

Response to Submissions Report – New M5

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City of Sydney's response to the submissions report on the New M5





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Executive Summary

The Response to Submissions Report produced by AECOM for the Roads and Maritime Services on the New M5 project is disappointing.

Despite a lengthy response to the City's submission (over 100 pages), **the Submissions Report generally fails to either respond to the actual issues raised in the City's submission or to provide any evidence to support the responder's position.**

This lack of response to the issue or lack of evidence may be due to the fact that the Response to Submissions Report was delivered within five weeks of the exhibition closing date. This is an extraordinarily fast turnaround to respond to 12,866 submissions on the project.

The City's three core issues with the WestConnex project remain as follows:

- There is no demonstrated strategic need for the project or evidence to support it;
- The project (and broader WestConnex program) does not support the Government's own land use objectives; and
- There are significant governance and probity concerns with the project.

More specific issues include the Campbell Street elevated walk and cycle path, the Campbell Road extension to Gardeners Road, assessment of strategic alternatives, impacts on Sydney Park, air quality and noise, and the impacts on urban renewal sites.

The Campbell Street elevated path is not an appropriate infrastructure solution, and is not supported by the City. The submissions report has failed to address the safety concerns about the continuous length of the bridge, how emergency or maintenance crews would access the bridge, whether the south side of Campbell Street is the most appropriate connection, and the potential conflict between user groups (such as recreational riders or walkers and commuter cyclists).

The Submissions Report did not address the City's concerns about the need for the Campbell Road extension to Gardeners Road. There are many questions that remain about its purpose, and the risks that it will create an east-west corridor that will be detrimental to residential and business amenity in that corridor.

The Submissions Report does not adequately respond to concerns in the City's submission about the assessment of strategic alternatives. Assessment of alternatives on a robust and like-for-like basis should be normal practice. A Benefit/Cost Ratio provides a tool to do this. This aspect of the project proposal and WestConnex business case requires significant strengthening.

The impacts of the St Peters Interchange on Sydney Park has not been addressed properly, nor has the impact of portal emissions or increased surface traffic on park users and local residents. Similarly, the report has not adequately responded to issue around increased surface traffic noise and the effect on this on sleep disturbance in particular.

The Submissions Report continues to not recognise the impacts and interactions between urban renewal sites such as Green Square, Ashmore and Central to Eveleigh or how they might be affected by WestConnex.

The Submissions Report continues to underestimate the impacts on local streets and the potential mitigation measures that may need to be implemented to reduce the impact.

The Submissions Report does not alleviate the City's concerns about these core issues, but continues to heighten them.

The City of Sydney continues to object to the development of the New M5 and WestConnex.

It is strongly recommended that the Department of Planning and Environment require the Roads and Maritime Services to **produce the following evidence or actions** to support the project prior to a Ministerial determination:

- Provide the origin-destination pair analysis used to support the need for the project and all of WestConnex;
- Provide the same for freight movements by light and heavy vehicle;
- Provide the assumptions that were used when developing the traffic model, including for trip distribution;
- Provide an understanding of the scope of local area traffic management works that are assumed or expected to be put in place by each local government area (those not delivered by WestConnex directly);
- Reveal the distribution of traffic at portal locations (all diagrams at the same scale);
- CAD drawings of the St Peters Interchange and surrounding works so that the City can understand the scale and landform of these changes and inform its communities (NB: CAD drawings were requested by the City during exhibition, but were not provided);
- An independent review of the Biodiversity Report, taking into account the valid concerns of the City of Sydney and Marrickville Councils including working in collaboration;
- The effects of tolling the existing M5 East and not building the New M5 on traffic dispersal and road capacity;
- Provide an understanding of what bus network redesign works or improvements to rail access will be delivered as part of WestConnex, in keeping with the *Long Term Transport Master Plan* action; and
- An understanding whether the operating contract for WestConnex will have non-competition clauses to prevent improvements in public transport along the corridor.

