

**Submission
No 407**

**INQUIRY INTO IMPACT OF THE WESTCONNEX
PROJECT**

Name: Mrs Margaret Hogg

Date Received: 29 August 2018

As in the CSELR Project, The Auditor General's Office has again seen many issues with the Cost Benefit Analysis of this West Connex Project, declaring it "Cavalier" with the tax payer's money. Yet, once again the Project has been allowed to proceed despite this. This seems to be a consistent and detrimental flaw in the current system.

Within this Project the public has incurred an Environmental Scar across the entire length of this road system. Not costed in terms of the linked costs to Health, Carbon and Energy outlays from the loss of these significant canopy, vegetation and green spaces. History and Heritage being an added loss again NOT costed.

Jason Byrne of Griffith University in Queensland last year showed a \$12 Billion link to the Mental Health Budget alone of this nation. This did not include the Other Health and Wellbeing linked aspects of these Public Assets and their amenity.

The air quality of many regions along this project have been recorded above world safety standards and while this is not only deplorable that the tax payer is paying for such detriment to themselves and their future generations, it shows a distinct necessity to have a Responsible Dollar Value assigned to them in a Reformed process mechanism that ensures a Better Future Direction.

While other advanced countries around the world have already moved in this direction Australia lags behind.

NSW has the largest number of this Country's 25 million people, it is imperative that a responsible move in the direction of good Governance for them is immediate. The imposed Costs to their taxes and personal budgets cannot be ignored or tolerated any longer.

Australia has lost species of uniquely historic significant trees and animal habitat in this project. As a nation our record here is most embarrassing and requires moves to eradicate the flaws in planning process that allow this to happen. By the inclusion of the canopy \$ value within the Cost Benefit Analysis; the incorporation of Arboricultural expertise and Strict adherence to Best Practice in the ground planning stages as well as throughout would greatly assist the planning department in making better decisions and protect the public into the future.

Critical State Significant Infrastructure status, should not exclude the public, but rather necessitate the epitome of Best Practice and sound economic responsibility to the protection of them and their assets and amenities. That they should be recognised as the primary stakeholder and indeed "brains trust" for such projects and as such should be fully involved throughout the planning and further stages and have powers to challenge and veto.

To insure this outcome is Conservation positive in its outcomes and public expectations, that a consistent system of Tree canopy, vegetation and green spaces audit have a mandatory offset that achieves the recorded, positive Conservation outcome in shade and significant tree canopy protections to the public in that area(s).

The loss of canopy in this project is at present unable to be reported on here, but with a 1 tree for 1 (65litre) tree offset the math is monumentally obvious to a multiplied loss outcome. 10-30 square metre canopy losses, with 1 square metre in return. The losses on each tree are multiplied losses. The detrimental COSTS unconscionable or acceptable.

To think that the public are not only to suffer this, but to be then charged to use it, while others gain a profit at their expense we feel indicates a gross lack of Governance in process and fundamental flaws in process and adherence to expected standards and outcomes. Remembering at all time the public comes first and fore most. Ongoing personal budget detriment and hardship should never be the accepted outcome as it is here.

Issues of Stacks has given rise to realisation of again better practices that are available and have seen some of these presented by the West Connex Action Group. I would urge that these methods be incorporated in any revisions of these

stacks and make particular note of methods that allow parklands above the filtered tunnels, for the public.

Compensation process and amounts of dollar valuation in this project has been identified as knowingly negligent by the government and would urge a case for Fraud might be issued ...(an activity or enterprise that sees one benefit at the cost of another...The public were surely told this would be a different outcome and it is at their on going expense and detriment while others gain)!

I urge that NO CONTRACTS be signed in relation to the operator and feel TfNSW should employ and manage this roadworks for the protection of the public purse, not be placed at the mercy of a Private interest.

There is much that can be done so much better in this and future projects. I congratulate the West Connex Action Group for their constructive efforts throughout this process and in the support for the community they have shown. I trust that the committee will produce effective and needed changes for the future.

Yours Sincerely

Margaret Hogg

