

**Submission
No 347**

INQUIRY INTO IMPACT OF THE WESTCONNEX PROJECT

Name: Ms Anne Picot
Date Received: 31 August 2018

Inquiry into the Impact of the WestConnex Project– Terms of Reference

That the Public Accountability Committee inquire into and report on the impact of the WestConnex project

I make the following submission to the Inquiry into WestConnex by the Public Accountability Committee of the NSW Legislative Council.

My name is Anne Picot and I live at _____ so I write as a resident affected by the construction and future operation of the new M5 stage 2 of WestConnex. I want to address principally the terms of reference concerning the cost but also raise some questions about the governance of the project, especially in relation to the findings of the NSW Auditor on that aspect.

To start, speaking as a resident of St Peters, with many other locals, to me the WestConnex project feels like the Norman Conquest.

We did not ask for it. We were never consulted about whether this road project was the best option for the traffic problems. We had no say in its status as "critical state significant infrastructure" which took away many construction impact and other environmental protections.

We dutifully followed the Environmental Impact Statement Assessment (EIS) procedure for all three stages and lodged substantial submissions and at each stage our objections were discounted because we oppose the project. The response from the principal government agency, Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) to these objections was to over-ride them in the name of costs to the project.

We have had to suffer the impact of the forcible acquisition of homes and the loss of our neighbours, the loss of parkland and tens of 1000s of street and park trees, the impact of construction sites, trucks, noise, dust and stenches, traffic disruptions, loss of sleep from night work, but throughout the (ongoing) construction period our complaints and objections have been discounted, rejected or ignored.

The result is a profound loss of trust in the state's statutory processes, and in the probity of the current NSW government. This is an intangible cost but should nonetheless be counted as one of the many avoidable costs of this project.

My submission addressed the following terms of reference.

The cost of the WestConnex project, Terms of Reference (b) and (i) and the Sydney gateway matter (h)

Questions for the Inquiry

- 1. When and on what basis was the decision to abandon the "Sydney Gateway" (the link to the airport and Port Botany) portion of the project made?*
- 2. Why were **not** other options considered both when the project was first proposed and especially when the Sydney Gateway element was removed?*
- 3. Why were the whole stage 2 planning and design, including the EIS's assumptions **not** reviewed and revised in light of that decision?*
- 4. Is the project capable of delivering any of its stated objectives?*

As the links to Sydney Airport and Port Botany were and are a major part of the rationale for the massive expenditure (see press release of 16 Jan. 2013) why was this decision not subject to more deliberation and re-casting of the project? By the time the St Peters Interchange and the forced acquisition of houses was announced on 4 November 2014 it had been postponed until after stage 2 was completed.

It seems from the public vantage point that there was no business case when the project was waved through as "critical state significant infrastructure". In September 2013 after the

Inquiry into the Impact of the WestConnex Project– Terms of Reference

That the Public Accountability Committee inquire into and report on the impact of the WestConnex project

Abbott government committed \$1.5 billion to the project the NSW government released an executive summary only of the business case for which the Commonwealth Labor government had provided \$25 million in 2012. The (redacted) business case released in December 2015 has been extensively criticised as inadequate.

Why was there no second external gateway review undertaken at this point? The NSW Auditor General was very critical of the failure of the NSW government to follow its own procedures for a project over the value of \$100 million.

"Only one independent, externally managed gateway review was conducted for the WestConnex project up to the pre-tender stage for the Parramatta to Homebush Bay M4 widening. If the Major Projects Assurance Framework had been fully implemented, four additional gateway reviews should have been conducted. The review that was conducted found that the preliminary business case was deficient and fell well short of the standard required for such a document."¹

Now the sale price for the SMC and WestConnex has just been announced - \$9.26 billion.

This is over half the cost of \$16.8 billion most often quoted for the whole 3-stage project. The media release states the key highlights of WestConnex as:

- 40 minutes cut from an average peak journey between Parramatta and Sydney Airport;
- Around 20 minutes cut from a peak hour trip between Burwood and Sydney Airport; and
- Bypassing 52 sets of traffic lights, including an uninterrupted journey between the Blue Mountains and Rozelle²

The first point is simply unbelievable. As stated above, the Sydney Gateway links to Sydney Airport and Port Botany were removed from the project by the time the EIS for stage 2 was released. No explanation for its deletion has been offered but the major part of the rationale for the project - connecting western Sydney to the airport and Port Botany - was deleted with it. The impact now, if the new M5-M4 link is completed, is to deliver tens of 1,000s more of vehicles onto the already congested roads to Sydney airport - Bourke Rd, O'Riordan St and Gardeners Rd. It adds nothing at all to the much needed link to Port Botany which is not even mentioned in the media release. The circumstances in which the Sydney Gateway links are obscure but the question remains:

From the point of view of my neighbourhood we have had to endure three years of demolitions and disruption with more in prospect if stage 3 goes ahead only to add to the traffic jams in Mascot with the likelihood of rat-running in our local streets.

