

**Submission
No 56**

INQUIRY INTO IMPACT OF THE WESTCONNEX PROJECT

Name: Mrs Maggie Aitken

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Re: The NSW Upper House inquiry into the "Impact of the WestConnex Project".

I would like to voice my strong ongoing objection to this project. I feel it is a little too late as the development is advancing. My ultimate wish would be that the tunnel could be converted to light rail

My objections to this project are as follows:

- The whole project has been steeped in secrecy. There has been inadequate public consultation, the objections to the EIS were not taken seriously and any public meeting was poorly publicised so that feedback was ill considered. In public meetings the Westconnex staff could not or would not answer questions. Usually good ideas are worth making public. One has to wonder who this development is for? The developers will get rich while the public get a costly and red herring that the majority do not want.
- There have been several well thought out Public Transport options put out by Eco Transit. Were these looked at or considered? If so there would be a much less expensive development, as a result of consultation
- Many citizens want public infrastructure money spent on public transport. Research from all over the world is supporting the use of public transport to reduce the use of cars and their pollution. Why is Australia in the dark ages?
- The secrecy extends to the cost of tolls. People in the Western Suburbs would have thought it a good idea until they found out too late how costly using the tunnel would be.
- The blatant use of public money for a project that does not have the sustainability of the public transport option. A train or light rail option would pay for itself and reduce toxic emissions. It would discourage rather than encourage cars and be a cheaper form of transport. In the current situation many people will avoid the WestCONNex due to the cost of the tolls.
- Throughout the whole development, it was impossible to find detail of how each area would be affected – until it was too late. The blatant disrespect for federation houses, people's homes, 100 year old trees is a blight on Australia's history
- I live about 1km from the St Peters exit. The road will go from 3 lanes in each direction (I believe) into 2 or 3 lanes in Euston road, then one lane further up. Euston road is at capacity now with 6,000 units of traffic per day. How will it cope with 60,000 units of traffic per day??? This area was not designed to cope with that amount of traffic. All the residential streets and lane ways will be taken up with traffic trying to get to their destination. Any time saved in the tunnel will be increased dramatically when it comes to a halt in Alexandria. None of this congestion was considered in the EIS and planning. And no plans whatsoever once traffic reaches the end of Euston Road
- Right now, our local streets are bombarded with oversize trucks using Maddox Street illegally to service the building development in the Ashmore Estate. This problem has been brought to the attention of RMS, the police and the Planning Minister through the Facebook page "Trucks of Maddox Street". Despite Highway Patrol police and the SCC council surveillance, trucks continue to disregard the 3 tonne weight limit. It is hoped that Maddox Street will be closed at Euston Road to stop the illegal use of this road by HGV's. This situation will be compounded if this street remains open if WestCONNex starts. All the residential roads and back lanes will be full of cars trying to find a way out of the road

standstill maze. Accidents will happen as these streets are residential and not designed for heavy volumes of traffic

- From a health perspective, if WestCONNex were completed, there would be a significant rise in air pollution from the volume of traffic. Is any baseline data being collected on the current lung disease status of residents? With the pollution levels expected to exceed safe levels there will be an increase in asthma, lung cancer and other lung related diseases. Data should be collected now. Litigation could be an issue. Not a safe place for the young or old – or anyone

The solution – back to the drawing board. Use the tunnel for light rail

Yours sincerely

Maggie Aitken