**WestCON Community Action Groups**

**Submission to WestConnex Delivery Authority**

**Stage 1-M4 East- Concord to Haberfield**

**The road tunnels to nowhere**

**17 February 2014**

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**WestCON Community Action Groups**

**SUBMISSION TO WESTCONNEX DELIVERY AUTHORITY**

**Who are We?**

Westcon Community Action Groupswas initially formed in December 2013 by a group of Ashfield residents concerned about the impact on local communities of the proposed WestConnex motorway. It has since grown to an organisation of more than 500 concerned residents, business owners and operators in Summer Hill, Ashfield, Haberfield, Concord, Strathfield, Homebush and Leichhardt. It has close links with the WestCon Action Group in Concord and Strathfield, the Save Ashfield Park Group, the Haberfield Association and NOW Public Transport.

WestCON Community Action Groups reject the WestConnex motorway in its current form and calls on the State Government to halt the Scheme in order to develop and consider cost effective and sustainable solutions to the traffic and development problems identified by the NSW government

We consider that the consultation process has been flawed and lacking in transparency due to failure to share key documents and information with the community and Councils.

We call for WestConnex to release detailed information on the scheme, extend the period of community consultation and to sponsor community forums to explore sustainable alternatives to the Concept Plan.

**These are our Demands**

* Hands off our homes and businesses
* Leave the heritage Ashfield Park alone
* Leave the heritage listed Yasmar Reserve estate alone
* Hands off Reg Coady Reserve and Ismay Park
* Implement sustainable, effective transport and freight solutions for the Sydney Region not a $11.5B+ road to a car park
* Develop public transport not a private toll-way
* Release the detailed business case
* Release the detailed concept plans and maps
* Extend submission date to six weeks after the full business case and detailed concept plans have been released
* All submissions to be publicly available via the WestConnex Delivery Authority website
* Community forums to explore viable sustainable alternative solutions to the current concept plan
* Just compensation for residents whose homes will be acquired and those directly affected by the scheme
* Government support and assistance for affected individuals and communities

**Background**

The WestConnex Delivery Authority (WDA) has been established as a public subsidiary corporation of Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) As the project has significant environmental impacts, an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will need to be prepared pursuant to the Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979. The proposal is considered to be ‘State Significant Infrastructure’ under Part 5.1 of the EP&A Act and requires the approval of the Minister for Planning & Infrastructure.

The WestConnex proposal involves the construction of a 33km motorway in 3 stages linking western Sydney with the south-west via the city, airport and port areas. This is Australia’s largest road transport project and the cost has been estimated at $11-11.5 billion in 2012 dollars. Funding of $3.3 billion has been committed from the current State and Federal Governments towards the first stage of the project – the M4 widening and M4 East tunnel.

WestConnex is expected to take around 10 years to deliver the project in 3 stages. The M4 Widening will open to traffic in 2017 and the M4 East (Homebush Bay Drive to Parramatta Road and City West Link Road) is planned to follow in 2019. Stages 2 and 3 are planned to open around 2020 and 2023, respectively. Tolling will be applied to each section of the motorway to finance the next section.

**Origins of WestConnex and the Lack of Alternatives**

WestConnex was the signature project that came out of Infrastructure NSW. This body was chaired by Nick Greiner who said:

“We want to provide an objective judgment to government on projects.”[[1]](#footnote-1)

The Board of Infrastructure NSW was appointed by the government. In our opinion, the board was not representative of the broader community and possibly lacked objectivity. For example, Max Moore-Wilton (Chairman of Macquarie Airports) was a board member. Since its first Master Plan in 2004, Macquarie Airports has been calling for better connections between the M4 and Sydney Airport. WestConnex achieves this objective and Macquarie Airports stand to profit significantly should this taxpayer funded motorway go ahead. It should be noted that another board member Les Wielinga, resigned from Infrastructure NSW due to a conflict of interest over WestConnex, as this project was not consistent with Transport for NSW’s strategies.