Other options

Taking the Sydney Airport train link back into public ownership so tickets could be priced in the normal range would remove up to a third of the private car traffic to and from Sydney Airport according to Dr Michelle Zeibots (transport planner at UTS).³ Overturning the undertaking to the owners of Port Botany not to penalize the delivery of containers to the port of Newcastle would move a sizable portion of the container traffic from the Sydney port and surrounding roads. This condition of sale is an unconscionable privilege to private

¹ <https://www.audit.nsw.gov.au/news/westconnex-assurance-to-the-government>

² See NSW Treasury <https://www.treasury.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2018-08/20180831%20-%20Media%20Release%20-%20Perrottet%20and%20Ayres%20-%20Transaction%20keeps%20Sydney%20on%20the%20move.pdf>

³ Stated by Dr Zeibots (<https://www.uts.edu.au/staff/michelle.e.zeibots>) at several public forums in 2016 and 2017.

Inquiry into the Impact of the WestConnex Project– Terms of Reference

That the Public Accountability Committee inquire into and report on the impact of the WestConnex project

owners which rationally ought to be removed. Improving the freight rail links to Port Botany likewise would also take some of the container traffic off the area's roads and improve access to the airport in the process.

The advent of the western Sydney airport also is a factor which should have forced a reconsideration of the rationale for the WestConnex project, but instead is ignored in the EISs for stage 3. Without the Sydney airport and Port Botany links the value of the project has to be questioned. I draw to the Inquiry's attention the valuation released by Credit Suisse, which states:

"We value the entire WestConnex project at \$3.0 billion with stage 1 at \$3.5 bn and stage 2 at \$ 2.9bn. Stage 3 (M4- M5 link) has negative value of \$3.4 due to the high capital costs of the tunnel construction and toll prices at the same level of the rest of WestConnex. If Stage 3 were sold separately it would require a very large capital subsidy or higher toll levels".⁴

On this valuation alone the Inquiry should question the value of the entire project and ask what of its supposed objectives is it capable of achieving.

Construction costs to immediate neighbourhood

One over-riding issue residents have with the whole Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and assessment procedure is the sense that the objections raised in comments on the EISs and subsequent complaints have not been taken seriously by WestConnex and the government because they were treated as opposition to the project, not as problems which needed to be addressed.

For example, the impacts of construction were discounted and are inadequately covered by the EISs for all three stages because the length and intensity of the construction period was discounted.

Consequent complaints from residents have been a source of local tension and the cause of disputes as contractors failed to deal adequately with the complaints and the additional costs of ameliorating the problem conditions. The costs which were inadequately accounted for include the amelioration costs for problems endured by residents during construction, the costs to the EPA in dealing with pollution complaints, and the costs to the Compliance section of the Department of Planning dealing likewise with residents' complaints about inadequate or non-compliance with the conditions of approval.

The Inquiry should seek from both agencies an account of the time and costs of responding to residents' complaints through the long construction period.

Listed below are some of the impacts of construction on our neighbourhood in St Peters which I have collected from the St Peters community FaceBook pages, and/or have been brought to the attention of the Inner West Council's WestConnex Community Liaison Forum (WCLF) to be addressed by the Council's own WestConnex unit. I hope the Inner West Council will appear at the Parliamentary Inquiry hearings to identify the costs to Council of dealing with the impacts of the project.

