

**Submission  
No 228**

## **INQUIRY INTO IMPACT OF THE WESTCONNEX PROJECT**

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## Introduction:

I am aware of many detailed critiques of the proposed Westconnex project, which convincingly argue the ill-conceived nature of the whole project - the corrupt lack of alternative proposals, the pollution and inconvenience to inner west and other Sydney communities, the compromises along the way which mean it will not even meet its original objectives, and the lunacy of greatly increasing the traffic strain on one of the busiest black-spots in Sydney congestion, namely the Anzac Bridge/Victoria Road area.

I will therefore not waste your time by repeating this detailed analysis. Instead I will merely summarise the main points which have convinced me and my family of the total lunacy of this ill-conceived project: and the obscene waste of public money.

## My Main objections are:

Increasing motorways through urban areas inevitably increases rather than decreases car usage and congestion in these areas, as demonstrated by the epitome of all motorway cities, Los Angeles, finally realising it simply doesn't work, and that public transport is the answer.

The only sensible arguments I have heard to attempt to justify this project were the links with the airport and Port Botany, to decrease the need for so many container trucks to enter the inner west, and central Sydney, but these 2 linkages have now been cancelled. The EIS states that the project will improve connection to the Sydney Airport and Port Botany, but The Premier herself has said that the Sydney Gateway does not form part of the WestConnex project. Without the Sydney Gateway, connections between WestConnex (St Peters Interchange) and Sydney Airport and Port Botany will be via congested surface roads in Botany and Mascot.

Rozelle and Iron Cove Interchanges do not achieve the stated project objective of linking the M4 East and New M5. (Part 3.3 of EIS) and should not be included in the overall Project. Existing motorways (Cross City Tunnel and Eastern Distributor) would provide suitable road capacity to avoid the city centre.

The Project documentation asserts that WestConnex will be a catalyst for urban renewal along major corridors. No evidence is provided to back this assertion. Motorways isolate communities, they do not help them renew.

Claims congestion will be eased are incorrect and misleading. The new roads will merely increase the number of cars and the resultant congestion.

The Project will slow down public transport through increased congestion in bottlenecks like the access to the Anzac Bridge

No strategic alternatives were assessed. This is grossly inefficient and potentially corrupt. It is criminal to not assess an integrated Public Transport alternative as this is the way of the future environmentally, socially, economically and logically.

Real integrated transport measures must be assessed. Sydney is a wonderful city but projects such as Westconnex will inevitably sully its image as neither tourists nor residents appreciate congestion and concrete eye-sores.

The Inquiry should investigate whether 'shortfall' and 'competing travel' clauses compromise public transport options in the future. Similar toll road contracts in NSW and in Queensland contain clauses that indemnify the operators against losses where actual usage falls below that projected in the business case. The Sydney Harbour Tunnel has cost the State Government over \$1 billion because of the failure to meet the shortfall in usage. The inclusion of any 'no competition' clauses clearly robs the public of a viable public transport alternative and is clearly contrary to the public interest. The secrecy surrounding the contract details prevents public scrutiny and confirmation of the existence of these onerous clauses.

Promised open space is toxic. Both the proposed St Peters and the Rozelle Interchange active recreation areas are a false promise, as the unfiltered exhaust will discourage everyone from using them. In addition, existing recreational facilities like The iconic Dawn Fraser and other harbour pools will be out of action indefinitely during the proposed construction stage, due to the stirring

up of toxic waste at the bottom of the harbour caused by the preparation for the placement of the new cross-harbour tunnel.

Cumulative impact of all the major projects interconnected with Westconnex has not been considered, in a cynical attempt to understate the environmental pollution that will be caused.

Unfiltered exhaust stacks like the 4 in the Rozelle area, will totally change the air quality in the surrounding area with inevitable health consequences for residents.

Derek Waddell,

30 August 2018