The 125 page WestConnex Strategic Environmental Review devotes half a page to alternatives to WestConnex. It states:

“As indicated in Chapter 2, WestConnex has been developed as a key transport component of the LTTMP [Long Term Transport Master Plan] integrated with the strategic land use outcomes as identified in the Draft Metropolitan Strategy.”[[2]](#footnote-2)

WestConnex did not appear in any Metropolitan Strategy documents until late 2012/early 2013. It is not a well-considered project. There has been inadequate discussion on any alternatives which we think would be prudent given that this is the biggest infrastructure project in Australia’s history.

Infrastructure Australia has WestConnex listed as an Early Stage Project. They provide the following explanation of Early Stage Projects:

“Initiatives in this category address a nationally significant issue or problem, but the identification or development of the right solution is at an early stage.”[[3]](#footnote-3)

Infrastructure Australia is not satisfied that this is the right solution - yet we have residents being issued with resumption letters. It is interesting to note that Infrastructure Australia has WestConnex as a proposal in its ‘National freight network’ category – not (as one would have expected from the WestConnex literature), in the ‘Transforming our cities’ category.

The WestConnex scheme plans to reshape Sydney over the next two decades with 25,000 residences to be created along Parramatta Road[[4]](#footnote-4). Activation of the WestConnex Trojan Horse will free up a Western corridor from the City to Parramatta to fast tracked high rise and commercial development largely exempt from any planning controls. Local residents and businesses will be powerless to shape this bonanza for developers and construction companies and to protect their homes, heritage and community.

Clearly there is a pressing need to address the traffic congestion issues between Concord and the City and to rejuvenate the decaying infrastructure along this section of Parramatta Road however the proposed M4 East tunnel is a very expensive non solution to these issues.

There are many alternatives worthy of consideration before committing to spending $15b of taxpayers money on a road to nowhere. These include:

* Demand pricing of the road network
* Improved public transport
* Encouraging local employment to reduce the need for long commutes
* Investing in social housing in areas of high job demand
* Implementing metropolitan wide parking policies
* Abolishing fringe benefits on company cars

**WestConnex will not alleviate traffic congestion and reduce travel times**

WestConnex does not go to the City. It does not go to Port Botany which is a further 8 kilometres away. It will eventually however, go to the airport. In a recent opinion piece in The Conversation, Chris Standen a Phd candidate at Sydney University, summed up the issue:

“A glance at the WestConnex business case reveals that some A$18 billion of the claimed economic benefit is merely the value of expected “travel time savings” and “travel time reliability”. This is basically the amount of money that a team of economists (paid by the NSW government) has decided motorists would hypothetically be willing to pay for shorter and more reliable travel times. The actual calculations and underlying assumptions have not been made public.

But, except in the case of freight and business travel, there is unlikely to be any reduction in average travel times; and even if there were, this would not result in any real income or cost savings for the economy.

For more than a century the average time humans spend travelling each day has been a constant 60-80 minutes. Whenever we’ve been provided with faster transport options, we’ve simply opted to live further from work and travel longer distances, but keep our daily travel times the same.

This is why no previous motorway project, in Sydney, Melbourne, or any other city in the world, has ever succeeded in reducing average daily travel times. Rather, they have resulted in longer average travel distances, more traffic, more sprawl and therefore increased transportation costs. There is no reason to believe that WestConnex or East-West Link will be any different.”[[5]](#footnote-5)

**Lack of transparency**

Traffic studies and modelling that underpin the project have not been released to allow independent assessment of the assumptions. The traffic projections for recent projects (Sydney’s Cross City Tunnel & Brisbane’s Clem7 motorway) grossly overestimated actual traffic flows. This has resulted in tax-payer funded bailouts.

