; 24/7 construction noise, vibration, and heavy truck movements; exposure to asbestos, construction dust, and toxic materials; and more. Mitigation is recommended in this EIS, but no information is provided 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.

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.

This project deliberately exposes communities in certain areas to increased pollution. Such an approach values the health and safety of people in certain areas of Sydney over others, and is both unjust and unacceptable. In addition, despite there being no safe level of exposure to fine particulate matter, the proponents want to build this project knowing it will increase these pollutants around much of the project route.

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 air quality study shows that dangerous fine particle pollution already exceeds acceptable levels in some areas in the project areas, and will worsen if this project is built. I also object to the way this and other information about air quality and pollution impacts has been provided in this EIS; it is far too dense and opaque for ordinary residents to

understand. It should go without saying that where public health is concerned, information about negative impacts should be provided in a way that affected residents can understand.

The EIS demonstrates that air quality, even at existing levels, is close to the allowable limits, and will only get worse with a major interchange, road upgrades and ventilation stacks implemented at the St Peters Interchange and surrounds. If new air quality standards as proposed by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) in 2012 are implemented, the New M5 would well exceed allowable air pollution levels.

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). I find it completely unacceptable that AECOM has been paid $13 million of taxpayer money to complete this EIS despite this, and despite it being 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. I also object to AECOM doing the EIS when it has contracts in the rest of the project including Stage 2. This conflict of interest needs to be explained and addressed.

Even with these flaws, tolls on these roads are to be in effect for decades. Many Sydneysiders will not see these roads untolled in their lifetimes. Nor will western Sydney or rural and regional NSW see any investment in their communities to create employment opportunities that would circumvent the need to commute long distances by car to jobs in Sydney's CBD, eastern suburbs and inner city.

The New M5 would cause costly traffic chaos throughout the inner west and south-west Sydney. 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. This EIS also 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, Kingsgrove and Brighton-Le-Sands. I object to building a road that the proponent admits will produce such volumes of traffic that such roads will be beyond capacity. Where traffic is already bad, plans should be to reduce it, not make it worse.

Meanwhile, even this EIS 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. This is because even the proponents know that commuters will be unwilling to pay $6 each way to use either of these toll roads, which is in line with figures in WestConnex's Updated Strategic Business Case that show for almost all of potential users, the value of time saved is less than the cost of using WestConnex.

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.

The delivery of the New M5 and in particular the St Peters Interchange, will have a significant impact on residents and businesses. The increased traffic resulting from this project will impact on urban amenity and will limit the ability for public transport services to operate efficiently due to increased local road congestion.

The EIS assumes that by 2031 the full WestConnex project will be complete. This includes the M4-M5 Link (Stage 3), which will have additional significant impacts on residents and businesses. Nowhere in the EIS are these impacts considered, nor information given to the public to fully consider or understand the implications of the whole WestConnex program.

The analysis of alternatives 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.

The evidence provided by the EIS in support of the project is incomplete and unbalanced, selectively including and excluding impacts from subsequent planned stages of the WestConnex project. The analysis of strategic alternatives in the EIS is cursory and fails to demonstrate the New M5 extension is the best option to meet the needs of a growing Sydney population. The EIS also does not take into consideration the travel patterns of residents and businesses in western or south-western Sydney that the New M5 is intended to serve, nor the wider impacts on inner-Sydney communities affected by the WestConnex program.

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.

The social impact study is little more than a 'cut and paste' job and is insulting to communities where hundreds of tenants and owners have lost homes and others will live in decimated communities. The report exaggerates the potential positive aspects of the project, while the negative aspects are either downplayed, insufficiently detailed or omitted altogether. Where negative economic or social impacts are identified in the report, they are inadequately addressed in terms of management or mitigation actions to be taken.

The statement that the New M5 project is an integrated transport project is false and misleading. It is a motorway that does not provide for improved public transport connections and has not fully considered the active transport component in line with government policy. The City's view is that the government could have delivered a better outcome by focusing on ways to "improve access" that is modally agnostic and more consistent with government's land use policies.

Endangered flora and fauna would be destroyed for this project, including the Green and Golden Bell Frog colony at Arncliffe and the critically endangered Cooks River Castlereagh Ironbark Forest at Kingsgrove/Beverly Hills. Saving these species in particular was a condition of the previous M5 motorway; destroying them now makes a mockery of these legal protections. I also object to the unprofessional analysis of the threat posed by the New M5 to these species and to biodiversity in general, as this section of the EIS attempts to downplay the significance of the flora and fauna threatened by this project and the impact of this project on biodiversity overall.

I am also concerned that the EIS suggests that the breeding ponds of the Green and Golden Bell Frog have not been kept healthy in recent years, especially since the RMS was responsible for building these ponds as a condition of the old M5.

Many public parks would be temporarily or permanently destroyed for this project, including parts of Sydney Park and the M5 Linear Park, along with thousands of mature trees along the route. Even if these trees would be reinstated, it will take decades to achieve the level of canopy that exists.

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.

The increase in road capacity on Euston Road from four lanes to between six and eight, and Campbell Road from two lanes to six will have noise impacts on people living in the area and using Sydney Park.

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 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 proponents have failed to consult with local businesses across the route, many of which would be destroyed by the traffic and/or construction impacts of this project.

The proponent has failed to adequately assess and responsibly handle asbestos, including the huge amounts it has removed ahead of this EIS from the Alexandria Landfill and transported through inner Sydney out to the western suburbs. More toxic asbestos is expected to be dug up and transported from various sites along the New M5 for this project, and the numerous breaches of basic health and safety procedures observed by residents in St Peters, Granville and Erskine Park in this regard have not been properly assessed in this EIS.

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,

Amelie Auzou

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Bob Masters [redacted]
Sent: Friday, 29 January 2016 2:58 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

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).

Global experience and research has shown conclusively that these kinds of toll road mega-projects are hugely expensive and provide only short-term relief from traffic congestion. I have yet to hear of an independent transport expert who backs the project. WestConnex will increase air pollution and traffic, 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.

The strategic justification for the New M5 is weak and inconsistent with the NSW Government's strategic planning and policy framework, despite its inclusion in the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy and the Long Term Transport Master Plan. The project as proposed in this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) does not deliver the broader objectives of WestConnex as stated in the Updated Strategic Business Case (November 2015).

There has been no compelling case made for why WestConnex should be built, and the project should not receive approval and not proceed. This EIS and the Updated Strategic Business Case for WestConnex are clear that the benefits accruing from Stage 2 do not outweigh the costs. Benefits are shown to come once the whole WestConnex project is built according to the Updated Strategic Business Case, and that no benefits exist until all three Stages are delivered (WestConnex Full Scheme: Economic Appraisal, KPMG, 19 November 2015). I am aware that even this has now expanded to include other tollways such as the Sydney Gateway, making it even more likely that this project will provide disbenefits to society if it proceeds as proposed in this EIS, i.e. as a standalone project. This is particularly concerning given there is a significant risk that Stage 3 will not be built.

Fundamentally flawed projects like WestConnex do not account for changing work practices supported by technologies such as teleworking, or flexible office spaces, or that car journeys are dropping as workers elect to work closer to home or use public transport, bicycles or car sharing. It also does not account for trends that will substantially change how people choose to travel in future and reduce the number of cars on the road, such as peak car or driverless cars.

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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.

The EIS lacks rigour and sound analysis, despite the huge volume of documentation. This lack of rigour and analysis is consistent across all chapters and appendices. The project objectives are biased towards a motorway solution, so that any proposed alternative falls short of the proposed solution. Similarly, the work undertaken in the EIS is highly compliance driven, and fails to take into account opportunities or strategic impacts, and the assessment of cumulative impacts is almost negligent.

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A larger question raised by the proposed New M5 project is what happens if capacity on this motorway is reached? The existing M5 East has proven that a new motorway can easily reach or exceed capacity within a 15 year timeframe. If that outcome is realised for the New M5, Sydney will be left with a transport legacy that cannot support the jobs growth in the west consistent with Government policy. Sydney needs to manage demand for existing road assets to maximise economically productive use and deliver sustainable transport as a real alternative to car travel. International cities such as Los Angeles are moving away from their dominant car-based culture to invest in public transport in order to build the sustainability and attractiveness of their city for residents, businesses and visitors alike.

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Heritage buildings would be destroyed for this project, while others would be isolated in a flood of traffic. e.g. terraces next to construction compounds and motorway in Campbell Street.

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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.

This project deliberately exposes communities in certain areas to increased pollution. Such an approach values the health and safety of people in certain areas of Sydney over others, and is both unjust and unacceptable. In addition, despite there being no safe level of exposure to fine particulate matter, the proponents want to build this project knowing it will increase these pollutants around much of the project route.

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 EIS assumes that by 2031 the full WestConnex project will be complete. This includes the M4-M5 Link (Stage 3), which will have additional significant impacts on residents and businesses. Nowhere in the EIS are these impacts considered, nor information given to the public to fully consider or understand the implications of the whole WestConnex program.

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Endangered flora and fauna would be destroyed for this project, including the Green and Golden Bell Frog colony at Arncliffe and the critically endangered Cooks River Castlereagh Ironbark Forest at Kingsgrove/Beverly Hills. Saving these species in particular was a condition of the previous M5 motorway; destroying them now makes a mockery of these legal protections. I also object to the unprofessional analysis of the threat posed by the New M5 to these species and to biodiversity in general, as this section of the EIS attempts to downplay the significance of the flora and fauna threatened by this project and the impact of this project on biodiversity overall.

I am also concerned that the EIS suggests that the breeding ponds of the Green and Golden Bell Frog have not been kept healthy in recent years, especially since the RMS was responsible for building these ponds as a condition of the old M5.

Many public parks would be temporarily or permanently destroyed for this project, including parts of Sydney Park and the M5 Linear Park, along with thousands of mature trees along the route. Even if these trees would be reinstated, it will take decades to achieve the level of canopy that exists.

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.

The increase in road capacity on Euston Road from four lanes to between six and eight, and Campbell Road from two lanes to six will have noise impacts on people living in the area and using Sydney Park.

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 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 proponents have failed to consult with local businesses across the route, many of which would be destroyed by the traffic and/or construction impacts of this project.

The proponent has failed to adequately assess and responsibly handle asbestos, including the huge amounts it has removed ahead of this EIS from the Alexandria Landfill and transported through inner Sydney out to the western suburbs. More toxic asbestos is expected to be dug up and transported from various sites along the New M5 for this project, and the numerous breaches of basic health and safety procedures observed by residents in St Peters, Granville and Erskine Park in this regard have not been properly assessed in this EIS.

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,

Bob Masters

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Ainsley Bennell [redacted]
Sent: Friday, 29 January 2016 2:50 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

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).

Before the points are outlined below I also find it abhorrent and absurd that public roads for which taxpayers fund the construction are then requiring taxpayers to pay outrageous tolls to use them!! A blatant double dipping and shameful revenue raising by the government.

Global experience and research has shown conclusively that these kinds of toll road mega-projects are hugely expensive and provide only short-term relief from traffic congestion. I have yet to hear of an independent transport expert who backs the project. WestConnex will increase air pollution and traffic, 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.

The strategic justification for the New M5 is weak and inconsistent with the NSW Government's strategic planning and policy framework, despite its inclusion in the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy and the Long Term Transport Master Plan. The project as proposed in this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) does not deliver the broader objectives of WestConnex as stated in the Updated Strategic Business Case (November 2015).

There has been no compelling case made for why WestConnex should be built, and the project should not receive approval and not proceed. This EIS and the Updated Strategic Business Case for WestConnex are clear that the benefits accruing from Stage 2 do not outweigh the costs. Benefits are shown to come once the whole WestConnex project is built according to the Updated Strategic Business Case, and that no benefits exist until all three Stages are delivered (WestConnex Full Scheme: Economic Appraisal, KPMG, 19 November 2015). I am aware that even this has now expanded to include other tollways such as the Sydney Gateway, making it even more likely that this project will provide disbenefits to society if it proceeds as proposed in this EIS, i.e. as a standalone project. This is particularly concerning given there is a significant risk that Stage 3 will not be built.

Fundamentally flawed projects like WestConnex do not account for changing work practices supported by technologies such as teleworking, or flexible office spaces, or that car journeys are dropping as workers elect to

work closer to home or use public transport, bicycles or car sharing. It also does not account for trends that will substantially change how people choose to travel in future and reduce the number of cars on the road, such as peak car or driverless cars.

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 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 EIS lacks rigour and sound analysis, despite the huge volume of documentation. This lack of rigour and analysis is consistent across all chapters and appendices. The project objectives are biased towards a motorway solution, so that any proposed alternative falls short of the proposed solution. Similarly, the work undertaken in the EIS is highly compliance driven, and fails to take into account opportunities or strategic impacts, and the assessment of cumulative impacts is almost negligent.

WestConnex is presented as a 'transformational' infrastructure project, however, the EIS is not clear on what transformation it will achieve. There is no demonstration that WestConnex delivers transformation in terms of social or economic improvement, or better land use outcomes. To the contrary, WestConnex will deliver a piece of infrastructure that increases traffic on local roads, does not enable value capture or urban renewal, and is not consistent with the government's land use priorities or the proposal in the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy.

Traffic on the existing M5 East exceeded capacity "within months" of opening (New M5 Project Overview, November 2015), including recent road widening. This lack of capacity is, in part, the rationale for the construction of the New M5. Managing demand on the M5 East and providing high quality public transport alternatives for those who can change mode would be a more effective long term solution that simply a 'predict and provide' approach, yet this alternative - along with many others - has not been assessed.

A larger question raised by the proposed New M5 project is what happens if capacity on this motorway is reached? The existing M5 East has proven that a new motorway can easily reach or exceed capacity within a 15 year timeframe. If that outcome is realised for the New M5, Sydney will be left with a transport legacy that cannot support the jobs growth in the west consistent with Government policy. Sydney needs to manage demand for existing road assets to maximise economically productive use and deliver sustainable transport as a real alternative to car travel. International cities such as Los Angeles are moving away from their dominant car-based culture to invest in public transport in order to build the sustainability and attractiveness of their city for residents, businesses and visitors alike.

The New M5 project has only been assessed to 2031, which does not take into account the 45 year concession period for the asset as stated in the WestConnex Updated Strategic Business Case. The assessment does not account for future events that may radically change travel demands or behaviours.

Heritage buildings would be destroyed for this project, while others would be isolated in a flood of traffic. e.g. terraces next to construction compounds and motorway in Campbell Street.

Residents in south west Sydney will suffer a huge loss of amenity as a result of the existing M5 being stripped of its green space and vegetation, particularly when residents fought so hard to get these green spaces established and thriving. I also strongly object to their concrete noise walls being replaced with transparent barriers. These will be right next to hundreds of homes, who will now be forced to look at (as well as listen to and breathe the fumes of) lanes of motorway traffic just over their fences. It is utterly unacceptable to prioritise the views of passing motorists over the privacy and amenity of people who live in an area.

This EIS fails to model traffic beyond two intersections after this project. This deliberately obscures the threat to King Street and roads in Alexandria. I object to exposing King Street and Edgeware Rd to the threat of becoming clearways.

Residents affected by compulsory acquisitions are 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.

I strongly object to the unacceptable impact the project's construction will have on local residents, businesses and schools. Across the route of this project, people face years of having their streets turned into car parks for construction workers; 24/7 construction noise, vibration, and heavy truck movements; exposure to asbestos, construction dust, and toxic materials; and more. Mitigation is recommended in this EIS, but no information is provided 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.

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.

This project deliberately exposes communities in certain areas to increased pollution. Such an approach values the health and safety of people in certain areas of Sydney over others, and is both unjust and unacceptable. In addition, despite there being no safe level of exposure to fine particulate matter, the proponents want to build this project knowing it will increase these pollutants around much of the project route.

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 air quality study shows that dangerous fine particle pollution already exceeds acceptable levels in some areas in the project areas, and will worsen if this project is built. I also object to the way this and other information about air quality and pollution impacts has been provided in this EIS; it is far too dense and opaque for ordinary residents to understand. It should go without saying that where public health is concerned, information about negative impacts should be provided in a way that affected residents can understand.

The EIS demonstrates that air quality, even at existing levels, is close to the allowable limits, and will only get worse with a major interchange, road upgrades and ventilation stacks implemented at the St Peters Interchange and surrounds. If new air quality standards as proposed by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) in 2012 are implemented, the New M5 would well exceed allowable air pollution levels.

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). I find it completely unacceptable that AECOM has been paid $13 million of taxpayer money to complete this EIS despite this, and despite it being 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. I also object to AECOM doing the EIS when it has contracts in the rest of the project including Stage 2. This conflict of interest needs to be explained and addressed.

Even with these flaws, tolls on these roads are to be in effect for decades. Many Sydneysiders will not see these roads untolled in their lifetimes. Nor will western Sydney or rural and regional NSW see any investment in their communities to create employment opportunities that would circumvent the need to commute long distances by car to jobs in Sydney's CBD, eastern suburbs and inner city.

The New M5 would cause costly traffic chaos throughout the inner west and south-west Sydney. 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. This EIS also 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, Kingsgrove and Brighton-Le-Sands. I object to building a road that the proponent admits will produce such volumes of traffic that such roads will be beyond capacity. Where traffic is already bad, plans should be to reduce it, not make it worse.

Meanwhile, even this EIS 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. This is because even the proponents know that commuters will be unwilling to pay $6 each way to use either of these toll roads, which is in line with figures in WestConnex's Updated Strategic Business Case that show for almost all of potential users, the value of time saved is less than the cost of using WestConnex.

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.

The delivery of the New M5 and in particular the St Peters Interchange, will have a significant impact on residents and businesses. The increased traffic resulting from this project will impact on urban amenity and will limit the ability for public transport services to operate efficiently due to increased local road congestion.

The EIS assumes that by 2031 the full WestConnex project will be complete. This includes the M4-M5 Link (Stage 3), which will have additional significant impacts on residents and businesses. Nowhere in the EIS are these impacts considered, nor information given to the public to fully consider or understand the implications of the whole WestConnex program.

The analysis of alternatives 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.

The evidence provided by the EIS in support of the project is incomplete and unbalanced, selectively including and excluding impacts from subsequent planned stages of the WestConnex project. The analysis of strategic alternatives in the EIS is cursory and fails to demonstrate the New M5 extension is the best option to meet the needs of a growing Sydney population. The EIS also does not take into consideration the travel patterns of residents and businesses in western or south-western Sydney that the New M5 is intended to serve, nor the wider impacts on inner-Sydney communities affected by the WestConnex program.

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.

The social impact study is little more than a 'cut and paste' job and is insulting to communities where hundreds of tenants and owners have lost homes and others will live in decimated communities. The report exaggerates the potential positive aspects of the project, while the negative aspects are either downplayed, insufficiently detailed or omitted altogether. Where negative economic or social impacts are identified in the report, they are inadequately addressed in terms of management or mitigation actions to be taken.

The statement that the New M5 project is an integrated transport project is false and misleading. It is a motorway that does not provide for improved public transport connections and has not fully considered the active transport component in line with government policy. The City's view is that the government could have delivered a better outcome by focusing on ways to "improve access" that is modally agnostic and more consistent with government's land use policies.

Endangered flora and fauna would be destroyed for this project, including the Green and Golden Bell Frog colony at Arncliffe and the critically endangered Cooks River Castlereagh Ironbark Forest at Kingsgrove/Beverly Hills. Saving these species in particular was a condition of the previous M5 motorway; destroying them now makes a mockery of these legal protections. I also object to the unprofessional analysis of the threat posed by the New M5 to these species and to biodiversity in general, as this section of the EIS attempts to downplay the significance of the flora and fauna threatened by this project and the impact of this project on biodiversity overall.

I am also concerned that the EIS suggests that the breeding ponds of the Green and Golden Bell Frog have not been kept healthy in recent years, especially since the RMS was responsible for building these ponds as a condition of the old M5.

Many public parks would be temporarily or permanently destroyed for this project, including parts of Sydney Park and the M5 Linear Park, along with thousands of mature trees along the route. Even if these trees would be reinstated, it will take decades to achieve the level of canopy that exists.

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.

The increase in road capacity on Euston Road from four lanes to between six and eight, and Campbell Road from two lanes to six will have noise impacts on people living in the area and using Sydney Park.

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 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 proponents have failed to consult with local businesses across the route, many of which would be destroyed by the traffic and/or construction impacts of this project.

The proponent has failed to adequately assess and responsibly handle asbestos, including the huge amounts it has removed ahead of this EIS from the Alexandria Landfill and transported through inner Sydney out to the western suburbs. More toxic asbestos is expected to be dug up and transported from various sites along the New M5 for this project, and the numerous breaches of basic health and safety procedures observed by residents in St Peters, Granville and Erskine Park in this regard have not been properly assessed in this EIS.

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,

Ainsley Bennell

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Janet Dandy-Ward [redacted]
Sent: Friday, 29 January 2016 2:50 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

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).