It is recommended that the Department of Planning and Environment require the following as **Conditions of Consent** should approval be forthcoming:

- Require the formation of an Urban Design Advisory Panel with membership including (but not limited to) representatives from Roads and Maritime Services, Transport for NSW, UrbanGrowth, and City of Sydney with the Department of Planning and Environment as Chair;
- A post-operational review be carried out by Roads and Maritime Services in collaboration with other road authorities at 12 months, 5 years and 10 years following implementation of WestConnex;
- That any road works to mitigate impacts, including on local roads be implemented by Roads and Maritime Services;
- That the results of motorway performance and capacity as a result of the review be made public;
- Similar conditions regarding noise;

- Re-analyse the air quality assessment based on the agreed amendments to the AAQ NEPM standards, and determine measures to be put in place to meet the standard;
- Require the amount of open space at the St Peters Interchange to be maximised, with a useable and valuable function. Implement an independent consultation process and a formal procedure between Roads and Maritime Services and local government to enable this;
- Assess the air quality at St Peters Interchange as a basis to make decisions about the appropriate use of open space;
- Use of the Dynamo building should be subject to a Conservation Management Plan as a condition of consent. This plan should guide the building's use, and the approval for this element could be referred to the Heritage Council;
- That new buildings on the Princes Highway are built to the street alignment with active frontages;
- Further work should be undertaken to adequately respond to and mitigate the safety issues with the open space at the St Peters Interchange and along the Campbell Street elevated structure (should that element remain in the design);
- Roads and Maritime Services collaborate with local government and Transport for NSW's Active Transport team to ensure best connectivity and user experience is delivered for active transport infrastructure;
- The King Street Gateway should be subject to a separate statutory assessment, however it should be delivered as part of the WestConnex New M5;
- Require the implementation of the biodiversity mitigation measures recommended in the City's submission to reduce impact on biodiversity outcomes; and
- Adopt ambitious yet realistic targets for sustainable resource use to maximise the use of recycled materials and reduce environmental impact.

The best outcome in the City's view would be for the Minister to refuse consent for this project. WestConnex is not the right project for Sydney, and as stated in the City's submission and completely unaddressed; there is no recognition of the legacy impact this will have on Sydney.

Sydney is a global city, but unless it can be supported by a transport system that is relevant to its community and future access needs, its competitiveness will reduce.

Comments on the Submissions Report

Project benefits (and need)

One of the key questions raised by the City in its submission on the New M5 was to ask why, if a core objective is to improve freight connectivity to the Port and Airport, would a new motorway be built that has a less direct connection to those places?

The response acknowledges that the existing M5 has a more direct connection to the Airport/Port, but then states that the New M5 is intended to deliver commuters to the north of the Airport/Port and also into the CBD. This is contrary to repeated claims by Sydney Motorway Corporation that the WestConnex is not designed to take people into the CBD, and **exacerbates the City's objection to the project in terms of it not being designed to improve freight.**

One of the evidentiary pieces that has been omitted from all documentation (either the EIS or the Submissions Report) is the actual origin and destination pairings for travel from south-west and western Sydney to the CBD and Port/Airport. **The Submissions Report does not respond to evidence put forward by the City that the demand for travel from the south-west and west of Sydney into the CBD is by public transport, highly driven by a constrained street environment at the destination.**

The City acknowledges that there is still some demand for commuter road connectivity to the Port/Airport from the south-west and western Sydney. This is likely driven by the impact of rolling shifts for the 24-hour businesses at the Airport/Port, the availability of parking at the destination and the need to pay the GatePass fee at the Airport rail stations. However, that being said, **there are actually very few people who are commuting from south-west or western Sydney to the Airport/Port precincts.** According to 2011 Census data, for south-western Sydney, less than 3,300 people drive to the Airport/Port precinct. This can be readily seen using the Journey to Work centre summary from the Bureau of Statistics and Analytics. **These numbers are certainly not significant enough to consider building a new motorway.**

The Submissions Report also states that the only ways that were considered to increase capacity on the congested M5 was to build another motorway. **No consideration of the effect of tolling the M5 East without building new infrastructure was considered.** Instead, the NSW Government is intending to build a motorway, disperse the traffic onto local roads and still toll the M5 East. **It is short-sighted for the Government not to consider demand management in the first instance.**

Dispersed trip patterns

The discussion in the City's submission regarding the ability for other forms of transport to serve a dispersed trip pattern has essentially been dismissed in the Submissions Report.

The Submissions Report describes a motorway as the trunk in a trunk and feeder type service. The Submissions Report does not acknowledge that this is also how public transport services can and should be designed in order to serve the maximum number of people with the greatest frequency. **The ability to aggregate a dispersed trip pattern into a trunk and feeder system using public transport was a key point in the City's submission.**

The response on dispersed trip patterns also talks about connecting centres. This highlights again the contradiction between Government's land use policies (develop centres that are compact, walkable and connected by public transport) and the development of the WestConnex program. It does not support the development of a compact city.