WestConnex has held only 7 community information sessions in December and February ( the last on !2/02/2014; only 3 working days prior to the close of public submissions on 17/02/2014). Residents have left these consultations very dissatisfied with the lack of detail and specificity in the information provided by WestConnex. particularly concerning the location of portals and ventilation stacks.

The proposal has been presented as the only option. No alternatives have been provided.

According to John Betts, WestConnex is meeting regularly with the road building industry working up the proposal. The community has not been provided with any information on who WestConnex is meeting with, what has been discussed and what has been decided. This is in contrast to the community information sessions which have been held in public.

The failure to release the detailed business case is another example of lack of transparency. The Member for Strathfield has said that he has seen the business case. This would suggest that it is not a ‘Cabinet-in-Confidence’ document. Why can’t it be shared with the community? A 52 page glossy brochure does not make a business case .

**WestConnex being used as a justification for unfettered development**

WestConnex is being promoted as a ‘City shaper’. It proposes to build 25,000 units along the Parramatta corridor. It argues that WestConnex is needed to free up traffic congestion on Parramatta Rd to allow for ‘activation’ of the corridor. We question the need for a motorway before you can activate a corridor. The stretch of Parramatta Rd between Parramatta and Concord has had a motorway next to it for more than 20 years. There has been little evidence of ‘activation’ on this section of Parramatta Rd. Ashfield Council has an enterprise zone along Parramatta Rd. This zone is experiencing activation without the need for a private tollway.

**Impacts of the WestConnex Scheme Stage 1 Concord to Haberfield**

The proposed Stage1 M4 East component of the WestConnex project will have major environmental, social and economic impacts on the Inner West particularly in the Canada Bay, Strathfield, Ashfield, Leichhardt and Marrickville LGA's

The Stage 1 concept plans proposes 4 pairs of tunnel portals, 2 in the Ashfield LGA (one adjacent to Ashfield Park/Yasmar Reserve on Parramatta Road and the other near Reg Coady Reserve adjacent to Dobroyd Parade/ City West Link Road) and two in the Concord area. Three ventilation stacks have been mooted. However the WestConnex Development Authority (WDA) has refused to specify where they are to be located. The Parramatta Road portals will accommodate two lanes of traffic into and out of the tunnel and on the City West link Road one lane in and out.

The tunnel entry and exit portals and associated slipways and ventilation stacks will require acquisition and demolition of at least 100 properties in Concord and in Parramatta Rd, Chandos St, Bland St, Wattle St and Ramsay Road in the Ashfield LGA. All of the south side of Wattle St is to be resumed for a 'cut and cover' construction for two tunnel portals at Ramsay Rd. Details have not been released to affected communities or to the local Councils.

**Community impacts**

With the announced acquisition of properties and businesses there are extensive community concerns over the uncertainty about property acquisitions, the acquisition process, the potential need to relocate elsewhere and the associated costs arising from this process. Many property owners near the proposed portal openings and slip lanes (who have not received property acquisition letters from the state government) are concerned that they may receive no compensation and will have to live with major impacts arising from the proposal such as noise, dust, vibration, poor air quality and reduced amenity.

In Concord, Ashfield and Haberfield, long established local communities are to be displaced. Insufficient compensation is being offered for these residents to be able to buy back into the area with ‘like-for-like’ housing. Consideration must be given to the high number of residents that will be in the market for a small volume of housing in their local area. Therefore, they will be competing against each other for limited housing, forcing prices higher. This will force established residents with strong community links out of the area. This includes families with children in local schools. There is a strong concern that the acquisitions for the project will enable developers to target remaining house owners with a view to building multi-story apartments. State planning laws provide little or no protection against this eventuality. It is unacceptable to residents who were once living in quiet back streets who now find themselves suddenly adjacent to the ramp/portal of a major arterial road.

