

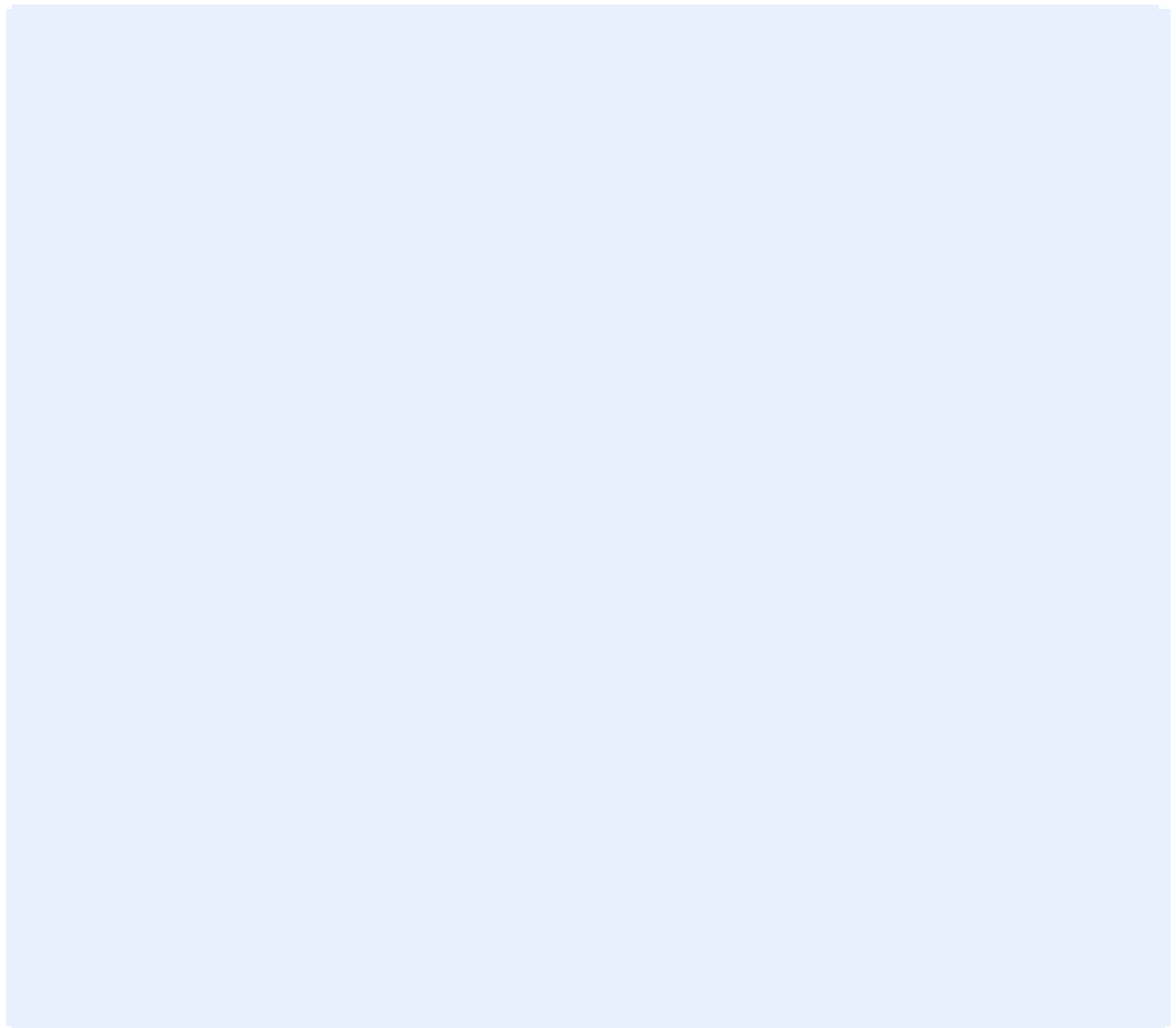
Submission
No 2

INQUIRY INTO IMPACT OF THE ROZELLE INTERCHANGE

Organisation: City of Sydney

Date Received: 15 March 2024

Legislative Council Inquiry into WestConnex Rozelle Interchange. City of Sydney Submission



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1. Introduction

1.1. Purpose of this submission

This document provides the City of Sydney ('the City') submission to the Legislative Council, Transport and Art Committee *Inquiry into the impacts of the Rozelle Interchange March 2024* ('the Inquiry').

1.2. Scope of this submission

The City recognises that the terms of reference of the parliamentary inquiry relate to the Rozelle Interchange.

By virtue of its location and role in the WestConnex network, the functional impacts of the Rozelle Interchange extend far beyond its physical boundary.

The Rozelle Interchange is the lynchpin of the WestConnex network, so in many ways the planning, design, operation and impacts of Rozelle Interchange are inextricably linked to the broader WestConnex project.

The City's position opposing all parts of the WestConnex project is well documented and will not be covered in this submission.

The City has drawn on previous submissions to develop this submission, which we have kept concise.