The discussion in the Submissions Report about WestConnex not being able to deliver on all the outcomes of the *Long Term Transport Master Plan* is not helpful. It would be absurd to consider that the City's view would be that one project or program could deliver on all the outcomes in the *Long Term Transport Master Plan*. It is important to also revisit that the proposed WestConnex in the *Long Term Transport Master Plan* and *State Infrastructure Strategy* are significantly different from that which is proposed or actually in delivery.

Connectivity to the global corridor

The Submissions Report states that, "The WestConnex program of works would not, by itself, significantly affect existing volumes of traffic with the Sydney CBD as an origin or destination" (p. 4-275). **This is an erroneous assertion.** The delivery of an additional 20,000 vehicles per day onto the Anzac Bridge, an additional 20,000 vehicles at Broadway and 37,000 vehicles at St Peters is likely to **have a serious and significant impact on the ability of the CBD and inner-city to function.**

The City agrees with the statement in the Submissions Report that the CBD is either an origin, destination or through-way for people travelling. **However, there has been no critical evaluation of the impact of increased traffic on the CBD in real terms, or how the additional traffic will travel through the CBD or interact with the changed public transport environment.**

The potential impact from a productivity perspective is significant, with the **existing congestion issues only to be compounded** through increased competition for road space, and likely less opportunity to deliver meaningful public transport priority or freight benefits.

The notion repeated by the Sydney Motorway Corporation (on behalf of the Roads and Maritime Services) that traffic will disperse at the exit point for tunnel portals and essentially have no impact are unrealistic and diminish the considerable community concerns about the effect on urban amenity and wellbeing. **No evidence is provided to understand the impact, despite modelling having been done to inform the *Updated Strategic Business Case*.**

The discussion in the Submissions Report about Concord being the centre of gravity for economic activity is confusing and does not add value. **Although there are centres that are growing in terms of economic activity; the role, function and contribution of the CBD as the heart of Australia's only global city cannot be ignored.** Connectivity between other parts of the global arc are serviced by the heavy rail network, and it is the City's view that the Government's investment would be better placed to increase rail capacity to service demand and improve existing service conditions.

Enabling long distance trips

The Submissions Report states that the purpose of motorways is to service medium to long distance trips (p. 4-276). Yet, the **evidence shows that the most dominant mode for travel over long distances is heavy rail, not the road network.**

Therefore, the question remains as to the strategic purpose of the WestConnex program. **If freight was really the main factor at play, then either pricing the M5 East to release capacity (as this is the dominant freight path) or potentially building a freight-only tunnel directly to the Airport/Port is likely to be a better solution to meet the needs of the industry and lessen the impact on communities.**

Indirect benefits

In the City's submission, it claimed that reference to 'indirect benefits' actually meant inducing demand from active and public transport to car travel. Despite the Submissions Report claiming that indirect benefits relates to improved travel time, this is not supported by evidence (with most travel time savings being inframarginal), and again highlights the poor treatment of induced demand for WestConnex generally. It is also unclear why travel time savings are considered indirect benefits despite these being counted as a primary benefit of WestConnex in the economic analysis.

The response in the Submissions Report clearly does not make the link between the claimed benefits of reduced congestion, reduced travel time and improved safety with the effect this would have on people's travel choices. If people can or perceive they can achieve a faster travel time by car than by public or active transport, people will switch mode to what is most attractive. The reverse is true for when capacity is reduced, people will move to active or public transport (particularly when there is priority or a dedicated corridor) to achieve the travel time savings. **Reduced capacity is a primary trigger to implement demand management strategies, as is occurring in the CBD as a result of light rail implementation.**

Project objectives

The City understands the genesis of WestConnex. However, the Submissions Report does not adequately respond to one of the key issues raised in the City's submission which is the bias in the project objectives towards a motorway solution, despite listing alternatives that are not motorway projects.

There has also been no response in the Submissions Report about how the New M5 project objectives link with the broader WestConnex objectives, despite the clear interdependencies of the projects. Nor does the report respond to how the project will enhance productivity given freight will continue to use the M5 East as a more direct route (and this is confirmed in the Submissions Report). Freight using the New M5 will still experience congestion on local roads (with poor level of service to the Airport/Port and to the employment lands north of the Airport).