The complaints include:

1. Vehicle exhaust, diesel fumes from trucks and machinery, dust and offensive odours from construction sites (the offensive odour from the St Peters Interchange site in 2017 is now the subject of legal action by the EPA);

⁴ <https://alexandriaresidentsactiongroup.files.wordpress.com/2018/08/document-1069771631.pdf>

Inquiry into the Impact of the WestConnex Project– Terms of Reference

That the Public Accountability Committee inquire into and report on the impact of the WestConnex project

2. long periods of penetrating noise (eg, pile driving on the Interchange site for weeks at a time);
3. night work construction noise (often because the Traffic Management Centre will not give permission to close streets during the day). The noise from concrete cutting to open the road surface has been a particular source of complaints. Why does it so often begin after 10 pm?
4. traffic disruptions (eg, changes to directions of one-way streets over several days or weeks, full road closures, half-road closures, limiting access to side streets);
5. failure to co-ordinate the activities of associated utilities with the WestConnex projects so that residents have had to endure work noise and disruption from the electricity, gas and/or water agencies during the night in addition to the noise and disruption from the WestConnex project during the day;
6. inadequate traffic control (too few traffic controllers in number, poorly briefed, focused on vehicle movement, not pedestrians);
7. poor signage (eg, not large enough or not placed at a distance sufficient to enable vehicles and pedestrians to respond safely) to help residents deal with traffic disruptions;
8. poor notification of disruptive work (ie, night work or drastic traffic changes) with not enough notice given for people to make alternative arrangements, incomprehensible or wrong descriptions of the work or changes to streets, last minute changes to location or exceeding the notified length of time of work);
9. parking of WestConnex workers' vehicles in residential streets;
10. damage to residents' cars from WestConnex workers' vehicles parked in local streets;
11. heavy vehicle movements, vehicle idling, and increased volumes of truck traffic on local roads around the construction sites, increasing vehicle pollution (a known carcinogen);
12. increased ordinary traffic on local streets displaced by or avoiding the construction sites and vehicles;
13. inadequate responses to complaints (the stakeholder relations officers of the new M5 contractors generally have down played or disputed the complaints rather than address them) ;
14. failure to carry out ameliorative work adequately (eg, noise treatment of premises, where residents have struggled to have the approved modifications carried out) as required under the conditions of approval;
15. Adverse health impacts from the dust and vehicle pollution with respiratory problems, asthma, increased infections particularly for children;
16. failure to put signs and street amenities in place because they were not required before the roads are operational
17. loss of trees and parkland to the detriment of the community (i.e., the impact of loss of shade trees and near-by parkland was marked in during the hot weather, made worse by the heat radiated from increasing expanses of concreted surfaces);
18. loss of sports grounds, requiring activities to be relocated some distance from the neighbourhood to the inconvenience of players and families.
19. dangerous traffic movement around the school and preschool, including heavy vehicle movement with no traffic controllers to help during school drop-off and pick-up periods;
20. damage to, and shoddy repair work of, footpaths leading to the school and other streets adjacent to construction sites, including metal plates with edges poking up, signs re-posted so they blocked use of the footpath, lumps of asphalt laid unevenly, obstructing the way for prams or wheelchairs;
21. asbestos waste left uncovered when houses were demolished and no water suppressant or other safety measures until after residents' complaints;

Inquiry into the Impact of the WestConnex Project– Terms of Reference

That the Public Accountability Committee inquire into and report on the impact of the WestConnex project

22. poor demolition practices which sent dust everywhere and in one instance dropped a quantity of bricks from a wall onto the road and broke a water pipe (photos attached);
23. use of school carpark (enclosed lands) for workers vehicles and trucks to do u-turns;
24. failure to uphold agreements made 3 years ago with the school about vehicle movement and communication;
25. houses shaking with consequent damage (ie cracking) from the explosions and vibration from the heavy construction work and the tunneling;
26. noticeable loss of wildlife in our area – eg bats, owls and other birds, bluetongues – but we have noticed an increase in the number of rats;
27. loss of tenants from the adverse health impacts in one instance and inability to let the property since leading to financial hardship;
28. The over-riding problem that generally the conditions of approval governing the restoration of street conditions and amenity or amelioration of the project's impacts only come into effect when the roads begin operations. As construction work is in its third year in St Peters and its fifth in Haberfield, the "temporary" impact is too long to ignore the adverse effects. For small children, for high school and tertiary students, for elderly people, for people with movement impairments or other chronic health problems, 3-5 years is a significant length of time.

All these complaints have led to poor relations between the contractors, their workforce, and WestConnex and the residents who feel they are treated by contractors & the state government as collateral damage.

Failure to anticipate the health impacts on communities of such long periods of construction, particularly for families with young children, for shift workers, for elderly residents and residents with mobility impairments or chronic ill health will result in increased health service costs. Air pollution from construction is one adverse impact of this phase (see 15. above) but so also are the loss of sleep, the stress from the relentless noise and vibration of construction work and machinery, day and night, the energy and time spent dealing with the never ending changes in road and traffic arrangements, the loss of mature trees and their mitigating effect on the heat of summer and general loss of the amenity of our neighbourhood all add up.