2. Background

2.1. Legislative Council Terms of reference

- (a) the planning, design and development of the Rozelle Interchange project and its impact on traffic flow, including the prioritisation of traffic from toll roads including WestConnex over local traffic*
- (b) all traffic modelling that was undertaken, including for WestConnex, all surrounding arterial roads and all local roads*
- (c) design decisions that restricted or compromised traffic flows, including any changes from the original plans or modelling*
- (d) the planning, design and development of the Rozelle Interchange project and its impact on the efficient and on-time running of buses, ferries and all other public transport*
- (e) the communication and consultation processes undertaken by Transport for NSW and other relevant stakeholders throughout the lifespan of the Rozelle Interchange Project*
- (f) the social, environmental, and economic impacts of the Rozelle Interchange project on impacted communities*
- (g) the impact on foot traffic and active transport options, including due to the closure of Rozelle Parklands*
- (h) the cause of asbestos detected in the Rozelle Parklands and the adequacy and appropriateness of the responses by government agencies and contractors to reports of asbestos in and near the Parklands*
- (i) solutions to ease the congestion and gridlock that the opening of the Rozelle Interchange has created, including the impact of the Western Harbour Tunnel after opening*
- (j) the adequacy of Transport for NSW planning, resource allocation and public communication in the period leading to and directly after the opening of the Rozelle Interchange*
- (k) the cost of the Rozelle Interchange and the total cost of WestConnex*
- (l) any other related matters*

The committee will report by 20 June 2024.

2.2. Previous submissions, Reports and Council Minutes

The City has written the following submissions, reports and Council minutes in response to the WestConnex project between 2015 and 2024

These are published on the City's website: [City of Sydney WestConnex Submissions 2015 - 2023](#) and are summarised below (in reverse chronological order):

Legislative Council Inquiry into WestConnex Rozelle Interchange.
City of Sydney Submission

1. 2023 City of Sydney Submission WestConnex Stage 3 – Pre-Opening Performance Plan. **September 2023**
2. City of Sydney submission on WestConnex M8: Draft Road Network Performance Review Plan - **June 2023**
3. City of Sydney Submission on Sydney Park Junction Review of Environmental Factors (REF) - **29 September 2021**
4. City of Sydney's Submission on the WestConnex Stage 3B M4-M5 Link Rozelle Interchange Draft Urban Design and Landscape Plan (UDLP) - **4 September 2020**
5. City of Sydney Submission on the Sydney Gateway Project Response to Submission Report - **28 May 2020**
6. City of Sydney Submission on WestConnex M4-M5 Link Modification 2 Design Amendment - Stage 3B Rozelle Interchange - **13 May 2020**
7. City of Sydney Submission on Western Harbour Tunnel and Warringah Freeway Upgrade Environmental Impact Statement - **25 March 2019**
8. City of Sydney Submission on WestConnex M4-M5 Link Modification 2 – Stage 3B Rozelle Interchange - **18 September 2019**
9. City of Sydney Submission on WestConnex F6 Extension Stage 1 Environmental Impact Statement - **13 December 2018**
10. City of Sydney Submission on WestConnex Stage 3 M4-M5 Link Modification 1 - **19 September 2018**
11. City of Sydney Submission on WestConnex Stage 2 New M5 Modification 6 - **13 June 2018**
12. City of Sydney Response to WestConnex Stage 3 M4-M5 Link Environmental Impact Statement Submissions and Preferred Infrastructure Report - **23 March 2018**
13. City of Sydney submission on WestConnex Stage 2 New M5 Modification 4 (28/02/2018) - **28 February 2018 (And 16 February 2018)**
14. City of Sydney Submission on WestConnex Stage 3 M4-M5 Link Environmental Impact Statement - **October 2017**
15. City of Sydney Submission on WestConnex Stage 3 M4-M5 Link Concept Design - **Released May 2017**
16. City of Sydney Submission on WestConnex Stage 3 M4-M5 Link Concept Design: Appendix A - City of Sydney Submission on the Draft Urban Design Landscape Plan - **28 April 2017**
17. City of Sydney Submission on WestConnex Stage 3 M4-M5 Link Concept Design: Appendix B1 - City of Sydney Comments on St Peters Interchange Recreational Area - **27 February 2017**
18. City of Sydney Submission on WestConnex Stage 3 M4-M5 Link Concept Design: Appendix B2 - City of Sydney Supplementary Comments on St Peters Interchange Recreational Area - **March 2017**
19. City of Sydney Submission on WestConnex Stage 3 M4-M5 Link Concept Design: Appendix C - City of Sydney comments to RMS on the Pedestrian & Cycle Network Review - **No date on document**
20. The WestConnex Challenge: Public Summary Report – **June 2017 (draft)**
21. WestConnex: Alternative Proposal - **16 June 2017**
22. City of Sydney Response to the Submissions Report on the New M5
23. SGS Economics & Planning: WestConnex Business Case Review – Final Report - **February 2016**

Legislative Council Inquiry into WestConnex Rozelle Interchange.
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24. City of Sydney Submission WestConnex New M5 Environmental Impact Statement - **29 January 2016**
25. WestConnex New M5 EIS Review of Biodiversity Assessment - **December 2015**
26. WestConnex New M5 EIS Review of Strategic Alternatives and Socio-economic Impacts - **January 2016**
27. WestConnex New M5 EIS Review of Traffic and Transport – Part 1- **28 January 2016**
28. WestConnex New M5 EIS Review of Traffic and Transport – Part 2 - **No date on document**
29. City of Sydney Submission WestConnex M4 East Environmental Impact Statement
30. SGS Economics & Planning: M4 East EIS Review – Final Report - **October 2015**
31. Strategic Review of the WestConnex Proposal: Final Report - **February 2015**
32. WestConnex Transport Modelling: Summary Report - **April 2015**
33. WestConnex Transport Modelling: Technical Report - **May 2015**
34. Lord Mayoral minute: WestConnex Strategic Review - **23 February 2015**
35. Lord Mayoral minute: WestConnex Transport Modelling – **27 April 2015**

Other related submissions

36. City of Sydney Submission to Western Distributor Network Improvements Proposal - **2022**

3. Key Issues

3.1. The planning, design and development of the Rozelle Interchange project and its impact on traffic and public transport

This addresses the following Terms of Reference:

(a) the planning, design and development of the Rozelle Interchange project and its impact on traffic flow, including the prioritisation of traffic from toll roads including WestConnex over local traffic

(d) the planning, design and development of the Rozelle Interchange project and its impact on the efficient and on-time running of buses, ferries and all other public transport

3.1.1. Planning for the Rozelle Interchange did not reflect Government aims and strategy

The NSW Government planned the WestConnex Rozelle Interchange contrary to its *Future Transport Strategy* and *Sydney City Centre Access Strategy*. These commit to zero growth in car travel to the City Centre.