***Compensation must be offered to residents directly impacted by the road/tunnel works, not just those in the immediate path.***

**Traffic Impacts**

Given the current situation at the end of the M4 is it reasonable to assume that at the conclusion of the Stage 1 works traffic volumes in the Ashfield and Leichhardt LGA's are likely to rise substantially as the M4 ‘traffic dump’ will have shifted 5 kilometres further east. The proposal delivers traffic bound for the CBD to current choke points at the start of City West Link and on Parramatta Rd. It is likely that traffic will become congested in the tunnel at the exit ramps to City West Link and Parramatta Rd. This will result in elevated levels of pollution in and around the tunnel, while discouraging motorists from using the tunnel. Having the portals in Concord and Ashfield will attract more through traffic to these areas both to and from the tunnel. Consequently, there is likely to be greater surface road impacts throughout Ashfield Canada Bay and Leichhardt LGA’s as they become new ‘tunnel access’ destinations.

Whilst long term improvements in traffic impacts are touted, these are predicated on the next 2 stages of the scheme going ahead. There is no certainty that these subsequent stages of the project will proceed as they are dependent on future private sector funding. In any event Ashfield and Concord will be significantly impacted by additional traffic until at least 2023. In the short to medium term, conditions will get much worse before there is any potential relief.

Residents question the rationale for the interchange at Concord given the proximity of the interchange at Centenary Drive/Homebush Bay Drive. If the intent is to direct traffic from the western suburbs into the tunnel and off Parramatta Rd, then traffic at Concord/Strathfield should be considered as local traffic and remain on current surface roads.

The interchange at Concord is considered to be a poor design with long access roads and ramps carving through small residential streets at the cost of demolishing homes. Less destructive design options exist. There are many disused commercial properties and other vacant lands in the vicinity of the Concord connections that should be taken into consideration in alternative designs.

**Community Connections**

In the Haberfield and Ashfield areas local connectivity will be severely compromised by the proposal and this increased severance will have a significant social impact on the local community both in the short and medium term through temporary and permanent changes to pedestrian, cycle and vehicular access. The proposal will significantly impact on the whole wedge of Haberfield bounded by Parramatta Road, Wattle St/Dobroyd Parade, Dalhousie St/Boomerang St and Mortley St, both during construction and beyond, with the required interim and permanent road changes.

In the Concord area, the proposed ramps act to isolate the community around Ada St from their local schools, shops and parks. Residents on Daly Ave & Franklyn St will have their streets ‘fractured’ by the portals and ramps with significant loss of community and connection.

Local businesses will be significantly disrupted during the proposed construction phase and through permanent changes arising from road closures and changed access arrangements in the vicinity of the motorway corridor.

**Health Impacts**

There are significant physical and mental health implications associated with major roadways.  These include:

* Air pollution – Particulate matter (PM10) and ultrafine particulate matter (PM2.5 and PM1) are known to have significant impacts on physical health (respiratory and cardiovascular health)
* Additional traffic noise – implications for both physical and mental health due to stress and loss of sleep
* Building and Construction noise possibly 24 hours a day for several years
* Loss of open space – green space is crucial to human health; loss of parkland will mean that there is less space for both passive and active recreation
* Community severance and dislocation – this has implications for all community members, but particularly vulnerable groups (children, the aged, and people living with a disability)
* Increased danger from traffic – implications for the community’s health particularly for vulnerable groups
* Reduced neighbourhood amenity mental and health implications

***A comprehensive independent health impact assessment must be undertaken as part of the EIS.***

**Air quality Impacts**

The proposal has generated major air quality concerns particularly for residents, schools and local businesses that will be in the immediate vicinity of the tunnel ventilation stacks and exit portals. [[6]](#footnote-6) WE understand that the current proposal is that they will all discharge unfiltered tunnel emissions. Of particular concern are the areas within 100-200 metres of the tunnel portals[[7]](#footnote-7) and 500 metres of the tunnel stacks where previous studies have shown adverse health concentration of noxious gases and particulates from vehicle exhaust emissions. The local impacts are influenced by prevailing winds, surrounding buildings which may promote or inhibit air flow, as well as local geographic features such as the local valley in which Parramatta Road sits in Ashfield/Haberfield.

