

**Submission
No 181**

**INQUIRY INTO IMPACT OF THE WESTCONNEX
PROJECT**

Name: Dr Robert George

Date Received: 29 August 2018

Impact of the WestConnex project

Submission to the NSW Government Legislative Council Inquiry from Robert George & Raymond Nicholls of Joynton Avenue, Zetland, NSW, 2017.

The whole WestConnex project is deeply flawed, particularly as it effects central and inner Sydney. This mid-20th Century approach to transportation (building more and bigger roads to deliver vastly increased volumes of road traffic to the already congested inner city) is madness. The fact that the current NSW government could ever have contemplated such an option is quite frankly beyond belief and one must ask who is ultimately benefitting from this cack-handed and cavalier project. One thing is sure; it's not the taxpayers funding it and the local residents who will continue paying the price in terms of air quality, congestion and further deterioration of public transport, (busses get stuck in jams just like cars and trucks).

In particular;

1. It is inconsistent with the NSW Government's policy to reduce the number of cars coming into the city and to reduce congestion; the business case for WestConnex makes clear it will dramatically increase congestion in our area by bringing 120,000 additional vehicles daily through the St Peters interchange. This is a significant threat to our future liveability and to investment in the city centre and the Green Square renewal area.
2. Like so many other major projects of the current NSW Government (Stadia, Powerhouse Museum, etc there has been inadequate planning and changing outcomes and the current goals of the project are not clear. That someone somewhere is benefitting from this confusion and inefficiency is a possible explanation and one worthy of probing within your Inquiry.
3. It has a flawed business case based on assumptions that are no longer valid. These assumptions need to be re-examined by your inquiry and quickly and the reasons for the original and flawed business case assumptions exposed to public scrutiny.
4. It constitutes a serious threats to our city's liveability including reduced air quality (see 7 below) and significant loss of parkland, trees and valuable inner city land.
5. The already delayed and overcrowded busses will become even more crowded and even more delayed by the tens of thousands of additional vehicles being delivered on to our streets. Many of these cars will have only one occupant whilst busses full of locals and tourists will be stuck in the congestion. Can your inquiry ask why the NSW government wish to make our city less liveable and further compromise the already inadequate public transport systems?
6. There has been a serious and ongoing lack of transparency and consultation with affected communities as the project has been rammed through. Why is that? We very much hope you inquiry will be able to explore the reasons. It seems to us to constitute an abuse of power and shows this government's contempt for ordinary citizens resident in the affected areas, many of whom (unlike the politicians responsible) will have to live with the negative outcomes for years to come.
7. Very recent evidence published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (USA) show that in addition to the already well described health harms and premature deaths associated with air pollution such pollution also causes significant reductions in intelligence.
8. We hope your inquiry will uncover the reasons why the NSW Government thinks the alleged benefits of WestConnex outweigh the many significant and avoidable harms implicit in its continuance.

We hope these points and suggestions are helpful to your work and thank you for the opportunity to comment.