It should be noted in the *Long Term Transport Master Plan* it is stated that WestConnex would serve the whole Port and Airport precinct (p.13) which the New M5 does not do. **There is also an action in the plan that WestConnex will deliver a multi-modal package of improvements during implementation, including; redesign of bus services, improved access to rail stations and bus priority measures (p. 137).** The Submissions Report considers improvements to public transport services as out of scope, and there is certainly no implementation plan for improved bus or access to rail as part of the impact assessment.

The City is familiar with the Western and Eastern screenlines. The City's submission made clear that the impact to the north was unknown and information on the impact

was provided during exhibition. **The City's view remains steady that the traffic modelling is flawed.**

The Submissions Report claims that only when WestConnex and the New M5 are considered holistically with other transport and land use projects will the outcomes from the *Long Term Transport Master Plan* be realised. This comes back to the issues of motorway-biased objectives, separation of stages in assessment, and public transport being out of scope. **If public transport improvements are intended to be delivered as part of WestConnex, the Government needs to make clear as part of WestConnex what they might look like.** These public transport improvements should form an integrated package and implementation plan. It should also be noted that the *Long Term Transport Master Plan* states:

"Investment in Sydney's motorway network **will have a negligible impact on congestion unless we simultaneously address wider problems underlying congestion.** As the motorway network develops, an integrated policy response will be required to manage growing demand and to preserve the productivity benefits from new investment. **This will require a suite of measures that reduce reliance on car travel, enhance public transport, manage congestion and traffic flows efficiently, and reform road pricing and access**" (pp. 140-141).

In the City's submission and as part of an independent review by SGS Economics and Planning, it was questioned why an integrated suite of alternatives were not considered. This point is even more important in light of the quote above. **It is not responsible to deliver a motorway program, particularly at the scale and cost of WestConnex, without a separate funded package of public transport improvements to maximise the function of the whole transport network.**

Cumulative impacts

The Submissions Report does not adequately address the key concern that there was a lack of focus on operational cumulative impacts, particularly around traffic.

The key concern is the expected cumulative impact on residents around the St Peters Interchange if the New M5 is delivered, particularly as a result of major road upgrades. It is not sufficient to say that the traffic will simply disperse, or that overall there is a reduction in traffic. **The City's analysis of the select links provided during exhibition, and the information in the EIS show there will be an impact, particularly on Euston Road, and that the impact will be ongoing.**

Assessment to 2031

While it might be common practice to only model 10 years out, **the Department of Planning and Environment should consider implementing an approach that enables a tiered or scaled assessment depending on the project's potential impact.**

With the delivery of an asset that will be in existence far past the 10 year mark, the lifecycle of the asset should be considered in the impact. It is understood by the City that forecasting to a greater time horizon delivers less certainty, however just as in the finance sector, **there needs to be a way to discount for the reduction in certainty while giving an indication of the longer term impact.**

A key issue for the City and many in the community is the separation of WestConnex projects in order to accelerate delivery, without providing visibility on the full program simultaneously. While the City understands that full WestConnex modelling has been

developed to inform the business case and to provide inputs for each EIS; it has not been shared in its entirety.

Governance and assurance

A design and construct (D&C) delivery model, while having advantages, carries significant risk.

According to the Australian Government's *Infrastructure Planning and Delivery: Best Practice Case Studies Volume 2*, **the primary risks associated with a D&C contract are:**

- **Costs may escalate due to the contractor bearing design risks; and**
- **No focus on life-cycle costs, with the client retaining whole-of-life asset risk.**

These two factors are important given the cost and scale of WestConnex. Even a small variation in price for a \$16.8 billion dollar program will increase the cost considerably. A cost increase of 2% would add \$336 million to the program. The risk to the public is even more apparent given the shareholders for the Sydney Motorway Corporation are Government Ministers.

Again, **this highlights the concerns raised by the City in its submission around gating and appropriate staging.** Although the public are assured that the current business case has undergone a full Gateway review, the staging remains confused and is not adequately addressed in the Submissions Report.

The business case is at Gate 2 yet procurement has occurred with contracts issued and the program is proceeding to Gate 5. The Submissions Report offers no explanation for this.

The discussion in the Submissions Report about Infrastructure Australia's assessment of WestConnex is highly concerning. The Submissions Report states that the *Updated Strategic Business Case* for WestConnex has enabled the project to progress from 'Threshold' status to 'Ready to Proceed' status. This is despite Infrastructure Australia's website stating that Stage 1 and 2 of WestConnex are in delivery. Stage 2 is the New M5. There is no explanation for this difference.