Informed residents, drawing on past government reports on the M5 East and the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) report on tunnel air quality and emissions[[8]](#footnote-8) have sought information from WestConnex on how tunnel and portal emissions will be dealt with. The answers have been vague and unsatisfactory.

Whilst we appreciate that emissions **may** lessen if there is less traffic in some sections of Parramatta Road with fewer cars, the increased overall traffic from the expanded M4, will increase local pollution at the Concord Road, Wattle Street and Parramatta Road Exits in Haberfield, from portals, as well as at the proposed Exhaust Stacks in Concord/Homebush and Ashfield/Haberfield. Further Ashfield and Haberfield will be subjected to increased congestion from the exits for several years until the next stages are constructed and for which there is no confirmed budget strategy to fund construction. The resultant local pollution increases are of particular concern, especially the impact of ultrafine particulate matter (PM 2.5 and PM 1)) from exhaust emission, which impacts on cardiovascular and respiratory health. The impact would increase from the current levels as more trucks are funnelled through the tunnels, than currently use Parramatta Road.

The impact on local school children, as well as infants, the elderly and other residents would be significant, particularly those with asthma or pre existing health conditions.

(Haberfield Public School, is located directly behind Yasmar Reserve, which has been identified as the likely site for the East Bound exit portal on Parramatta Rd. The exhaust stacks will be in close proximity to the exit portals. The exhaust stacks have been identified as being on Yasmar Reserve and/or the Brescia site on the corner of Bland and Parramatta Rd. The Dobroyd Point Public School is close to the proposed portals and exhaust stacks at Ramsay Rd and Dobroyd Parade. St Joan of Arc Primary School sits in between both sets of proposed portals and ventilation stacks)

Whilst there have been improvements of Particulate Matter (PM 10) exhaust filtration, if properly fitted in modern diesel engines, many of the local truck fleet remain on the road with unfiltered exhausts. Regulatory and monitoring practices of heavy vehicle exhaust compliance require considerable improvement if there is to be any public confidence in this factor resolving concerns about exhaust emission impacts on health. In addition, the full impact of the smaller ultrafine particulate matter (PM 2.5 and PM1) is only beginning to be understood. The small size of such particles allows much greater penetration into the lungs, where damage can ensue, even if it takes a long time to manifest, as for example in the case of asbestos exposure. There needs to be broader investigation into safe exposure limits of ultrafine particulate matter (PM 2.5 & PM 1.0) and how these can be continually monitored. The NHMRC report cited above has highlighted that whilst these standards are yet to be determined, a very cautious approach to exposure should be taken prior to any levels of safe exposure are determined.

***Monitoring must be performed in the immediate vicinity of all proposed portals and exhaust stacks, including on/off ramps at Homebush, Concord, Haberfield and Ashfield. Air quality monitoring, carried out by an independent organisation, must be performed before, during and after the proposed construction. Monitored data must be made available to the community on the internet in real time. Data must be instantaneous, not averaged. The maximum pollution levels must be reported for each preceding 24 hour period (not just averaged data)***.

**Noise and Vibration Impacts**

Noise and vibration arising from construction and following completion of the tunnel will create significant impacts on adjoining and nearby properties in the vicinity of tunnel portals, construction depots and along the spoil haulage routes. Tunnelling is expected to continue around the clock. There will be increased traffic noise around tunnel portals and major construction depot sites and vibration impacts on nearby buildings and other structures in proximity to the tunnel construction works. Some construction activities are proposed to take place at night.

Detailed technical reports are needed to assess noise and vibration impacts as part of preparation of the EIS. This would entail defining ‘sensitive receivers’ along the route such as residential , commercial and heritage properties, schools, aged care facilities, hospitals, and parks.

