

Submission
No 523

**INQUIRY INTO IMPACT OF THE WESTCONNEX
PROJECT**

Name: Name suppressed

Date Received: 31 August 2018

Partially
Confidential

Parliamentary Inquiry into Impacts of WestConnex

August, 2018

To whom it may concern,

We have a number of serious concerns regarding WestConnex,

Stage 1-North Strathfield/Concord/Homebush/Strathfield

1. Lack of Meaningful Consultation

Lack of any response to community concerns from decision makers.

No response from Canada Bay or Strathfield Councils...along with WestConnex itself or NSW Government. Numerous emails sent and no response to serious concerns were ever answered or sent in return. Why?

Whole process was deliberately fast tracked with NO MEANINGFUL PUBLIC CONSULTATION. So called "public consultation" was "tokenistic" at best!

For example... WestConnex Information booth at Westfield's, Burwood manned by Irish backpackers, with no knowledge of the local area or relevant information. All they did was hand out glossy brochures, paid for by the taxpayer...US!!!!

2. Limited Information

Lack of real and consistent information regarding the big WestConnex picture and therefore impacts on communities of Homebush, Concord, Strathfield and North Strathfield. Information trickled out in dribs and drabs so how was the community able to truly respond and highlight concerns / impacts on our communities. This was done deliberately to "dumb down" and silence community opposition to this WestConnex project of environmental destruction. At the same time, we were faced with fighting / community consultation process regarding council amalgamations and also the Parramatta Road Transformation Strategy, where our low density residential areas were proposed to be rezoned for high rise, high density. Yes, this state government is even after the family home. A coincidence that the community was inundated with so many challenging developments at the same time? I doubt it, this was done deliberately to overwhelm residents with information overload!

3. Environmental Impact

Homes disappeared and were replaced by temporary car parks for workers on Concord Road. The whole area has become a dustbowl of dirt, debris and dust. Many trees have disappeared and have been replaced with masses of concrete-roads, overpasses etc... Dust everywhere to the point that our deck and backyard were unusable. We kept windows closed to avoid dust entering our home and to avoid asthma attacks to two members of our family. Our local area was once a green oasis which has now been turned into a concrete jungle thus creating a heat island effect...

4. Poor Council Response/Advocacy

We are very concerned that Canada Bay and Strathfield Councils did not make a any meaningful public response or comment regarding WestConnex. Why? Unlike the Mayor of Ashfield, Lucille McKenna who very publicly stood against Westconnex as evidenced in her mayoral column/community meetings, expressing concerns regarding the impact of the WestConnex. Where did Canada Bay and Strathfield Council stand on the impact of the WestConnex to our local community of Canada Bay/Strathfield? Why didn't they advocate in the best interests of the community which they were voted to represent. Why the silence?

Who represented the interests of the residents and communities destroyed by WestConnex?

5a.Stack Height and Location

The location and height of the stack is of most concern, as the placement is right next to many townhouse developments along Underwood Rd, Homebush and many, many established homes in the surrounding area. Also this stack is located next to a number of high rise developments along Parramatta Rd, with many more developments to come along this stretch of Parramatta Rd in the future which raises serious health concerns.

5b.

We cannot understand the location of the stacks and the proximity to where many people live and work.These stacks are apparently to be unfiltered, with so many primary and high schools within the local area such as Our Lady of the Assumption, North Strathfield, MacDonald College, North Strathfield, Strathfield North Public School, Homebush Boys HS, Homebush Public School, Strathfield Girls HS to mention just a few!

6. Visual Impact

Concerning us also is the UGLY, overdeveloped, concrete spaghetti maze of road flyovers/entry/exit points ?????? that are planned for the intersections of Concord Rd and Parramatta Rd all to get to a congestion point further down the road faster! Did WestConnex have to be so ugly and overdeveloped, and finally dumped in what is a beautiful, liveable suburb. We did not want a concrete traffic jungle so alienating in its appalling design but nobody listened or responed to written concerns.

7. No Alternative Designs

Surely there were alternatives to this version of WestConnex with less impact on the community, health wise and visually than the one offered. Alternatives were never offered or discussed with the community due to the speed with which this project was pushed through.

8.Unfiltered Stacks as of 2019 at Homebush...WHY?

Next year, Strathfield and Canada LGA will have an unfiltered stack located at Underwood Rd, Homebush. This unfiltered stack will be spewing out carcinogenic poison into North Strathfield /Homebush /Strathfield/ Concord, impacting surrounding homes, high rise and many, many local schools. Government bodies approved WestConnex, so therefore they have a duty of care to protect the health of local residents and get this stack filtered, as is done in other major cities around the

world where these stacks exist. Failure to do this may see a future community class action once health issues become apparent. This is a major issue for our community which is being ignored.

9.B-Double Trucks

Our once peaceful area has been inundated with these dangerous vehicles. They have used our local streets as rat runs and have endangered residents with their reckless driving and multiple daily movements. Loads have not always been secured as they should have been, contributing to the dustbowl our area has become. It is a miracle that no one has lost their life particularly at the intersection of Concord Rd and Parramatta Rd where multiply B Double truck gather daily and cars are forced to dodge on a daily basis.

So the questions which must be asked by the this inquiry are...

1.What was done to protect our beautiful and liveable area from the obvious disaster to our community that was and will continue to be WestConnex, Stage 1?

2.Who is accountable for this destruction on so many levels?

3.Where is the duty of care from this state government regarding serious healths concerns/outcomes from that unfiltered stack on Underwood Rd, Homebush to existing and future residents?

Thank you for considering our considerable concerns

from a North Strathfield resident representing concerns of residents in North Strathfield and surrounding area