Strategic justification

The Submissions Report refers to WestConnex as an integrated transport solution due to its inclusion in the *Long Term Transport Master Plan*. This does not explain how it is part of an integrated system, particularly given the action to develop a multi-modal program for implementation during the delivery of WestConnex.

Consistency with land use policy

The Submissions Report does not appropriately respond to the issue raised in the City's submission about the disconnection between WestConnex and the land use policy of Government.

The Submissions Report states that over 70% of journey to work trips are by car but only around 20% of these are commuting trips. While this is true, these are averages across metropolitan Sydney and do not take into account the particular travel needs of people in south-western and western Sydney, or how they might change into the future.

The Submissions Report also says that around 60% of jobs are outside of Sydney's major centres, and that public transport cannot meet the needs of such diversity. There are a few points to make about these comments:

- This position does not support policies to grow the west, or to facilitate the development of centres;
- There is no recognition that people in south-west and western Sydney have a good degree of job containment to their local area;
- There is no evidence or analysis presented on origin-destination analysis to support the need for WestConnex;
- The Submissions Report is contradictory in that here it disregards the commute task, yet is designing for it (see p. 4-271);
- The numbers of people travelling from the south-west to the Airport/Port are small; and
- Numbers travelling to the CBD are significantly higher, yet large majority travel by train.

The Submissions Report makes note of the *State Infrastructure Strategy* which states that public transport should be the preferred mode to travel between centres. This strengthens the City's argument about the irrationality of WestConnex; it is designed to have people travel longer distances and is not supporting centres policy, which makes public transport even harder to deliver as the density of places is spread out.

A role of Government is to develop policy to influence markets and to offer some certainty to those markets. **Delivering WestConnex while trying to build compact cities is illogical and counter-productive.** It does not make sense to continue growing the link between the south-west/west and the east of Sydney if the objective of Government is to grow jobs in the west.

The Submissions Report says that WestConnex will enable the development of new employment zones along the M4 and M5 corridors, including in the outer south-west and western suburbs. In developing a compact city of centres and growing west and south-west Sydney, employment zones in these locations would benefit from better access north and south in the west to avoid the CBD. This connectivity is serviced via the M7. If access to the Port/Airport is needed, then pricing the existing M5 East or implementing other demand management tools may well have the same effect as duplicating – and is likely to have a longer lasting impact as the opportunity to develop alternate services and travel behaviours is provided.

Facilitation of urban renewal

The Submissions Report states that public transport is out of scope. This is not consistent with the *Long Term Transport Master Plan* or the concept of integrated transport planning.

In the Social and Economic section of the Submissions Report, the response focuses on property values, which was a factor raised by the City, but this was secondary to the point being made about urban renewal sites creating significant transport demand in themselves.

Premier's Priorities/ NSW 2021

The Submissions Report states that traffic will reduce around the St Peters area as a result of WestConnex. **This is not the case. The reduction of traffic is primarily**

as a result of downgrading the Princes Highway, but does not recognise the significant growth in traffic along Euston and Campbell and its impact on communities.

The Submissions Report states that additional traffic management measures could be implemented as a result of increased local traffic. There is no mention of who would be responsible for implementation. This should be the responsibility of the Roads and Maritime Services as the client for WestConnex.

A flexible design does not equal improved public transport services. **It is reasonable to expect that additional road capacity should prioritise public transport, active transport and freight movements.**

Road safety

The Submissions Report makes comment on the City's concerns about increased travel speeds and road safety. The report states that a motorway that is operating as free-flowing has a reduced severity of crashes. **Yet, this does not take into account the impact of congestion and the complex interaction of different user groups at portal locations.**

Particularly at St Peters Interchange, there will be a mix of users including people using the motorway, freight, pedestrians and bike riders. The interchange is adjacent a major regional park and will now be surrounded by multi-lane highways.

Predict and provide approach

The project and the Submissions Report consistently fails to acknowledge that building to relieve congestion does not work. There is significant research and examples to support this.

It is not sufficient for the Submissions Report to dismiss this position by saying other transport solutions will be delivered given there is no plan for this and it is claimed to be out of scope.

WestConnex is not sensible strategic planning, and this is reflected in the City's comments on this EIS and Submissions Report.

Western Sydney Airport

The Submissions Report has earlier made reference to the desire of the Government to grow jobs in western Sydney and to develop employment zones from the M4 and M5 corridors. The evidence shows that many trucking and freight related companies are based in Sydney's west and south-west.