3.1.2. Planning for the Rozelle Interchange was based on flawed, outdated approaches

The NSW Government planned the WestConnex Rozelle Interchange using an outdated, traffic-centric approach. Other global cities have abandoned large-scale inner-city motorway construction as inefficient and ineffective. No modern democracy has been able to address urban traffic congestion through investment in motorways.

The Rozelle Interchange is an outlier in contemporary transport planning: extremely expensive and complex with very poor justification or logic, and with major loss of land in key areas around Sydney's global centre.

3.1.3. Planning for the Rozelle Interchange evidences modal promotion of the movement of vehicles over better outcomes for public transport, active transport and place

The planning of the Rozelle Interchange (and WestConnex more broadly) exposed *road-first* bias. Despite going against NSW Government policy and global best practice (see sections 3.1.1 and 3.1.2 above), officers championing the project promoted the movement of vehicles over better outcomes for public transport, active transport and place.

3.1.4. Planning for the Rozelle Interchange did not adequately consider alternatives

The NSW Government planned WestConnex and its Rozelle Interchange without adequately considering alternative options, including:

- Motorway connection between the M4 and M5 in a different location and via a different, more appropriate route such as the A3 or A6 corridors
- Lower complexity interchange at Rozelle that does not connect to the City Centre (there is ample motorway capacity to serve that demand (which has been static/decreasing))
- Options that prioritise travel by public transport rather than motor vehicles in the inner city. For example: promoting use of public transport by providing bus priority on Anzac Bridge. Sydney, like other international cities, has witnessed an upward trend in heavy rail patronage over the past thirty years coinciding with slowing of growth in kilometres travelled by car. Rushing the opening of WestConnex Rozelle Interchange ahead of Metro West risks locking in car-focused land use and travel behaviour.

- Travel demand management options – options that do not encourage travel by car.

The Rozelle Interchange is the lynchpin of the flawed WestConnex network. As far back as the City of Sydney’s 2017 submission on *WestConnex Stage 3 M4-M5 Link Environmental Impact Statement*, noted that:

“The EIS provides no assessment of strategic alternatives for road solutions, public transport solutions, travel demand management solutions or a combination of all. It relies on dated assessments provided in the WestConnex Updated Strategic Business Case and documentation prepared for previous WestConnex planning submissions.

No comprehensive assessment of alternatives has been undertaken as required by the Department of Planning and Environment Secretary’s Environmental Assessment Requirements SSI 16_7485 (SEARS) and the proposal relies on flawed and outdated information from the WestConnex Updated Strategic Business Case.

The Project will reduce the speed and reliability of buses travelling between the busy Victoria Road Corridor and the city centre via the Anzac Bridge.”

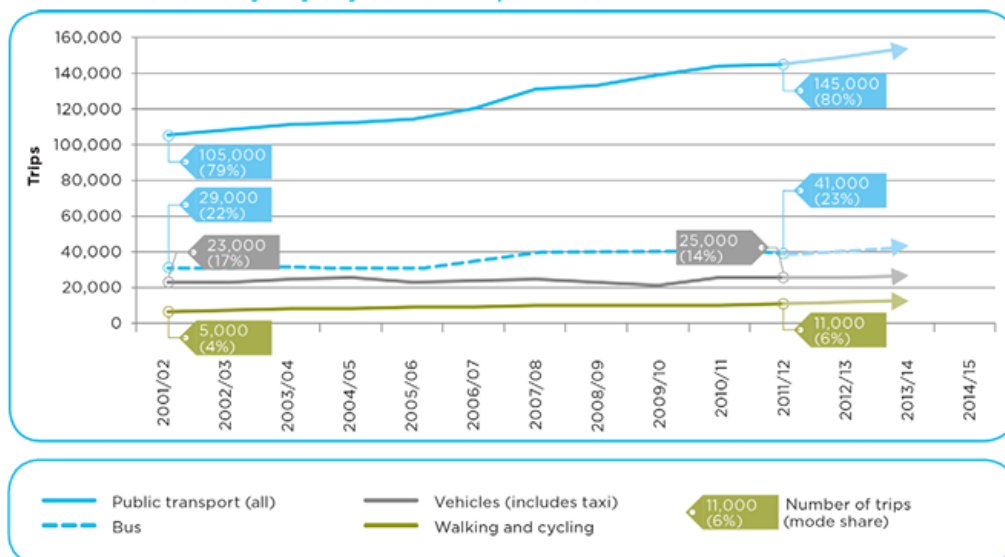
Of additional concern is that the planning and business case for WestConnex Rozelle Interchange did not consider future NSW Government investment in major public transport services including Sydney Metro West which would materially change the demand for and benefits of investment in motorways.

3.1.5. Planning for the Rozelle Interchange failed to recognise that the Sydney City Centre is amply served by motorway capacity to provide vehicle access *to/from* – but cannot accommodate any additional vehicle traffic *within*

There has been no measurable growth in vehicle traffic accessing the Sydney City Centre since 2003.