Global experience and research has shown conclusively that these kinds of toll road mega-projects are hugely expensive and provide only short-term relief from traffic congestion. I have yet to hear of an independent transport expert who backs the project. WestConnex will increase air pollution and traffic, 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.

The strategic justification for the New M5 is weak and inconsistent with the NSW Government's strategic planning and policy framework, despite its inclusion in the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy and the Long Term Transport Master Plan. The project as proposed in this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) does not deliver the broader objectives of WestConnex as stated in the Updated Strategic Business Case (November 2015).

There has been no compelling case made for why WestConnex should be built, and the project should not receive approval and not proceed. This EIS and the Updated Strategic Business Case for WestConnex are clear that the benefits accruing from Stage 2 do not outweigh the costs. Benefits are shown to come once the whole WestConnex project is built according to the Updated Strategic Business Case, and that no benefits exist until all three Stages are delivered (WestConnex Full Scheme: Economic Appraisal, KPMG, 19 November 2015). I am aware that even this has now expanded to include other tollways such as the Sydney Gateway, making it even more likely that this project will provide disbenefits to society if it proceeds as proposed in this EIS, i.e. as a standalone project. This is particularly concerning given there is a significant risk that Stage 3 will not be built.

Fundamentally flawed projects like WestConnex do not account for changing work practices supported by technologies such as teleworking, or flexible office spaces, or that car journeys are dropping as workers elect to work closer to home or use public transport, bicycles or car sharing. It also does not account for trends that will substantially change how people choose to travel in future and reduce the number of cars on the road, such as peak car or driverless cars.

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 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 EIS lacks rigour and sound analysis, despite the huge volume of documentation. This lack of rigour and analysis is consistent across all chapters and appendices. The project objectives are biased towards a motorway solution, so that any proposed alternative falls short of the proposed solution. Similarly, the work undertaken in the EIS is highly compliance driven, and fails to take into account opportunities or strategic impacts, and the assessment of cumulative impacts is almost negligent.

WestConnex is presented as a 'transformational' infrastructure project, however, the EIS is not clear on what transformation it will achieve. There is no demonstration that WestConnex delivers transformation in terms of social or economic improvement, or better land use outcomes. To the contrary, WestConnex will deliver a piece of infrastructure that increases traffic on local roads, does not enable value capture or urban renewal, and is not consistent with the government's land use priorities or the proposal in the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy.

Traffic on the existing M5 East exceeded capacity "within months" of opening (New M5 Project Overview, November 2015), including recent road widening. This lack of capacity is, in part, the rationale for the construction of the New M5. Managing demand on the M5 East and providing high quality public transport alternatives for those who can change mode would be a more effective long term solution that simply a 'predict and provide' approach, yet this alternative - along with many others - has not been assessed.

A larger question raised by the proposed New M5 project is what happens if capacity on this motorway is reached? The existing M5 East has proven that a new motorway can easily reach or exceed capacity within a 15 year timeframe. If that outcome is realised for the New M5, Sydney will be left with a transport legacy that cannot support the jobs growth in the west consistent with Government policy. Sydney needs to manage demand for existing road assets to maximise economically productive use and deliver sustainable transport as a real alternative to car travel. International cities such as Los Angeles are moving away from their dominant car-based culture to invest in public transport in order to build the sustainability and attractiveness of their city for residents, businesses and visitors alike.

The New M5 project has only been assessed to 2031, which does not take into account the 45 year concession period for the asset as stated in the WestConnex Updated Strategic Business Case. The assessment does not account for future events that may radically change travel demands or behaviours.

Heritage buildings would be destroyed for this project, while others would be isolated in a flood of traffic. e.g. terraces next to construction compounds and motorway in Campbell Street.

Residents in south west Sydney will suffer a huge loss of amenity as a result of the existing M5 being stripped of its green space and vegetation, particularly when residents fought so hard to get these green spaces established and thriving. I also strongly object to their concrete noise walls being replaced with transparent barriers. These will be right next to hundreds of homes, who will now be forced to look at (as well as listen to and breathe the fumes of) lanes of motorway traffic just over their fences. It is utterly unacceptable to prioritise the views of passing motorists over the privacy and amenity of people who live in an area.

This EIS fails to model traffic beyond two intersections after this project. This deliberately obscures the threat to King Street and roads in Alexandria. I object to exposing King Street and Edgeware Rd to the threat of becoming clearways.

Residents affected by compulsory acquisitions are 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.

I strongly object to the unacceptable impact the project's construction will have on local residents, businesses and schools. Across the route of this project, people face years of having their streets turned into car parks for construction workers; 24/7 construction noise, vibration, and heavy truck movements; exposure to asbestos, construction dust, and toxic materials; and more. Mitigation is recommended in this EIS, but no information is provided 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.

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.

This project deliberately exposes communities in certain areas to increased pollution. Such an approach values the health and safety of people in certain areas of Sydney over others, and is both unjust and unacceptable. In addition, despite there being no safe level of exposure to fine particulate matter, the proponents want to build this project knowing it will increase these pollutants around much of the project route.

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 air quality study shows that dangerous fine particle pollution already exceeds acceptable levels in some areas in the project areas, and will worsen if this project is built. I also object to the way this and other information about air quality and pollution impacts has been provided in this EIS; it is far too dense and opaque for ordinary residents to

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Even with these flaws, tolls on these roads are to be in effect for decades. Many Sydneysiders will not see these roads untolled in their lifetimes. Nor will western Sydney or rural and regional NSW see any investment in their communities to create employment opportunities that would circumvent the need to commute long distances by car to jobs in Sydney's CBD, eastern suburbs and inner city.

The New M5 would cause costly traffic chaos throughout the inner west and south-west Sydney. 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. This EIS also 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, Kingsgrove and Brighton-Le-Sands. I object to building a road that the proponent admits will produce such volumes of traffic that such roads will be beyond capacity. Where traffic is already bad, plans should be to reduce it, not make it worse.

Meanwhile, even this EIS 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. This is because even the proponents know that commuters will be unwilling to pay $6 each way to use either of these toll roads, which is in line with figures in WestConnex's Updated Strategic Business Case that show for almost all of potential users, the value of time saved is less than the cost of using WestConnex.

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.

The delivery of the New M5 and in particular the St Peters Interchange, will have a significant impact on residents and businesses. The increased traffic resulting from this project will impact on urban amenity and will limit the ability for public transport services to operate efficiently due to increased local road congestion.

The EIS assumes that by 2031 the full WestConnex project will be complete. This includes the M4-M5 Link (Stage 3), which will have additional significant impacts on residents and businesses. Nowhere in the EIS are these impacts considered, nor information given to the public to fully consider or understand the implications of the whole WestConnex program.

The analysis of alternatives 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.

The evidence provided by the EIS in support of the project is incomplete and unbalanced, selectively including and excluding impacts from subsequent planned stages of the WestConnex project. The analysis of strategic alternatives in the EIS is cursory and fails to demonstrate the New M5 extension is the best option to meet the needs of a growing Sydney population. The EIS also does not take into consideration the travel patterns of residents and businesses in western or south-western Sydney that the New M5 is intended to serve, nor the wider impacts on inner-Sydney communities affected by the WestConnex program.

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.

The social impact study is little more than a 'cut and paste' job and is insulting to communities where hundreds of tenants and owners have lost homes and others will live in decimated communities. The report exaggerates the potential positive aspects of the project, while the negative aspects are either downplayed, insufficiently detailed or omitted altogether. Where negative economic or social impacts are identified in the report, they are inadequately addressed in terms of management or mitigation actions to be taken.

The statement that the New M5 project is an integrated transport project is false and misleading. It is a motorway that does not provide for improved public transport connections and has not fully considered the active transport component in line with government policy. The City's view is that the government could have delivered a better outcome by focusing on ways to "improve access" that is modally agnostic and more consistent with government's land use policies.

Endangered flora and fauna would be destroyed for this project, including the Green and Golden Bell Frog colony at Arncliffe and the critically endangered Cooks River Castlereagh Ironbark Forest at Kingsgrove/Beverly Hills. Saving these species in particular was a condition of the previous M5 motorway; destroying them now makes a mockery of these legal protections. I also object to the unprofessional analysis of the threat posed by the New M5 to these species and to biodiversity in general, as this section of the EIS attempts to downplay the significance of the flora and fauna threatened by this project and the impact of this project on biodiversity overall.

I am also concerned that the EIS suggests that the breeding ponds of the Green and Golden Bell Frog have not been kept healthy in recent years, especially since the RMS was responsible for building these ponds as a condition of the old M5.

Many public parks would be temporarily or permanently destroyed for this project, including parts of Sydney Park and the M5 Linear Park, along with thousands of mature trees along the route. Even if these trees would be reinstated, it will take decades to achieve the level of canopy that exists.

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.

The increase in road capacity on Euston Road from four lanes to between six and eight, and Campbell Road from two lanes to six will have noise impacts on people living in the area and using Sydney Park.

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 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 proponents have failed to consult with local businesses across the route, many of which would be destroyed by the traffic and/or construction impacts of this project.

The whole consultation process has been a sham. What a terrible Mike Baird's Govt will have, when he is the premier who prides himself on listening to the community (ABC702 27/1/16)

The proponent has failed to adequately assess and responsibly handle asbestos, including the huge amounts it has removed ahead of this EIS from the Alexandria Landfill and transported through inner Sydney out to the western suburbs. More toxic asbestos is expected to be dug up and transported from various sites along the New M5 for this project, and the numerous breaches of basic health and safety procedures observed by residents in St Peters, Granville and Erskine Park in this regard have not been properly assessed in this EIS.

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,

Janet Dandy-Ward

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Peter Bishop [redacted]
Sent: Friday, 29 January 2016 2:44 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

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). My daughter, son-in-law and young family live in the immediate vicinity of the Campbell Road widening and I am concerned about the amenity, economic and social impact the widening will have on their home. In addition my granddaughter attends the St Peters Pre-School and as a nurse for over fifty years I have huge knowledge of the impact which the increases in traffic will impact on the school including air pollution, noise, dust, smell, amenity and safe access to and from school.

Global experience and research has shown conclusively that these kinds of toll road mega-projects are hugely expensive and provide only short-term relief from traffic congestion. I have yet to hear of an independent transport expert who backs the project. WestConnex will increase air pollution and traffic, 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.

The strategic justification for the New M5 is weak and inconsistent with the NSW Government's strategic planning and policy framework, despite its inclusion in the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy and the Long Term Transport Master Plan. The project as proposed in this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) does not deliver the broader objectives of WestConnex as stated in the Updated Strategic Business Case (November 2015).

There has been no compelling case made for why WestConnex should be built, and the project should not receive approval and not proceed. This EIS and the Updated Strategic Business Case for WestConnex are clear that the benefits accruing from Stage 2 do not outweigh the costs. Benefits are shown to come once the whole WestConnex project is built according to the Updated Strategic Business Case, and that no benefits exist until all three Stages are delivered (WestConnex Full Scheme: Economic Appraisal, KPMG, 19 November 2015). I am aware that even this has now expanded to include other tollways such as the Sydney Gateway, making it even more likely that this project will provide disbenefits to society if it proceeds as proposed in this EIS, i.e. as a standalone project. This is particularly concerning given there is a significant risk that Stage 3 will not be built.

Fundamentally flawed projects like WestConnex do not account for changing work practices supported by technologies such as teleworking, or flexible office spaces, or that car journeys are dropping as workers elect to work closer to home or use public transport, bicycles or car sharing. It also does not account for trends that will

substantially change how people choose to travel in future and reduce the number of cars on the road, such as peak car or driverless cars.

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 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 EIS lacks rigour and sound analysis, despite the huge volume of documentation. This lack of rigour and analysis is consistent across all chapters and appendices. The project objectives are biased towards a motorway solution, so that any proposed alternative falls short of the proposed solution. Similarly, the work undertaken in the EIS is highly compliance driven, and fails to take into account opportunities or strategic impacts, and the assessment of cumulative impacts is almost negligent.

WestConnex is presented as a 'transformational' infrastructure project, however, the EIS is not clear on what transformation it will achieve. There is no demonstration that WestConnex delivers transformation in terms of social or economic improvement, or better land use outcomes. To the contrary, WestConnex will deliver a piece of infrastructure that increases traffic on local roads, does not enable value capture or urban renewal, and is not consistent with the government's land use priorities or the proposal in the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy.

Traffic on the existing M5 East exceeded capacity "within months" of opening (New M5 Project Overview, November 2015), including recent road widening. This lack of capacity is, in part, the rationale for the construction of the New M5. Managing demand on the M5 East and providing high quality public transport alternatives for those who can change mode would be a more effective long term solution that simply a 'predict and provide' approach, yet this alternative - along with many others - has not been assessed.

A larger question raised by the proposed New M5 project is what happens if capacity on this motorway is reached? The existing M5 East has proven that a new motorway can easily reach or exceed capacity within a 15 year timeframe. If that outcome is realised for the New M5, Sydney will be left with a transport legacy that cannot support the jobs growth in the west consistent with Government policy. Sydney needs to manage demand for existing road assets to maximise economically productive use and deliver sustainable transport as a real alternative to car travel. International cities such as Los Angeles are moving away from their dominant car-based culture to invest in public transport in order to build the sustainability and attractiveness of their city for residents, businesses and visitors alike.

The New M5 project has only been assessed to 2031, which does not take into account the 45 year concession period for the asset as stated in the WestConnex Updated Strategic Business Case. The assessment does not account for future events that may radically change travel demands or behaviours.

Heritage buildings would be destroyed for this project, while others would be isolated in a flood of traffic. e.g. terraces next to construction compounds and motorway in Campbell Street.

Residents in south west Sydney will suffer a huge loss of amenity as a result of the existing M5 being stripped of its green space and vegetation, particularly when residents fought so hard to get these green spaces established and thriving. I also strongly object to their concrete noise walls being replaced with transparent barriers. These will be right next to hundreds of homes, who will now be forced to look at (as well as listen to and breathe the fumes of) lanes of motorway traffic just over their fences. It is utterly unacceptable to prioritise the views of passing motorists over the privacy and amenity of people who live in an area.

This EIS fails to model traffic beyond two intersections after this project. This deliberately obscures the threat to King Street and roads in Alexandria. I object to exposing King Street and Edgeware Rd to the threat of becoming clearways.

Residents affected by compulsory acquisitions are 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.

I strongly object to the unacceptable impact the project's construction will have on local residents, businesses and schools. Across the route of this project, people face years of having their streets turned into car parks for construction workers; 24/7 construction noise, vibration, and heavy truck movements; exposure to asbestos, construction dust, and toxic materials; and more. Mitigation is recommended in this EIS, but no information is provided 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.

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.

This project deliberately exposes communities in certain areas to increased pollution. Such an approach values the health and safety of people in certain areas of Sydney over others, and is both unjust and unacceptable. In addition, despite there being no safe level of exposure to fine particulate matter, the proponents want to build this project knowing it will increase these pollutants around much of the project route.

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 air quality study shows that dangerous fine particle pollution already exceeds acceptable levels in some areas in the project areas, and will worsen if this project is built. I also object to the way this and other information about air quality and pollution impacts has been provided in this EIS; it is far too dense and opaque for ordinary residents to understand. It should go without saying that where public health is concerned, information about negative impacts should be provided in a way that affected residents can understand.

The EIS demonstrates that air quality, even at existing levels, is close to the allowable limits, and will only get worse with a major interchange, road upgrades and ventilation stacks implemented at the St Peters Interchange and surrounds. If new air quality standards as proposed by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) in 2012 are implemented, the New M5 would well exceed allowable air pollution levels.

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). I find it completely unacceptable that AECOM has been paid $13 million of taxpayer money to complete this EIS despite this, and despite it being 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. I also object to AECOM doing the EIS when it has contracts in the rest of the project including Stage 2. This conflict of interest needs to be explained and addressed.

Even with these flaws, tolls on these roads are to be in effect for decades. Many Sydneysiders will not see these roads untolled in their lifetimes. Nor will western Sydney or rural and regional NSW see any investment in their communities to create employment opportunities that would circumvent the need to commute long distances by car to jobs in Sydney's CBD, eastern suburbs and inner city.

The New M5 would cause costly traffic chaos throughout the inner west and south-west Sydney. 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. This EIS also 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, Kingsgrove and Brighton-Le-Sands. I object to building a road that the proponent admits will produce such volumes of traffic that such roads will be beyond capacity. Where traffic is already bad, plans should be to reduce it, not make it worse.

Meanwhile, even this EIS 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. This is because even the proponents know that commuters will be unwilling to pay $6 each way to use either of these toll roads, which is in line with figures in WestConnex's Updated Strategic Business Case that show for almost all of potential users, the value of time saved is less than the cost of using WestConnex.

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.

The delivery of the New M5 and in particular the St Peters Interchange, will have a significant impact on residents and businesses. The increased traffic resulting from this project will impact on urban amenity and will limit the ability for public transport services to operate efficiently due to increased local road congestion.

The EIS assumes that by 2031 the full WestConnex project will be complete. This includes the M4-M5 Link (Stage 3), which will have additional significant impacts on residents and businesses. Nowhere in the EIS are these impacts considered, nor information given to the public to fully consider or understand the implications of the whole WestConnex program.

The analysis of alternatives 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.

The evidence provided by the EIS in support of the project is incomplete and unbalanced, selectively including and excluding impacts from subsequent planned stages of the WestConnex project. The analysis of strategic alternatives in the EIS is cursory and fails to demonstrate the New M5 extension is the best option to meet the needs of a growing Sydney population. The EIS also does not take into consideration the travel patterns of residents and businesses in western or south-western Sydney that the New M5 is intended to serve, nor the wider impacts on inner-Sydney communities affected by the WestConnex program.

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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component in line with government policy. The City's view is that the government could have delivered a better outcome by focusing on ways to "improve access" that is modally agnostic and more consistent with government's land use policies.

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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,

Peter Bishop

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Jenny bunyon [redacted]
Sent: Friday, 29 January 2016 2:44 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

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

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The strategic justification for the New M5 is weak and inconsistent with the NSW Government's strategic planning and policy framework, despite its inclusion in the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy and the Long Term Transport Master Plan. The project as proposed in this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) does not deliver the broader objectives of WestConnex as stated in the Updated Strategic Business Case (November 2015).

There has been no compelling case made for why WestConnex should be built, and the project should not receive approval and not proceed. This EIS and the Updated Strategic Business Case for WestConnex are clear that the benefits accruing from Stage 2 do not outweigh the costs. Benefits are shown to come once the whole WestConnex project is built according to the Updated Strategic Business Case, and that no benefits exist until all three Stages are delivered (WestConnex Full Scheme: Economic Appraisal, KPMG, 19 November 2015). I am aware that even this has now expanded to include other tollways such as the Sydney Gateway, making it even more likely that this project will provide disbenefits to society if it proceeds as proposed in this EIS, i.e. as a standalone project. This is particularly concerning given there is a significant risk that Stage 3 will not be built.

Fundamentally flawed projects like WestConnex do not account for changing work practices supported by technologies such as teleworking, or flexible office spaces, or that car journeys are dropping as workers elect to work closer to home or use public transport, bicycles or car sharing. It also does not account for trends that will substantially change how people choose to travel in future and reduce the number of cars on the road, such as peak car or driverless cars.

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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.

The delivery of the New M5 and in particular the St Peters Interchange, will have a significant impact on residents and businesses. The increased traffic resulting from this project will impact on urban amenity and will limit the ability for public transport services to operate efficiently due to increased local road congestion.

The EIS assumes that by 2031 the full WestConnex project will be complete. This includes the M4-M5 Link (Stage 3), which will have additional significant impacts on residents and businesses. Nowhere in the EIS are these impacts considered, nor information given to the public to fully consider or understand the implications of the whole WestConnex program.

The analysis of alternatives 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.

The evidence provided by the EIS in support of the project is incomplete and unbalanced, selectively including and excluding impacts from subsequent planned stages of the WestConnex project. The analysis of strategic alternatives in the EIS is cursory and fails to demonstrate the New M5 extension is the best option to meet the needs of a growing Sydney population. The EIS also does not take into consideration the travel patterns of residents and businesses in western or south-western Sydney that the New M5 is intended to serve, nor the wider impacts on inner-Sydney communities affected by the WestConnex program.

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.

The social impact study is little more than a 'cut and paste' job and is insulting to communities where hundreds of tenants and owners have lost homes and others will live in decimated communities. The report exaggerates the potential positive aspects of the project, while the negative aspects are either downplayed, insufficiently detailed or omitted altogether. Where negative economic or social impacts are identified in the report, they are inadequately addressed in terms of management or mitigation actions to be taken.

The statement that the New M5 project is an integrated transport project is false and misleading. It is a motorway that does not provide for improved public transport connections and has not fully considered the active transport component in line with government policy. The City's view is that the government could have delivered a better outcome by focusing on ways to "improve access" that is modally agnostic and more consistent with government's land use policies.