***Traffic survey counts are needed around proposed portal locations, and background noise data recording of ‘sensitive’ locations along the corridor to establish baseline data and predicted noise levels.***

**Construction Fatigue**

There will be also be noise impacts, both during construction and afterwards. The impact on the work productivity, quite apart from the lives of residents near to this project will be profound, but this does not appear to be considered as an economic cost, quite apart from a social or health impact.

The project has already caused considerable disquiet and anxiety amongst residents who face property resumption and also amongst those who will live next a construction zone for some years, to be followed by the subsequent impacts of reduced air quality and noise. This is coupled with loss of valuable parkland and open space, with both resumption of public lands dedicated for public recreation (such as Ashfield Park), but also alienation from other parks to enable construction zones. This is at a time when parks and recreation areas would have perhaps provided respite from the construction.

***A comprehensive health impact assessment must be undertaken as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment of this proposal. This study should be conducted by independent experts and address air quality issues, effects of ultrafine particulate matter, noise impacts, cardio-respiratory impacts and psychological impacts both during proposed construction, interim periods between proposed stages and the final outcome.***

**Heritage Impacts**

The proposed tunnel and eastern portals pass through and impact upon some of the most sensitive and significant areas of heritage significance in the Ashfield LGA – Ashfield Park, Haberfield and the state significant property Yasmar.[[9]](#footnote-9)

**Ashfield Park**

Ashfield Park, heritage listed in 1986, is the principal area of public open space in the LGA.  It is also serves as an important link to Haberfield to the north, including for pedestrians crossing at Parramatta Road. The park has high levels of use for both passive and active recreation purposes.  A 20 metre wide strip of land (4% of the total park area) will be taken from the frontage of Ashfield park along Parramatta Road to construct a two lane entry portal, slip lane and ramp In addition, the scheme is likely to require road closures at the park’s two main connecting roads to Parramatta Road – Ormond Street and Orpington Street, significantly restricting access to and isolating the park. There has been no consideration of the heritage impact of the proposal on this historic park, its setting and whether the impacts of the proposal on the Park can be ameliorated.

**Yasmar Reserve**

The Yasmar site on Parramatta Rd is an important state heritage listed site. The southern part of the Yasmar site will be affected by ‘cut and cover’ land excavations required for the exit ramp and eastbound tunnel portal opening. This part of the site contains 1800s historic gates and side stone posts, significant tree plantings and part of the ‘sunken garden’ – a major remaining historic element of the site. The proposed works will require the removal of a number of significant mature trees which are a feature of the frontage of this site. There is no supporting information which examines the heritage impact of the proposal, whether or not such works can be justified without compromising the heritage significance of the site or how the historic fixtures will be conserved.

**Loss or degradation of public and green spaces**

The Ashfield LGA is one of the most densely populated in the Sydney metropolitan area and has a disproportionately low level of public open space by comparison. In this context the loss of any existing open space, through the proposed project, is of great concern and unacceptable to the community. Part of Reg Coady Reserve will be acquired for the construction of the tunnel portal exit and slip lane to the City West Link Road. A major concern is the potential loss of connectivity across the City West Link Road through road closures and widening of the current road corridor to the major recreation areas of the timbrel Reserve and the Bay Run.

Connectivity is also likely to be severely compromised between Haberfield and Ashfield in the vicinity of Ashfield Park. The north/south link from Dalhousie Street across Parramatta Road is an important one and with the proposed entry portal in this location it is unlikely that the signal controlled pedestrian access can be maintained in its current configuration.

**Urban Design and Visual Amenity**

The portals and their ‘land cuttings’ for the associated entry and exit laneways will create poor visual settings, for adjacent residential areas in Concord and Ashfield. Vehicles using entry and exit laneways will create high levels of noise for adjoining properties, and nearby residences.

