

Submission  
No 544

**INQUIRY INTO IMPACT OF THE WESTCONNEX  
PROJECT**

**Name:** Name suppressed

**Date Received:** 30 August 2018

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Partially  
Confidential

## Submission for Parliamentary Inquiry

I am against WestConnex and think it should be stopped for the following reasons:

### 1. Flawed cost-benefit analysis

The WestConnex business case, including the cost-benefit analysis is seriously flawed. Given that air pollution costs Sydney up to \$8.4 billion a year (source: Environmental Justice Australia), the cost of health care directly related to both the extra vehicles projected to use the roads and the unfiltered ventilation shafts should be included in the business case. Why isn't the NSW Government following the world's best practice as with road tunnels in Japan, Norway, Spain, Italy, and China, which are constructed with in tunnel particulate and nitrogen dioxide filtration?

The business case does not adequately address alternative forms of transport, such as buses and trains.

The ventilation shafts in Rozelle is projected to emit 50 tonnes of particulate matter annually, based on RMS figures for the M5 East exhaust stack. The current proposal shows public park land and outdoor sports facilities directly below the ventilation shafts, where it has been proven both that ground level air pollution exceeds safe limits, and that people with increased lung function (ie people breathing faster due to exercise) are more susceptible to the negative health effects of air pollution.

The Northconnex tunnel entrances show PM2.5 readings of over 500 micrograms per cubic meter at peak hour, which is the health equivalent of smoking over 20 cigarettes.

Table 2-47 Calculated in-tunnel air quality for forecast traffic volumes (2019 and 2029) (project contribution) – main alignment tunnels during peak hours

a – design as presented in the EIS  
 b – design including updates to fuel mix and no change to ratio of NO<sub>x</sub> to NO<sub>x</sub> (10%)  
 c – design including updates to fuel mix and ratio of NO<sub>x</sub> to NO<sub>x</sub> (10%)

Pollutant concentrations (mg/m<sup>3</sup>) (peak hour)

Approximate distance along main alignment tunnels (km)	1 km	2 km	3 km	4 km	5 km	6 km	7 km	8 km	9 km
<b>Northbound main alignment tunnel at 9 am (2019)</b>									
PM <sub>2.5</sub>	0.351	0.772	1.09	1.34	1.62	1.90	2.17	2.56	3.45
PM <sub>10</sub>	0.348	0.812	1.12	1.41	1.70	2.00	2.28	2.71	3.63
NO <sub>2</sub>	0.039	0.098	0.124	0.144	0.165	0.186	0.206	0.250	0.374
NO	0.044	0.111	0.140	0.162	0.186	0.210	0.232	0.282	0.422
CO	0.070	0.177	0.224	0.260	0.298	0.336	0.372	0.451	0.675
SO <sub>2</sub>	0.039	0.084	0.122	0.158	0.193	0.229	0.265	0.307	0.377
PM <sub>2.5</sub> (c)	0.040	0.087	0.127	0.164	0.200	0.238	0.275	0.318	0.391
PM <sub>10</sub> (c)	0.037	0.090	0.115	0.149	0.183	0.217	0.251	0.290	0.347
NO <sub>2</sub> (c)	0.039	0.085	0.122	0.158	0.195	0.231	0.267	0.306	0.369
<b>Northbound main alignment tunnel at 9 am (2029)</b>									
PM <sub>2.5</sub>	0.411	0.966	1.32	1.67	2.01	2.35	2.70	3.20	4.29
PM <sub>10</sub>	0.415	0.985	1.33	1.69	2.03	2.37	2.73	3.23	4.33
NO <sub>2</sub>	0.043	0.108	0.136	0.159	0.182	0.204	0.227	0.276	0.411
NO	0.049	0.124	0.156	0.183	0.209	0.235	0.261	0.317	0.473
CO	0.079	0.199	0.250	0.292	0.335	0.375	0.415	0.506	0.756
SO <sub>2</sub>	0.047	0.101	0.145	0.189	0.232	0.275	0.319	0.369	0.439
PM <sub>2.5</sub> (c)	0.051	0.109	0.156	0.203	0.249	0.295	0.343	0.397	0.472
PM <sub>10</sub> (c)	0.046	0.095	0.137	0.176	0.219	0.260	0.301	0.346	0.414
NO <sub>2</sub> (c)	0.050	0.102	0.148	0.192	0.236	0.280	0.324	0.375	0.446
<b>Southbound main alignment tunnel at 6 pm (2019)</b>									
PM <sub>2.5</sub>	0.156	0.911	1.76	2.62	3.47	4.32	5.12	5.59	6.26
PM <sub>10</sub>	0.152	0.890	1.71	2.55	3.38	4.20	4.98	5.44	6.09

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The Northconnex EIS shows the predicted levels of pollution for the North bound and South bound tunnels in 2019 and 2029, with PM2.5 at 0.477 and 0.487 in one tunnel and 0.553 and 0.576 milligrams per cubic metre in the other tunnel. After conversion from milligrams to micrograms per cubic metre these measurements equate to 477 and 487 micrograms per cubic metre in one tunnel and 553 and 576 micrograms per cubic metre in the other tunnel, where safe levels of PM2.5 ranges of less than 22.6 micrograms per cubic metre.

