

**Submission  
No 110**

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

**Name:** Ms Pauline Tyrrell

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The **terms of reference for the NSW Parliamentary Public Accountability Committee Inquiry into WestConnex** are:

1. That the Public Accountability Committee inquire into and report on the impact of the WestConnex project, including:

(a) the **adequacy of the business case** for the WestConnex project, including the cost-benefits ratio

The Business Case is inadequate as it has not been amended to reflect significant changes to the scope of the project, such as extra kilometres of tunnel decided in 2016.

The \$20 billion claimed economic benefit from savings in travel time is unsubstantiated. A Citigroup report calculates that the Business Case overestimates the usage of WestConnex by 10%. We in the Canada Bay Council area are likely to have extended travel times caused by the congestion on local roads from induced traffic and 'rat runners' avoiding the tollway. The cost of the environmental and health impacts for Sydney's inner west have also been ignored in the Business Case.

The Business Case should have compared public transport alternatives to this motorway project.

(b) the **cost** of WestConnex project, including the size and reasons for overruns

The exceedingly high costs of this project, with a budget of \$16.8 billion, are not justified. This does not even include the costs of compulsory land acquisitions. Canada Bay Greens submit that this amount should have been better spent on public transport for the Sydney region. With already a 68% increase on the original cost estimate, will this project end up costing billions more of taxpayers' money?

(c) consideration of the **governance and structure** of the WestConnex project including the relationship between Sydney Motorway Corporation, Roads and Maritime Services, the Treasury and its shareholding Ministers

Canada Bay Greens object to the fact that Sydney Motorway Corporation, a private company, operates outside Roads and Maritimes Services and the expertise within NSW Transport and that there is no proper transparency and accountability in this arrangement. No Freedom of Information requests are available for public scrutiny.

(d) the **compulsory acquisition of property** for the project

The compulsory acquisitions for WestConnex have already had a deleterious impact on our area. Affected residents not only have had their lives disrupted, but inadequate levels of compensation have meant that many have been unable to purchase another property within the area.

€ the **recommendations of the Audit Office** of New South Wales and the Australian National Audit Office in regards to WestConnex

(f) the **extent to which the project is meeting the original goals** of the project as articulated in 2012

The fact that the current proposal does not provide a link to Port Botany means that there is even less justification for the construction of the M5 East tunnel or the whole WestConnex project and the disruption it has caused, and will cause, our area. Neither traffic conditions nor urban amenity along Parramatta Road will be improved by the revised project.

(g) the **relationship between WestConnex and other toll road projects** including the Sydney Gateway, Western Harbour Tunnel, F6 and Beaches Link

(h) the circumstances by which WestConnex and the Sydney Gateway were declared to be separate projects in 2017

(i) the cost of the project against its current valuation as determined through the sale of the Sydney

Motorway Corporation and **whether it represents a good investment for NSW taxpayers**

*(j) any **other** related matter*

**Health impacts of Exhaust Stacks and more cars:** Canada Bay Greens objects to the fact that the exhaust ventilation stacks for the M5 East tunnel will not be filtered, as in world's best practice, and that more cars will be travelling in our area. This will impact negatively on the health of local residents and is of special concern in the case of children. The particulate matter (from car exhausts) with a diameter of 10 microns or less can lodge deep inside the lungs.