

**Submission
No 23**

INQUIRY INTO IMPACT OF THE ROZELLE INTERCHANGE

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Submission to the NSW Parliamentary Inquiry into the Impact of the Rozelle Interchange

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The opening of the Rozelle interchange has had a dramatic detrimental impact on upstream traffic flows along Victoria Rd which previously enjoyed a relatively steady, if slow, pace during peak hours. Now traffic is routinely backed up over the Gladesville Bridge and back into Hunters Hill, Lane Cove and Gladesville during morning and afternoon peaks. This is far more severe than happened previously.

The contributing causes include:

- a) There are now up to 10 feeding lanes of traffic from the South West (M5), West (M4), Inner West and North-West (Victoria Rd) regions of Sydney merging into four at the Anzac Bridge approach. Previously it was two lanes from Victoria Rd and two lanes from the City Westlink. The additional lanes are from the M4-M8 from Haberfield and the M5-M8 connection from Kingsgrove/Bexley or airport/Gardeners Rd/Sydenham;
- b) Victoria Rd has been reduced to one lane of car traffic from Iron Cove Bridge, where two lanes merge into one, to the Anzac Bridge approach. This is because a bus lane has been placed in the middle of three eastbound lanes to Anzac Bridge and the kerbside lane has been designated for left turn only at a number of streets where this is not required due to low traffic numbers exiting Victoria Rd onto the side-streets to access Balmain;
- c) Presumably to try to avoid traffic gridlock on the immediate entrances to the Anzac Bridge due to the excessive number of lanes merging down to just four lanes on the bridge, traffic light timing and phasing has been altered back along Victoria Rd to the Gladesville Bridge. Red light sequences have been lengthened on Victoria Rd (notable at Day St (right turn onto eastbound Victoria Rd) and Park Rd (left turn onto eastbound Victoria Rd)) and the Lyons Rd sequencing has been lengthened. This has presumably been done to “hold back” traffic from hitting the interchange downstream. All of this is causing massive queues to form over Gladesville Bridge eastbound and back into the feeding roads in Hunters Hill, Lane Cove and Gladesville.

For the above reasons motorists travelling from the Balmain/Rozelle peninsula, Drummoyne/Five Dock and coming into Sydney via Gladesville Bridge have been disproportionately impacted. It is highly unlikely that there is more traffic using the eastbound Victoria Rd route into the city now than was using it prior to the opening of the Rozelle interchange (to avoid tolls etc). With the opening of the eastbound dual lane Iron Cove tunnel traffic on Victoria Road between Iron Cove Bridge and the Anzac Bridge on the surface roads should have been improved, but this has not been the case.

It is obvious that the Rozelle interchange is with us now to stay and it has to be made to work. The state MP for Balmain, Koby Shetty, was quoted in the AFR on Dec 8 as saying “*while traffic on public roads feeding onto the Anzac Bridge was bottle-necked and slowed down by traffic flights, traffic from WestConnex’s tunnels flowed freely onto the bridge. Unless the state government looks at prioritising, or at least equalising, the [traffic] flow of those tolled tunnels, I think we’re going to continue to see problems*” (my emphasis). The solutions to this problem are fairly obvious.

The solution involves balancing the feed-in traffic from the West Connex tunnels with the Victoria Rd traffic flows. This could be done by forcing traffic to merge further back in the tunnel at various points. The overall aim should be to equalise the flows from the tunnels with the flows from Victoria Rd. This could have the effect of making traffic from the M5 and M4 consider alternate routes to head

towards the CBD or Sydney Harbour Bridge (*e.g.*, Southern Cross Drive/M5 East or Parramatta Rd) rather than using Anzac Bridge.

In addition, to specifically address the points raised above:

- a) Forcing earlier merges in the tunnels to reduce traffic flow from the West Connex tunnels onto the Anzac Bridge approach should be implemented;
- b) Move the eastbound Victoria Rd bus lane from the middle lane back to the kerbside lane as it was previously and restore two lanes of unrestricted traffic to Victoria Rd again, as it was previously. Restore two lanes for non-bus traffic at the approach to the Anzac Bridge where Victoria Rd terminates;
- c) Reset all traffic light sequencing and timings from Balmain Rd, Rozelle back to Lyons Rd, Drummoyne, to reduce the unnecessary delays and improve the traffic flow in both directions along Victoria Rd on the corridor between the Anzac and Gladesville Bridges.

Further, I do not see the need for a dedicated bus lane eastbound towards the city in the kerbside lane on the Gladesville Bridge continuing through on Victoria Rd Drummoyne to Iron Cove Bridge in the afternoon peak and suggest it be made into a Clearway between 3pm-7pm on weekdays and unrestricted on weekends.

I hope this is helpful. The important point is that the “pain” needs to be shared more equally between those using the West Connex tunnels and the residents forced to use the surface roads along the Victoria Rd corridor who have few, if any, other options.

Yours sincerely,

Dale Bailey