Although Sydney Airport and Port may remain the biggest terminals for freight, it would make sense for Government to make use of the opportunity with Badgerys Creek to develop the freight businesses in the west. **This could achieve two outcomes; develop jobs in western Sydney and enable a more compact city, and support the growth and development of the second Sydney Airport.**

Regional Impacts

The City refutes the claim in the Submissions Report that an appropriate analysis of subregional impacts has taken place. Urban renewal sites require the development of infrastructure and services as a result of increased demand.

A major renewal site such as Green Square is already demonstrating significant demand on the regional road network through public transport demand, private vehicle use and construction activities. Green Square is recognised in Government policy as a Planned Strategic Centre. With this and Central to Eveleigh coming into effect, these impacts should be recognised.

Road space for alternative transport use

The Submissions Report states that reallocation of road space is outside the scope of the project. This is not true as significant amounts of road space are being reallocated for WestConnex with the widening of Euston and Campbell, implementation of new bridges, signalised intersections and roadways, and removal of park land. **It is reasonable that in an integrated transport system, reallocation or reduction of road space for an amended use would be appropriate.**

Potential rat-runs

Given there is no information on the assumptions for the traffic model, it is unclear what sits behind the traffic model outputs and whether rat runs have been considered.

Toll avoidance

The City is not confident that toll avoidance has been adequately accounted for in the traffic modelling. An independent review shows that the effect should be assumed to be higher, with a resulting impact on the level of benefit in the business case.

The EIS or business case has not taken into consideration what will happen if both the motorway and arterial roads are at capacity.

The Submissions Report makes reference to preference surveys that were undertaken to determine willingness to pay. **It would be helpful to understand the findings of these surveys and the methodology used.**

Enabler or disabler?

WestConnex is a program of interdependent motorways. **It is not appropriate to consider each project in isolation or to consider the potential impact of WestConnex on the Bays Precinct or Parramatta Road out of scope.**

Assessment of strategic alternatives

It is not unreasonable to expect that alternative scenarios are treated in a similar manner to determine the most appropriate way forward. It should be expected in the Strategic Business Case that alternative scenarios are tested in a similar way, including developing a BCR so that a consistent assessment can be made.

As projects grow in terms of potential impact, or cost or both; this assessment should be more robust and offer a real comparative measure. This is one of the key benefits of a BCR.

The City's position in its submission that the strategic alternatives in the EIS are poorly conceived and lacking detail remains constant. There has been no

methodology to the assessment applied apart from a cursory tick box to provide any understanding of the process. **Assessment of alternatives should be one of the key anchors of project development, and it appears from the lack of information made public that this has not occurred.**

The City also rejects this response as the objectives of the project demonstrate that any non-motorway scenario was intended to fail.

On these grounds, the City does not accept the response in the Submissions Report.

Post operational review

A post-operational review should occur not only 12 months from the motorway opening, but also at 5 years and 10 years. Roads and Maritime should lead this review, but local Councils as roads authorities must be consulted, especially in defining the parameters. Any changes for implementation should be the responsibility of the Roads and Maritime Services. Delivering a review with a longer time horizon will provide evidence as to the performance of motorways over time to inform future planning and to test the validity of traffic forecasts. This performance results of the review should be made public.

Footpaths and cycleways

Although there will be many new footpaths and shared paths constructed as part of the New M5, there are still significant concerns raised by the City that continue to not be addressed.

The Campbell Street elevated path is not an appropriate infrastructure solution, and is not supported by the City. The Submissions Report has failed to address the safety concerns about the continuous length of the bridge, how emergency or maintenance crews would access the bridge, whether the south side of Campbell St is the most appropriate connection, and the potential conflict between user groups (such as recreational riders or walkers and commuter cyclist).

It is noted that the Preferred Infrastructure Report **separates the pedestrian and bike riding** uses on the Campbell St elevated path at the connection between Sydney Park and the St Peters Interchange; yet **this does not resolve the issue.** All that does is artificially force people to travel on a certain side and then re-join at either side. It also does not respond to the inherent conflict of use and maintains pinch points.

Given the intention is to start construction within a matter of months should approval be forthcoming, detailed design is not the appropriate forum for change. **The changes should be made in consultation with local government prior to any approval to ensure the public value of the infrastructure is maximised.** This is also made more difficult given the D&C contract in place assuming design changes would be penalise the client.