The NSW Government’s Sydney City Centre Access Strategy (2013) showed that despite unprecedented development and economic growth between 2001 and 2011, *the number of people driving to the city centre in the morning peak hour has plateaued at around 25,000 trips and the number of people arriving by public transport has increased from 105,000 to 145,000 trips.* See figure below.

Trends in travel to the Sydney City Centre - AM peak 1 hour



After George Street was reallocated from vehicles to people and light rail, there was a *reduction* in driving to and within the City Centre.

In basic terms, the City Centre is exceptionally well served by public transport, walking and cycling, while the constrained street space and parking limits the degree to which people can drive.

NSW Government modellers continually but incorrectly project that increases in jobs and housing will lead to growth in driving whereas TfNSW data continues to show that within the inner-city area, there has been no measurable increase in driving despite significant increases in jobs and housing stock – this was the case even before COVID lockdowns and subsequent changes in travel behaviours.

Before WestConnex, the City Centre already had ample motorway connectivity, a bypass network, and capacity to serve its current and future traffic needs.

There was never a valid planning basis for the Rozelle Interchange to provide additional motorway capacity or connectivity for the City Centre.

3.1.6. Planning for the Rozelle Interchange neglected public transport and has had major impacts in the travel time and reliability of buses.

The Rozelle Interchange is the lynchpin of the flawed WestConnex network. As far back as the City of Sydney's 2017 submission on *WestConnex Stage 3 M4-M5 Link Environmental Impact Statement*, noted that:

“The Project will reduce the speed and reliability of buses travelling between the busy Victoria Road Corridor and the city centre via the Anzac Bridge.

The EIS provides no mitigation measures to even maintain the current (poor) levels of travel time and reliability of Victoria Road bus services.

The Project can no longer purport to meet the government's key objective of traffic reductions (and consequent urban renewal) along the Parramatta Road corridor, because the reintroduction of tolls on the M4 has actually resulted in traffic increases on Parramatta Road, not the promised reductions.”

3.1.7. Planning for the Rozelle Interchange went against NSW Government land use policy

The NSW Government planned the WestConnex Rozelle Interchange in one of the highest value parts of Sydney. Key impacts of this poor planning decision:

- Bringing large volumes of regional vehicle traffic to one of the most congested parts of Sydney's road transport system
- Allocating large areas of high-value developable land to deal with regional vehicle traffic
- Impacting dense, vibrant inner city communities with additional traffic, noise, emissions, severance (in addition to construction impacts)

The Government's own Regional and District plans acknowledge that the future of Sydney's competitiveness comes from creating connected places where people live in close proximity to jobs. Public transport has superior carrying capacity – Metro moves 250,000 people/hour compared, bus priority corridor (i.e.2 lanes) moves 20,000 people/hour the equivalent space for a motorway (i.e.: 2 lanes) that can only move around 4,000 people/hour .

3.1.8. Obligations to give back Victoria Road and Parramatta Road to the Community have been ignored

As part of the planning, construction and opening of the Rozelle Interchange, TfNSW has to date resisted taking any action to reallocate road space from vehicles to people on key surface corridors.

The NSW Government promoted the WestConnex Rozelle Interchange as the key enabler of reducing regional through traffic on Victoria Road and Parramatta Road so these main streets could be handed back to the community.

TfNSW has advised that:

- There is no NSW Government commitment to or funding for these projects

- Local government would need to undertake the planning and design of any changes to the configuration of these (state-controlled) roads before TfNSW could consider them
- any proposals to change the function and configuration of these roads should not impact the convenience of drivers.

The WestConnex Rozelle Interchange has opened without any plan to deliver any improvements to place, active transport or public transport on Victoria Road or Parramatta Road and failed to realise the potential for quality employment and residential growth. Government should still reallocate street space to people, planting and public transport to enable this, but the task is made harder, not easier, by the opening of WestConnex Rozelle Interchange.

3.1.9. TfNSW continues expanding road capacity at interfaces with the surface street network, and prioritising more traffic through Pyrmont and City Centre streets

The mitigation measures in TfNSW's WestConnex Rozelle Interchange Pre-Opening Plan are not consistent with Government strategic plans such as the *Pyrmont Peninsula Place Strategy*, *Tech Central Place Based Transport Strategy*, *Future Transport* or *Active Transport Strategy*. For example:

- No plan for traffic reduction on Broadway
- Plans for more traffic on Harris Street and Pyrmont Bridge Road
- Delays to Sydney Park Junction project (that aims to reduce traffic on King Street, Newtown)

The mitigation measures (including expansion of Western Distributor off-ramps at Allen Street and Pyrmont Bridge Road) jeopardise rezoning and development investment in Pyrmont an area identified as ideal for densification because of its proximity to Tech Central and new public transport (Pyrmont Metro station).

Continued use of Harris Street and Pyrmont Bridge Road as relief valves for Rozelle interchange puts at risk the 23,000 jobs and up to 4,000 new homes in Pyrmont and deliver of \$280 million of developer contributions to help pay for the new Pyrmont Metro station.

In addition, the delay in the construction of the final missing link in the City's cycleway network at King Street due to concerns about "*possible*" queuing on the Western Distributor. Despite thousands of cyclists risking road trauma every day by riding on King Street in the City Centre, TfNSW has prioritised road space on King Street for WestConnex traffic to avoid the very unlikely risk of congestion on the Western Distributor, rather than reduce the risk of road trauma for people riding.