Endangered flora and fauna would be destroyed for this project, including the Green and Golden Bell Frog colony at Arncliffe and the critically endangered Cooks River Castlereagh Ironbark Forest at Kingsgrove/Beverly Hills. Saving these species in particular was a condition of the previous M5 motorway; destroying them now makes a mockery of these legal protections. I also object to the unprofessional analysis of the threat posed by the New M5 to these species and to biodiversity in general, as this section of the EIS attempts to downplay the significance of the flora and fauna threatened by this project and the impact of this project on biodiversity overall.

I am also concerned that the EIS suggests that the breeding ponds of the Green and Golden Bell Frog have not been kept healthy in recent years, especially since the RMS was responsible for building these ponds as a condition of the old M5.

Many public parks would be temporarily or permanently destroyed for this project, including parts of Sydney Park and the M5 Linear Park, along with thousands of mature trees along the route. Even if these trees would be reinstated, it will take decades to achieve the level of canopy that exists.

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.

The increase in road capacity on Euston Road from four lanes to between six and eight, and Campbell Road from two lanes to six will have noise impacts on people living in the area and using Sydney Park.

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 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 proponents have failed to consult with local businesses across the route, many of which would be destroyed by the traffic and/or construction impacts of this project.

The proponent has failed to adequately assess and responsibly handle asbestos, including the huge amounts it has removed ahead of this EIS from the Alexandria Landfill and transported through inner Sydney out to the western suburbs. More toxic asbestos is expected to be dug up and transported from various sites along the New M5 for this project, and the numerous breaches of basic health and safety procedures observed by residents in St Peters, Granville and Erskine Park in this regard have not been properly assessed in this EIS.

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,

Jenny bunyon

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted] 12431

From: Isobel Bishop [redacted]
Sent: Friday, 29 January 2016 2:43 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

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). My daughter, son-in-law and young family live in the immediate vicinity of the Campbell Road widening and I am concerned about the amenity, economic and social impact the widening will have on their home. In addition my granddaughter attends the St Peters Pre-School and as a nurse for over fifty years I have huge knowledge of the impact which the increases in traffic will impact on the school including air pollution, noise, dust, smell, amenity and safe access to and from school.

Global experience and research has shown conclusively that these kinds of toll road mega-projects are hugely expensive and provide only short-term relief from traffic congestion. I have yet to hear of an independent transport expert who backs the project. WestConnex will increase air pollution and traffic, 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.

The strategic justification for the New M5 is weak and inconsistent with the NSW Government's strategic planning and policy framework, despite its inclusion in the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy and the Long Term Transport Master Plan. The project as proposed in this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) does not deliver the broader objectives of WestConnex as stated in the Updated Strategic Business Case (November 2015).

There has been no compelling case made for why WestConnex should be built, and the project should not receive approval and not proceed. This EIS and the Updated Strategic Business Case for WestConnex are clear that the benefits accruing from Stage 2 do not outweigh the costs. Benefits are shown to come once the whole WestConnex project is built according to the Updated Strategic Business Case, and that no benefits exist until all three Stages are delivered (WestConnex Full Scheme: Economic Appraisal, KPMG, 19 November 2015). I am aware that even this has now expanded to include other tollways such as the Sydney Gateway, making it even more likely that this project will provide disbenefits to society if it proceeds as proposed in this EIS, i.e. as a standalone project. This is particularly concerning given there is a significant risk that Stage 3 will not be built.

Fundamentally flawed projects like WestConnex do not account for changing work practices supported by technologies such as teleworking, or flexible office spaces, or that car journeys are dropping as workers elect to work closer to home or use public transport, bicycles or car sharing. It also does not account for trends that will

substantially change how people choose to travel in future and reduce the number of cars on the road, such as peak car or driverless cars.

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 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 EIS lacks rigour and sound analysis, despite the huge volume of documentation. This lack of rigour and analysis is consistent across all chapters and appendices. The project objectives are biased towards a motorway solution, so that any proposed alternative falls short of the proposed solution. Similarly, the work undertaken in the EIS is highly compliance driven, and fails to take into account opportunities or strategic impacts, and the assessment of cumulative impacts is almost negligent.

WestConnex is presented as a 'transformational' infrastructure project, however, the EIS is not clear on what transformation it will achieve. There is no demonstration that WestConnex delivers transformation in terms of social or economic improvement, or better land use outcomes. To the contrary, WestConnex will deliver a piece of infrastructure that increases traffic on local roads, does not enable value capture or urban renewal, and is not consistent with the government's land use priorities or the proposal in the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy.

Traffic on the existing M5 East exceeded capacity "within months" of opening (New M5 Project Overview, November 2015), including recent road widening. This lack of capacity is, in part, the rationale for the construction of the New M5. Managing demand on the M5 East and providing high quality public transport alternatives for those who can change mode would be a more effective long term solution that simply a 'predict and provide' approach, yet this alternative - along with many others - has not been assessed.

A larger question raised by the proposed New M5 project is what happens if capacity on this motorway is reached? The existing M5 East has proven that a new motorway can easily reach or exceed capacity within a 15 year timeframe. If that outcome is realised for the New M5, Sydney will be left with a transport legacy that cannot support the jobs growth in the west consistent with Government policy. Sydney needs to manage demand for existing road assets to maximise economically productive use and deliver sustainable transport as a real alternative to car travel. International cities such as Los Angeles are moving away from their dominant car-based culture to invest in public transport in order to build the sustainability and attractiveness of their city for residents, businesses and visitors alike.

The New M5 project has only been assessed to 2031, which does not take into account the 45 year concession period for the asset as stated in the WestConnex Updated Strategic Business Case. The assessment does not account for future events that may radically change travel demands or behaviours.

Heritage buildings would be destroyed for this project, while others would be isolated in a flood of traffic. e.g. terraces next to construction compounds and motorway in Campbell Street.

Residents in south west Sydney will suffer a huge loss of amenity as a result of the existing M5 being stripped of its green space and vegetation, particularly when residents fought so hard to get these green spaces established and thriving. I also strongly object to their concrete noise walls being replaced with transparent barriers. These will be right next to hundreds of homes, who will now be forced to look at (as well as listen to and breathe the fumes of) lanes of motorway traffic just over their fences. It is utterly unacceptable to prioritise the views of passing motorists over the privacy and amenity of people who live in an area.

This EIS fails to model traffic beyond two intersections after this project. This deliberately obscures the threat to King Street and roads in Alexandria. I object to exposing King Street and Edgeware Rd to the threat of becoming clearways.

Residents affected by compulsory acquisitions are 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.

I strongly object to the unacceptable impact the project's construction will have on local residents, businesses and schools. Across the route of this project, people face years of having their streets turned into car parks for construction workers; 24/7 construction noise, vibration, and heavy truck movements; exposure to asbestos, construction dust, and toxic materials; and more. Mitigation is recommended in this EIS, but no information is provided 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.

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.

This project deliberately exposes communities in certain areas to increased pollution. Such an approach values the health and safety of people in certain areas of Sydney over others, and is both unjust and unacceptable. In addition, despite there being no safe level of exposure to fine particulate matter, the proponents want to build this project knowing it will increase these pollutants around much of the project route.

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 air quality study shows that dangerous fine particle pollution already exceeds acceptable levels in some areas in the project areas, and will worsen if this project is built. I also object to the way this and other information about air quality and pollution impacts has been provided in this EIS; it is far too dense and opaque for ordinary residents to understand. It should go without saying that where public health is concerned, information about negative impacts should be provided in a way that affected residents can understand.

The EIS demonstrates that air quality, even at existing levels, is close to the allowable limits, and will only get worse with a major interchange, road upgrades and ventilation stacks implemented at the St Peters Interchange and surrounds. If new air quality standards as proposed by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) in 2012 are implemented, the New M5 would well exceed allowable air pollution levels.

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). I find it completely unacceptable that AECOM has been paid $13 million of taxpayer money to complete this EIS despite this, and despite it being 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. I also object to AECOM doing the EIS when it has contracts in the rest of the project including Stage 2. This conflict of interest needs to be explained and addressed.

Even with these flaws, tolls on these roads are to be in effect for decades. Many Sydneysiders will not see these roads untolled in their lifetimes. Nor will western Sydney or rural and regional NSW see any investment in their communities to create employment opportunities that would circumvent the need to commute long distances by car to jobs in Sydney's CBD, eastern suburbs and inner city.

The New M5 would cause costly traffic chaos throughout the inner west and south-west Sydney. 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. This EIS also 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, Kingsgrove and Brighton-Le-Sands. I object to building a road that the proponent admits will produce such volumes of traffic that such roads will be beyond capacity. Where traffic is already bad, plans should be to reduce it, not make it worse.

Meanwhile, even this EIS 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. This is because even the proponents know that commuters will be unwilling to pay $6 each way to use either of these toll roads, which is in line with figures in WestConnex's Updated Strategic Business Case that show for almost all of potential users, the value of time saved is less than the cost of using WestConnex.

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 analysis of alternatives 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.

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The statement that the New M5 project is an integrated transport project is false and misleading. It is a motorway that does not provide for improved public transport connections and has not fully considered the active transport

component in line with government policy. The City's view is that the government could have delivered a better outcome by focusing on ways to "improve access" that is modally agnostic and more consistent with government's land use policies.

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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 proponents have failed to consult with local businesses across the route, many of which would be destroyed by the traffic and/or construction impacts of this project.

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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,

Isobel Bishop

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Elizabeth Elston [redacted]
Sent: Friday, 29 January 2016 2:41 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

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).

Global experience and research has shown conclusively that these kinds of toll road mega-projects are hugely expensive and provide only short-term relief from traffic congestion. I have yet to hear of an independent transport expert who backs the project. WestConnex will increase air pollution and traffic, 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.

The strategic justification for the New M5 is weak and inconsistent with the NSW Government's strategic planning and policy framework, despite its inclusion in the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy and the Long Term Transport Master Plan. The project as proposed in this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) does not deliver the broader objectives of WestConnex as stated in the Updated Strategic Business Case (November 2015).

There has been no compelling case made for why WestConnex should be built, and the project should not receive approval and not proceed. This EIS and the Updated Strategic Business Case for WestConnex are clear that the benefits accruing from Stage 2 do not outweigh the costs. Benefits are shown to come once the whole WestConnex project is built according to the Updated Strategic Business Case, and that no benefits exist until all three Stages are delivered (WestConnex Full Scheme: Economic Appraisal, KPMG, 19 November 2015). I am aware that even this has now expanded to include other tollways such as the Sydney Gateway, making it even more likely that this project will provide disbenefits to society if it proceeds as proposed in this EIS, i.e. as a standalone project. This is particularly concerning given there is a significant risk that Stage 3 will not be built.

Fundamentally flawed projects like WestConnex do not account for changing work practices supported by technologies such as teleworking, or flexible office spaces, or that car journeys are dropping as workers elect to work closer to home or use public transport, bicycles or car sharing. It also does not account for trends that will substantially change how people choose to travel in future and reduce the number of cars on the road, such as peak car or driverless cars.

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 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 EIS lacks rigour and sound analysis, despite the huge volume of documentation. This lack of rigour and analysis is consistent across all chapters and appendices. The project objectives are biased towards a motorway solution, so that any proposed alternative falls short of the proposed solution. Similarly, the work undertaken in the EIS is highly compliance driven, and fails to take into account opportunities or strategic impacts, and the assessment of cumulative impacts is almost negligent.

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Traffic on the existing M5 East exceeded capacity "within months" of opening (New M5 Project Overview, November 2015), including recent road widening. This lack of capacity is, in part, the rationale for the construction of the New M5. Managing demand on the M5 East and providing high quality public transport alternatives for those who can change mode would be a more effective long term solution that simply a 'predict and provide' approach, yet this alternative - along with many others - has not been assessed.

A larger question raised by the proposed New M5 project is what happens if capacity on this motorway is reached? The existing M5 East has proven that a new motorway can easily reach or exceed capacity within a 15 year timeframe. If that outcome is realised for the New M5, Sydney will be left with a transport legacy that cannot support the jobs growth in the west consistent with Government policy. Sydney needs to manage demand for existing road assets to maximise economically productive use and deliver sustainable transport as a real alternative to car travel. International cities such as Los Angeles are moving away from their dominant car-based culture to invest in public transport in order to build the sustainability and attractiveness of their city for residents, businesses and visitors alike.

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Residents affected by compulsory acquisitions are 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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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.

This project deliberately exposes communities in certain areas to increased pollution. Such an approach values the health and safety of people in certain areas of Sydney over others, and is both unjust and unacceptable. In addition, despite there being no safe level of exposure to fine particulate matter, the proponents want to build this project knowing it will increase these pollutants around much of the project route.

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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understand. It should go without saying that where public health is concerned, information about negative impacts should be provided in a way that affected residents can understand.

The EIS demonstrates that air quality, even at existing levels, is close to the allowable limits, and will only get worse with a major interchange, road upgrades and ventilation stacks implemented at the St Peters Interchange and surrounds. If new air quality standards as proposed by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) in 2012 are implemented, the New M5 would well exceed allowable air pollution levels.

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). I find it completely unacceptable that AECOM has been paid $13 million of taxpayer money to complete this EIS despite this, and despite it being 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. I also object to AECOM doing the EIS when it has contracts in the rest of the project including Stage 2. This conflict of interest needs to be explained and addressed.

Even with these flaws, tolls on these roads are to be in effect for decades. Many Sydneysiders will not see these roads untolled in their lifetimes. Nor will western Sydney or rural and regional NSW see any investment in their communities to create employment opportunities that would circumvent the need to commute long distances by car to jobs in Sydney's CBD, eastern suburbs and inner city.

The New M5 would cause costly traffic chaos throughout the inner west and south-west Sydney. 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. This EIS also 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, Kingsgrove and Brighton-Le-Sands. I object to building a road that the proponent admits will produce such volumes of traffic that such roads will be beyond capacity. Where traffic is already bad, plans should be to reduce it, not make it worse.

Meanwhile, even this EIS 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. This is because even the proponents know that commuters will be unwilling to pay $6 each way to use either of these toll roads, which is in line with figures in WestConnex's Updated Strategic Business Case that show for almost all of potential users, the value of time saved is less than the cost of using WestConnex.

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.

The delivery of the New M5 and in particular the St Peters Interchange, will have a significant impact on residents and businesses. The increased traffic resulting from this project will impact on urban amenity and will limit the ability for public transport services to operate efficiently due to increased local road congestion.

The EIS assumes that by 2031 the full WestConnex project will be complete. This includes the M4-M5 Link (Stage 3), which will have additional significant impacts on residents and businesses. Nowhere in the EIS are these impacts considered, nor information given to the public to fully consider or understand the implications of the whole WestConnex program.

The analysis of alternatives 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.

The evidence provided by the EIS in support of the project is incomplete and unbalanced, selectively including and excluding impacts from subsequent planned stages of the WestConnex project. The analysis of strategic alternatives in the EIS is cursory and fails to demonstrate the New M5 extension is the best option to meet the needs of a growing Sydney population. The EIS also does not take into consideration the travel patterns of residents and businesses in western or south-western Sydney that the New M5 is intended to serve, nor the wider impacts on inner-Sydney communities affected by the WestConnex program.

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.

The social impact study is little more than a 'cut and paste' job and is insulting to communities where hundreds of tenants and owners have lost homes and others will live in decimated communities. The report exaggerates the potential positive aspects of the project, while the negative aspects are either downplayed, insufficiently detailed or omitted altogether. Where negative economic or social impacts are identified in the report, they are inadequately addressed in terms of management or mitigation actions to be taken.

The statement that the New M5 project is an integrated transport project is false and misleading. It is a motorway that does not provide for improved public transport connections and has not fully considered the active transport component in line with government policy. The City's view is that the government could have delivered a better outcome by focusing on ways to "improve access" that is modally agnostic and more consistent with government's land use policies.

Endangered flora and fauna would be destroyed for this project, including the Green and Golden Bell Frog colony at Arncliffe and the critically endangered Cooks River Castlereagh Ironbark Forest at Kingsgrove/Beverly Hills. Saving these species in particular was a condition of the previous M5 motorway; destroying them now makes a mockery of these legal protections. I also object to the unprofessional analysis of the threat posed by the New M5 to these species and to biodiversity in general, as this section of the EIS attempts to downplay the significance of the flora and fauna threatened by this project and the impact of this project on biodiversity overall.

I am also concerned that the EIS suggests that the breeding ponds of the Green and Golden Bell Frog have not been kept healthy in recent years, especially since the RMS was responsible for building these ponds as a condition of the old M5.

Many public parks would be temporarily or permanently destroyed for this project, including parts of Sydney Park and the M5 Linear Park, along with thousands of mature trees along the route. Even if these trees would be reinstated, it will take decades to achieve the level of canopy that exists.

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.

The increase in road capacity on Euston Road from four lanes to between six and eight, and Campbell Road from two lanes to six will have noise impacts on people living in the area and using Sydney Park.

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 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 proponents have failed to consult with local businesses across the route, many of which would be destroyed by the traffic and/or construction impacts of this project.

The proponent has failed to adequately assess and responsibly handle asbestos, including the huge amounts it has removed ahead of this EIS from the Alexandria Landfill and transported through inner Sydney out to the western suburbs. More toxic asbestos is expected to be dug up and transported from various sites along the New M5 for this project, and the numerous breaches of basic health and safety procedures observed by residents in St Peters, Granville and Erskine Park in this regard have not been properly assessed in this EIS.

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,

Elizabeth Elston

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Sharon Laura [redacted]
Sent: Friday, 29 January 2016 2:41 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

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 object to the proposed WestConnex new M5 motorway. It is not a solution to Sydney's transport problems. It will induce more cars onto our roads and create local traffic jams and more traffic pollution. This pollution will greatly increase toxic ultrafine particulate matter into the Greater Sydney Metropolitan air shed.

Community consultation during the exhibition period of the M5 EIS has been a sham and insult. Nothing but a PR tick and flick exercise. The employment of contract/casual workers at so called information booths and sessions was a disgrace. The NSW Department of Planning should demand better standards, and actually monitor the quality of information and engagement being delivered and served up as community consultation. All too often, at 'information kiosks', these contract workers barely knew local streets or any real detail about this project (other than PR spin), a most frustrating experience for all, - but worse, a perversion of proper community engagement and planning in NSW. I hope that the Planning Department will provide advice to the Minister so that in the future there is substance – not just an appearance of community consultation during future EIS exhibitions. I request that the Department of Planning not now accept the M5 proponents version of what has been d

elivered to the community. But actually listen to community feed back and challenge the spin of the proponent's communication team. I believe that the EIS process for the M5 was so flawed it should not stand as having been delivered and should be re- started.

I also object to the fact that the NSW government is attempting to avoid scrutiny by transferring responsibility for this project from a government body, the WestConnex Delivery Authority, to a privately run government company - being the Sydney Motorway Corporation. The Sydney Motorway Corporation is not a public body. It is appalling that public money is being used by a private company that does not have to publish contracts or provide full information to the people of NSW, - prior to building such massive road infrastructure. I object that a "public company" has been set up to deliver a road project that will not deliver on it's promise to solve Sydney's transport problems.

The fact that the NSW Government has already signed multi-billion dollar contracts for WestConnex before the M5 EIS was placed on public exhibition totally destroys my confidence that this is a genuine EIS consultation process, or that the planning system in NSW has not been thoroughly corrupted by special interest groups.

I object to the fact that accountability for contracts already signed is avoided, by "commercial in confidence" rhetoric. It is only right that contracts entered into by the NSW government, on behalf of the public be gazetted and terms and conditions disclosed so that the public understand what agreements have been entered into in our name.

Global experience and research has shown conclusively that these kinds of toll road mega-projects are hugely expensive and provide only short-term relief from traffic congestion. I have yet to hear of an independent transport expert who backs the project. WestConnex will increase air pollution and traffic, 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.

The strategic justification for the New M5 is weak and inconsistent with the NSW Government's strategic planning and policy framework, despite its inclusion in the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy and the Long Term Transport Master Plan. The project as proposed in this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) does not deliver the broader objectives of WestConnex as stated in the Updated Strategic Business Case (November 2015).

There has been no compelling case made for why WestConnex should be built, and the project should not receive approval and not proceed. This EIS and the Updated Strategic Business Case for WestConnex are clear that the benefits accruing from Stage 2 do not outweigh the costs. Benefits are shown to come once the whole WestConnex project is built according to the Updated Strategic Business Case, and that no benefits exist until all three Stages are delivered (WestConnex Full Scheme: Economic Appraisal, KPMG, 19 November 2015). I am aware that even this has now expanded to include other tollways such as the Sydney Gateway, making it even more likely that this project will provide disbenefits to society if it proceeds as proposed in this EIS, i.e. as a standalone project. This is particularly concerning given there is a significant risk that Stage 3 will not be built.