Detail is urgently needed on-

* the design and visual impact of any noise screening walls and other structures to ensure they will be effective in mitigating noise impacts for adjoining properties
* treatment of residual areas which are part of the portal/roadway works
* landscaping treatments around the portal sites and entry/exit laneways.
* treatment of visually exposed parts of the portal/slip lanes such as side walls

**Impact of Construction Activity**

Temporary construction depots will be required along the length of the tunnel corridor to accommodate construction activities including the storage of equipment, removal of spoil material, parking for construction workers. Concord Oval and Reg Coady Reserve have been identified for this purpose. This could mean significantly reduced public access to these parks for many years.

Tunnel construction traffic in Ashfield and Concord will be a constant during a large period of this project. Assuming the method of construction is the same as has been used in other Sydney road tunnel projects (i.e. road headers), the end result will see the major roads along the motorway corridor used as the conduit for this construction generated traffic.

**IN Summary we have outlined a number of issues that to date, have not been given adequate public address in the flawed WestConnex proposal .** This hasty process gives little confidence that the public is adequately informed on proposals or has capacity to shape the outcomes in a just and equitable manner..

**The following information is required for informed public discussion and consultation to occur:**

**1 A release of the full business case of the proposal , with detailed mapping showing all of the below mentioned points prior to any further progression of this project** :

* Allotments affected by the project;
* Location and footprint of tunnel portals;
* Location and footprint of ventilation stacks;
* Surface road re-alignments and new road construction; and,
* Location of construction compounds and batching plants
* Confirmation and publication of the true amount of frontage proposed to be lost from Ashfield Park, Yasmar Reserve, Reg Coady Reserve and any other parks. There also needs to be a proposal on how this loss of public amenity will be redressed and what other parks will be developed to remedy this loss to the public
* The completion of a cost-benefit analysis of the long term operation of original planned route (long tunnel option) to the ANZAC Bridge versus the shortened M4 East (short tunnel option) exiting onto the City West Link **. The question that requires an answer is, if the long tunnel option was deemed not cost effective, how has the short tunnel option become cost effective? The RMS has a poor track record with business case projections and proposals**

**3. Genuine community consultation is required with residents and business owners about the proposed route and its design**.

**4** That the results of the market research groups mentioned at 2.3 of the SSI Application Report **be released to the public.**

**5** **The public release of the results of the full traffic study inclusive of current traffic numbers and projected modelling numbers.**

**6**. **An independent comprehensive Health Impact Assessment must be undertaken as part of the EIS , and include**:

* A comprehensive air quality study which includes the current baseline situation and the impact of increased vehicle numbers and predicted emissions from the tunnel portals and ventilation stacks **.**
* A full noise study which includes current traffic numbers and modelling on projected traffic numbers**.**
* A full noise and vibration completed prior to commencement of construction**.**
* **The traffic, noise and air quality studies should be immediately undertaken.**

**7 In terms of any project management and construction processes:**

* Noise and vibration levels must not exceed EPA guidelines.
* Maximum project noise abatement measures must be in place prior to construction commencing.
* Maximum noise abatement / screening measures must be installed prior to the completion of the project.
* Maximum dust abatement / screening measures must be used throughout the construction period.
* The Environmental Management Plan for construction of the project and management of associated dust and noise to be completed and **publically available.**
* Operational periods during construction must be limited to reasonable hours of 0600 to 2200 at an absolute maximum.
* No construction, related traffic movements, asphalt batching or activities associated with construction are to occur between 2200 and 0600.
* A commitment to ongoing monitoring of air quality both during and post-construction to ensure compliance with regulatory requirements – **these results MUST be released and available to the public in real time on the internet**

**8. Proposed changes to local Traffic flow and rearrangements public transport routes need public consultation prior to any implementation including**:

* Detailed mapping showing proposed road closures and detours (pedestrian and vehicular) both during and post-construction
* Information on proposed re-routing of 461,438, 439 and 406 bus routes
* A full pedestrian traffic study of Ashfield Park and the Dalhousie Street pedestrian crossings to be completed
* Details of how pedestrian access will be maintained at both Ashfield Park and Reg Coady Reserve both during and post-construction
* That an independent consultant review public safety issues

**9 Post Construction, the following monitoring information must be continuously publically available.**

* Confirmation that the tunnel will be fitted with carbon monoxide monitors; air visibility monitors and air velocity monitors as per the Sydney Harbour Tunnel.
* Confirmation that ambient (outdoor) air quality monitors as per the M5 East tunnel
* Confirmation that this project will follow recent road tunnel construction in being designed to avoid portal emissions
* Maximum filtration measures MUST be installed prior to operation.