The Submissions Report states that existing connections are provided between the existing M5 and the St Peters Interchange, but they are not complete. This is not consistent with Government policy in *Sydney's Cycling Future* to deliver a surface cycle connection along the entire route. **A constrained environment is not a sufficient reason to not deliver.**

Noting the Submission Report's position on slip lanes, the City's position remains that slip lanes should not be included in the design to maximise pedestrian and cycle connectivity and safety.

Regarding the Bourke Road cycleway connection, the cycleway continues along Bourke Road to Bourke Street in Woolloomooloo. It will connect with the cycleway south of Gardeners Road once completed.

Air quality

The Submissions Report has not appropriately responded to the issues raised by the City regarding portal emissions management, particularly with portal congestion. **This needs to be addressed as a condition of consent should approval be forthcoming.**

The response regarding air quality fails to account for the emissions from increases in surface traffic, and in turn its effect on activities such as use of Sydney Park and urban amenity.

The National Environment Protection Council (NEPC) has agreed to vary the AAQ NEPM by approving an amending instrument to the AAQ NEPM. One of the amendments is:

- including an aim to move to annual average and 24-hour PM2.5 standards of 7 µg/m3 and 20 µg/m3 by 2025.

The current annual average PM2.5 levels are already above 8 µg/m3 and the 24-hour mean is almost 25 µg/m3 (see images below), which are the current standards. These levels will increase with the project.

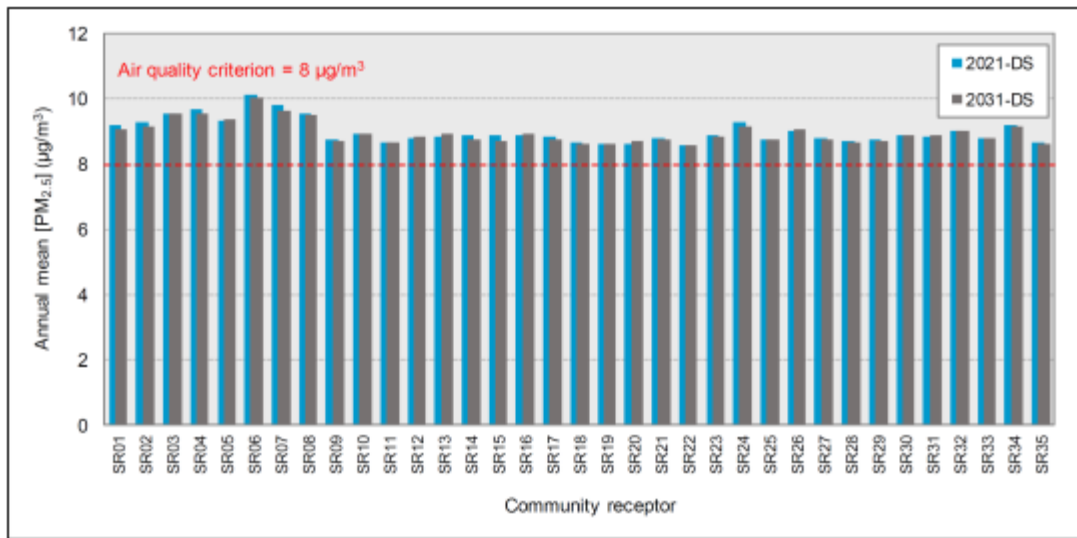


Figure 9-73 Annual mean PM_{2.5} at community receptors (2021-DS and 2031-DS)