3.1.10. Inadequately response to consent conditions requiring an assessment of impacts on local streets surrounding the WestConnex portals pre and post opening

The *Rozelle Interchange Pre-Opening Plan Road Network Performance Plan* (Rozelle Pre-Opening plan) does not respond to the consent conditions. The City does not agree that TfNSW has consulted, or assessed the performance of the multi-modal transport network, and have only developed mitigation measures to respond to Motorway traffic performance.

Further, TfNSW has not proposed any measures that will mitigate impacts on the local road network. The Rozelle Pre-Opening Plan contains no new placemaking initiatives despite identifying numerous new intersections requiring modification to improve traffic flow e.g. Harris Street. New mitigation measures (those not discussed in the EIS phase) are designed to improve the performance of the motorway network at the expense of local places, jobs and housing.

3.2. Traffic modelling for WestConnex, surrounding arterial roads and local roads.

This addresses the following Terms of Reference:

(b) all traffic modelling that was undertaken, including for WestConnex, all surrounding arterial roads and all local roads

(c) design decisions that restricted or compromised traffic flows, including any changes from the original plans or modelling

3.2.1. NSW Government relied heavily on inappropriate and disproven “predict and provide” transport modelling to support the project

TfNSW applied “predict and provide” modelling to the Rozelle Interchange (and rest of WestConnex project) contrary to its Movement and Place Framework, which favours a “Vision and Validate” approach.

TfNSW also used a modelling methodology that is not fit-for-purpose for assessing the impact of changes to a motorway interface on the surface roads adjacent to the Rozelle Interchange:

- It is understood that TfNSW used the Sydney Strategic Motorway Planning Model (SMPM) to inform this project, which is an unconstrained strategic level toll assignment model for assessing traffic volumes on the motorway network. It does not provide fit-for-purpose outputs for assessing traffic growth in the streets impacted by the Rozelle Interchange.
- TfNSW has not calibrated their model as required in the TfNSW Motorway Design Guide – Capacity and flow analysis (RMS, 2017): “The major assumptions in a model relate to population and employment patterns, future land use, mode choice, travel behaviour, and characteristics of the transport infrastructure. Therefore, the traffic estimates will change with any changes to the underlying assumptions.”

The City is of the view that if TfNSW insists on using predict and provide modelling (contrary to its own framework), then it should at least have made use of more task-appropriate modelling tools that it has at its disposal (such as VISSIM) to assess traffic impacts on surface streets impacted by the Rozelle Interchange. Further, TfNSW should have updated its modelling to reflect latest development projections and the mode share assumptions that reflect commitment to Metro West.

3.2.2. The NSW Government’s 2017 EIS showed that the Rozelle Interchange would cause traffic impacts – yet it made no changes to the project

Notwithstanding that the NSW Government relied heavily on inappropriate and disproven “predict and provide” transport modelling to support the project (as outlined above), the NSW Government made no changes to the WestConnex Rozelle interchange design, despite the fact that:

- Its 2017 EIS indicated that the Rozelle Interchange would lead to traffic volumes some 30 per cent higher than the capacity of the Anzac Bridge and
- The City of Sydney’s 2017 submission on WestConnex Stage 3 M4-M5 Link Environmental Impact Statement, noted that:
 - *“The Rozelle Interchange locates numerous tollway portals in one of the most congested parts of Sydney’s road network, and will directly impact the Anzac Bridge and the western edge of the city centre. This will further delay buses and service and delivery vehicles needed to keep the city centre globally competitive”.*

- *“The Project will place an unacceptable burden on the Anzac Bridge, increasing travel times from Rozelle into the Sydney city centre for all drivers, including essential services and buses. Buses account for over 24 per cent of all trips entering the City Centre via the Anzac Bridge during the AM Peak Hour”*

3.2.3. NSW Government withheld traffic projections at every stage of the process

Notwithstanding that the NSW Government relied heavily on inappropriate and disproven “predict and provide” transport modelling to support the project (as outlined above), it did not provide sufficient modelling outputs to assess likely traffic impacts.

The modelling projections that the NSW Government did provide did not cover sufficient surface streets nor did they cover areas sufficiently distant from motorway portals.

As far back as the City of Sydney’s 2017 submission on *WestConnex Stage 3 M4-M5 Link Environmental Impact Statement*, noted that:

The description shows seven portals in Rozelle and Lilyfield feeding to and from Anzac Bridge, Victoria Road and the City West Link without full modelling of their long term impacts locally or on the city centre

3.2.4. The NSW Government’s secrecy around modelling processes, assumptions and outputs is unacceptable.

There is a lack of transparency in terms of key inputs to the traffic modelling process (which form the basis of the analysis and assessment of many key impacts associated with the WestConnex Rozelle Interchange Project).

As recently as November 2023, City staff seeking information about traffic modelling for a NSW Government motorway Project asked TfNSW to:

“Provide evidence (e.g. legal advice or terms of contract) that demonstrates that Strategic Motorway Project Model (SMPM) outputs are unable to be shared with the City or other stakeholders.”

TfNSW responded:

“Data from the SMPM will not be provided, nor will any data deemed commercially sensitive. The SMPM contains commercially sensitive information pertaining to the toll road infrastructure and includes information indicating the future demand and patronage on commercially sensitive projects. The SMPM also includes indicative and visionary projects currently undergoing business case investigation. “

TfNSW declined to provide any evidence of a legal or contractual justification for considering the data commercially sensitive.

TfNSW’s consistent failure to provide the Community with access to information to understand motorway expansion projects makes no sense. If the evidence can justify TfNSW proposals, there is no justification for withholding it – why is this information being withheld?

