

**Submission
No 511**

INQUIRY INTO IMPACT OF THE WESTCONNEX PROJECT

Organisation: Annandale North Public School P&C Association

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Annandale North Public School P&C Association

Submission to the Parliamentary Inquiry into the impact of the WestConnex Project

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About the ANPS P&C

The Annandale North Public School P&C Association is a member of The Federation of Parents and Citizens Associations of New South Wales (commonly referred to as the P&C Federation).

The objectives of the ANPS P&C are to:

- Promote the interests of the school by bringing parents, citizens, pupils and teaching staff into close co-operation;
- Assist in providing equipment required by the school;
- Report to the Minister the material requirements of the school; and
- Assist the teaching staff in establishment of school policy and management in all facets of school activity.

Summary of submission

We write to express, on behalf of the children and parents of the Annandale North Public School P&C Association our deep concern with regards to the Westconnex M4 - M5 Link. As parents and as representatives of the school community we are primarily concerned with future generations, most notably their health and wellbeing. Like the Government, we must be concerned with the long term and we feel that the proposed plans will impact our community for decades to come.

Our concerns are:

- The long term impact of the planned unfiltered exhaust stacks located in Rozelle Rail yards, and Victoria Rd / Iron Cove Bridge, on the health of our community
- The impact of increased heavy vehicle traffic to the safety and wellbeing of students attending ANPS during the construction of the project

Our recommendations are:

- That WestConnex be compelled to install appropriate air/particulate filtering in the planned exhaust stacks;
- That the RMS and WestConnex be compelled to perform an adequate risk assessment of the impact of increased heavy vehicle traffic to the health of students at schools on or near Johnston St, Annandale;
- **That RMS and WestConnex be compelled to investigate and where necessary upgrade safety measures on the road crossings in front of all schools on Johnston St.**

Addressing Terms of Reference

Term of reference J - Any other related matter

Our primary concerns with the Westconnex project relate to the health and safety of the students, families, and community that our Association represents. We submit that inadequate planning and consideration has been undertaken with regards to the long term impact to the health of the community from:

- Three unfiltered exhaust stacks at the Rozelle Rail Yards; and
- One unfiltered exhaust stack on Victoria Rd, at Iron Cove Bridge.

We also submit that inadequate consideration has been made to the health and safety impact of the projected increase in heavy vehicle traffic along the Johnston St during the relevant construction period.

Unfiltered exhaust stacks

We submit that the exhaust stacks pose a risk to the health of our community. A previous parliamentary inquiry¹ agrees that exhaust stacks should be filtered to reduce the source of air pollution.

These stacks will impact negatively on the health and wellbeing of residents in the inner west specifically increasing toxic pollution levels near the proposed unfiltered ventilation stacks, which are to be located in residential areas and also near schools and parks.

Local schools and kindergartens use local parks and outdoor areas for activities, including inter-school cross country runs. These places are small sanctuaries of green, open space where school and parents promote health and wellbeing. "Come on", we say, "Let's go and get some fresh air". What are we, as parents, policy makers and Government doing to our ability to say that in the future?

Particulate matter affects more people than any other pollutant and the most health-damaging particles which can penetrate and lodge deep inside the lungs are those which will be concentrated in highly densely populated areas as a result of WestConnex.

Adding a filtration system to tunnel exhaust stacks is not only world's best practice, it's the responsibility of the Government not to pursue projects which actively decrease health outcomes for current and future generations.

¹ M5 East Ventilation Stack (2001), Recommendation 12, page 85
<https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/committees/Pages/inquiryprofile/m5-east-ventilation-stack-2001.aspx> (Accessed 31 August 2018).

We ask that this project prioritises our children's health over project cost and does everything possible to preserve the air quality of the surrounding area including exhaust stack filtration and any other means.

Increased heavy vehicle traffic during construction

In line with our concerns over respiratory health detailed above, the increased heavy vehicle traffic of diesel trucks used during construction of the project will impact directly and negatively on the school and its children.

Increased traffic also means increased congestion, and a higher risk of traffic accidents involving the many students and families who cross Johnston St. during school drop off and pick up.

We ask that the RMS and WestConnex be compelled to perform an adequate and transparent risk assessment of the impact of increased heavy vehicle traffic to the health of students at schools on or nearby Johnston St, Annandale.

We also ask that RMS and WestConnex be compelled to investigate and where necessary upgrade safety measures on the road crossings in front of all schools on Johnston St.