I refer to the submission⁵ by one of my near-neighbours in Brown St (St Peters) in which she chronicles the continuing battles with the new M5 contractors over noise and noise mitigation, over the traffic re-routing and parking, the vibration and machinery impacts damaging her house, the effects of night work and attempts to seek redress whether in the form of alternative accommodation or breaks in sequences of night work, and above all the issue of the stench emanating from the St Peters Interchange site in 2017. With school age children and studying herself, she describes the emotional, mental and physical toll of living next to demolition and major road construction sites for the past three years. This cannot be written off as "temporary" and discounted as not having a lasting impact. They all amount to significant discomfort and reduced ability to cope with the impacts, compounding the pollution's effects on human health.

The impacts should have been more accurately identified and effective measures put in place to manage the risk and reduce the adverse effects. Despite the very large number of submissions raising the issue of air pollution in the EIS process for all three stages, the risk from neither air pollution nor the cumulative impact of prolonged construction work was not taken seriously; both were considered temporary and not of lasting effect.

⁵ Submission from Ms Tamara Thompson.

Inquiry into the Impact of the WestConnex Project– Terms of Reference

That the Public Accountability Committee inquire into and report on the impact of the WestConnex project

As stated above much of the catalogue of problems and complaints was aired at the InnerWest Council's WestConnex Community Liaison Forum (WCLF) instigated by the Administrator, Richard Pearson, appointed in 2016. The InnerWest Council (IWC) set a special unit to deal with residents' issues and the more general impacts of the massive project on this local government area. The cost to the council of dealing with WestConnex in October 2017 was calculated as over \$2 million covering the following:

- staff time from former councils to respond to Stage 1 & 2 EISs;
- three full-time WestConnex Unit staff from October 2016 to date;
- general expenses for WestConnex community meetings; and
- consultancies for Stage 3 EIS assessment and WestConnex Local Area Improvement Strategy.⁶

The community is grateful for the support afforded by the Council and the WCLF but the Inquiry should note the opportunity cost of \$2+ million lost from the council's general activities. I hope that the Inquiry will seek testimony from the IWC in its public hearings as well as considering its submission.

The Inquiry should look at the impact of policing the conditions of approval on the Environmental Protection Agency. The Environmental Protection Agency has been one of the two principal government agencies to which residents have applied for dealing with complaints about pollution (eg, noise, dust and odours) and for attempting to resolve such issues. The agency has been hamstrung in my opinion by the restrictions placed on its ability to deal with the WestConnex projects by the status of "critical state-significant infrastructure". The laughably small financial penalties⁷ and the limited action the EPA can take (eg, stopping work on the project until problems are dealt with is explicitly excluded for critical state infrastructure) has meant that even when our complaints are upheld by the EPA the responses of the contractors have been limited, delayed and minimal.

Similarly the Compliance section of the Department of Planning has been the other government agency to which complaints about inadequate or non-compliance with the conditions of approval are made. The limitations of the conditions of approval – typically restricted from dealing with matters during construction, only coming into play when the roads are operational – has led to frustration and the feeling in communities of being discounted by the government. This in itself an intangible cost. Like the EPA, the Department of Planning should be asked to inform the Inquiry about the number and variety of complaints and the time taken to deal with them.

The time for both agencies should include:

- Dealing with complaints and investigations, legal advice and preparation of matters for court or other bodies;
- Liaison through community forums and consultative committees
- Participation on committees such as the air quality, inter-agency committees or regular meetings
- Preparing submissions for the EISs of the three stages of WestConnex.

⁶ Extracted from the report to the IWC in October 2017, nearly a year ago.

⁷ \$15,000 fine for tracking mud onto Burrows Rd - see media release from the EPA

<https://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/news/media-releases/2018/epamedia180815-epa-fines-contractor-at-st-peters-site>

Inquiry into the Impact of the WestConnex Project– Terms of Reference

That the Public Accountability Committee inquire into and report on the impact of the WestConnex project

Conclusion

There is a serious flaw in the EIS(s) process in discounting construction impacts as temporary. When construction takes place over three to five years and more, the impacts cannot be considered temporary just because they eventually stop. The failure to anticipate the "temporary" adverse impacts on residents has made dealing with the ensuing problems more costly to all parties, the residents, the contractors and the supervising government agencies.

