

25.09.2019

Attention: Director, Transport Assessments Planning Services Department of Planning, Industry and Environment

GPO Box 39  
Sydney, NSW 2001

**Submission**

WestConnex M4-M5 Link MOD2  
Application number SSI 7485.

I work in the field architecture and urban planning and have extensive experience in large scale projects and transit oriented development. My current position is associate director at a global architecture and engineering firm which, is a recognised market leader in transport engineering and urban planning.

I do understand the complexities and challenges of community sensitive, multi disciplinary design, as well as the tussle between vision and design development as all of the layers of minutia, push and pull lines on a page. I am also aware of the cynicism and laziness which infects and erodes principle.

**Change the overpass to a tunnel**

I oppose the proposal to build an overpass at The Crescent in Annandale. The plan for an overpass should be replaced by a tunnel.

The overpass is a truly horrendous outcome and demonstrates the failure to learn from bayside precedents such Darling Harbor and Circular Quay which, while at a greater scale, are nonetheless both well recognized as highly compromised by elevated transport infrastructure.

- The proposed overpass is visually offensive. It's bulk and scale is not in keeping with the transition from parkland and fine grained neighborhoods, (The scale of the roads below don't magically justify increased infrastructural context, quite the opposite)
- It blocks and compromises views, lessening the enjoyment, quality and value of the area
- It breaks what was a fairly sensible, direct (and approved) East West pedestrian link adjacent the Rozelle Light Rail. The approved East West link was a far superior urban outcome than the spaghetti proposed in the modification.

- It distorts, dislocates and blockades the Green link and puts it on the wrong side of the Crescent. The approved green link has the potential to be an iconic success, a triumph of good design, a celebration of the public domain and a fantastic publicity piece worthy of an international city.
- The double stacking of the proposed circuitous “Shared user path” over the proposed vehicle overpass would be laughable if it wasn’t so embarrassingly tragic and represents a complete reversal of correct priorities and loss of project control.
- That there remains an on grade crossing at the Crescent - Western Distributor intersection is not a valid “alternative.” This has always been an arduous multi lane crossing, the approved design provided a good solution and should be maintained.
- Pedestrian logic, public amenity and environmental neighborhood quality must take precedence. The road design just needs to respond to these guiding principles.

While much of the argument is qualitative, this is about more than the experiential, it is about intelligent forward planning for growth aligned with basic, but visionary economics.

The bays precinct will inevitably be developed. The fish markets is one current example. However the bays precinct has become increasingly isolated over the years as main roads have encircled it.

WestConnex provides an opportunity to restore and create best practice, pedestrian friendly, “simple” connections from the residential neighbourhoods to the foreshore, increasing property values and voter satisfaction now, and setting up for broader economic benefit as the bays precinct develops in the future.

An underpass road instead of an overpass, provides the best visual and urban outcomes and should allow the retention of the green bridge in a location to best connect the parklands and residential neighborhoods together.

### **Simplify Johnson St / Crescent Pedestrian Crossings**

The proposed modification is hideously convoluted and a huge step backwards. It beggars belief that this would even be proposed.

- Maintain the existing east west on grade crossing on the North West corner of Johnston St and the Crescent or design a better solution.

I hear the protests and hand wringing from the PMs, the civil team and the cost planners. I hear the “can’t be done”, I hear it every day in my profession. Yet I also see leaders, who have courage, will and self respect, who do not accept laziness or mediocrity, who deliver successful projects of which to be proud.

A final word about the value of art. The mural is a daggy thing but it is important because it says all of the above. We have lived for generations by the foreshore, seen it change and develop, for better and worse, but we have retained this recognition of our valued connection to the water.

This is our legacy, please do better.

Regards

Sam Faigen