Fundamentally flawed projects like WestConnex do not account for changing work practices supported by technologies such as teleworking, or flexible office spaces, or that car journeys are dropping as workers elect to work closer to home or use public transport, bicycles or car sharing. It also does not account for trends that will substantially change how people choose to travel in future and reduce the number of cars on the road, such as peak car or driverless cars.

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 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 EIS lacks rigour and sound analysis, despite the huge volume of documentation. This lack of rigour and analysis is consistent across all chapters and appendices. The project objectives are biased towards a motorway solution, so that any proposed alternative falls short of the proposed solution. Similarly, the work undertaken in the EIS is highly compliance driven, and fails to take into account opportunities or strategic impacts, and the assessment of cumulative impacts is almost negligent.

WestConnex is presented as a 'transformational' infrastructure project, however, the EIS is not clear on what transformation it will achieve. There is no demonstration that WestConnex delivers transformation in terms of social or economic improvement, or better land use outcomes. To the contrary, WestConnex will deliver a piece of infrastructure that increases traffic on local roads, does not enable value capture or urban renewal, and is not consistent with the government's land use priorities or the proposal in the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy.

Traffic on the existing M5 East exceeded capacity "within months" of opening (New M5 Project Overview, November 2015), including recent road widening. This lack of capacity is, in part, the rationale for the construction of the New M5. Managing demand on the M5 East and providing high quality public transport alternatives for those who can change mode would be a more effective long term solution that simply a 'predict and provide' approach, yet this alternative - along with many others - has not been assessed.

A larger question raised by the proposed New M5 project is what happens if capacity on this motorway is reached? The existing M5 East has proven that a new motorway can easily reach or exceed capacity within a 15 year timeframe. If that outcome is realised for the New M5, Sydney will be left with a transport legacy that cannot support the jobs growth in the west consistent with Government policy. Sydney needs to manage demand for existing road assets to maximise economically productive use and deliver sustainable transport as a real alternative to car travel. International cities such as Los Angeles are moving away from their dominant car-based culture to invest in public transport in order to build the sustainability and attractiveness of their city for residents, businesses and visitors alike.

The New M5 project has only been assessed to 2031, which does not take into account the 45 year concession period for the asset as stated in the WestConnex Updated Strategic Business Case. The assessment does not account for future events that may radically change travel demands or behaviours.

Heritage buildings would be destroyed for this project, while others would be isolated in a flood of traffic. e.g. terraces next to construction compounds and motorway in Campbell Street.

Residents in south west Sydney will suffer a huge loss of amenity as a result of the existing M5 being stripped of its green space and vegetation, particularly when residents fought so hard to get these green spaces established and thriving. I also strongly object to their concrete noise walls being replaced with transparent barriers. These will be right next to hundreds of homes, who will now be forced to look at (as well as listen to and breathe the fumes of) lanes of motorway traffic just over their fences. It is utterly unacceptable to prioritise the views of passing motorists over the privacy and amenity of people who live in an area.

This EIS fails to model traffic beyond two intersections after this project. This deliberately obscures the threat to King Street and roads in Alexandria. I object to exposing King Street and Edgeware Rd to the threat of becoming clearways.

Residents affected by compulsory acquisitions are 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.

I strongly object to the unacceptable impact the project's construction will have on local residents, businesses and schools. Across the route of this project, people face years of having their streets turned into car parks for construction workers; 24/7 construction noise, vibration, and heavy truck movements; exposure to asbestos, construction dust, and toxic materials; and more. Mitigation is recommended in this EIS, but no information is provided 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.

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.

This project deliberately exposes communities in certain areas to increased pollution. Such an approach values the health and safety of people in certain areas of Sydney over others, and is both unjust and unacceptable. In addition, despite there being no safe level of exposure to fine particulate matter, the proponents want to build this project knowing it will increase these pollutants around much of the project route.

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 air quality study shows that dangerous fine particle pollution already exceeds acceptable levels in some areas in the project areas, and will worsen if this project is built. I also object to the way this and other information about air quality and pollution impacts has been provided in this EIS; it is far too dense and opaque for ordinary residents to understand. It should go without saying that where public health is concerned, information about negative impacts should be provided in a way that affected residents can understand.

The EIS demonstrates that air quality, even at existing levels, is close to the allowable limits, and will only get worse with a major interchange, road upgrades and ventilation stacks implemented at the St Peters Interchange and surrounds. If new air quality standards as proposed by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) in 2012 are implemented, the New M5 would well exceed allowable air pollution levels.

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). I find it completely unacceptable that AECOM has been paid $13 million of taxpayer money to complete this EIS despite this, and despite it being 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. I also object to AECOM doing the EIS when it has contracts in the rest of the project including Stage 2. This conflict of interest needs to be explained and addressed.

Even with these flaws, tolls on these roads are to be in effect for decades. Many Sydneysiders will not see these roads untolled in their lifetimes. Nor will western Sydney or rural and regional NSW see any investment in their communities to create employment opportunities that would circumvent the need to commute long distances by car to jobs in Sydney's CBD, eastern suburbs and inner city.

The New M5 would cause costly traffic chaos throughout the inner west and south-west Sydney. 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. This EIS also 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, Kingsgrove and Brighton-Le-Sands. I object to building a road that the proponent admits will produce such volumes of traffic that such roads will be beyond capacity. Where traffic is already bad, plans should be to reduce it, not make it worse.

Meanwhile, even this EIS 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. This is because even the proponents know that commuters will be unwilling to pay $6 each way to use either of these toll roads, which is in line with figures in WestConnex's Updated Strategic Business Case that show for almost all of potential users, the value of time saved is less than the cost of using WestConnex.

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.

The delivery of the New M5 and in particular the St Peters Interchange, will have a significant impact on residents and businesses. The increased traffic resulting from this project will impact on urban amenity and will limit the ability for public transport services to operate efficiently due to increased local road congestion.

The EIS assumes that by 2031 the full WestConnex project will be complete. This includes the M4-M5 Link (Stage 3), which will have additional significant impacts on residents and businesses. Nowhere in the EIS are these impacts considered, nor information given to the public to fully consider or understand the implications of the whole WestConnex program.

The analysis of alternatives 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.

The evidence provided by the EIS in support of the project is incomplete and unbalanced, selectively including and excluding impacts from subsequent planned stages of the WestConnex project. The analysis of strategic alternatives in the EIS is cursory and fails to demonstrate the New M5 extension is the best option to meet the needs of a growing Sydney population. The EIS also does not take into consideration the travel patterns of residents and businesses in western or south-western Sydney that the New M5 is intended to serve, nor the wider impacts on inner-Sydney communities affected by the WestConnex program.

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.

The social impact study is little more than a 'cut and paste' job and is insulting to communities where hundreds of tenants and owners have lost homes and others will live in decimated communities. The report exaggerates the potential positive aspects of the project, while the negative aspects are either downplayed, insufficiently detailed or omitted altogether. Where negative economic or social impacts are identified in the report, they are inadequately addressed in terms of management or mitigation actions to be taken.

The statement that the New M5 project is an integrated transport project is false and misleading. It is a motorway that does not provide for improved public transport connections and has not fully considered the active transport component in line with government policy. The City's view is that the government could have delivered a better outcome by focusing on ways to "improve access" that is modally agnostic and more consistent with government's land use policies.

Endangered flora and fauna would be destroyed for this project, including the Green and Golden Bell Frog colony at Arncliffe and the critically endangered Cooks River Castlereagh Ironbark Forest at Kingsgrove/Beverly Hills. Saving these species in particular was a condition of the previous M5 motorway; destroying them now makes a mockery of these legal protections. I also object to the unprofessional analysis of the threat posed by the New M5 to these species and to biodiversity in general, as this section of the EIS attempts to downplay the significance of the flora and fauna threatened by this project and the impact of this project on biodiversity overall.

I am also concerned that the EIS suggests that the breeding ponds of the Green and Golden Bell Frog have not been kept healthy in recent years, especially since the RMS was responsible for building these ponds as a condition of the old M5.

Many public parks would be temporarily or permanently destroyed for this project, including parts of Sydney Park and the M5 Linear Park, along with thousands of mature trees along the route. Even if these trees would be reinstated, it will take decades to achieve the level of canopy that exists.

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.

The increase in road capacity on Euston Road from four lanes to between six and eight, and Campbell Road from two lanes to six will have noise impacts on people living in the area and using Sydney Park.

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 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 proponents have failed to consult with local businesses across the route, many of which would be destroyed by the traffic and/or construction impacts of this project.

The proponent has failed to adequately assess and responsibly handle asbestos, including the huge amounts it has removed ahead of this EIS from the Alexandria Landfill and transported through inner Sydney out to the western suburbs. More toxic asbestos is expected to be dug up and transported from various sites along the New M5 for this project, and the numerous breaches of basic health and safety procedures observed by residents in St Peters, Granville and Erskine Park in this regard have not been properly assessed in this EIS.

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,

Sharon Laura

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Marcus Pethurst <[redacted]
Sent: Friday, 29 January 2016 2:39 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

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).

Global experience and research has shown conclusively that these kinds of toll road mega-projects are hugely expensive and provide only short-term relief from traffic congestion. I have yet to hear of an independent transport expert who backs the project. WestConnex will increase air pollution and traffic, 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.

Fundamentally flawed projects like WestConnex do not account for changing work practices supported by technologies such as teleworking, or flexible office spaces, or that car journeys are dropping as workers elect to work closer to home or use public transport, bicycles or car sharing. It also does not account for trends that will substantially change how people choose to travel in future and reduce the number of cars on the road, such as peak car or driverless cars.

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 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.

It also has been stated that these tolls are to be in effect for 43 years. Many Sydneysiders will not see these roads untolled in their lifetimes. Nor will western Sydney or rural and regional NSW see any investment in their communities to create employment opportunities that would circumvent the need to commute long distances by car to jobs in Sydney's CBD, eastern suburbs and inner city.

I object the destruction of heritage buildings for this project. I also object to leaving other heritage buildings isolated in a flood of traffic. e.g. terraces next to construction compounds and motorway in Campbell Street.

I object to residents in south west Sydney suffering a huge loss of amenity as a result of the existing M5 being stripped of its green space and vegetation, particularly when residents fought so hard to get these green spaces established and thriving. I also strongly object to their concrete noise walls being replaced with transparent barriers. These will be right next to hundreds of homes, who will now be forced to look at (as well as listen to and breathe the fumes of) lanes of motorway traffic just over their fences. It is utterly unacceptable to prioritise the views of passing motorists over the privacy and amenity of people who live in an area.

I object to not modelling beyond two intersections after this project. This deliberately obscures the threat to King Street and roads in Alexandria. I object to exposing King Street and Edgeware Rd to the threat of becoming clearways.

Residents affected by compulsory acquisitions are 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.

I strongly object to the unacceptable impact the project's construction will have on local residents, businesses and schools. Across the route of this project, people face years of having their streets turned into car parks for construction workers; 24/7 construction noise, vibration, and heavy truck movements; exposure to asbestos, construction dust, and toxic materials; and more. Mitigation is recommended in this EIS, but no information is provided 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.

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.

I strongly object to the manner in which this project deliberately exposes communities in certain areas to increased pollution. Such an approach values the health and safety of people in certain areas of Sydney over others, and is both unjust and unacceptable. In addition, despite there being no safe level of exposure to fine particulate matter, the proponents want to build this project knowing it will increase these pollutants around much of the project route.

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 air quality study shows that dangerous fine particle pollution already exceeds acceptable levels in some areas in the project areas, and will worsen if this project is built. I also object to the way this and other information about air quality and pollution impacts has been provided in this EIS; it is far too dense and opaque for ordinary residents to understand. It should go without saying that where public health is concerned, information about negative impacts should be provided in a way that affected residents can understand.

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). I find it completely unacceptable that AECOM has been paid $13 million of taxpayer money to complete this EIS despite this, and despite it being 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. I also object to AECOM doing the EIS when it has contracts in the rest of the project including Stage 2. This conflict of interest needs to be explained and addressed.

The New M5 would cause costly traffic chaos throughout the inner west and south-west Sydney. 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. This EIS also 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, Kingsgrove and Brighton-Le-Sands. I object to building a road that the proponent admits will produce such volumes of traffic that such roads will be beyond capacity. Where traffic is already bad, plans should be to reduce it, not make it worse.

Meanwhile, even this EIS 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. This is because even the proponents know that commuters will be unwilling to pay $6 each way to use either of these toll roads, which is in line with figures in WestConnex's Updated Strategic Business Case that show for almost all of potential users, the value of time saved is less than the cost of using WestConnex.

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.

The analysis of alternatives 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.

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.

The social impact study is little more than a 'cut and paste' job and is insulting to communities where hundreds of tenants and owners have lost homes and others will live in decimated communities. The report exaggerates the potential positive aspects of the project, while the negative aspects are either downplayed, insufficiently detailed or omitted altogether. Where negative economic or social impacts are identified in the report, they are inadequately addressed in terms of management or mitigation actions to be taken.

I strongly object to the destruction of endangered flora and fauna for this project, including the Green and Golden Bell Frog colony at Arncliffe and the critically endangered Cooks River Castlereagh Ironbark Forest at Kingsgrove/Beverly Hills. Saving these species in particular was a condition of the previous M5 motorway; destroying them now makes a mockery of these legal protections. I also object to the unprofessional analysis of the threat posed by the New M5 to these species and to biodiversity in general, as this section of the EIS attempts to downplay the significance of the flora and fauna threatened by this project and the impact of this project on biodiversity overall.

I am concerned that the EIS suggests that the breeding ponds of the Green and Golden Bell Frog have not been kept healthy in recent years, especially since the RMS was responsible for building these ponds as a condition of the old M5.

I strongly object to the permanent destruction of public parks for this project, including parts of Sydney Park and the M5 Linear Park, along with thousands of mature trees along the route. 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.

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 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.

I strongly object to the complete failure to consult with local businesses across the route, many of which would be destroyed by the traffic and/or construction impacts of this project.

I strongly object to WestConnex's failure to adequately assess and responsibly handle asbestos, including the huge amounts it has removed ahead of this EIS from the Alexandria Landfill and transported through inner Sydney out to the western suburbs. More toxic asbestos is expected to be dug up and transported from various sites along the New M5 for this project, and the numerous breaches of basic health and safety procedures observed by residents in St Peters, Granville and Erskine Park in this regard have not been properly assessed in this EIS.

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.

Additionally I expect a personal reply from yourselves and I am going to go to advertising standards for false information in your flyers

Yours sincerely,

Marcus Pethurst

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: [redacted]
Sent: Friday, 29 January 2016 2:38 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

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).

Global experience and research has shown conclusively that these kinds of toll road mega-projects are hugely expensive and provide only short-term relief from traffic congestion. I have yet to hear of an independent transport expert who backs the project. WestConnex will increase air pollution and traffic, 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.

The strategic justification for the New M5 is weak and inconsistent with the NSW Government's strategic planning and policy framework, despite its inclusion in the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy and the Long Term Transport Master Plan. The project as proposed in this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) does not deliver the broader objectives of WestConnex as stated in the Updated Strategic Business Case (November 2015).

There has been no compelling case made for why WestConnex should be built, and the project should not receive approval and not proceed. This EIS and the Updated Strategic Business Case for WestConnex are clear that the benefits accruing from Stage 2 do not outweigh the costs. Benefits are shown to come once the whole WestConnex project is built according to the Updated Strategic Business Case, and that no benefits exist until all three Stages are delivered (WestConnex Full Scheme: Economic Appraisal, KPMG, 19 November 2015). I am aware that even this has now expanded to include other tollways such as the Sydney Gateway, making it even more likely that this project will provide disbenefits to society if it proceeds as proposed in this EIS, i.e. as a standalone project. This is particularly concerning given there is a significant risk that Stage 3 will not be built.

Fundamentally flawed projects like WestConnex do not account for changing work practices supported by technologies such as teleworking, or flexible office spaces, or that car journeys are dropping as workers elect to work closer to home or use public transport, bicycles or car sharing. It also does not account for trends that will substantially change how people choose to travel in future and reduce the number of cars on the road, such as peak car or driverless cars.

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 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 EIS lacks rigour and sound analysis, despite the huge volume of documentation. This lack of rigour and analysis is consistent across all chapters and appendices. The project objectives are biased towards a motorway solution, so that any proposed alternative falls short of the proposed solution. Similarly, the work undertaken in the EIS is highly compliance driven, and fails to take into account opportunities or strategic impacts, and the assessment of cumulative impacts is almost negligent.

WestConnex is presented as a 'transformational' infrastructure project, however, the EIS is not clear on what transformation it will achieve. There is no demonstration that WestConnex delivers transformation in terms of social or economic improvement, or better land use outcomes. To the contrary, WestConnex will deliver a piece of infrastructure that increases traffic on local roads, does not enable value capture or urban renewal, and is not consistent with the government's land use priorities or the proposal in the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy.

Traffic on the existing M5 East exceeded capacity "within months" of opening (New M5 Project Overview, November 2015), including recent road widening. This lack of capacity is, in part, the rationale for the construction of the New M5. Managing demand on the M5 East and providing high quality public transport alternatives for those who can change mode would be a more effective long term solution that simply a 'predict and provide' approach, yet this alternative - along with many others - has not been assessed.

A larger question raised by the proposed New M5 project is what happens if capacity on this motorway is reached? The existing M5 East has proven that a new motorway can easily reach or exceed capacity within a 15 year timeframe. If that outcome is realised for the New M5, Sydney will be left with a transport legacy that cannot support the jobs growth in the west consistent with Government policy. Sydney needs to manage demand for existing road assets to maximise economically productive use and deliver sustainable transport as a real alternative to car travel. International cities such as Los Angeles are moving away from their dominant car-based culture to invest in public transport in order to build the sustainability and attractiveness of their city for residents, businesses and visitors alike.

The New M5 project has only been assessed to 2031, which does not take into account the 45 year concession period for the asset as stated in the WestConnex Updated Strategic Business Case. The assessment does not account for future events that may radically change travel demands or behaviours.

Heritage buildings would be destroyed for this project, while others would be isolated in a flood of traffic. e.g. terraces next to construction compounds and motorway in Campbell Street.

Residents in south west Sydney will suffer a huge loss of amenity as a result of the existing M5 being stripped of its green space and vegetation, particularly when residents fought so hard to get these green spaces established and thriving. I also strongly object to their concrete noise walls being replaced with transparent barriers. These will be right next to hundreds of homes, who will now be forced to look at (as well as listen to and breathe the fumes of) lanes of motorway traffic just over their fences. It is utterly unacceptable to prioritise the views of passing motorists over the privacy and amenity of people who live in an area.

This EIS fails to model traffic beyond two intersections after this project. This deliberately obscures the threat to King Street and roads in Alexandria. I object to exposing King Street and Edgeware Rd to the threat of becoming clearways.

Residents affected by compulsory acquisitions are 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.

I strongly object to the unacceptable impact the project's construction will have on local residents, businesses and schools. Across the route of this project, people face years of having their streets turned into car parks for construction workers; 24/7 construction noise, vibration, and heavy truck movements; exposure to asbestos, construction dust, and toxic materials; and more. Mitigation is recommended in this EIS, but no information is provided 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.

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.

This project deliberately exposes communities in certain areas to increased pollution. Such an approach values the health and safety of people in certain areas of Sydney over others, and is both unjust and unacceptable. In addition, despite there being no safe level of exposure to fine particulate matter, the proponents want to build this project knowing it will increase these pollutants around much of the project route.

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 air quality study shows that dangerous fine particle pollution already exceeds acceptable levels in some areas in the project areas, and will worsen if this project is built. I also object to the way this and other information about air quality and pollution impacts has been provided in this EIS; it is far too dense and opaque for ordinary residents to

understand. It should go without saying that where public health is concerned, information about negative impacts should be provided in a way that affected residents can understand.

The EIS demonstrates that air quality, even at existing levels, is close to the allowable limits, and will only get worse with a major interchange, road upgrades and ventilation stacks implemented at the St Peters Interchange and surrounds. If new air quality standards as proposed by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) in 2012 are implemented, the New M5 would well exceed allowable air pollution levels.

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). I find it completely unacceptable that AECOM has been paid $13 million of taxpayer money to complete this EIS despite this, and despite it being 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. I also object to AECOM doing the EIS when it has contracts in the rest of the project including Stage 2. This conflict of interest needs to be explained and addressed.

Even with these flaws, tolls on these roads are to be in effect for decades. Many Sydneysiders will not see these roads untolled in their lifetimes. Nor will western Sydney or rural and regional NSW see any investment in their communities to create employment opportunities that would circumvent the need to commute long distances by car to jobs in Sydney's CBD, eastern suburbs and inner city.

The New M5 would cause costly traffic chaos throughout the inner west and south-west Sydney. 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. This EIS also 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, Kingsgrove and Brighton-Le-Sands. I object to building a road that the proponent admits will produce such volumes of traffic that such roads will be beyond capacity. Where traffic is already bad, plans should be to reduce it, not make it worse.