Recommendations:

That the conditions of approval for all 3 stages be reviewed and amended to cost accurately and provide for adequate amelioration of the adverse impacts, particularly of noise impacts, on residents in the vicinity of the WestConnex construction sites.

That the critical state infrastructure legislation be amended to enable the EPA to halt construction work when a serious environmental hazard – such as the stench from the St Peters Interchange site in 2017 – occurs to ensure the contractors respond in a timely manner.

That a mandatory means of co-ordinating the work of the utilities and Traffic Management Services in conjunction with the major contractors be established to reduce the amount of night work to an absolute minimum for the improvement of the lives of neighbouring residents.

That there be mandatory consultation with affected residents well in advance of any proposed night work to negotiate timing and the offer of alternative accommodation when night work extends past 2 nights in a row within 1 kilometre of the work site in question.

Cost of environmental and global warming considerations

There are substantial environmental impacts from this project, principally from the increased carbon emissions from the increased volume of vehicular traffic, but not only. The massive increase in concreted and tarmac surface areas from the gigantic interchanges, widened roads and enlarged intersections all around the project's ramps and portals, and beyond, coupled with the increased volumes of traffic, will increase emissions, both from the vehicles and from the concrete, and increase the heat footprint as well. In addition the loss of 1000s of mature trees in streets and parks also results in the loss of their mitigating effect, first in shade to reduce the warm weather temperature and second, in reducing the air pollution. The response of the proponent to the environmental concerns raised by residents in submissions to the EIS for stage 2 (new M5) is almost insulting.

In the introduction to the proponent's response to the general public's submissions it noted:

Submissions raised general concerns that the project would result in unspecified environmental impacts. Concerns included... That the EIS acknowledges that the project would have serious environmental impacts....

The EIS has been prepared by a team of qualified professionals and presents a balanced merit-based environmental impact assessment in accordance with the EP&A Act, the SEARs and applicable NSW assessment policies. ...

Once completed, the New M5 would significantly increase the capacity of the M5 Motorway corridor, resulting in travel time savings, improving travel reliability and reducing pollution resulting from congestion on the M5 East.⁸

⁸ RMS *Submissions and Preferred Infrastructure Report*, Vol.1 B 5.1 My underlining

Inquiry into the Impact of the WestConnex Project– Terms of Reference

That the Public Accountability Committee inquire into and report on the impact of the WestConnex project

The opening sentence, that the EIS has been prepared by a team of qualified professionals, is patronising and evidently intended to discourage residents from criticising it. While this section (5.21.1) refers to the table of revised environmental management measures in Chap. 8 (table 8.40) it goes on to describe the increased connectivity which would result from new and more cycle and pedestrian paths. I do not understand how this is supposed to mitigate the admitted adverse environmental impact, nor can I guess how many people will choose to cycle alongside 6-7 lane motorways which will, according to the project's own forecasts, will be heavily used. No estimates of the numbers of cyclists or pedestrians are given by the Report.

The RMS's Report offers the following in response to the 2,797 submissions concerning greenhouse gas emissions in operation.

An assessment of greenhouse gas emissions as a result of the project is included in Chapter 22 and Appendix U (Detailed greenhouse gas calculations) of the EIS. The assessment results indicate the project would reduce annual greenhouse gas emissions by around 229,200 t CO₂-e in the 2031 'with project' scenario and around 1,874,000 t CO₂-e in the 2031 'cumulative' scenario (including the full WestConnex program of works), within the study area assessed. The predicted reduction in greenhouse gas emissions as a result of the project would be due to an improvement in vehicle fuel efficiency for most links within the study area, as well as the operational efficiency of the project tunnels."⁹

The revised environmental management measure for responding to greenhouse gas emissions is given in Chap. 8, Table Op GHG 1 – the key element is:

OpGHG 1 The main alignment tunnels would be designed to minimise fuel consumed by vehicles using the road, for example through the provision of a vertical alignment that allows consistent vehicle speeds to be maintained [to be revealed in] the Detailed design.¹⁰

This seems to be magical thinking as very little is offered to support it. Enough experts have cast doubt over the traffic modelling in the Business Case to suggest the numbers of vehicles using the WestConnex tollroads may not reach the projected volumes but this can hardly be the basis for asserting there will be lower vehicle emissions. The City of Sydney's critique of the traffic modelling notes especially:

"The strategic traffic model that forms the basis of the WestConnex traffic projections is an 'unconstrained' model. This model assumes that all vehicles will travel on roads with the lowest generalised cost (lowest time and money) and that the traffic will flow freely¹¹. It does not take into account whether all the traffic can actually fit on those roads. In the reality, people change their time of travel, method of travel and consider whether to make a trip at all to avoid heavily congested routes. As a result travel patterns would be very different to the patterns identified in the model.¹²

The point I draw attention to the unrealistic assumption that the traffic will generally flow freely. The underlying premise of the entire WestConnex project is that private vehicle travel will be preferred by commuters and other motorists, set to increase over the next several decades. Whether the traffic uses the tolled tunnels or not (and we have seen already the

⁹ RMS *Submissions and Preferred Infrastructure Report*, Vol.1 B p. 5.415

¹⁰ RMS *WestConnex New M5 Submissions and preferred infrastructure report* Vol. 1 B March 2016, Table 8-40.

¹¹ Bilemmer, M., 2018, Sydney's Transport Modelling 60 years out of date and flawed. <http://sydney.edu.au/business/news/2018/sydneys-transport-modelling-60-years-out-of-date-and-flawed-research>

¹² Draft "Submission to the Parliamentary Inquiry Into the Impact of the Westconnex project", City of Sydney, 5.2.2, p.8

Inquiry into the Impact of the WestConnex Project– Terms of Reference

That the Public Accountability Committee inquire into and report on the impact of the WestConnex project

choice made by motorists to leave the widened M4 the tolled roads and use the “free” routes) there will be more vehicles on the roads and more vehicular, including carbon, emissions.

While there are suggestions that the car fleet may become electric in the future and higher standards of fuel efficiency and tougher emissions standard may also apply in the future and so lower GHG emissions, this seems even more wishful thinking. There is no plan or incentive to encourage electric vehicle use in Australia and the infrastructure required to support it does not yet exist. There seems to be no appetite in either state or federal governments to impose better fuel efficiency or lower emissions standards on Australian vehicles at present, and given the age of the Australian car fleet (average 10 years) it would be decades before there was a discernable impact. Being realistic, given the encouragement to use private vehicles for transport which is the premise of this project, we must expect vehicle emissions to increase if, as the project’s investors are no doubt banking on, the number of cars using the tollroads increases.

On the impact of the project on the heat footprint of the project, the proponent’s response asserts:

“The majority of the project is underground in tunnels or involves replacing existing hard surfaces with new hard surfaces. While the project would remove 10.76 hectares of vegetation, this is the total removal across the entire project footprint, and is not concentrated in a single area. The vegetation to be removed is predominantly urban native and exotic vegetation (7.45 hectares) and would provide only a very localised benefit to residents directly adjacent to the vegetation (in terms of urban island effect). Proposed landscaping would replace the planted vegetation that would be lost, which would help to offset potential impacts.”¹³

Not in fact true, because of the significant increase in concrete and tarmac surfaces in the on and off ramps for the tunnels, the widened roads and remade larger intersections on the roads surrounding the project’s interchanges. Much of the widened roads and enlarged intersections in St Peters and Alexandria have removed many street trees and parkland in the case of Sydney Park and Camdenville Park and small pocket parks in the neighbourhood.

The reference to the re-planting ignores that replacing mature shade trees (eg, in Euston Rd the 100s of paperbarks and eucalypts removed were approximately 3 decades old) with saplings and shrubs is not replacing like for like and the mitigation impact will need decades to take effect. The mitigating effect perceived by people may be local but the loss of amenity in the neighbourhood is real, and the lack of shade and loss of park land discourages people from walking out of doors in the warmer months and increases the use of air conditioning. The greater use of cars and the lag in replacing the shade trees logically will increase the heat footprint around the project’s above-ground fixtures.

The reason I draw attention to these flawed responses is that they play down the climate impact of this giant project in an era when European cities and indeed north American cities are moving to reduce private car use and provide mass transit alternatives, both to reduce carbon emissions and more urgently, to reduce dangerous vehicle emission pollution. The effect of vehicle emissions on the health of the general public is statistically discernable in premature deaths and significant health impairments.¹⁴ The increasing volumes of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases in the atmosphere are adding to the already measurable impacts on the global climate. The last thing which responsible Australian

¹³ RMS WestConnex New M5 *Submissions and preferred infrastructure report* Vol. 1 B March 2016, p. 5-415.