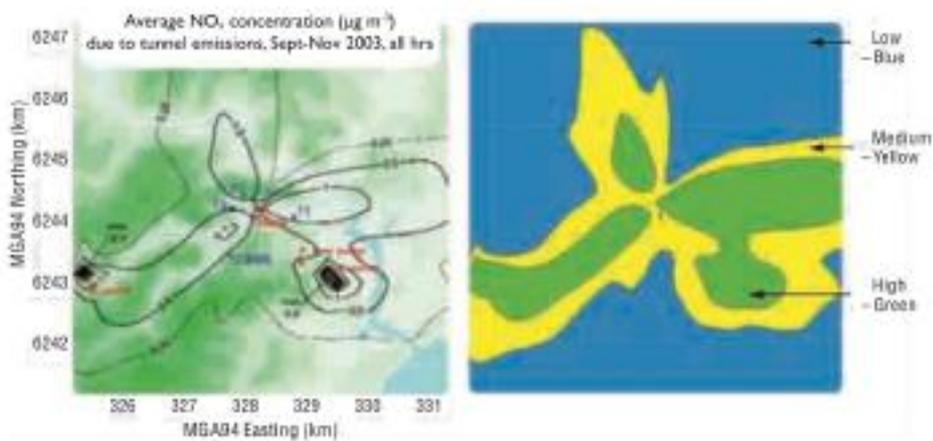
Air pollution readings from the M5 ventilation shaft at Turella show the ground level air pollution from this ventilation shaft over an area 6km in length. The slide below shows some of the data from the NHMRC document on the M5 East, and it shows an increase in ground level air pollution around ventilation shaft sites due to tunnel emissions, with high exposure > 0.54 micrograms per cubic metre of Nitrogen Oxide in green, medium exposure > 0.30 and < 0.54 micrograms per cubic metre of Nitrogen Oxide in yellow, and low exposure < 0.30 micrograms per cubic metre of Nitrogen Oxide in blue. High exposure levels are the equivalent of smoking over two cigarettes a day. Why has this not been factored into the business case?

Source: <http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/environment/Publications/m5-health-impact.pdf>

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The shape of the 'high' exposure zone describes the interaction of prevailing meteorology with the emitted NO<sub>x</sub> plumes from these three sources.

FIGURE 5.1 Modelled average NO<sub>x</sub> concentrations (left) and resulting assigned NO<sub>x</sub> exposure zones (right) for the M5 East tunnel



Source: *Investigation into the possible health impacts of the M5 East motorway stack on the Turella community – reanalysis report by NSW Health, November 2006 (see Chapter 6)*

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Who will pay for the negative health effects of air pollution from these ventilation shafts?

Why is the NSW Government allowed to poison residents in this way?

## **2. Independence Issues**

The approval of the WestConnex business does seem to have been undertaken by independent parties. The relationship between stakeholders (Sydney Motorway Corporation, Roads and Maritime Services, the Treasury and its shareholding Ministers) needs to be investigated as they do not seem to be acting independently and the process for the award of tenders for State Significant Infrastructure projects may be corrupt.

## **3. Corrupt Organisations being allowed to Tender**

Organisations that have been barred from tendering in other countries due to allegations of corruption should also be barred in Australia too, until a positive outcome has been found.

## **4. Toll Road Usage Incentives**

Tax payers should not have their funds used as incentives for people to use toll roads. Toll roads should pay for themselves. The NSW Government should neither be using tax payer's money to pay for toll reimbursements to motorists, nor guaranteeing income to the toll road operators. AECOM's figures for The Sydney Harbour Tunnel has cost NSW taxpayers over \$1 billion during the time of its operation.

## **5. Community Bribes**

Tax payers should not have their funds used by Sydney Motorway Corporation to bribe communities with at least \$10,000 (for example Birchgrove Public School and St Peter's Public School) in return for their silence regarding the damage the construction is doing to these communities. How much money has been spent in this way?

## **6. Compulsory acquisition of property**

The organisations responsible for the compulsory acquisition of property should be forced in their contracts to purchase these properties at 100% of market value, determined by two independent parties. Furthermore, residents who have their properties compulsory acquired should receive monetary help in terms of finding alternative accommodation. In addition, residents close to construction sites should be offered an opportunity to sell their property for 100% market value. Once purchased, these organisations should be forced to preserve and reuse heritage houses for office buildings and protect natural assets such as mature trees and endangered wildlife.

## **7. Dramatically different Project Scope**

The project scope has changed considerably since the business case was approved. Therefore a new business case must be written and approved before any further funds are spent on this project. The relationship between WestConnex and other toll road projects including the Sydney Gateway, Western Harbour Tunnel, F6 and Beaches Link is obvious, and as such, one business case should be written encompassing all road-building projects.

## **8. Objections Ignored**

There were 13,000 objections to WestConnexStage 3; why were these ignored?