Meanwhile, even this EIS 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. This is because even the proponents know that commuters will be unwilling to pay $6 each way to use either of these toll roads, which is in line with figures in WestConnex's Updated Strategic Business Case that show for almost all of potential users, the value of time saved is less than the cost of using WestConnex.

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.

The delivery of the New M5 and in particular the St Peters Interchange, will have a significant impact on residents and businesses. The increased traffic resulting from this project will impact on urban amenity and will limit the ability for public transport services to operate efficiently due to increased local road congestion.

The EIS assumes that by 2031 the full WestConnex project will be complete. This includes the M4-M5 Link (Stage 3), which will have additional significant impacts on residents and businesses. Nowhere in the EIS are these impacts considered, nor information given to the public to fully consider or understand the implications of the whole WestConnex program.

The analysis of alternatives 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.

The evidence provided by the EIS in support of the project is incomplete and unbalanced, selectively including and excluding impacts from subsequent planned stages of the WestConnex project. The analysis of strategic alternatives in the EIS is cursory and fails to demonstrate the New M5 extension is the best option to meet the needs of a growing Sydney population. The EIS also does not take into consideration the travel patterns of residents and businesses in western or south-western Sydney that the New M5 is intended to serve, nor the wider impacts on inner-Sydney communities affected by the WestConnex program.

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.

The social impact study is little more than a 'cut and paste' job and is insulting to communities where hundreds of tenants and owners have lost homes and others will live in decimated communities. The report exaggerates the potential positive aspects of the project, while the negative aspects are either downplayed, insufficiently detailed or omitted altogether. Where negative economic or social impacts are identified in the report, they are inadequately addressed in terms of management or mitigation actions to be taken.

The statement that the New M5 project is an integrated transport project is false and misleading. It is a motorway that does not provide for improved public transport connections and has not fully considered the active transport component in line with government policy. The City's view is that the government could have delivered a better outcome by focusing on ways to "improve access" that is modally agnostic and more consistent with government's land use policies.

Endangered flora and fauna would be destroyed for this project, including the Green and Golden Bell Frog colony at Arncliffe and the critically endangered Cooks River Castlereagh Ironbark Forest at Kingsgrove/Beverly Hills. Saving these species in particular was a condition of the previous M5 motorway; destroying them now makes a mockery of these legal protections. I also object to the unprofessional analysis of the threat posed by the New M5 to these species and to biodiversity in general, as this section of the EIS attempts to downplay the significance of the flora and fauna threatened by this project and the impact of this project on biodiversity overall.

I am also concerned that the EIS suggests that the breeding ponds of the Green and Golden Bell Frog have not been kept healthy in recent years, especially since the RMS was responsible for building these ponds as a condition of the old M5.

Many public parks would be temporarily or permanently destroyed for this project, including parts of Sydney Park and the M5 Linear Park, along with thousands of mature trees along the route. Even if these trees would be reinstated, it will take decades to achieve the level of canopy that exists.

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.

The increase in road capacity on Euston Road from four lanes to between six and eight, and Campbell Road from two lanes to six will have noise impacts on people living in the area and using Sydney Park.

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 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 proponents have failed to consult with local businesses across the route, many of which would be destroyed by the traffic and/or construction impacts of this project.

The proponent has failed to adequately assess and responsibly handle asbestos, including the huge amounts it has removed ahead of this EIS from the Alexandria Landfill and transported through inner Sydney out to the western suburbs. More toxic asbestos is expected to be dug up and transported from various sites along the New M5 for this project, and the numerous breaches of basic health and safety procedures observed by residents in St Peters, Granville and Erskine Park in this regard have not been properly assessed in this EIS.

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: [redacted]
Sent: Friday, 29 January 2016 2:37 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

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).

Global experience and research has shown conclusively that these kinds of toll road mega-projects are hugely expensive and provide only short-term relief from traffic congestion. I have yet to hear of an independent transport expert who backs the project. WestConnex will increase air pollution and traffic, 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.

The strategic justification for the New M5 is weak and inconsistent with the NSW Government's strategic planning and policy framework, despite its inclusion in the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy and the Long Term Transport Master Plan. The project as proposed in this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) does not deliver the broader objectives of WestConnex as stated in the Updated Strategic Business Case (November 2015).

There has been no compelling case made for why WestConnex should be built, and the project should not receive approval and not proceed. This EIS and the Updated Strategic Business Case for WestConnex are clear that the benefits accruing from Stage 2 do not outweigh the costs. Benefits are shown to come once the whole WestConnex project is built according to the Updated Strategic Business Case, and that no benefits exist until all three Stages are delivered (WestConnex Full Scheme: Economic Appraisal, KPMG, 19 November 2015). I am aware that even this has now expanded to include other tollways such as the Sydney Gateway, making it even more likely that this project will provide disbenefits to society if it proceeds as proposed in this EIS, i.e. as a standalone project. This is particularly concerning given there is a significant risk that Stage 3 will not be built.

Fundamentally flawed projects like WestConnex do not account for changing work practices supported by technologies such as teleworking, or flexible office spaces, or that car journeys are dropping as workers elect to work closer to home or use public transport, bicycles or car sharing. It also does not account for trends that will substantially change how people choose to travel in future and reduce the number of cars on the road, such as peak car or driverless cars.

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 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 EIS lacks rigour and sound analysis, despite the huge volume of documentation. This lack of rigour and analysis is consistent across all chapters and appendices. The project objectives are biased towards a motorway solution, so that any proposed alternative falls short of the proposed solution. Similarly, the work undertaken in the EIS is highly compliance driven, and fails to take into account opportunities or strategic impacts, and the assessment of cumulative impacts is almost negligent.

WestConnex is presented as a 'transformational' infrastructure project, however, the EIS is not clear on what transformation it will achieve. There is no demonstration that WestConnex delivers transformation in terms of social or economic improvement, or better land use outcomes. To the contrary, WestConnex will deliver a piece of infrastructure that increases traffic on local roads, does not enable value capture or urban renewal, and is not consistent with the government's land use priorities or the proposal in the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy.

Traffic on the existing M5 East exceeded capacity "within months" of opening (New M5 Project Overview, November 2015), including recent road widening. This lack of capacity is, in part, the rationale for the construction of the New M5. Managing demand on the M5 East and providing high quality public transport alternatives for those who can change mode would be a more effective long term solution that simply a 'predict and provide' approach, yet this alternative - along with many others - has not been assessed.

A larger question raised by the proposed New M5 project is what happens if capacity on this motorway is reached? The existing M5 East has proven that a new motorway can easily reach or exceed capacity within a 15 year timeframe. If that outcome is realised for the New M5, Sydney will be left with a transport legacy that cannot support the jobs growth in the west consistent with Government policy. Sydney needs to manage demand for existing road assets to maximise economically productive use and deliver sustainable transport as a real alternative to car travel. International cities such as Los Angeles are moving away from their dominant car-based culture to invest in public transport in order to build the sustainability and attractiveness of their city for residents, businesses and visitors alike.

The New M5 project has only been assessed to 2031, which does not take into account the 45 year concession period for the asset as stated in the WestConnex Updated Strategic Business Case. The assessment does not account for future events that may radically change travel demands or behaviours.

Heritage buildings would be destroyed for this project, while others would be isolated in a flood of traffic. e.g. terraces next to construction compounds and motorway in Campbell Street.

Residents in south west Sydney will suffer a huge loss of amenity as a result of the existing M5 being stripped of its green space and vegetation, particularly when residents fought so hard to get these green spaces established and thriving. I also strongly object to their concrete noise walls being replaced with transparent barriers. These will be right next to hundreds of homes, who will now be forced to look at (as well as listen to and breathe the fumes of) lanes of motorway traffic just over their fences. It is utterly unacceptable to prioritise the views of passing motorists over the privacy and amenity of people who live in an area.

This EIS fails to model traffic beyond two intersections after this project. This deliberately obscures the threat to King Street and roads in Alexandria. I object to exposing King Street and Edgeware Rd to the threat of becoming clearways.

Residents affected by compulsory acquisitions are 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.

I strongly object to the unacceptable impact the project's construction will have on local residents, businesses and schools. Across the route of this project, people face years of having their streets turned into car parks for construction workers; 24/7 construction noise, vibration, and heavy truck movements; exposure to asbestos, construction dust, and toxic materials; and more. Mitigation is recommended in this EIS, but no information is provided 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.

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.

This project deliberately exposes communities in certain areas to increased pollution. Such an approach values the health and safety of people in certain areas of Sydney over others, and is both unjust and unacceptable. In addition, despite there being no safe level of exposure to fine particulate matter, the proponents want to build this project knowing it will increase these pollutants around much of the project route.

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 air quality study shows that dangerous fine particle pollution already exceeds acceptable levels in some areas in the project areas, and will worsen if this project is built. I also object to the way this and other information about air quality and pollution impacts has been provided in this EIS; it is far too dense and opaque for ordinary residents to

understand. It should go without saying that where public health is concerned, information about negative impacts should be provided in a way that affected residents can understand.

The EIS demonstrates that air quality, even at existing levels, is close to the allowable limits, and will only get worse with a major interchange, road upgrades and ventilation stacks implemented at the St Peters Interchange and surrounds. If new air quality standards as proposed by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) in 2012 are implemented, the New M5 would well exceed allowable air pollution levels.

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). I find it completely unacceptable that AECOM has been paid $13 million of taxpayer money to complete this EIS despite this, and despite it being 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. I also object to AECOM doing the EIS when it has contracts in the rest of the project including Stage 2. This conflict of interest needs to be explained and addressed.

Even with these flaws, tolls on these roads are to be in effect for decades. Many Sydneysiders will not see these roads untolled in their lifetimes. Nor will western Sydney or rural and regional NSW see any investment in their communities to create employment opportunities that would circumvent the need to commute long distances by car to jobs in Sydney's CBD, eastern suburbs and inner city.

The New M5 would cause costly traffic chaos throughout the inner west and south-west Sydney. 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. This EIS also 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, Kingsgrove and Brighton-Le-Sands. I object to building a road that the proponent admits will produce such volumes of traffic that such roads will be beyond capacity. Where traffic is already bad, plans should be to reduce it, not make it worse.

Meanwhile, even this EIS 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. This is because even the proponents know that commuters will be unwilling to pay $6 each way to use either of these toll roads, which is in line with figures in WestConnex's Updated Strategic Business Case that show for almost all of potential users, the value of time saved is less than the cost of using WestConnex.

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.

The delivery of the New M5 and in particular the St Peters Interchange, will have a significant impact on residents and businesses. The increased traffic resulting from this project will impact on urban amenity and will limit the ability for public transport services to operate efficiently due to increased local road congestion.

The EIS assumes that by 2031 the full WestConnex project will be complete. This includes the M4-M5 Link (Stage 3), which will have additional significant impacts on residents and businesses. Nowhere in the EIS are these impacts considered, nor information given to the public to fully consider or understand the implications of the whole WestConnex program.

The analysis of alternatives 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.

The evidence provided by the EIS in support of the project is incomplete and unbalanced, selectively including and excluding impacts from subsequent planned stages of the WestConnex project. The analysis of strategic alternatives in the EIS is cursory and fails to demonstrate the New M5 extension is the best option to meet the needs of a growing Sydney population. The EIS also does not take into consideration the travel patterns of residents and businesses in western or south-western Sydney that the New M5 is intended to serve, nor the wider impacts on inner-Sydney communities affected by the WestConnex program.

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.

The social impact study is little more than a 'cut and paste' job and is insulting to communities where hundreds of tenants and owners have lost homes and others will live in decimated communities. The report exaggerates the potential positive aspects of the project, while the negative aspects are either downplayed, insufficiently detailed or omitted altogether. Where negative economic or social impacts are identified in the report, they are inadequately addressed in terms of management or mitigation actions to be taken.

The statement that the New M5 project is an integrated transport project is false and misleading. It is a motorway that does not provide for improved public transport connections and has not fully considered the active transport component in line with government policy. The City's view is that the government could have delivered a better outcome by focusing on ways to "improve access" that is modally agnostic and more consistent with government's land use policies.

Endangered flora and fauna would be destroyed for this project, including the Green and Golden Bell Frog colony at Arncliffe and the critically endangered Cooks River Castlereagh Ironbark Forest at Kingsgrove/Beverly Hills. Saving these species in particular was a condition of the previous M5 motorway; destroying them now makes a mockery of these legal protections. I also object to the unprofessional analysis of the threat posed by the New M5 to these species and to biodiversity in general, as this section of the EIS attempts to downplay the significance of the flora and fauna threatened by this project and the impact of this project on biodiversity overall.

I am also concerned that the EIS suggests that the breeding ponds of the Green and Golden Bell Frog have not been kept healthy in recent years, especially since the RMS was responsible for building these ponds as a condition of the old M5.

Many public parks would be temporarily or permanently destroyed for this project, including parts of Sydney Park and the M5 Linear Park, along with thousands of mature trees along the route. Even if these trees would be reinstated, it will take decades to achieve the level of canopy that exists.

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.

The increase in road capacity on Euston Road from four lanes to between six and eight, and Campbell Road from two lanes to six will have noise impacts on people living in the area and using Sydney Park.

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 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 proponents have failed to consult with local businesses across the route, many of which would be destroyed by the traffic and/or construction impacts of this project.

The proponent has failed to adequately assess and responsibly handle asbestos, including the huge amounts it has removed ahead of this EIS from the Alexandria Landfill and transported through inner Sydney out to the western suburbs. More toxic asbestos is expected to be dug up and transported from various sites along the New M5 for this project, and the numerous breaches of basic health and safety procedures observed by residents in St Peters, Granville and Erskine Park in this regard have not been properly assessed in this EIS.

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: [redacted]
Sent: Friday, 29 January 2016 2:37 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

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).

Global experience and research has shown conclusively that these kinds of toll road mega-projects are hugely expensive and provide only short-term relief from traffic congestion. I have yet to hear of an independent transport expert who backs the project. WestConnex will increase air pollution and traffic, 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.

The strategic justification for the New M5 is weak and inconsistent with the NSW Government's strategic planning and policy framework, despite its inclusion in the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy and the Long Term Transport Master Plan. The project as proposed in this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) does not deliver the broader objectives of WestConnex as stated in the Updated Strategic Business Case (November 2015).

There has been no compelling case made for why WestConnex should be built, and the project should not receive approval and not proceed. This EIS and the Updated Strategic Business Case for WestConnex are clear that the benefits accruing from Stage 2 do not outweigh the costs. Benefits are shown to come once the whole WestConnex project is built according to the Updated Strategic Business Case, and that no benefits exist until all three Stages are delivered (WestConnex Full Scheme: Economic Appraisal, KPMG, 19 November 2015). I am aware that even this has now expanded to include other tollways such as the Sydney Gateway, making it even more likely that this project will provide disbenefits to society if it proceeds as proposed in this EIS, i.e. as a standalone project. This is particularly concerning given there is a significant risk that Stage 3 will not be built.

Fundamentally flawed projects like WestConnex do not account for changing work practices supported by technologies such as teleworking, or flexible office spaces, or that car journeys are dropping as workers elect to work closer to home or use public transport, bicycles or car sharing. It also does not account for trends that will substantially change how people choose to travel in future and reduce the number of cars on the road, such as peak car or driverless cars.

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 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 EIS lacks rigour and sound analysis, despite the huge volume of documentation. This lack of rigour and analysis is consistent across all chapters and appendices. The project objectives are biased towards a motorway solution, so that any proposed alternative falls short of the proposed solution. Similarly, the work undertaken in the EIS is highly compliance driven, and fails to take into account opportunities or strategic impacts, and the assessment of cumulative impacts is almost negligent.

WestConnex is presented as a 'transformational' infrastructure project, however, the EIS is not clear on what transformation it will achieve. There is no demonstration that WestConnex delivers transformation in terms of social or economic improvement, or better land use outcomes. To the contrary, WestConnex will deliver a piece of infrastructure that increases traffic on local roads, does not enable value capture or urban renewal, and is not consistent with the government's land use priorities or the proposal in the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy.

Traffic on the existing M5 East exceeded capacity "within months" of opening (New M5 Project Overview, November 2015), including recent road widening. This lack of capacity is, in part, the rationale for the construction of the New M5. Managing demand on the M5 East and providing high quality public transport alternatives for those who can change mode would be a more effective long term solution that simply a 'predict and provide' approach, yet this alternative - along with many others - has not been assessed.

A larger question raised by the proposed New M5 project is what happens if capacity on this motorway is reached? The existing M5 East has proven that a new motorway can easily reach or exceed capacity within a 15 year timeframe. If that outcome is realised for the New M5, Sydney will be left with a transport legacy that cannot support the jobs growth in the west consistent with Government policy. Sydney needs to manage demand for existing road assets to maximise economically productive use and deliver sustainable transport as a real alternative to car travel. International cities such as Los Angeles are moving away from their dominant car-based culture to invest in public transport in order to build the sustainability and attractiveness of their city for residents, businesses and visitors alike.

The New M5 project has only been assessed to 2031, which does not take into account the 45 year concession period for the asset as stated in the WestConnex Updated Strategic Business Case. The assessment does not account for future events that may radically change travel demands or behaviours.

Heritage buildings would be destroyed for this project, while others would be isolated in a flood of traffic. e.g. terraces next to construction compounds and motorway in Campbell Street.

Residents in south west Sydney will suffer a huge loss of amenity as a result of the existing M5 being stripped of its green space and vegetation, particularly when residents fought so hard to get these green spaces established and thriving. I also strongly object to their concrete noise walls being replaced with transparent barriers. These will be right next to hundreds of homes, who will now be forced to look at (as well as listen to and breathe the fumes of) lanes of motorway traffic just over their fences. It is utterly unacceptable to prioritise the views of passing motorists over the privacy and amenity of people who live in an area.

This EIS fails to model traffic beyond two intersections after this project. This deliberately obscures the threat to King Street and roads in Alexandria. I object to exposing King Street and Edgeware Rd to the threat of becoming clearways.

Residents affected by compulsory acquisitions are 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.

I strongly object to the unacceptable impact the project's construction will have on local residents, businesses and schools. Across the route of this project, people face years of having their streets turned into car parks for construction workers; 24/7 construction noise, vibration, and heavy truck movements; exposure to asbestos, construction dust, and toxic materials; and more. Mitigation is recommended in this EIS, but no information is provided 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.

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.

This project deliberately exposes communities in certain areas to increased pollution. Such an approach values the health and safety of people in certain areas of Sydney over others, and is both unjust and unacceptable. In addition, despite there being no safe level of exposure to fine particulate matter, the proponents want to build this project knowing it will increase these pollutants around much of the project route.

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 air quality study shows that dangerous fine particle pollution already exceeds acceptable levels in some areas in the project areas, and will worsen if this project is built. I also object to the way this and other information about air quality and pollution impacts has been provided in this EIS; it is far too dense and opaque for ordinary residents to

understand. It should go without saying that where public health is concerned, information about negative impacts should be provided in a way that affected residents can understand.

The EIS demonstrates that air quality, even at existing levels, is close to the allowable limits, and will only get worse with a major interchange, road upgrades and ventilation stacks implemented at the St Peters Interchange and surrounds. If new air quality standards as proposed by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) in 2012 are implemented, the New M5 would well exceed allowable air pollution levels.

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). I find it completely unacceptable that AECOM has been paid $13 million of taxpayer money to complete this EIS despite this, and despite it being 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. I also object to AECOM doing the EIS when it has contracts in the rest of the project including Stage 2. This conflict of interest needs to be explained and addressed.

Even with these flaws, tolls on these roads are to be in effect for decades. Many Sydneysiders will not see these roads untolled in their lifetimes. Nor will western Sydney or rural and regional NSW see any investment in their communities to create employment opportunities that would circumvent the need to commute long distances by car to jobs in Sydney's CBD, eastern suburbs and inner city.

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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.

The delivery of the New M5 and in particular the St Peters Interchange, will have a significant impact on residents and businesses. The increased traffic resulting from this project will impact on urban amenity and will limit the ability for public transport services to operate efficiently due to increased local road congestion.

The EIS assumes that by 2031 the full WestConnex project will be complete. This includes the M4-M5 Link (Stage 3), which will have additional significant impacts on residents and businesses. Nowhere in the EIS are these impacts considered, nor information given to the public to fully consider or understand the implications of the whole WestConnex program.

The analysis of alternatives 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.

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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.

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The statement that the New M5 project is an integrated transport project is false and misleading. It is a motorway that does not provide for improved public transport connections and has not fully considered the active transport component in line with government policy. The City's view is that the government could have delivered a better outcome by focusing on ways to "improve access" that is modally agnostic and more consistent with government's land use policies.