¹⁴ Presentation to WCLF by Dr Kleete Simpson, medical epidemiologist of Public Health Unit, Sydney Local Health District, 5 July 2018.

Inquiry into the Impact of the WestConnex Project– Terms of Reference

That the Public Accountability Committee inquire into and report on the impact of the WestConnex project

governments should be doing is promoting the increase in carbon emissions and adding to the warming climate. The transport sector is identified as having high carbon emissions which present a significant task to reduce. This is the impact of a massive road project pursued against all objections instead of expanding and improving public transport, especially trains powered by electricity which can be and increasingly will be provided by carbon-free renewable resources. One of the significant costs of this project is the impact on the climate in addition to the opportunity costs of not expanding mass transit alternatives.

The Inquiry should seek expert advice on realistic estimates of the additional carbon emissions which the projected traffic on these tollroads will add in NSW and on the comparable impact of mass transit systems in its stead.

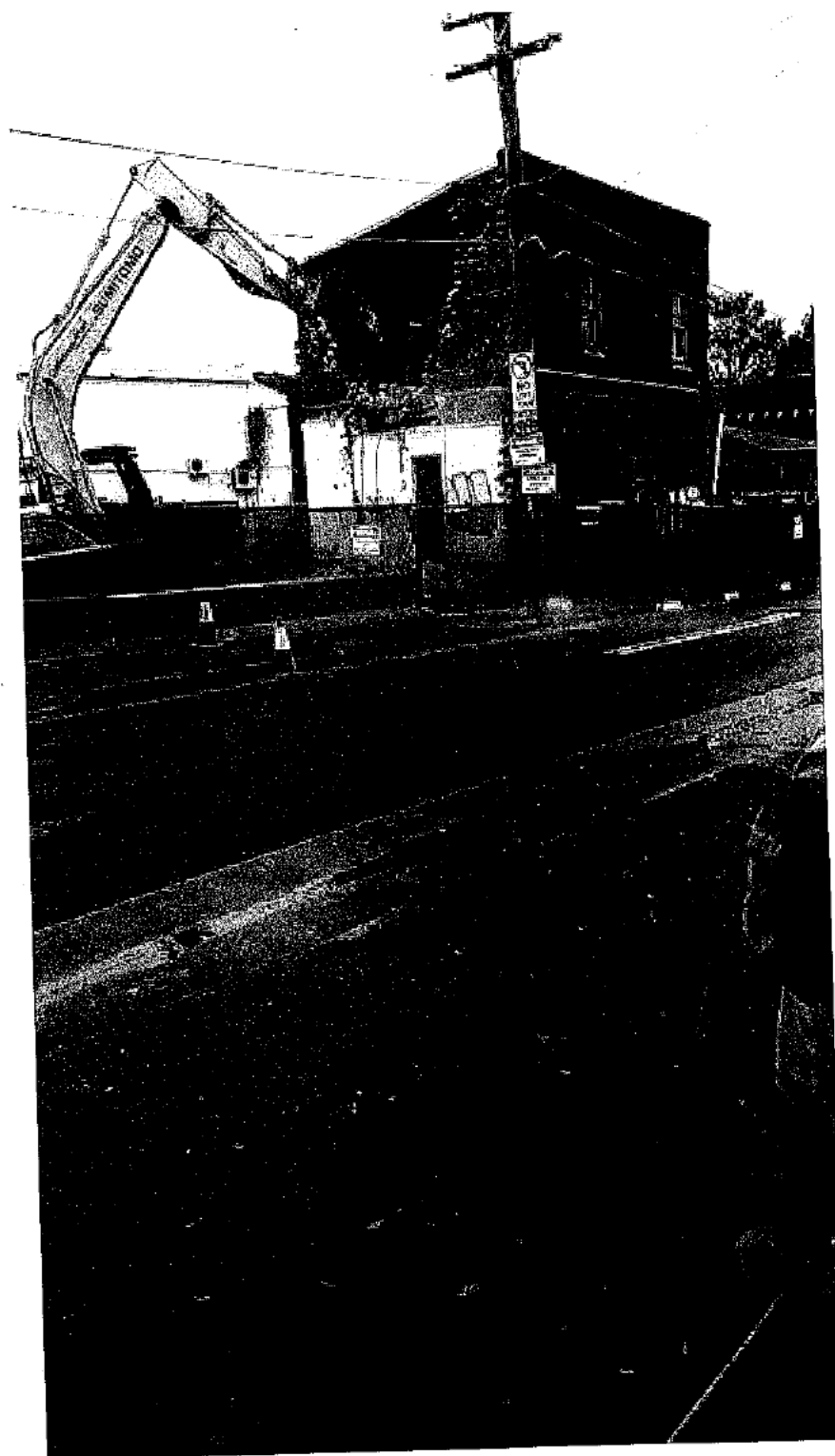
Recommendation: that the Inquiry consider a mandatory requirement on all future major infrastructure projects that there be no net increase of greenhouse gas emissions as a result of the operation of the project.

