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**Locked Bag 928**

**North Sydney NSW 2059**

**COMMUNITY FEEDBACK**

**WESTCONNEX STAGE 1 - M4 EAST TUNNEL**

**I, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

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**Contact: Ph: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

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**Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Dated:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**As a concerned resident of the Inner West, I reject the WestConnex M4 East Stage 1 development in its current form. I urge the proponents of this project to consider my objections and recommendations as detailed below.**

1. **DOES NOT CONNECT THE WESTERN SUBURBS TO THE CBD**

1.1 The proposal delivers traffic bound for the CBD to a choke point at the start of City West Link. Therefore, there is no value proposition for city bound traffic, and therefore the proposed tunnel will be ineffective in removing vehicles from Parramatta Rd. In addition, 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.

1. **TOO HIGH A COST TO LOCAL INNER WEST COMMUNITIES**
   1. Long established local communities with strong connections to the area are being 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 will include families with children in local schools. This is grossly unfair and places an unacceptably high burden on these residents.
   2. In the Concord area, the proposed ramps act to isolate the community around Ada St from their local schools/shops/parks etc. Residents on Daly Ave & Franklyn St will have their streets ‘fractured’ by the portals and significant loss of community and connection.

2.3 Unacceptable loss of land area and trees from Heritage Listed Ashfield Park. This park has strong historical significance. In addition, it has been mooted that the park will be used as a construction staging point. This will result in unacceptable loss of amenity and disruption to the local community. This includes dust and noise as well as disruption in local streets by trucks and machinery.

2.4 It has been mooted that Concord Oval will be used as a construction staging point. This will result in unacceptable loss of a public amenity and disruption to the local community. This includes dust and noise as well as disruption in local streets by trucks and machinery.

2.5 Compensation must be offered to residents directly impacted by the road/tunnel works, not just those in the immediate path. It is unacceptable for residents who were once living in quiet back streets find themselves suddenly adjacent to the ramp/portal of a major arterial road.

2.6 Property value guarantees must be offered to all residents impacted by this project.

2.7 I have real concerns that this project will undermine and weaken the local community, allowing developers to target remaining house owners with a view to building multi-story apartments. This is of particular concern given the changes to planning laws currently before the State Parliament that would marginalise local communities from the decision making process.

1. **FLAWED COMMUNITY CONSULATION PROCESS**

I feel the consultation process has been flawed for the following reasons:

3.1 During the consultation period, I have become aware that WestConnex is engaged in efforts to secure the properties of my neighbours for this project. This, by its nature, is a secretive process that undermines and fragments my community. It diminishes the purported ‘good will’ of the consultation process. In addition to this activity, I am constantly reminded in the media by both the State and Federal governments that this project is a priority and must be ‘fast tracked’. This further undermines my faith in the true value of this ‘consultation’.

3.2 The WestConnex ‘displays’ at various locations in December and February have been more about presenting a fixed design rather than receiving community feedback. For example, there has been no obvious formal feedback document/process at these presentations, only random hand written notes on blank pieces of paper.

3.3 Often questions are met with a comment such as “we will take that on board”, or “we will get back to you”. However, there is no follow-up. The consultation should be a ‘dialogue’ where the community increases its understanding and knowledge of the design. Without this dialogue, the community is only engaged on a very superficial level.

3.4 It seems that the Stage 1 proposal relies inherently on completion of Stage 2 and Stage 3 to be effective. However, details for Stages 2 & 3 are almost completely absent. This is disingenuous to the community of the Inner West as it delays community engagement with the Stage 2 & 3 areas until after the start of Stage 1. As a result, I feel that the wider community sentiment (i.e. areas affected by Stage 2 & Stage 3) is being supressed. Regardless of whether this is a deliberate strategy, or otherwise, it acts to undermine the ‘good faith’ of the consultation process.

3.5 Community Consultation occurred over Christmas/New Year Holiday Period. This undermines community engagement. An extension to the Feb. 17th deadline was requested by the community but was rejected by WestConnex and government. This further calls into question the commitment of WestConnex and the government to community engagement.

1. **CONCERNS OVER AIR QUALITY AT PORTALS AND EXHAUST STACKS**

4.1 I do not accept any reduction in air quality in the vicinity of the tunnel portals and exhaust stacks. This means no emissions from portals.

4.2 Independent air quality monitoring (world best practice) must be performed before, during and after the proposed construction. This monitoring must be performed by an independent organisation. 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).

4.3 The above-mentioned monitoring must be performed in the immediate vicinity of all portals and exhaust stacks, including on/off ramps at Homebush, Concord, Haberfield and Ashfield.

4.4 An independent monitoring regulator must be appointed. They must be independently audited every 6 months as a minimum. Audit reports must be released to the public.

4.5 I have real concerns over the proximity of exhaust stacks to schools (Haberfield School) and residential areas (i.e. around Ismay Park, Bland St etc.).

1. **FLAWED DESIGN FOR CONCORD CONNECTIONS**

5.1 The current concept design is ill conceived. I question why the concept design for the Concord connections which shows **exposed surface roads carving through small residential streets at cost of demolishing homes, destroying lives, and annihilating a well-established community**. **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. It is in the public interest that a design that minimises the destructive impact of the project to the Concord community is properly developed.

5.2 I question the justification 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.

1. **NOISE POLLUTION**

6.1 I do not accept any increase in noise pollution.

6.2 Noise levels must be monitored before, during and after construction of the proposed development.

6.3 Noise abatement must be addressed at the source, and must not rely on alterations to adjacent property/amenity.

1. **VISUAL POLLUTION**

7.1 I do not accept any increase in visual pollution. In particular, WestConnex has indicated that the off ramp connecting to the M4 at Concord will be above ground surface level. This is not acceptable and the off ramp must be removed from the design.

1. **BUSINESS CASE**

8.1 The business case supporting the project must be released to the community. I am concerned that traffic projections for recent projects (Sydney’s Cross City Tunnel & Brisbane’s Clem7 motorway) have grossly over estimated actual traffic flows. This has resulted in tax-payer funded bailouts.

8.2 WestConnex does not have any traffic studies supporting the business case. I cannot accept a proposal of this size and impact to the community without supporting traffic studies.