3.3. Impact on foot traffic and active transport options

This addresses the following Term of Reference:

(g) the impact on foot traffic and active transport options, including due to the closure of Rozelle Parklands

3.3.1. Rozelle Interchange construction caused major, unjustified impacts to walking and cycling connectivity – contrary to NSW Government policy

Despite the NSW Government's commitment to active transport, the City and Inner West Council were forced to advocate and negotiate with TfNSW over many months to get WestConnex to provide a safe and reasonably direct walking and cycling route between the inner west and the CBD across the Rozelle interchange construction site.

The route involved riders competing with heavy vehicles for limited road space on James Craig Road, with pedestrians standing for long periods on small, exposed traffic islands. The poor provision of this basic active transport connection caused the numbers of people using the route to plummet.

Some improvements were made only after TfNSW intervened and required WestConnex to reduce vehicles speeds and create more space for people standing at intersections.

Since the construction works ended – and active transport routes re-established - rates of walking and riding have not returned to pre-construction levels.

3.4. Gateway and investment processes

This addresses following Terms of Reference:

- (k) the cost of the Rozelle Interchange and the total cost of WestConnex*
- (l) any other related matters*

3.4.1. Business Case process is flawed WestConnex project objectives have not been realised

The NSW Government has never evaluated, or released any plan to evaluate, the WestConnex Rozelle Interchange (and the broader WestConnex project that it enables) against its project objectives to verify that it has realised the community benefits. Specifically, the business case revised in 2015 included the addition of the WestConnex Rozelle Interchange, the Western Harbour Tunnel and the F6 in addition to the 2013 commitment to connect Western Sydney with the port/airport/CBD. The business case objectives are to:

- *“support Sydney’s long-term economic growth through improved motorway access and connections linking Sydney’s international gateways, western Sydney and key places of business across the city as well as*
- *create opportunities for urban renewal, improved liveability and public and active transport improvements along and around Parramatta Road”*

To date, despite \$30 Billion investment, the *WestConnex* project:

- Fails to connect to Port Botany, delivering the critical freight connection between the Port and Western Sydney
- Failed to deliver improvements to place, public transport and active transport on Parramatta Road and Victoria Road to catalyse urban renewal.

3.4.2. The true cost of WestConnex has not been made transparent

The NSW Government investment process and assurance gateway process lack transparency. The estimated total cost of Sydney's massive motorway expansion is somewhere in the vicinity of \$30 Billion. NSW Government Budget Papers show that the current \$16.8 Billion WestConnex price tag does not include:

- Sydney Gateway (\$2.6 Billion)
- F6 Extension (\$3 Billion)

- Warringah Freeway extension (\$700 million)
- Western Harbour Tunnel (\$6.7 Billion)
- Western Distributor Smart Motorway (\$125 million)

At no point did the NSW Government inform the community about the total cost of the project, let alone given an opportunity to demand government reset and invest in alternatives e.g. more Metro or other public transport options.

In addition, the Government - private sector partnership for WestConnex has locked the community into complex contractual arrangements for half a century that make changes to local streets and roads connected to the WestConnex Motorway difficult at best.

The Government's toll rebate scheme has removed investment risks that justified the private partnership model by underwriting private vehicle tolls, ensuring that Transurban has a guaranteed and growing income stream.

The funds that Government spends on WestConnex toll rebates could be better spent delivering alternative community services and infrastructure instead of underwriting the risk to private motorway consortia. The Government's Tolling Review provided an opportunity for these issues to be assessed.

3.4.3. Business case(s) lack transparency for the community about total costs and benefits

It has not been possible for the community to understand the actual cost or the impacts of the entire WestConnex proposal, because the NSW Government described the costs and impacts of each stage separately – through different processes, at different times and with a constantly evolving and growing project. In reality, each stage of the WestConnex project relied on the subsequent stage of WestConnex to pay for it and to deal with the traffic impacts and demands it caused.

The NSW Government assurance process which should protect community interest and safeguard against poor investment decisions is opaque and lacks transparency.

The Auditor General's June 2021 report (into the WestConnex project) supports this view, noting that:

- *“Government decisions to fund WestConnex related projects outside of WestConnex's \$16.812 billion reported budget have reduced transparency and understate the full cost of WestConnex”*
- *“TfNSW should provide transparent whole of program assurance on total costs and benefits throughout the project life-cycle when complex projects are split into sub-projects.”*
- *“In response to our formal requests for relevant information, made during the conduct of this audit, TfNSW advised that complete and valid records of key decision-making processes, analysis and advice were unavailable. Additionally, TfNSW often provided information that was incomplete or unverifiable (for instance, unsigned briefing notes). This is not consistent with accepted governance practices and does not comply with the requirements of the State Records Act 1998.”*

3.5. Major project engagement and stakeholder feedback processes

This addresses the following Terms of Reference:

- (e) the communication and consultation processes undertaken by Transport for NSW and other relevant stakeholders throughout the lifespan of the Rozelle Interchange Project*

3.5.1. NSW Government did address feedback provided in submissions

TfNSW did not address the City's feedback or analysis on the WestConnex Rozelle Interchange (or any other part of the) Project, instead continued to produce planning documents that are inadequate at best and misleading at worst.

The City wrote more than 30 submissions (over 500 pages of written feedback) about every part of the WestConnex project, amassing significant evidence showing how TfNSW Project documents contained misleading statements, major omissions, opaque or confusing data and poor design.

The NSW Government could not respond to the most fundamental issue that the City raised in regard to the WestConnex Rozelle Interchange:

“Given the highly constrained and congested nature of the city centre and in light of the NSW Government’s transport policy which focuses on reducing the number of cars in the city centre in favour of public transport and walking and cycling, any additional vehicles travelling into the Sydney city centre threatens the potential to meet the access requirements of the growing CBD. Additional traffic within the Sydney city centre also threatens the productivity and liveability of Australia’s Global City Centre.”