Anne Picot 31/08/2018

Inquiry's Terms of reference:

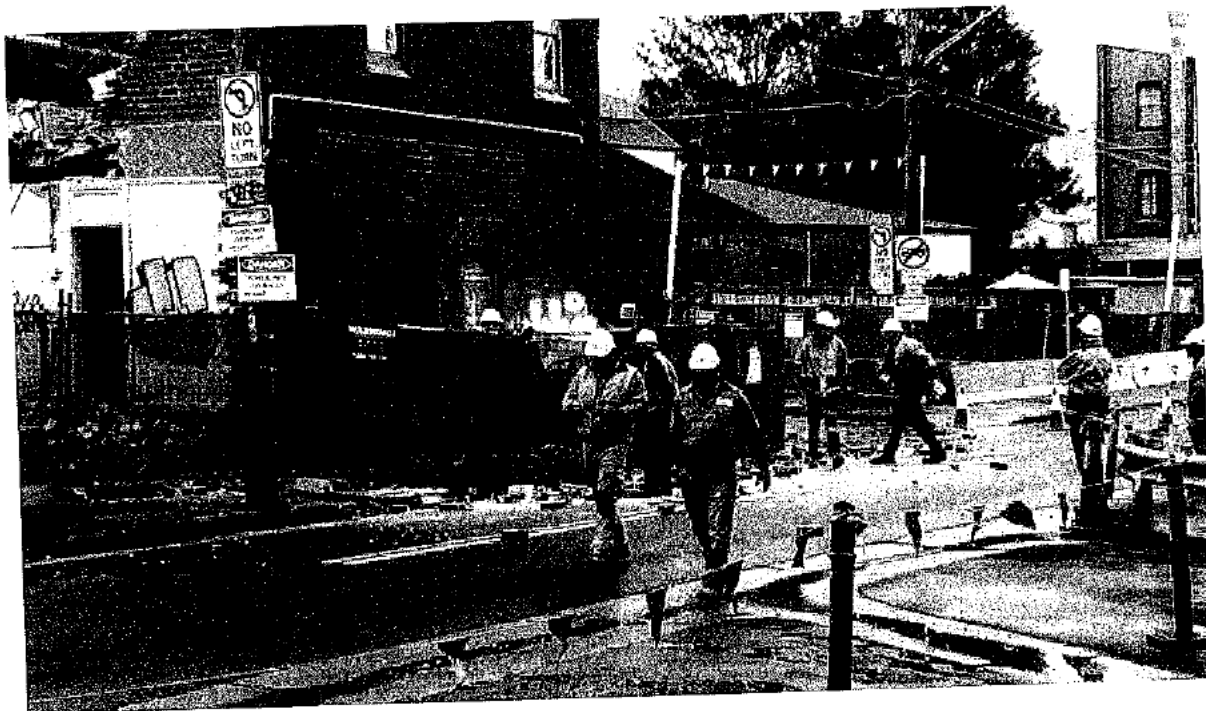
- (a) the adequacy of the business case for the WestConnex project, including the cost-benefits ratio
- (b) the cost of WestConnex project, including the size and reasons for overruns
- (c) consideration of the governance and structure of the WestConnex project including the relationship between Sydney Motorway Corporation, Roads and Maritime Services, the Treasury and its shareholding Ministers
- (d) the compulsory acquisition of property for the project
- (e) 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
- (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.

Inquiry into the Impact of the WestConnex Project– Terms of Reference
That the Public Accountability Committee inquire into and report on the impact of the WestConnex project



Campbell St, St Peters, 20 May 2017. 9.06 am. Item 22 in the complaints list refers.

Inquiry into the Impact of the WestConnex Project– Terms of Reference
That the Public Accountability Committee inquire into and report on the impact of the WestConnex project



Campbell St, St Peters, 20 May 2017. 9.15 am. Item 22 in the complaints list refers.

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