Endangered flora and fauna would be destroyed for this project, including the Green and Golden Bell Frog colony at Arncliffe and the critically endangered Cooks River Castlereagh Ironbark Forest at Kingsgrove/Beverly Hills. Saving these species in particular was a condition of the previous M5 motorway; destroying them now makes a mockery of these legal protections. I also object to the unprofessional analysis of the threat posed by the New M5 to these species and to biodiversity in general, as this section of the EIS attempts to downplay the significance of the flora and fauna threatened by this project and the impact of this project on biodiversity overall.

I am also concerned that the EIS suggests that the breeding ponds of the Green and Golden Bell Frog have not been kept healthy in recent years, especially since the RMS was responsible for building these ponds as a condition of the old M5.

Many public parks would be temporarily or permanently destroyed for this project, including parts of Sydney Park and the M5 Linear Park, along with thousands of mature trees along the route. Even if these trees would be reinstated, it will take decades to achieve the level of canopy that exists.

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.

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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 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 proponents have failed to consult with local businesses across the route, many of which would be destroyed by the traffic and/or construction impacts of this project.

The proponent has failed to adequately assess and responsibly handle asbestos, including the huge amounts it has removed ahead of this EIS from the Alexandria Landfill and transported through inner Sydney out to the western suburbs. More toxic asbestos is expected to be dug up and transported from various sites along the New M5 for this project, and the numerous breaches of basic health and safety procedures observed by residents in St Peters, Granville and Erskine Park in this regard have not been properly assessed in this EIS.

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: Julie Magee [redacted]
Sent: Friday, 29 January 2016 2:37 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

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).

Global experience and research has shown conclusively that these kinds of toll road mega-projects are hugely expensive and provide only short-term relief from traffic congestion at best. I have yet to hear of an independent transport expert who backs the project. WestConnex will increase air pollution and traffic, 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.

The strategic justification for the New M5 is weak and inconsistent with the NSW Government's strategic planning and policy framework, despite its inclusion in the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy and the Long Term Transport Master Plan. The project as proposed in this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) does not deliver the broader objectives of WestConnex as stated in the Updated Strategic Business Case (November 2015).

There has been no compelling case made for why WestConnex should be built, and the project should not receive approval and not proceed. This EIS and the Updated Strategic Business Case for WestConnex are clear that the benefits accruing from Stage 2 do not outweigh the costs. Benefits are shown to come once the whole WestConnex project is built according to the Updated Strategic Business Case, and that no benefits exist until all three Stages are delivered (WestConnex Full Scheme: Economic Appraisal, KPMG, 19 November 2015). I am aware that even this has now expanded to include other tollways such as the Sydney Gateway, making it even more likely that this project will provide disbenefits to society if it proceeds as proposed in this EIS, i.e. as a standalone project. This is particularly concerning given there is a significant risk that Stage 3 will not be built.

Fundamentally flawed projects like WestConnex do not account for changing work practices supported by technologies such as teleworking, or flexible office spaces, or that car journeys are dropping as workers elect to work closer to home or use public transport, bicycles or car sharing. It also does not account for trends that will substantially change how people choose to travel in future and reduce the number of cars on the road, such as peak car or driverless cars.

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 would like to see this money invested in other projects including public transport and regional roads rather than in one unproven project in Sydney mteropolitan area.

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 EIS lacks rigour and sound analysis, despite the huge volume of documentation. This lack of rigour and analysis is consistent across all chapters and appendices. The project objectives are biased towards a motorway solution, so that any proposed alternative falls short of the proposed solution. Similarly, the work undertaken in the EIS is highly compliance driven, and fails to take into account opportunities or strategic impacts, and the assessment of cumulative impacts is almost negligent.

WestConnex is presented as a 'transformational' infrastructure project, however, the EIS is not clear on what transformation it will achieve. There is no demonstration that WestConnex delivers transformation in terms of social or economic improvement, or better land use outcomes. To the contrary, WestConnex will deliver a piece of infrastructure that increases traffic on local roads, does not enable value capture or urban renewal, and is not consistent with the government's land use priorities or the proposal in the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy.

Traffic on the existing M5 East exceeded capacity "within months" of opening (New M5 Project Overview, November 2015), including recent road widening. This lack of capacity is, in part, the rationale for the construction of the New M5. Managing demand on the M5 East and providing high quality public transport alternatives for those who can change mode would be a more effective long term solution that simply a 'predict and provide' approach, yet this alternative - along with many others - has not been assessed.

A larger question raised by the proposed New M5 project is what happens if capacity on this motorway is reached? The existing M5 East has proven that a new motorway can easily reach or exceed capacity within a 15 year timeframe. If that outcome is realised for the New M5, Sydney will be left with a transport legacy that cannot support the jobs growth in the west consistent with Government policy. Sydney needs to manage demand for existing road assets to maximise economically productive use and deliver sustainable transport as a real alternative to car travel. International cities such as Los Angeles are moving away from their dominant car-based culture to invest in public transport in order to build the sustainability and attractiveness of their city for residents, businesses and visitors alike.

The New M5 project has only been assessed to 2031, which does not take into account the 45 year concession period for the asset as stated in the WestConnex Updated Strategic Business Case. The assessment does not account for future events that may radically change travel demands or behaviours.

Heritage buildings would be destroyed for this project, while others would be isolated in a flood of traffic. e.g. terraces next to construction compounds and motorway in Campbell Street.

Residents in south west Sydney will suffer a huge loss of amenity as a result of the existing M5 being stripped of its green space and vegetation, particularly when residents fought so hard to get these green spaces established and thriving. I also strongly object to their concrete noise walls being replaced with transparent barriers. These will be right next to hundreds of homes, who will now be forced to look at (as well as listen to and breathe the fumes of) lanes of motorway traffic just over their fences. It is utterly unacceptable to prioritise the views of passing motorists over the privacy and amenity of people who live in an area.

This EIS fails to model traffic beyond two intersections after this project. This deliberately obscures the threat to King Street and roads in Alexandria. I object to exposing King Street and Edgeware Rd to the threat of becoming clearways.

Residents affected by compulsory acquisitions are 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.

I strongly object to the unacceptable impact the project's construction will have on local residents, businesses and schools. Across the route of this project, people face years of having their streets turned into car parks for construction workers; 24/7 construction noise, vibration, and heavy truck movements; exposure to asbestos, construction dust, and toxic materials; and more. Mitigation is recommended in this EIS, but no information is provided 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.

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.

This project deliberately exposes communities in certain areas to increased pollution. Such an approach values the health and safety of people in certain areas of Sydney over others, and is both unjust and unacceptable. In addition, despite there being no safe level of exposure to fine particulate matter, the proponents want to build this project knowing it will increase these pollutants around much of the project route.

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 air quality study shows that dangerous fine particle pollution already exceeds acceptable levels in some areas in the project areas, and will worsen if this project is built. I also object to the way this and other information about air quality and pollution impacts has been provided in this EIS; it is far too dense and opaque for ordinary residents to understand. It should go without saying that where public health is concerned, information about negative impacts should be provided in a way that affected residents can understand.

The EIS demonstrates that air quality, even at existing levels, is close to the allowable limits, and will only get worse with a major interchange, road upgrades and ventilation stacks implemented at the St Peters Interchange and surrounds. If new air quality standards as proposed by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) in 2012 are implemented, the New M5 would well exceed allowable air pollution levels.

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). I find it completely unacceptable that AECOM has been paid $13 million of taxpayer money to complete this EIS despite this, and despite it being 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. I also object to AECOM doing the EIS when it has contracts in the rest of the project including Stage 2. This conflict of interest needs to be explained and addressed.

Even with these flaws, tolls on these roads are to be in effect for decades. Many Sydneysiders will not see these roads untolled in their lifetimes. Nor will western Sydney or rural and regional NSW see any investment in their communities to create employment opportunities that would circumvent the need to commute long distances by car to jobs in Sydney's CBD, eastern suburbs and inner city.

The New M5 would cause costly traffic chaos throughout the inner west and south-west Sydney. 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. This EIS also 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, Kingsgrove and Brighton-Le-Sands. I object to building a road that the proponent admits will produce such volumes of traffic that such roads will be beyond capacity. Where traffic is already bad, plans should be to reduce it, not make it worse.

Meanwhile, even this EIS 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. This is because even the proponents know that commuters will be unwilling to pay $6 each way to use either of these toll roads, which is in line with figures in WestConnex's Updated Strategic Business Case that show for almost all of potential users, the value of time saved is less than the cost of using WestConnex.

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.

The delivery of the New M5 and in particular the St Peters Interchange, will have a significant impact on residents and businesses. The increased traffic resulting from this project will impact on urban amenity and will limit the ability for public transport services to operate efficiently due to increased local road congestion.

The EIS assumes that by 2031 the full WestConnex project will be complete. This includes the M4-M5 Link (Stage 3), which will have additional significant impacts on residents and businesses. Nowhere in the EIS are these impacts considered, nor information given to the public to fully consider or understand the implications of the whole WestConnex program.

The analysis of alternatives 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.

The evidence provided by the EIS in support of the project is incomplete and unbalanced, selectively including and excluding impacts from subsequent planned stages of the WestConnex project. The analysis of strategic alternatives in the EIS is cursory and fails to demonstrate the New M5 extension is the best option to meet the needs of a growing Sydney population. The EIS also does not take into consideration the travel patterns of residents and businesses in western or south-western Sydney that the New M5 is intended to serve, nor the wider impacts on inner-Sydney communities affected by the WestConnex program.

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.

The social impact study is little more than a 'cut and paste' job and is insulting to communities where hundreds of tenants and owners have lost homes and others will live in decimated communities. The report exaggerates the potential positive aspects of the project, while the negative aspects are either downplayed, insufficiently detailed or omitted altogether. Where negative economic or social impacts are identified in the report, they are inadequately addressed in terms of management or mitigation actions to be taken.

The statement that the New M5 project is an integrated transport project is false and misleading. It is a motorway that does not provide for improved public transport connections and has not fully considered the active transport

component in line with government policy. The City's view is that the government could have delivered a better outcome by focusing on ways to "improve access" that is modally agnostic and more consistent with government's land use policies.

Endangered flora and fauna would be destroyed for this project, including the Green and Golden Bell Frog colony at Arncliffe and the critically endangered Cooks River Castlereagh Ironbark Forest at Kingsgrove/Beverly Hills. Saving these species in particular was a condition of the previous M5 motorway; destroying them now makes a mockery of these legal protections. I also object to the unprofessional analysis of the threat posed by the New M5 to these species and to biodiversity in general, as this section of the EIS attempts to downplay the significance of the flora and fauna threatened by this project and the impact of this project on biodiversity overall.

I am also concerned that the EIS suggests that the breeding ponds of the Green and Golden Bell Frog have not been kept healthy in recent years, especially since the RMS was responsible for building these ponds as a condition of the old M5.

Many public parks would be temporarily or permanently destroyed for this project, including parts of Sydney Park and the M5 Linear Park, along with thousands of mature trees along the route. Even if these trees would be reinstated, it will take decades to achieve the level of canopy that exists.

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.

The increase in road capacity on Euston Road from four lanes to between six and eight, and Campbell Road from two lanes to six will have noise impacts on people living in the area and using Sydney Park.

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 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 proponents have failed to consult with local businesses across the route, many of which would be destroyed by the traffic and/or construction impacts of this project.

The proponent has failed to adequately assess and responsibly handle asbestos, including the huge amounts it has removed ahead of this EIS from the Alexandria Landfill and transported through inner Sydney out to the western suburbs. More toxic asbestos is expected to be dug up and transported from various sites along the New M5 for this project, and the numerous breaches of basic health and safety procedures observed by residents in St Peters, Granville and Erskine Park in this regard have not been properly assessed in this EIS.

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,

Julie Magee

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Karen Cameron [redacted]
Sent: Friday, 29 January 2016 2:34 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

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).

Global experience and research has shown conclusively that these kinds of toll road mega-projects are hugely expensive and provide only short-term relief from traffic congestion. I have yet to hear of an independent transport expert who backs the project. WestConnex will increase air pollution and traffic, 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.

The strategic justification for the New M5 is weak and inconsistent with the NSW Government's strategic planning and policy framework, despite its inclusion in the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy and the Long Term Transport Master Plan. The project as proposed in this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) does not deliver the broader objectives of WestConnex as stated in the Updated Strategic Business Case (November 2015).

There has been no compelling case made for why WestConnex should be built, and the project should not receive approval and not proceed. This EIS and the Updated Strategic Business Case for WestConnex are clear that the benefits accruing from Stage 2 do not outweigh the costs. Benefits are shown to come once the whole WestConnex project is built according to the Updated Strategic Business Case, and that no benefits exist until all three Stages are delivered (WestConnex Full Scheme: Economic Appraisal, KPMG, 19 November 2015). I am aware that even this has now expanded to include other tollways such as the Sydney Gateway, making it even more likely that this project will provide disbenefits to society if it proceeds as proposed in this EIS, i.e. as a standalone project. This is particularly concerning given there is a significant risk that Stage 3 will not be built.

Fundamentally flawed projects like WestConnex do not account for changing work practices supported by technologies such as teleworking, or flexible office spaces, or that car journeys are dropping as workers elect to work closer to home or use public transport, bicycles or car sharing. It also does not account for trends that will substantially change how people choose to travel in future and reduce the number of cars on the road, such as peak car or driverless cars.

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 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 EIS lacks rigour and sound analysis, despite the huge volume of documentation. This lack of rigour and analysis is consistent across all chapters and appendices. The project objectives are biased towards a motorway solution, so that any proposed alternative falls short of the proposed solution. Similarly, the work undertaken in the EIS is highly compliance driven, and fails to take into account opportunities or strategic impacts, and the assessment of cumulative impacts is almost negligent.

WestConnex is presented as a 'transformational' infrastructure project, however, the EIS is not clear on what transformation it will achieve. There is no demonstration that WestConnex delivers transformation in terms of social or economic improvement, or better land use outcomes. To the contrary, WestConnex will deliver a piece of infrastructure that increases traffic on local roads, does not enable value capture or urban renewal, and is not consistent with the government's land use priorities or the proposal in the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy.

Traffic on the existing M5 East exceeded capacity "within months" of opening (New M5 Project Overview, November 2015), including recent road widening. This lack of capacity is, in part, the rationale for the construction of the New M5. Managing demand on the M5 East and providing high quality public transport alternatives for those who can change mode would be a more effective long term solution that simply a 'predict and provide' approach, yet this alternative - along with many others - has not been assessed.

A larger question raised by the proposed New M5 project is what happens if capacity on this motorway is reached? The existing M5 East has proven that a new motorway can easily reach or exceed capacity within a 15 year timeframe. If that outcome is realised for the New M5, Sydney will be left with a transport legacy that cannot support the jobs growth in the west consistent with Government policy. Sydney needs to manage demand for existing road assets to maximise economically productive use and deliver sustainable transport as a real alternative to car travel. International cities such as Los Angeles are moving away from their dominant car-based culture to invest in public transport in order to build the sustainability and attractiveness of their city for residents, businesses and visitors alike.

The New M5 project has only been assessed to 2031, which does not take into account the 45 year concession period for the asset as stated in the WestConnex Updated Strategic Business Case. The assessment does not account for future events that may radically change travel demands or behaviours.

Heritage buildings would be destroyed for this project, while others would be isolated in a flood of traffic. e.g. terraces next to construction compounds and motorway in Campbell Street.

Residents in south west Sydney will suffer a huge loss of amenity as a result of the existing M5 being stripped of its green space and vegetation, particularly when residents fought so hard to get these green spaces established and thriving. I also strongly object to their concrete noise walls being replaced with transparent barriers. These will be right next to hundreds of homes, who will now be forced to look at (as well as listen to and breathe the fumes of) lanes of motorway traffic just over their fences. It is utterly unacceptable to prioritise the views of passing motorists over the privacy and amenity of people who live in an area.

This EIS fails to model traffic beyond two intersections after this project. This deliberately obscures the threat to King Street and roads in Alexandria. I object to exposing King Street and Edgeware Rd to the threat of becoming clearways.

Residents affected by compulsory acquisitions are 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.

I strongly object to the unacceptable impact the project's construction will have on local residents, businesses and schools. Across the route of this project, people face years of having their streets turned into car parks for construction workers; 24/7 construction noise, vibration, and heavy truck movements; exposure to asbestos, construction dust, and toxic materials; and more. Mitigation is recommended in this EIS, but no information is provided 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.

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.

This project deliberately exposes communities in certain areas to increased pollution. Such an approach values the health and safety of people in certain areas of Sydney over others, and is both unjust and unacceptable. In addition, despite there being no safe level of exposure to fine particulate matter, the proponents want to build this project knowing it will increase these pollutants around much of the project route.

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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Even with these flaws, tolls on these roads are to be in effect for decades. Many Sydneysiders will not see these roads untolled in their lifetimes. Nor will western Sydney or rural and regional NSW see any investment in their communities to create employment opportunities that would circumvent the need to commute long distances by car to jobs in Sydney's CBD, eastern suburbs and inner city.

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Meanwhile, even this EIS 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. This is because even the proponents know that commuters will be unwilling to pay $6 each way to use either of these toll roads, which is in line with figures in WestConnex's Updated Strategic Business Case that show for almost all of potential users, the value of time saved is less than the cost of using WestConnex.

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.

The delivery of the New M5 and in particular the St Peters Interchange, will have a significant impact on residents and businesses. The increased traffic resulting from this project will impact on urban amenity and will limit the ability for public transport services to operate efficiently due to increased local road congestion.

The EIS assumes that by 2031 the full WestConnex project will be complete. This includes the M4-M5 Link (Stage 3), which will have additional significant impacts on residents and businesses. Nowhere in the EIS are these impacts considered, nor information given to the public to fully consider or understand the implications of the whole WestConnex program.

The analysis of alternatives 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.

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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.

The social impact study is little more than a 'cut and paste' job and is insulting to communities where hundreds of tenants and owners have lost homes and others will live in decimated communities. The report exaggerates the potential positive aspects of the project, while the negative aspects are either downplayed, insufficiently detailed or omitted altogether. Where negative economic or social impacts are identified in the report, they are inadequately addressed in terms of management or mitigation actions to be taken.

The statement that the New M5 project is an integrated transport project is false and misleading. It is a motorway that does not provide for improved public transport connections and has not fully considered the active transport component in line with government policy. The City's view is that the government could have delivered a better outcome by focusing on ways to "improve access" that is modally agnostic and more consistent with government's land use policies.

Endangered flora and fauna would be destroyed for this project, including the Green and Golden Bell Frog colony at Arncliffe and the critically endangered Cooks River Castlereagh Ironbark Forest at Kingsgrove/Beverly Hills. Saving these species in particular was a condition of the previous M5 motorway; destroying them now makes a mockery of these legal protections. I also object to the unprofessional analysis of the threat posed by the New M5 to these species and to biodiversity in general, as this section of the EIS attempts to downplay the significance of the flora and fauna threatened by this project and the impact of this project on biodiversity overall.

I am also concerned that the EIS suggests that the breeding ponds of the Green and Golden Bell Frog have not been kept healthy in recent years, especially since the RMS was responsible for building these ponds as a condition of the old M5.

Many public parks would be temporarily or permanently destroyed for this project, including parts of Sydney Park and the M5 Linear Park, along with thousands of mature trees along the route. Even if these trees would be reinstated, it will take decades to achieve the level of canopy that exists.

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.

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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 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 proponents have failed to consult with local businesses across the route, many of which would be destroyed by the traffic and/or construction impacts of this project.

The proponent has failed to adequately assess and responsibly handle asbestos, including the huge amounts it has removed ahead of this EIS from the Alexandria Landfill and transported through inner Sydney out to the western suburbs. More toxic asbestos is expected to be dug up and transported from various sites along the New M5 for this project, and the numerous breaches of basic health and safety procedures observed by residents in St Peters, Granville and Erskine Park in this regard have not been properly assessed in this EIS.

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 Cameron

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Raewyn Leithhead [redacted]
Sent: Friday, 29 January 2016 2:32 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

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).

Global experience and research has shown conclusively that these kinds of toll road mega-projects are hugely expensive and provide only short-term relief from traffic congestion. I have yet to hear of an independent transport expert who backs the project. WestConnex will increase air pollution and traffic, 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.

The strategic justification for the New M5 is weak and inconsistent with the NSW Government's strategic planning and policy framework, despite its inclusion in the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy and the Long Term Transport Master Plan. The project as proposed in this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) does not deliver the broader objectives of WestConnex as stated in the Updated Strategic Business Case (November 2015).

There has been no compelling case made for why WestConnex should be built, and the project should not receive approval and not proceed. This EIS and the Updated Strategic Business Case for WestConnex are clear that the benefits accruing from Stage 2 do not outweigh the costs. Benefits are shown to come once the whole WestConnex project is built according to the Updated Strategic Business Case, and that no benefits exist until all three Stages are delivered (WestConnex Full Scheme: Economic Appraisal, KPMG, 19 November 2015). I am aware that even this has now expanded to include other tollways such as the Sydney Gateway, making it even more likely that this project will provide disbenefits to society if it proceeds as proposed in this EIS, i.e. as a standalone project. This is particularly concerning given there is a significant risk that Stage 3 will not be built.

