

Submission
No 437

INQUIRY INTO IMPACT OF THE WESTCONNEX PROJECT

Name: Ms Julie Williams
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I have serious concerns over the Westconnex Project on a number of issues including air pollution impacts on the community, operational traffic impacts, traffic congestion, noise, profound negative impact on the liveability in this community as well as feeling that this project represents a poor transport option compared to other alternatives. This submission would be way too long if I went into depth with each concern. My main concern is the impact the tunnelling has had on my property.

Before construction all properties within 50m of the outer edge of underground tunnels, were offered a property condition survey with a follow up survey for the property after construction. This was to ensure there was a record of the property's condition before and after construction. We were advised by the independent assessor and multiple times by Westconnex in the lead up to getting the report done (we had major concerns about the independence of these reports at the time and brought this up very strongly with Westconnex) that if there was any damage due to the project it would be repaired at no cost to the property owner. We live in St Peters and the tunnel is under our property so we requested a Property condition survey but during the tunnelling and constant blasting (particularly in the last 4 months) many more cracks have appeared in our walls, subsidence at the front door and front gate has resulted in our metal security doors not closing properly as well as numerous cracks in our ornate plaster ceilings suddenly appearing. I contacted Westconnex and was advised to fill in a Claim form which I submitted on 9th June 2018. The lack of any response led me to email them again (8th Aug 2018) to enquire how my claim was going. I was told that the person I was instructed to send my form to had left Westconnex and her email was not being monitored. I resubmitted.

They acknowledged receipt of my claim and advised that they would conduct a thorough investigation of our property. Westconnex then sent us a letter saying that it does not consider that it is responsible for the damage caused to our property without even coming out to inspect our property. Clearly in order to even determine any damage caused by Westconnex or not you would need to at the very least inspect the property have a new report done and compare before and after results.

There seems to be no accountability whatsoever, there was NO investigation and we just received the automated, generic response that Vibration limits have not been exceeded. When the blasting has been going on it feels like an earthquake under our house and the whole house shakes. I do not know how they can say that this is doing no damage to our house it clearly is.

I have since rang Westconnex to complain and been advised that they will visit my home at the time of blasting and review the damage to my property but am yet to hear from them.

I am not only concerned in the short term but also in the longer term from soil settlement from tunnel-related groundwater withdrawal.

Regards

Julie Williams