**10** **In terms of residents directly affected or touched by this project**:

* Full, appropriate, fair and just compensation for affected property owners – inclusive of the difference between the value of the property prior to the announcement of this project and the PERCEIVED value post-announcement, and any costs associated with buying / selling (such as stamp duty, commissions, fees, etc;
* Detail on any proposed ‘architectural improvements’ (or ‘cubing’) that will be offered to affected residents whose properties are not resumed but will be severely affected.

**Appendix 1**

**Community Concerns and Questions**

**More than 400 people attended a public meeting held at Ashfield Town Hall on 16 December, 2013. Issues raised by residents included:**

* Lack of information from WestConnex upon which to make informed submissions
* Maps not detailed enough – don’t show all portals, access and egress ramps, stack locations, road closures or road realignments
* No consolidated information on impact on properties
* Impact on residents during extended construction phase
* Absence of traffic modelling leaving community in the dark about possible impacts
* Where is the Cost Benefit Analysis? When will it be made available to the community
* What steps are being taken to mitigate the loss of amenity
* Compensation for affected property owners
* General disbelief that more roads will meet Sydney’s transport needs
* Support for greater spending on public transport
* Questioning the need for the WestConnex project
* The need for WestConnex has not been proven by traffic modelling
* Potential for WestConnex to become underground car park
* Questioned accuracy of predicted travel times on the motorway
* Fast tracking Badgerys Creek might be an alternative to improved road links to the current airport
* WestConnex designed for the owners of the airport and property developers – not the community
* Time savings outlined by the project are the same as current travel times to the airport by rail
* Is this the only plan being taken to the Environmental Impact Assessment?
* Lack of bicycle lanes in the proposal
* Where is the community infrastructure (schools, parks, public transport) to support the additional 25,000 dwellings along Parramatta Rd
* Amenity of Ashfield will be worsened through additional traffic on local roads
* Haberfield alienated from Ashfield Park and Ashfield
* Lack of consideration of heritage items in Ashfield compared to Burwood, Strathfield and Leichhardt
* Location of Ventilation stacks
* Any impact on Ashfield Park was considered unacceptable
* Impact of air quality on people with existing respiratory conditions and students at local schools
* Health assessment required
* Non-filtration of ventilation stacks
* Ongoing uncertainty of property owners
* Lack of compensation for property owners not subject to acquisition

1. NAB, Corporate Finance Insights, September 2012 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. WestConnex, Strategic Environmental Review, September 2013 page 27 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Infrastructure Australia, National Infrastructure Plan, June 2013 page 101 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. WestConnex (2013) Business Case Executive Summary [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Chris Standen, Big road projects don’t really save time or boost productivity, The Conversation, 24 January 2014 [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. http://westconactiongroup.weebly.com/maps.html (viewed 14/02/2014) [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Oettl D, Sturm P and Almbauer R (2005). Evaluation of GRAL for the pollutant dispersion from a city street tunnel portal at depressed level. Environmental Modelling & Software 20:499–504. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Ian Longley and Francesca Kelly (2007) ,Systematic Literature Review to Address Air Quality in and around Traffic Tunnels, Commonwealth of Australia, as represented by the National Health and Medical

   Research Council, With funding from the Department of Health and Ageing [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. See submission Crowe, V Heritage and Green Space Working Group, WestCON Community Action Groups, 2014 [↑](#footnote-ref-9)