Fundamentally flawed projects like WestConnex do not account for changing work practices supported by technologies such as teleworking, or flexible office spaces, or that car journeys are dropping as workers elect to work closer to home or use public transport, bicycles or car sharing. It also does not account for trends that will substantially change how people choose to travel in future and reduce the number of cars on the road, such as peak car or driverless cars.

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 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 EIS lacks rigour and sound analysis, despite the huge volume of documentation. This lack of rigour and analysis is consistent across all chapters and appendices. The project objectives are biased towards a motorway solution, so that any proposed alternative falls short of the proposed solution. Similarly, the work undertaken in the EIS is highly compliance driven, and fails to take into account opportunities or strategic impacts, and the assessment of cumulative impacts is almost negligent.

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Traffic on the existing M5 East exceeded capacity "within months" of opening (New M5 Project Overview, November 2015), including recent road widening. This lack of capacity is, in part, the rationale for the construction of the New M5. Managing demand on the M5 East and providing high quality public transport alternatives for those who can change mode would be a more effective long term solution that simply a 'predict and provide' approach, yet this alternative - along with many others - has not been assessed.

A larger question raised by the proposed New M5 project is what happens if capacity on this motorway is reached? The existing M5 East has proven that a new motorway can easily reach or exceed capacity within a 15 year timeframe. If that outcome is realised for the New M5, Sydney will be left with a transport legacy that cannot support the jobs growth in the west consistent with Government policy. Sydney needs to manage demand for existing road assets to maximise economically productive use and deliver sustainable transport as a real alternative to car travel. International cities such as Los Angeles are moving away from their dominant car-based culture to invest in public transport in order to build the sustainability and attractiveness of their city for residents, businesses and visitors alike.

The New M5 project has only been assessed to 2031, which does not take into account the 45 year concession period for the asset as stated in the WestConnex Updated Strategic Business Case. The assessment does not account for future events that may radically change travel demands or behaviours.

Heritage buildings would be destroyed for this project, while others would be isolated in a flood of traffic. e.g. terraces next to construction compounds and motorway in Campbell Street.

Residents in south west Sydney will suffer a huge loss of amenity as a result of the existing M5 being stripped of its green space and vegetation, particularly when residents fought so hard to get these green spaces established and thriving. I also strongly object to their concrete noise walls being replaced with transparent barriers. These will be right next to hundreds of homes, who will now be forced to look at (as well as listen to and breathe the fumes of) lanes of motorway traffic just over their fences. It is utterly unacceptable to prioritise the views of passing motorists over the privacy and amenity of people who live in an area.

This EIS fails to model traffic beyond two intersections after this project. This deliberately obscures the threat to King Street and roads in Alexandria. I object to exposing King Street and Edgeware Rd to the threat of becoming clearways.

Residents affected by compulsory acquisitions are 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.

I strongly object to the unacceptable impact the project's construction will have on local residents, businesses and schools. Across the route of this project, people face years of having their streets turned into car parks for construction workers; 24/7 construction noise, vibration, and heavy truck movements; exposure to asbestos, construction dust, and toxic materials; and more. Mitigation is recommended in this EIS, but no information is provided 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.

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.

This project deliberately exposes communities in certain areas to increased pollution. Such an approach values the health and safety of people in certain areas of Sydney over others, and is both unjust and unacceptable. In addition, despite there being no safe level of exposure to fine particulate matter, the proponents want to build this project knowing it will increase these pollutants around much of the project route.

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 air quality study shows that dangerous fine particle pollution already exceeds acceptable levels in some areas in the project areas, and will worsen if this project is built. I also object to the way this and other information about air quality and pollution impacts has been provided in this EIS; it is far too dense and opaque for ordinary residents to

understand. It should go without saying that where public health is concerned, information about negative impacts should be provided in a way that affected residents can understand.

The EIS demonstrates that air quality, even at existing levels, is close to the allowable limits, and will only get worse with a major interchange, road upgrades and ventilation stacks implemented at the St Peters Interchange and surrounds. If new air quality standards as proposed by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) in 2012 are implemented, the New M5 would well exceed allowable air pollution levels.

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). I find it completely unacceptable that AECOM has been paid $13 million of taxpayer money to complete this EIS despite this, and despite it being 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. I also object to AECOM doing the EIS when it has contracts in the rest of the project including Stage 2. This conflict of interest needs to be explained and addressed.

Even with these flaws, tolls on these roads are to be in effect for decades. Many Sydneysiders will not see these roads untolled in their lifetimes. Nor will western Sydney or rural and regional NSW see any investment in their communities to create employment opportunities that would circumvent the need to commute long distances by car to jobs in Sydney's CBD, eastern suburbs and inner city.

The New M5 would cause costly traffic chaos throughout the inner west and south-west Sydney. 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. This EIS also 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, Kingsgrove and Brighton-Le-Sands. I object to building a road that the proponent admits will produce such volumes of traffic that such roads will be beyond capacity. Where traffic is already bad, plans should be to reduce it, not make it worse.

Meanwhile, even this EIS 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. This is because even the proponents know that commuters will be unwilling to pay $6 each way to use either of these toll roads, which is in line with figures in WestConnex's Updated Strategic Business Case that show for almost all of potential users, the value of time saved is less than the cost of using WestConnex.

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.

The delivery of the New M5 and in particular the St Peters Interchange, will have a significant impact on residents and businesses. The increased traffic resulting from this project will impact on urban amenity and will limit the ability for public transport services to operate efficiently due to increased local road congestion.

The EIS assumes that by 2031 the full WestConnex project will be complete. This includes the M4-M5 Link (Stage 3), which will have additional significant impacts on residents and businesses. Nowhere in the EIS are these impacts considered, nor information given to the public to fully consider or understand the implications of the whole WestConnex program.

The analysis of alternatives 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.

The evidence provided by the EIS in support of the project is incomplete and unbalanced, selectively including and excluding impacts from subsequent planned stages of the WestConnex project. The analysis of strategic alternatives in the EIS is cursory and fails to demonstrate the New M5 extension is the best option to meet the needs of a growing Sydney population. The EIS also does not take into consideration the travel patterns of residents and businesses in western or south-western Sydney that the New M5 is intended to serve, nor the wider impacts on inner-Sydney communities affected by the WestConnex program.

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.

The social impact study is little more than a 'cut and paste' job and is insulting to communities where hundreds of tenants and owners have lost homes and others will live in decimated communities. The report exaggerates the potential positive aspects of the project, while the negative aspects are either downplayed, insufficiently detailed or omitted altogether. Where negative economic or social impacts are identified in the report, they are inadequately addressed in terms of management or mitigation actions to be taken.

The statement that the New M5 project is an integrated transport project is false and misleading. It is a motorway that does not provide for improved public transport connections and has not fully considered the active transport component in line with government policy. The City's view is that the government could have delivered a better outcome by focusing on ways to "improve access" that is modally agnostic and more consistent with government's land use policies.

Endangered flora and fauna would be destroyed for this project, including the Green and Golden Bell Frog colony at Arncliffe and the critically endangered Cooks River Castlereagh Ironbark Forest at Kingsgrove/Beverly Hills. Saving these species in particular was a condition of the previous M5 motorway; destroying them now makes a mockery of these legal protections. I also object to the unprofessional analysis of the threat posed by the New M5 to these species and to biodiversity in general, as this section of the EIS attempts to downplay the significance of the flora and fauna threatened by this project and the impact of this project on biodiversity overall.

I am also concerned that the EIS suggests that the breeding ponds of the Green and Golden Bell Frog have not been kept healthy in recent years, especially since the RMS was responsible for building these ponds as a condition of the old M5.

Many public parks would be temporarily or permanently destroyed for this project, including parts of Sydney Park and the M5 Linear Park, along with thousands of mature trees along the route. Even if these trees would be reinstated, it will take decades to achieve the level of canopy that exists.

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.

The increase in road capacity on Euston Road from four lanes to between six and eight, and Campbell Road from two lanes to six will have noise impacts on people living in the area and using Sydney Park.

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 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 proponents have failed to consult with local businesses across the route, many of which would be destroyed by the traffic and/or construction impacts of this project.

The proponent has failed to adequately assess and responsibly handle asbestos, including the huge amounts it has removed ahead of this EIS from the Alexandria Landfill and transported through inner Sydney out to the western suburbs. More toxic asbestos is expected to be dug up and transported from various sites along the New M5 for this project, and the numerous breaches of basic health and safety procedures observed by residents in St Peters, Granville and Erskine Park in this regard have not been properly assessed in this EIS.

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,

Raewyn Leithhead

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Greg Rcketson [redacted]
Sent: Friday, 29 January 2016 2:32 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

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).

Global experience and research has shown conclusively that these kinds of toll road mega-projects are hugely expensive and provide only short-term relief from traffic congestion. I have yet to hear of an independent transport expert who backs the project. WestConnex will increase air pollution and traffic, 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.

The strategic justification for the New M5 is weak and inconsistent with the NSW Government's strategic planning and policy framework, despite its inclusion in the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy and the Long Term Transport Master Plan. The project as proposed in this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) does not deliver the broader objectives of WestConnex as stated in the Updated Strategic Business Case (November 2015).

There has been no compelling case made for why WestConnex should be built, and the project should not receive approval and not proceed. This EIS and the Updated Strategic Business Case for WestConnex are clear that the benefits accruing from Stage 2 do not outweigh the costs. Benefits are shown to come once the whole WestConnex project is built according to the Updated Strategic Business Case, and that no benefits exist until all three Stages are delivered (WestConnex Full Scheme: Economic Appraisal, KPMG, 19 November 2015). I am aware that even this has now expanded to include other tollways such as the Sydney Gateway, making it even more likely that this project will provide disbenefits to society if it proceeds as proposed in this EIS, i.e. as a standalone project. This is particularly concerning given there is a significant risk that Stage 3 will not be built.

Fundamentally flawed projects like WestConnex do not account for changing work practices supported by technologies such as teleworking, or flexible office spaces, or that car journeys are dropping as workers elect to work closer to home or use public transport, bicycles or car sharing. It also does not account for trends that will substantially change how people choose to travel in future and reduce the number of cars on the road, such as peak car or driverless cars.

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 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 EIS lacks rigour and sound analysis, despite the huge volume of documentation. This lack of rigour and analysis is consistent across all chapters and appendices. The project objectives are biased towards a motorway solution, so that any proposed alternative falls short of the proposed solution. Similarly, the work undertaken in the EIS is highly compliance driven, and fails to take into account opportunities or strategic impacts, and the assessment of cumulative impacts is almost negligent.

WestConnex is presented as a 'transformational' infrastructure project, however, the EIS is not clear on what transformation it will achieve. There is no demonstration that WestConnex delivers transformation in terms of social or economic improvement, or better land use outcomes. To the contrary, WestConnex will deliver a piece of infrastructure that increases traffic on local roads, does not enable value capture or urban renewal, and is not consistent with the government's land use priorities or the proposal in the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy.

Traffic on the existing M5 East exceeded capacity "within months" of opening (New M5 Project Overview, November 2015), including recent road widening. This lack of capacity is, in part, the rationale for the construction of the New M5. Managing demand on the M5 East and providing high quality public transport alternatives for those who can change mode would be a more effective long term solution that simply a 'predict and provide' approach, yet this alternative - along with many others - has not been assessed.

A larger question raised by the proposed New M5 project is what happens if capacity on this motorway is reached? The existing M5 East has proven that a new motorway can easily reach or exceed capacity within a 15 year timeframe. If that outcome is realised for the New M5, Sydney will be left with a transport legacy that cannot support the jobs growth in the west consistent with Government policy. Sydney needs to manage demand for existing road assets to maximise economically productive use and deliver sustainable transport as a real alternative to car travel. International cities such as Los Angeles are moving away from their dominant car-based culture to invest in public transport in order to build the sustainability and attractiveness of their city for residents, businesses and visitors alike.

The New M5 project has only been assessed to 2031, which does not take into account the 45 year concession period for the asset as stated in the WestConnex Updated Strategic Business Case. The assessment does not account for future events that may radically change travel demands or behaviours.

Heritage buildings would be destroyed for this project, while others would be isolated in a flood of traffic. e.g. terraces next to construction compounds and motorway in Campbell Street.

Residents in south west Sydney will suffer a huge loss of amenity as a result of the existing M5 being stripped of its green space and vegetation, particularly when residents fought so hard to get these green spaces established and thriving. I also strongly object to their concrete noise walls being replaced with transparent barriers. These will be right next to hundreds of homes, who will now be forced to look at (as well as listen to and breathe the fumes of) lanes of motorway traffic just over their fences. It is utterly unacceptable to prioritise the views of passing motorists over the privacy and amenity of people who live in an area.

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The analysis of alternatives 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.

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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.

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Endangered flora and fauna would be destroyed for this project, including the Green and Golden Bell Frog colony at Arncliffe and the critically endangered Cooks River Castlereagh Ironbark Forest at Kingsgrove/Beverly Hills. Saving these species in particular was a condition of the previous M5 motorway; destroying them now makes a mockery of these legal protections. I also object to the unprofessional analysis of the threat posed by the New M5 to these species and to biodiversity in general, as this section of the EIS attempts to downplay the significance of the flora and fauna threatened by this project and the impact of this project on biodiversity overall.

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Many public parks would be temporarily or permanently destroyed for this project, including parts of Sydney Park and the M5 Linear Park, along with thousands of mature trees along the route. Even if these trees would be reinstated, it will take decades to achieve the level of canopy that exists.

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.

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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 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 proponents have failed to consult with local businesses across the route, many of which would be destroyed by the traffic and/or construction impacts of this project.

The proponent has failed to adequately assess and responsibly handle asbestos, including the huge amounts it has removed ahead of this EIS from the Alexandria Landfill and transported through inner Sydney out to the western suburbs. More toxic asbestos is expected to be dug up and transported from various sites along the New M5 for this project, and the numerous breaches of basic health and safety procedures observed by residents in St Peters, Granville and Erskine Park in this regard have not been properly assessed in this EIS.

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,

Greg Rcketson

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: [redacted]
Sent: Friday, 29 January 2016 2:29 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

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).

Global experience and research has shown conclusively that these kinds of toll road mega-projects are hugely expensive and provide only short-term relief from traffic congestion. I have yet to hear of an independent transport expert who backs the project. WestConnex will increase air pollution and traffic, 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.

The strategic justification for the New M5 is weak and inconsistent with the NSW Government's strategic planning and policy framework, despite its inclusion in the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy and the Long Term Transport Master Plan. The project as proposed in this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) does not deliver the broader objectives of WestConnex as stated in the Updated Strategic Business Case (November 2015).

There has been no compelling case made for why WestConnex should be built, and the project should not receive approval and not proceed. This EIS and the Updated Strategic Business Case for WestConnex are clear that the benefits accruing from Stage 2 do not outweigh the costs. Benefits are shown to come once the whole WestConnex project is built according to the Updated Strategic Business Case, and that no benefits exist until all three Stages are delivered (WestConnex Full Scheme: Economic Appraisal, KPMG, 19 November 2015). I am aware that even this has now expanded to include other tollways such as the Sydney Gateway, making it even more likely that this project will provide disbenefits to society if it proceeds as proposed in this EIS, i.e. as a standalone project. This is particularly concerning given there is a significant risk that Stage 3 will not be built.

Fundamentally flawed projects like WestConnex do not account for changing work practices supported by technologies such as teleworking, or flexible office spaces, or that car journeys are dropping as workers elect to work closer to home or use public transport, bicycles or car sharing. It also does not account for trends that will substantially change how people choose to travel in future and reduce the number of cars on the road, such as peak car or driverless cars.

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 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 EIS lacks rigour and sound analysis, despite the huge volume of documentation. This lack of rigour and analysis is consistent across all chapters and appendices. The project objectives are biased towards a motorway solution, so that any proposed alternative falls short of the proposed solution. Similarly, the work undertaken in the EIS is highly compliance driven, and fails to take into account opportunities or strategic impacts, and the assessment of cumulative impacts is almost negligent.

WestConnex is presented as a 'transformational' infrastructure project, however, the EIS is not clear on what transformation it will achieve. There is no demonstration that WestConnex delivers transformation in terms of social or economic improvement, or better land use outcomes. To the contrary, WestConnex will deliver a piece of infrastructure that increases traffic on local roads, does not enable value capture or urban renewal, and is not consistent with the government's land use priorities or the proposal in the 2012 State Infrastructure Strategy.

Traffic on the existing M5 East exceeded capacity "within months" of opening (New M5 Project Overview, November 2015), including recent road widening. This lack of capacity is, in part, the rationale for the construction of the New M5. Managing demand on the M5 East and providing high quality public transport alternatives for those who can change mode would be a more effective long term solution that simply a 'predict and provide' approach, yet this alternative - along with many others - has not been assessed.

A larger question raised by the proposed New M5 project is what happens if capacity on this motorway is reached? The existing M5 East has proven that a new motorway can easily reach or exceed capacity within a 15 year timeframe. If that outcome is realised for the New M5, Sydney will be left with a transport legacy that cannot support the jobs growth in the west consistent with Government policy. Sydney needs to manage demand for existing road assets to maximise economically productive use and deliver sustainable transport as a real alternative to car travel. International cities such as Los Angeles are moving away from their dominant car-based culture to invest in public transport in order to build the sustainability and attractiveness of their city for residents, businesses and visitors alike.

The New M5 project has only been assessed to 2031, which does not take into account the 45 year concession period for the asset as stated in the WestConnex Updated Strategic Business Case. The assessment does not account for future events that may radically change travel demands or behaviours.

Heritage buildings would be destroyed for this project, while others would be isolated in a flood of traffic. e.g. terraces next to construction compounds and motorway in Campbell Street.

Residents in south west Sydney will suffer a huge loss of amenity as a result of the existing M5 being stripped of its green space and vegetation, particularly when residents fought so hard to get these green spaces established and thriving. I also strongly object to their concrete noise walls being replaced with transparent barriers. These will be right next to hundreds of homes, who will now be forced to look at (as well as listen to and breathe the fumes of) lanes of motorway traffic just over their fences. It is utterly unacceptable to prioritise the views of passing motorists over the privacy and amenity of people who live in an area.

This EIS fails to model traffic beyond two intersections after this project. This deliberately obscures the threat to King Street and roads in Alexandria. I object to exposing King Street and Edgeware Rd to the threat of becoming clearways.

Residents affected by compulsory acquisitions are 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.

I strongly object to the unacceptable impact the project's construction will have on local residents, businesses and schools. Across the route of this project, people face years of having their streets turned into car parks for construction workers; 24/7 construction noise, vibration, and heavy truck movements; exposure to asbestos, construction dust, and toxic materials; and more. Mitigation is recommended in this EIS, but no information is provided 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.

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.

This project deliberately exposes communities in certain areas to increased pollution. Such an approach values the health and safety of people in certain areas of Sydney over others, and is both unjust and unacceptable. In addition, despite there being no safe level of exposure to fine particulate matter, the proponents want to build this project knowing it will increase these pollutants around much of the project route.

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 air quality study shows that dangerous fine particle pollution already exceeds acceptable levels in some areas in the project areas, and will worsen if this project is built. I also object to the way this and other information about air quality and pollution impacts has been provided in this EIS; it is far too dense and opaque for ordinary residents to

understand. It should go without saying that where public health is concerned, information about negative impacts should be provided in a way that affected residents can understand.

The EIS demonstrates that air quality, even at existing levels, is close to the allowable limits, and will only get worse with a major interchange, road upgrades and ventilation stacks implemented at the St Peters Interchange and surrounds. If new air quality standards as proposed by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) in 2012 are implemented, the New M5 would well exceed allowable air pollution levels.

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). I find it completely unacceptable that AECOM has been paid $13 million of taxpayer money to complete this EIS despite this, and despite it being 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. I also object to AECOM doing the EIS when it has contracts in the rest of the project including Stage 2. This conflict of interest needs to be explained and addressed.

Even with these flaws, tolls on these roads are to be in effect for decades. Many Sydneysiders will not see these roads untolled in their lifetimes. Nor will western Sydney or rural and regional NSW see any investment in their communities to create employment opportunities that would circumvent the need to commute long distances by car to jobs in Sydney's CBD, eastern suburbs and inner city.

The New M5 would cause costly traffic chaos throughout the inner west and south-west Sydney. 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. This EIS also 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, Kingsgrove and Brighton-Le-Sands. I object to building a road that the proponent admits will produce such volumes of traffic that such roads will be beyond capacity. Where traffic is already bad, plans should be to reduce it, not make it worse.