4. Urgent actions to address impacts of Rozelle Interchange

This addresses the following Term of Reference:

(l) any other related matters

4.1. Stop using surface main streets as “relief valves” for traffic congestion caused by Rozelle interchange – and deliver place and public transport improvements

The City of Sydney has major concerns that TfNSW is attempting to mitigate the traffic impacts of the failed WestConnex Rozelle Interchange by using key surface main streets as traffic “relief valves”. Most notably, these are Victoria Road and Parramatta Road – the two urban spines that the NSW Government stated were to benefit most from the traffic relief promised by WestConnex.

TfNSW is also using the traffic generated by the WestConnex Rozelle Interchange to justify amplifying traffic movements on Harris Street through Pyrmont and King Street (City) rather than delivering on NSW Government objectives for place making (Harris Street) and cycleway network (King Street, City).

4.1.1. Stop using traffic management measures that divert or encourage drivers to use Parramatta Road

TfNSW should not use traffic management measures such as signal phasing, signage and travel information to direct drivers onto Victoria Road and Parramatta Road.

For example: The variable message sign on Parramatta Road at Croydon currently advises drivers of the travel time to Broadway encouraging drivers to use Parramatta Road rather than WestConnex.

The transformation of Parramatta Road and Broadway into a green avenue for the Tech Central innovation area is a key economic strategy of government, but TfNSW has failed to take action on it.

4.1.2. Fund Broadway Green Avenue (walking and cycling improvements plus public transport priority)

The NSW Government’s *Tech Central Place based Transport Strategy* (2021) highlighted the opportunities for reallocating street space on Broadway as early as 2023, in response to WestConnex. That Transport Strategy calls for more space for public transport (such as light rail), more space for people walking and for trees, and a separated cycleway. Investigation shows that even before WestConnex Stage 3 opened, there was excess vehicle capacity along the length of Broadway, which is up to nine lanes wide.

WestConnex has predicted a 50% reduction in traffic on Broadway. To achieve this benefit, the NSW Government must reduce the traffic capacity on Parramatta Road and of Broadway. Otherwise, as some drivers divert to WestConnex and free up capacity on Broadway, the improved traffic flow and travel times will attract additional drivers to Broadway, inducing traffic. The City's long-term vision for Broadway includes light rail. The NSW Government should immediately fund and deliver footpath widening, cycleway and zero emissions buses along Broadway and Parramatta Road

4.1.3. NSW Government should fund Victoria Road walking and cycling improvements (plus bus priority)

The City supports changes to Victoria Road that make it easier to walk, use public transport and ride. Specifically, space currently used by vehicles should be reallocated to a separated cycleway, footpath widening. Bus priority must be maintained.

The Victoria Road footpath must be decluttered, flattened and improved to make walking safer and more comfortable. Inner West Council is currently developing a *Rozelle Town Centre Master Plan*, and the NSW Government should fund improvements along Victoria Road consistent with the Master Plan.

4.1.4. NSW Government should be less opaque when developing Motorway projects

TfNSW must stop developing road projects that are inconsistent with Government strategic plans.

For example, TfNSW developed the "Western Distributor Road Network Improvements" project to address perceived risks of traffic congestion associated with the WestConnex Rozelle Interchange. This included a new on-ramp at Fig Street, new Signals at Pymont Bridge Road and increased off-ramp and intersection capacity for vehicles exiting the Western Distributor at Allen Street onto Harris Street.

Information was withheld on the Western Distributor proposal from the community and place partners (Department of Planning and Infrastructure NSW). City senior staff have spent many thousands of hours collaborating on no fewer than seven strategic planning processes with TfNSW over the past three years. City staff requested full visibility of any TfNSW proposals affecting these planning processes.

4.2. Bus Priority between Iron Cove and City Centre

4.2.1. TfNSW must implement bus priority between Iron Cove into the City.

The City supports TfNSW providing bus priority between Iron Cove and the City Centre. Thousands and thousands of peoples' journeys are delayed by the poor design of the WestConnex Rozelle Interchange and the impacts it causes to the Victoria Road bus lane.

4.3. Rebuild Glebe Island Bridge as a walking and cycling connection between Rozelle to City Centre

4.3.1. The NSW Government should refurbish the Glebe Island Bridge as a walking and cycling connection

A refurbished Glebe Island bridge will provide a more direct, at-grade active transport connection between the City and the Inner West and can help address the challenges created by WestConnex Rozelle interchange for people travelling between Balmain / Rozelle and the City. The refurbished bridge will reduce the vehicle congestion caused by WestConnex and also be a crucial enabler for the redevelopment of the White Bay precinct.

This heritage listed bridge should be immediately refurbished/restored before it is allowed to deteriorate anymore.

4.4. Stop planning or funding motorways and arterial roads, reallocate funding to public transport, walking and cycling

4.4.1. The NSW Government should pause planning, funding or building new motorways and arterials in inner Sydney

The City does not support new motorway or arterial road building in inner Sydney. Evidence clearly shows that vehicle kilometres travelled are declining and TfNSW data shows public transport patronage is increasing following the COVID disruption.

With new Metro opening later this year, more people will have a high quality public transport option.

Road transport assets can be more effectively used by reallocating street space for buses and encouraging people to use public transport, bicycles or walking, rather than driving.

The NSW Government should call a halt to planning or funding any more major roads high density areas until it has addressed modal biases within its agencies.

