

**Submission
No 331**

INQUIRY INTO IMPACT OF THE WESTCONNEX PROJECT

Name: Ms Ifeanna Tooth

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The Director c/- Legislative Council
Standing Committee on Public Accountability
Parliament House, Macquarie Street, Sydney NSW 2000

Submission to the Inquiry into the Impact of WestConnex

Name: Ifeanna Tooth

To the Director,

Please find my comments on the Inquiry into the impact of WestConnex based on the Terms of Reference as follows.

I agree to my name being published.

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

The business case is seriously flawed in terms of benefit to vehicles and reducing traffic congestion. Factors such as environmental destruction from road building, dive sites, etc. have not been factored in to models, not has reduced amenity, effects on health and well being from increased pollution, noise and more roadways.

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

The cost is extreme and unwarranted given that we have poorly connected and constantly disrupted public transport networks which need upgrading and building. There is little advantage of the WestConnex and this will decrease over time. Drivers will be forced onto expensive toll roads and funneled into congested local streets in the inner west, adding to congestion, pollution, amenity and impacting negatively on our health.

(c) 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

The fact that the public, nor councils have access to information regarding WestConnex is very disappointing. NSW taxpayers and other residents have the right to see and scrutinize all deals which involve our democratically elected governments and the decisions they make which concern us.

(d) The compulsory acquisition of property for the project

Compulsory acquisition of people's homes for the WestConnex project has been mishandled. The destruction of people's homes has been inhumane and carried out using bully boy tactics involving harassment by authorities and police. The value given to people for their homes was also below market value.

(e) The recommendations of the Audit Office of New South Wales and the Australian National Audit Office in regards to WestConnex

All Australian residents should be very concerned about The NSW Audit Office scathing comments regarding Commonwealth loans to the WestConnex projects, failures to meet deadlines, advance payments made to contractors and multinational companies before project completion and other dodgy deals.

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

The benefits of WestConnex were overstated in 2012 and has Sydney and surrounding areas have grown in population and traffic since then there will be little benefit for NSW residents.

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

This relationship has been poorly managed and ad hoc. These areas of Sydney would be better serviced by improved public transport and links not more roads and pollution.

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

I am very suspicious about this and believe that it was done purely to rename part of the WestConnex which has a bad name and to distract complainants from the real issue that Sydney does not need more roads but better connected and upgraded and cheaper public transport.

(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

This is definitely not a good investment for NSW taxpayers and will only see a destruction of our Sydney amenities. Tourists demand a reliable and well connected public transport system and our governments should be investing in that, not more roads.

(j) Any other related matter

Pollution generated by more vehicles which will increase greenhouse gas emissions & contribute to dangerous climate change such as rising sea levels, storms and higher temperatures. Property prices will decrease in the inner west where traffic congestion will be intolerable as a result of WestConnex roads funneling vehicles onto our small scale and aged road network.