Meanwhile, even this EIS 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. This is because even the proponents know that commuters will be unwilling to pay $6 each way to use either of these toll roads, which is in line with figures in WestConnex's Updated Strategic Business Case that show for almost all of potential users, the value of time saved is less than the cost of using WestConnex.

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.

The delivery of the New M5 and in particular the St Peters Interchange, will have a significant impact on residents and businesses. The increased traffic resulting from this project will impact on urban amenity and will limit the ability for public transport services to operate efficiently due to increased local road congestion.

The EIS assumes that by 2031 the full WestConnex project will be complete. This includes the M4-M5 Link (Stage 3), which will have additional significant impacts on residents and businesses. Nowhere in the EIS are these impacts considered, nor information given to the public to fully consider or understand the implications of the whole WestConnex program.

The analysis of alternatives 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.

The evidence provided by the EIS in support of the project is incomplete and unbalanced, selectively including and excluding impacts from subsequent planned stages of the WestConnex project. The analysis of strategic alternatives in the EIS is cursory and fails to demonstrate the New M5 extension is the best option to meet the needs of a growing Sydney population. The EIS also does not take into consideration the travel patterns of residents and businesses in western or south-western Sydney that the New M5 is intended to serve, nor the wider impacts on inner-Sydney communities affected by the WestConnex program.

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.

The social impact study is little more than a 'cut and paste' job and is insulting to communities where hundreds of tenants and owners have lost homes and others will live in decimated communities. The report exaggerates the potential positive aspects of the project, while the negative aspects are either downplayed, insufficiently detailed or omitted altogether. Where negative economic or social impacts are identified in the report, they are inadequately addressed in terms of management or mitigation actions to be taken.

The statement that the New M5 project is an integrated transport project is false and misleading. It is a motorway that does not provide for improved public transport connections and has not fully considered the active transport component in line with government policy. The City's view is that the government could have delivered a better outcome by focusing on ways to "improve access" that is modally agnostic and more consistent with government's land use policies.

Endangered flora and fauna would be destroyed for this project, including the Green and Golden Bell Frog colony at Arncliffe and the critically endangered Cooks River Castlereagh Ironbark Forest at Kingsgrove/Beverly Hills. Saving these species in particular was a condition of the previous M5 motorway; destroying them now makes a mockery of these legal protections. I also object to the unprofessional analysis of the threat posed by the New M5 to these species and to biodiversity in general, as this section of the EIS attempts to downplay the significance of the flora and fauna threatened by this project and the impact of this project on biodiversity overall.

I am also concerned that the EIS suggests that the breeding ponds of the Green and Golden Bell Frog have not been kept healthy in recent years, especially since the RMS was responsible for building these ponds as a condition of the old M5.

Many public parks would be temporarily or permanently destroyed for this project, including parts of Sydney Park and the M5 Linear Park, along with thousands of mature trees along the route. Even if these trees would be reinstated, it will take decades to achieve the level of canopy that exists.

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.

The increase in road capacity on Euston Road from four lanes to between six and eight, and Campbell Road from two lanes to six will have noise impacts on people living in the area and using Sydney Park.

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 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 proponents have failed to consult with local businesses across the route, many of which would be destroyed by the traffic and/or construction impacts of this project.

The proponent has failed to adequately assess and responsibly handle asbestos, including the huge amounts it has removed ahead of this EIS from the Alexandria Landfill and transported through inner Sydney out to the western suburbs. More toxic asbestos is expected to be dug up and transported from various sites along the New M5 for this project, and the numerous breaches of basic health and safety procedures observed by residents in St Peters, Granville and Erskine Park in this regard have not been properly assessed in this EIS.

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]

[redacted]

From: Caitlin Rowlands [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 6:48 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.

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,

Caitlin Rowlands

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 6:42 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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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.

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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: Damien Stephens [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 6:41 PM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

My wife and I own a terrace in Alexandria however now live in Asia. We have been travelling the world since 2004 and experienced all types of transport, seen the good the bad and the down right ugly. We can learn from other countries successes and fails. Singapore/Japan/Hong Kong are great successes on infrastructure for fast, cheap, efficient public transport. Sydney is slowly turning into LA by putting more cars on the road. WestConnex New M5 EIS, project number SSI 14_6788 is preschool thinking, please show me how much smarter you can be. Think big, think global, think for the future as Sydney's population is only set to rise and more cars and roads isn't the answer. More cars, more pollution, more angry people vs fast, cheap, effective public transport freeing up the roads? Really, is it that hard to work out what is more effective?

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.

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[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Blake M [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 6:38 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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Yours sincerely,

Blake M

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Jane Williams [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 6:37 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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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.

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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 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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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,

Jane Williams

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Krysia Stephens [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 6:36 PM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

I own a terrace in Alexandria however now live in Asia. I have been travelling the world since 2004 and experienced all types of transport, seen the good the bad and the down right ugly. We can learn from other countries successes and fails. Singapore/Japan/Hong Kong are great successes on infrastructure for fast, cheap, efficient public transport. Sydney is slowly turning into LA by putting more cars on the road. WestConnex New M5 EIS, project number SSI 14_6788 is preschool thinking, please show me how much smarter you can be. Think big, think global, think for the future as Sydney's population is only set to rise and more cars and roads isn't the answer. More cars, more pollution, more angry people vs fast, cheap, effective public transport freeing up the roads? Really, is it that hard to work out what is more effective?

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.

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Yours sincerely,

Krysia Stephens

[redacted]

From: Connie Anthes [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 6:32 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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Yours sincerely,

Connie Anthes

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 6:24 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.

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.

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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,

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Kirrilee Phillips [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 6:22 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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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.

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[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Edward Doherty [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 6:19 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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From: Francis Brazil [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 6:18 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 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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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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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,

Francis Brazil

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Rainer Chlanda [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 6:18 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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Rainer Chlanda

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted] 12455

From: Caterina Cadeddu [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 6:13 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,

Caterina Cadeddu

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Roxana Knittel [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 6:07 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.

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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Roxana Knittel

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Anita Johnson [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 6:00 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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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,

Anita Johnson

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Jessica Regan [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 5:58 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

I believe that the loss of parks and natural spaces will negatively affect the quality of life for the surrounding neighborhoods. I also know that it will reduce Sydney's appeal as a desirable city on a global scale and be an embarrassment as a first world nation in regard to sustainable and environmentally friendly living.

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.

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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.

Yours sincerely,

Jessica Regan

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Louisa Carr [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 5:52 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

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.

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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.

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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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Louisa Carr

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted] 12460

From: [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 5:43 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: Kim Kofod [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 5:42 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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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,

Kim Kofod

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 5:42 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'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.

[redacted]

From: Nathan Etherington [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 10:53 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

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).

Global experience and research has shown conclusively that these kinds of toll road mega-projects are hugely expensive and provide only short-term relief from traffic congestion. I have yet to hear of an independent transport expert who backs the project. WestConnex will increase air pollution and traffic, 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.

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 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.

I strongly object to the unacceptable impact the project's construction will have on local residents, businesses and schools. Across the route of this project, people face years of having their streets turned into car parks for construction workers; 24/7 construction noise, vibration, and heavy truck movements; exposure to asbestos, construction dust, and toxic materials; and more. Mitigation is recommended in this EIS, but no information is provided 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.

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.

I strongly object to the manner in which this project deliberately exposes communities in certain areas to increased pollution. Such an approach values the health and safety of people in certain areas of Sydney over others, and is both unjust and unacceptable. In addition, despite there being no safe level of exposure to fine particulate matter, the proponents want to build this project knowing it will increase these pollutants around much of the project route.

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). I find it completely unacceptable that AECOM has been paid $13 million of taxpayer money to complete this EIS despite this, and despite it being 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 New M5 would cause costly traffic chaos throughout the inner west and south-west Sydney. 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. This EIS also 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, Kingsgrove and Brighton-Le-Sands.

Meanwhile, even this EIS 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. This is because even the proponents know that commuters will be unwilling to pay $6 each way to use either of these toll roads, which is in line with figures in WestConnex's Updated Strategic Business Case that show for almost all of potential users, the value of time saved is less than the cost of using WestConnex.

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.

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 air quality study shows that dangerous fine particle pollution already exceeds acceptable levels in some areas in the project areas, and will worsen if this project is built. I also object to the way this and other information about air quality and pollution impacts has been provided in this EIS; it is far too dense and opaque for ordinary residents to understand. It should go without saying that where public health is concerned, information about negative impacts should be provided in a way that affected residents can understand.

The analysis of alternatives 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.

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.

The social impact study is little more than a 'cut and paste' job and is insulting to communities where hundreds of tenants and owners have lost homes and others will live in decimated communities.

I strongly object to the destruction of endangered flora and fauna for this project, including the Green and Golden Bell Frog colony at Arncliffe and the critically endangered Cooks River Castlereagh Ironbark Forest at Kingsgrove/Beverly Hills. Saving these species in particular was a condition of the previous M5 motorway; destroying them now makes a mockery of these legal protections. I also object to the unprofessional analysis of the threat posed by the New M5 to these species and to biodiversity in general, as this section of the EIS attempts to downplay the significance of the flora and fauna threatened by this project and the impact of this project on biodiversity overall.

I strongly object to the permanent destruction of public parks for this project, including parts of Sydney Park and the M5 Linear Park, along with thousands of mature trees along the route. 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.

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 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.

I strongly object to the complete failure to consult with local businesses across the route, many of which would be destroyed by the traffic and/or construction impacts of this project.

I strongly object to WestConnex's failure to adequately assess and responsibly handle asbestos, including the huge amounts it has removed ahead of this EIS from the Alexandria Landfill and transported through inner Sydney out to the western suburbs. More toxic asbestos is expected to be dug up and transported from various sites along the New M5 for this project, and the numerous breaches of basic health and safety procedures observed by residents in St Peters, Granville and Erskine Park in this regard have not been properly assessed in this EIS.

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,

Nathan Etherington

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Denice McCabe [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 10:45 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.

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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.

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,

McCabe McCabe

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Claudia Hermann [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 10:33 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.

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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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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,

Claudia Hermann

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Sarah Hurst [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 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

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

In addition to the points below I strongly object to this project as I do not believe that a sound business case has been established and that taxpayers money is being spent on an unnecessary project that does not address the true needs of our society.

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.

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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.

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 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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Yours sincerely,

Sarah Hurst

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Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 10:22 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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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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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.

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[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Richard Moras [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 10:20 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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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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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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From: Claudia Hayes [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 10:16 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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From: Louise Young [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 10:15 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,

Louise Young

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted] 12471

From: horst thiele [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 10:07 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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horst thiele

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Sheryl Rosser [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 10:01 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]

[redacted]

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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.

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,

Douglas Macpherson

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Sherrill Nixon [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 9:51 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

Thank you for this opportunity to respond to the New M5 EIS.

We 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).

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

We previously made submissions to the M4 East EIS and our objections to this project have only grown upon reading the EIS for the New M5 section.

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. Most critically for WestConnex - as reducing congestion is its key purpose - it will actively worsen congestion in many parts of Sydney, and make little impact on congestion across the rest of the city.

We 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. Surveying and drilling work have begun in various places along the route before approval has been given. Hundreds of families have already lost their homes, or have been told their homes are to be acquired, before the government and authorities have consulted with and responded to the community. 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.

In particular, we would like to mention the impact on Euston Road, Alexandria, which seems to sum up the farcical nature of this road development. According to the EIS, Euston Road is supposed to handle 61,000 cars on 3 lanes each way when the New M5 is built. This is almost 10 times what it can handle on 2 lanes currently. The problem is compounded by the fact that the road widening only occurs for a short distance - the greatly increased traffic will hit a bottleneck a few hundred metres down the road where widening has not occurred. Not only will this clearly cause gridlock in a neighbourhood where the roads are already gridlocked, but the widened road will have thousands of cars each hour passing less than 2m in front of families' properties on Euston Road. This is dangerous and unhealthy and will cause great grief to those property owners on Euston Road.

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.

We cannot imagine that the Coalition, if in opposition, would be supportive of such an atrocious process and flawed model. Why is it blithely following this path and ignoring the community's concerns when in government?

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. I am particularly concerned about the air quality and health and safety effects on students, teachers and families at schools like Arncliffe Primary School.

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.

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.

We are regular users of Sydney Park, and previously lived close by in Alexandria. This park has been transformed over the past 20 years in to such a valuable asset for the community, and families come from miles away to use the playground and other facilities. It makes no sense to build a 'spaghetti junction' and an emissions stack in the near vicinity, causing vast amounts of toxic exhaust pollution to be released over one of the few green areas in the area.

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.

We are aware that independent traffic experts have not had 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.

Like with the M4 East EIS, 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.

We 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 we have raised.

Yours sincerely,

Sherrill Nixon and Gavin Zauch

[redacted]

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[redacted]

From: Claire Southall [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 9:48 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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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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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,

Claire Southall

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Tanya Burrows [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 9:47 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

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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.

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.

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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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[redacted]

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From: Craig Harkness [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 9:44 PM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
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Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

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Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 9:43 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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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,

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted] 12479

From: alex mozejko [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 9:43 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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alex mozejko

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Emma Lees [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 9:39 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 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,

Emma Lees

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Janet Dandy-Ward [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 9:35 PM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
Subject: SSI 14_6788: Submission to WestConnex New M5 EIS

Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

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

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).

Experience and research from independent experts here in Australia and overseas has shown that these kinds of toll road mega-projects are hugely expensive and do not ease congestion over the long term. If anything, such projects make congestion worse by increasing overall traffic volumes as the new road capacity quickly fills up. Even the EISs produced for the various stages of WestConnex show it is not a long-term solution to Sydney's congestion problem.

WestConnex will also divert 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.

The whole WestConnex has also 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.

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.

This project will result in residents of western and south-west Sydney being forced to pay large tolls to use this road, rather than being provided with the additional public transport capacity and connections they need, or investment in their regional centres to create employment opportunities that would circumvent the need to commute long distances by car to jobs in Sydney's CBD, eastern suburbs and inner city.

This project will lock Sydney into greater reliance on inefficient and unsustainable road freight instead of investing in freight on rail alternatives. It also ignores the development of regional freight hubs in Sydney's west that would reduce the need for this project.

WestConnex is now being built by a private company that does not even have to publish its contracts. This is unaccountable government at its worst.

There has been no noise assessment for any buildings above two stories, despite the fact thousands of residents are already living in apartment blocks in Alexandria and St Peters

The proponent will not release the full assumptions on which its traffic modelling is based so that Councils and independent experts can test its predictions. This has implications for other key parts of the EIS that rely on these traffic figures, including the air quality, social and economic impact, and more.

The health affects of high levels of noise on local roads over a three year construction period have not been sufficiently assessed.

This EIS admits that dangerous dust pollution will be created during construction at St Peters. It proposes to water the site to avoid this. The community can not accept this when the proponent itself (via its contractors) has failed to water the site during current asbestos removal, and has also failed to ensure this waste has been watered down at its destination sites in western Sydney.

It is not clear whether massive proposed increases in population in inner and south-west Sydney have been taken into account in traffic congestion predictions. The entire area along the project footprint will be subject to massive increases in density over the next few years. There is no indication that this EIS has taken any of this into account.

Construction traffic will continue throughout the night which will disturb the sleep of residents located along local road networks. However, this EIS does not outline what mitigation plans would be put in place for affected residents.

The business case that was finally released by the government has so many redactions that it can not be interpreted by independent analysts. It should go without saying that a project costing almost $17 billion, much of it funded by taxpayers, should be transparent.

I support a massive injection of funds into public transport for the Western suburbs rather than a legacy of unaffordable tolls. If $16.8 billion was spent on public transport and effective road management, a toll road project like WestConnex be even less necessary than it is now.

There is NO safe level of fine particle exposure. Through this project and the entire WestConnex of which it is part, the NSW Government is consciously building a project that it knows will worsen already high levels of pollution in parts of the inner west and south-west Sydney. It is not acceptable for a government to jeopardise the health and safety of its citizens in this way.

The positive case for the full WestConnex rests on a pie in the sky plans that are not funded or designed. What will happen if these plans never come to fruition? The probability that these extra projects will either never be built or will remain unbuilt for many years to come is a very real one, yet this EIS fails to consider the impact of this on the areas surrounding the New M5, which would be left to cope with a crippling amount of traffic.

When complete, the New M5 will dump over thousands of extra cars into suburbs along the route, much of which will end up on local streets. This is not by accident – it is intentional. It is outrageous that Euston Road in Alexandria alone will be expected to handle 60,000 cars or ten times more than it does now. I reject the idea that a busy, polluted road should be widened to within several metres of existing homes, including children's bedrooms.

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 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. In many cases the modelling does not go further than 2 intersections past the end of the project, even in instances where 10 times the current number of cars are expected to flow onto roads past that point. 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 object to the failure of the EIS to consult with business owners and managers in King St Newtown and other parts of inner and south-west Sydney. These businesses are part of a thriving economy and street life that would be destroyed by increased traffic. Assurances from politicians and bureaucrats that that they will not create clearways or further widen roads are worthless.

I 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.

Thousands of diesel trucks will carry spoil at all times, including peak times, leading to great disruption of local and regional road networks. I object to thousands of trucks a day for years transporting millions of cubic metres of soil including contaminated waste through south-west and inner Sydney roads to the western suburbs, where it will be dumped without any clear plans or information for communities affected.

There is already insufficient parking in the inner west. I object to hundreds of parking spaces being removed, some permanently and some for several years of construction.

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

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

I 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 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 which 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

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

I object to the fact that AECOM who have a record of failed traffic modelling has been paid $13 million to complete this EIS while it has other contracts which depend on the project going ahead.

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.

Whole communities along the route will be disastrously impacted by this project. The social impact study – which is even less detailed than the substandard one done for the WestConnex M4 East – 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 job 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.

The fact that the NSW Government has already signed multi-billion dollar contracts for WestConnex before this EIS was even placed on public exhibition undermines community confidence that this is a genuine consultation process.

I recognise there is pressure on several NSW Departments, including yours, 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. I therefore ask you to reject this proposal, publish this submission, and provide a written response to my objections.

Yours sincerely,

Janet Dandy-Ward

Sydney NSW 2044, Australia

[redacted]

From: Kirsten Mawby [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 9:33 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). In particular I have been incredibly alarmed at the number of trees that have already been destroyed along the span of the proposed M4 expansion with it looking like many more will go.with the M5 too. Are they to be replaced on a minimum one to one basis? I'm incredibly concerned as a lot of wildlife used those trees including endangered species. I don't feel the EIS or the assessment has addressed these issues well enough.

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.

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,

Kirsten Mawby

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted] 12483

From: Emma Pierce [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 9:27 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.

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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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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,

Emma Pierce

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Hans de Klerk [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 9:26 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.

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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.

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,

Hans de Klerk

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Melanie Gee [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 9:24 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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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.

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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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This project has not being carried out in consultation with the community which is why we are being forced to submit such strenuous objections. This project also pretends to be the solution to transport problems when in fact it will create permanent problems. It will divert resources that would be far better used for more appropriate public transport options over a much greater area.

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,

Melanie Gee

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Kate Johnston [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 9:22 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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Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 9:21 PM
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Subject: Project SSI 14_6788 WestConnex New M5 EIS submission

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.

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Yours sincerely,

Catherine Fraser

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Marja Hennessy [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 9:17 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 am absolutely horrified at what you have done to those beautiful trees that were home to so many animals and birds. I thought for a split second you were ok Michael Baird but I can't stand you now....my heart is full of sorrow for the loos of those majestic trees not only planted for our Anzacs but the wildlife corridor which is now homeless....

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Marja Hennessy

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[redacted]

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From: Steve Russ [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 9:16 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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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).

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.

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.

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.

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.

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Yours sincerely,

Damien Ricketson

[redacted]

[redacted]

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Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 9:15 PM
To: DPE CSE Information Planning Mailbox
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Categories: Follow-up, Assessment Panel

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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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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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Yours sincerely,

Adrian Poo

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Miriam Lam [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 9:13 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

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[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Thomas Gray [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 3:34 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 have previously lived in suburbs that will be impacted by this road proposal such as Newtown and Leichhardt, and I regularly visit and stay in this part of Sydney.

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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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,

Thomas Gray

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Paloma Maine [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 3:31 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

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.

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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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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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Paloma. [redacted] Maine

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 3:24 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]

[redacted]

From: Louis van Ekert [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 28 January 2016 3:21 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 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,

Louis van Ekert

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Colin Hesse [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.

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.

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parts of NSW need the quality, publicly owned and operated infrastrcuture that will not be built if this wasteful project goes aheard.

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.

I also request that the NSW Coalition Government releases full details of all donations made to all state and federal offices of their parties, including all infrastructure companies and property devlelopers, as well as a full list of Party advisers and the advisers to MPs and senior staff of State Government Departments and the consultants who have worked with developers and infrastructure builders so that the public can see how decisions are made in NSW

Yours sincerely,

Colin Hesse

[redacted]

[redacted]