4.4.2. NSW Government should increase funding for walking, cycling and public transport by reallocating a portion of the road traffic budget

There is little justification to invest scarce NSW capital funds on providing more traffic capacity in Sydney's Eastern Harbour City.

If the NSW Government reallocated 20% of its 5 year, \$15 Billion urban arterial and motorway budget to walking, cycling and public transport, Sydney would be a world class walkable City, with a separated bike network, vastly enhanced bus services and would be able to continue developing the Metro pipeline. These investments would unlock significant productivity, health, amenity and housing benefits.

The City's Access Strategy and Action Plan outlines how application of NSW Government transport policies and approaches, committed public transport projects, and street space reallocation can support a more vibrant, productive and cooler city centre – even while improving access to/from and within it: <https://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/strategies-action-plans/access-strategy-and-action-plan-continuing-the-vision>

4.5. Address shortcomings in NSW Government transport planning and culture

4.5.1. Adherence to NSW Government and Policy and Strategy

The NSW Government must stop funding projects that are not aligned with Government Strategy - even if they relate to the WestConnex Rozelle Interchange (for example, the Western Distributor Proposal).

The NSW Government should invest its limited infrastructure funding in agreed priorities.

4.5.2. Address Modal bias

The NSW Government must address and change the road-first culture and private car modal bias.

Well intentioned NSW Government approaches such as *Movement and Place* and the *Road User Space Allocation Policy* have not yet secured significant results in the implementation of this policies.

One potential response would be to amend the Objects of the Road Transport Act (2013) to include reference to implementing the road user space allocation hierarchy.

4.6. Stop using inappropriate and disproven *predict and provide* transport modelling

4.6.1. NSW Government must stop using inappropriate and disproven *predict and provide* transport modelling

The WestConnex Rozelle Interchange provided yet more evidence that it is no longer appropriate for TfNSW to use the *predict and provide* transport modelling process, as it is flawed and likely led to the NSW Government investing in a poorly planned and designed project.

TfNSW should use the vision and validate approach, which is NSW Government policy, outlined in its own Future Transport Strategy. This approach uses modelling or other appropriate analysis to ensure the needs of *all road users* are addressed.

The predict and provide approach supports incremental expansion of the existing road network and leads to wasteful investment in inefficient road building. The following graphic from Future Transport explains how some modelling approaches support good planning, when used within a vision and validate approach:

Planning, prioritising and performance

Outcomes shape our focus

Transport's outcomes describe the value we seek for customers, communities, the people of NSW and the people of Transport.

This outcomes-based planning approach ensures we start by thinking about the value and outcomes we want to achieve, and that we work with customers and communities to identify the best solutions. This approach is aligned to the NSW Government's Outcome Budgeting framework, which recognises the allocation of public resources should be based on outcomes for people, not the amount spent.

- establishing a baseline through data collection and analysis to understand how people and goods currently move as well as the function of a location or place
- co-designing creative solutions and validating them through robust principles, strategic merit testing, scenario modelling and data analysis
- deciding on the priorities and actions required in the short, medium and long term, and the responsibilities across the NSW Government, councils and community.

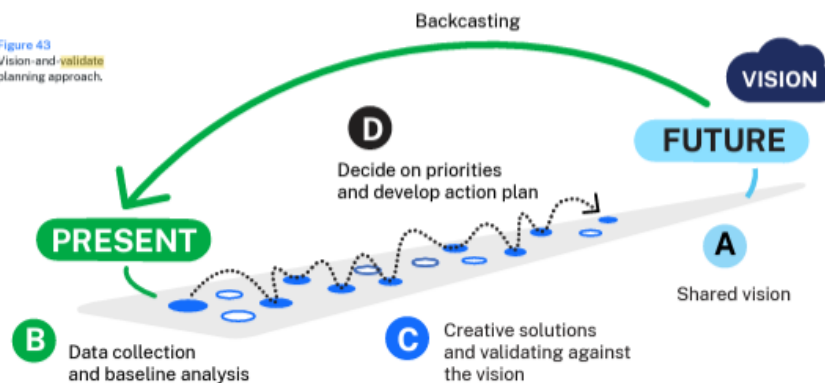
Vision-led planning and delivery

Traditional predict-and-provide planning tends to reinforce current experiences and historical trends. When looking at the future, we have instead used a vision-and-validate approach. The focus of this approach is on:

- developing a shared long-term vision and outcomes with key stakeholders for a specific location, service or network

The vision-and-validate approach recognises the need for continuous improvement and reviews. Feedback from periodic and post-implementation reviews allows for validation that expected benefits are being realised. We will also have change pathways where we consider whether initiatives need to be reviewed or reprioritised.

Figure 43
Vision-and-validate
planning approach.



Improve accountability in NSW Government Investment processes

4.6.2. Government must address the 2021 Auditor General's WestConnex Report recommendations

The Government should implement the recommendations in the Auditor General's 2021 WestConnex report. These recommend that the NSW Government enhance public transparency and investment assurance processes by requiring large complex infrastructure programs to undergo periodic review at a whole-of-program level, and specifically:

"This could take the form of reports to Parliament on the total costs and benefits on selected large and complex projects by the responsible agency, including cost to government and cost to community of funding and financing, as well as an accompanying independent assessment of the agency report"

The Minns Labor government revealed in December 2023 that motorists will be tolled a total of \$64 billion by the WestConnex motorway consortium until 2060. It is almost impossible for the community of stakeholders to understand the full implications of the project because the contractual arrangements are not transparent. The community cannot know who is responsible for what outcomes because the contracts are assurance processes are confidential.

