

**Submission
No 401**

INQUIRY INTO IMPACT OF THE WESTCONNEX PROJECT

Organisation: Pymont Action

Date Received: 29 August 2018

27 August, 2018

The Director of Public Accountability Committee,
NSW Legislative Council,
Parliament House,
SYDNEY. NSW. 2000

Impacts of Westconnex

Dear Director,

We have long been concerned about the physical, social and economic impacts of this gargantuan project, and address the following Terms of Reference for your consideration:

- 1.0 Adequacy of the Business Case – Whilst we are not able to undertake a forensic examination of the business case, as irregular users of the Cross City Tunnel, it is obvious that any forecast of levels of usage of this motorway is certain to be overstated. RMS (formerly Department of Roads) predicted 30,000 vehicle movements per day yet the numbers using this tunnel remain far below that. It is likely that this is a consequence of the very high charges for use per journey (over \$5 each way). All reports of the likely charges for use by people travelling from the Western Suburbs lead to the conclusion that travelling via Westconnex to the CBD or beyond, will be exorbitant and unaffordable for a majority of residents and workers.

- 2.0 Public Transport – We already see people voting with their feet by endeavouring to use the inadequate public transport in place at the moment. Our experience in using the light rail running between Dulwich Hill and Central is that it is packed, especially in peak hours and at weekends. The demand for public transport is high, and IF the various Metro plans are implemented, it is inevitable that people from the Western suburbs wishing to travel to the city (and vice versa) will choose public transport over expensive, 1950s motorways.

Further, the public funding going into this white elephant of a project would have been far better spent on public transport, especially heavy and light rail projects which are the most efficient modes of travel for the greatest number of people. To be investing in such an out-of-date travel mode such as the Westconnex is a deplorable misuse of public money.

- 3.0 Acquisition – We are aware of the many reports of people and businesses having their homes and premises compulsorily acquired against their wishes, for far less than the properties were worth (if the Westconnex was not pushed through their area). The most heinous of these were of homes in the heritage suburb of Haberfield which not only deprived residents of their homes, but the people of Sydney of an intact early 20th Century suburb.



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- 4.0 Local Impact – Westconnex will have an adverse impact on people who live and work in its path, including those who need to use existing road corridors which will be clogged with construction vehicles for many years. In our area, large areas of vacant public land in the Bays Precinct will be used as marshalling yards for construction and worker vehicles for many years. At the same time major projects are proposed for Glebe Island, involving substantial road traffic. The cumulative traffic impact of Westconnex, the Multi-user facility, the relocation of Hanson's concrete batching plant and the use of a site at White Bay for a marshalling yard for the Metro, is as yet unknown but can only add to the current congestion of roads leading to the Anzac Bridge, noting that recently we have been advised by RMS that the Anzac Bridge is currently AT capacity.

We remain opponents of the Westconnex projects which continue to cut destructive swathes through the homes and parks of many suburbs, for little perceived long-term benefit. We have yet to learn of any community support for the projects and deplore the Government's actions in ignoring community concerns regarding both the economic, social and environmental impacts on their lives and health.

Elizabeth Elenius
Convenor