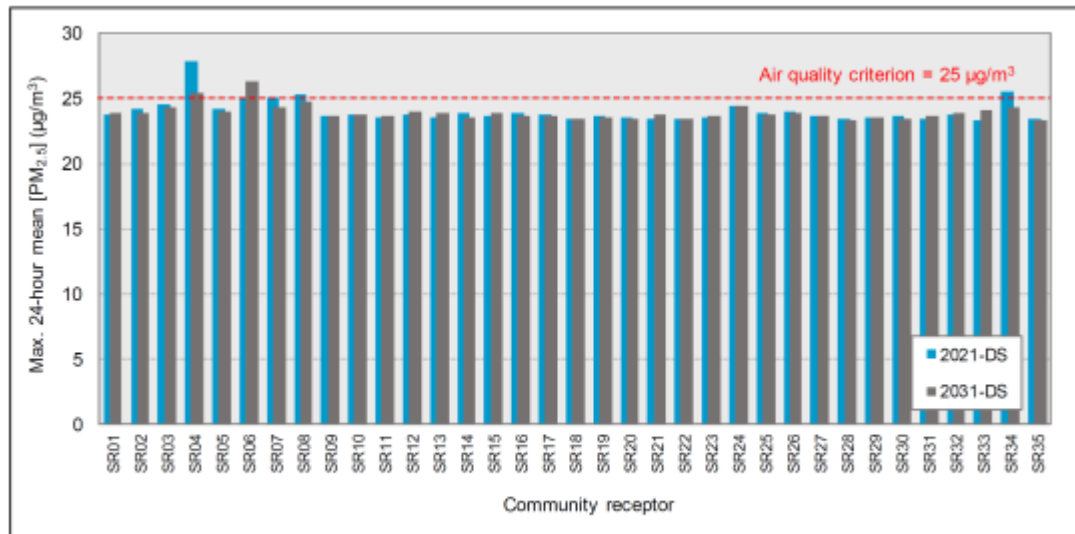


Figure 9-84 Maximum 24-hour mean PM_{2.5} at community receptors (2021-DS and 2031-DS)

The response in the Submissions Report does not clarify this. A contingency plan is not mentioned.

The City recommends that the air quality assessment is re-analysed based on the agreed amendments to the AAQ NEPM standards, and what measures will be put in place to meet the standard.

Landfill Closure Management Plan

The City recommends that the Landfill Closure Management Plan be updated with all the elements in the City’s submission prior to any approval being given.

Human Health

One of the criticisms of the New M5 EIS is a compliance-driven response to the SEARs. **While the City recognises this is a statutory process, it should not be unreasonable to expect a high degree of strategic thinking when determining how to respond to a project of this scale.**

Noise and vibration

The City’s position remains that mitigation measures should be given a metric to increase their efficacy. **It is reasonable to set targets for reductions to be able to track progress.**

Similar to the post-operational review for traffic performance, the temporal scope for reviewing noise impacts should be longer than six or 12 months. **At a minimum, it should also include a five year measurement, and a 10 year measurement. This would also add weight to the need to measure the impact to track progress. The results should be made public.**

Sleep disturbance (Construction)

The Submissions Report does not adequately address the issue raised regarding Sleep Disturbance (construction) and is to a degree, dismissive of the issue.

The assertion is that the assessment of construction noise impact is over simplified in a non-conservative manner in the report.

“A reduction of 10 dB(A) in noise levels through an open window is commonly achieved in NSW for residences and has been used in the noise impact assessments of other recent, similar major infrastructure projects in NSW”

The assertion that this is a commonly used process for approximating the nexus of external to internal noise ingress does not provide any objective or evidentiary basis that the methodology as employed is more or less accurate for deducing the extent of actual sleep disturbance impact associated with the WestConnex project. **Whilst the City is aware that it is common practice to use the principle outlined, the issue here is how this principle is used.**

It is understood that the noise reduction principle is based on the older World Health Organisation Community Noise Guidelines that neighbourhood noise surveys based in countries with climatic conditions and thus building construction methodologies not consistent with those employed in Australia for Australian climatic conditions. **The City simply points out in its submission that best practice would be to acknowledge the limitations of this methodology and present the impact as “up to a 10dB reduction may be achieved”, as opposed to the providing that a 10 dB reduction would be achieved and potentially under reporting on the probable impact.**

Notwithstanding the use in some manner of the 10dB external to internal drop, The City is unaware of any independently vetted, Australian studies that would support the claim made by Roads and Maritime Services, however is happy to consider any further material.

Lastly, we note the commitment to provide further assessment of this issue and commend the intention to do so. However we provide that the actual impact should be more thoroughly and conservatively reported towards the higher levels of impact, and that construction noise that will be generated as a result of the project. **The City considers that noise impact associated with major construction should be best understood and its impact managed from a planning perspective from the genesis of the project as opposed to deferring consideration of an issue and thus increasing dependence reactive controls to this noise impact feasibly,** steps could be taken to better plan a response.

Additional Traffic Noise Predictions – Scope Expansion

The City notes that the operational noise impact study area associated with the environmental impact assessment has been expanded. The City is confident that the report would accurately address the impact of the noise generated by the additional road traffic and note that this is limited to thresholds below which would require amelioration of this noise in accordance with the relevant policy.

The expansion of the study area is appreciated, and provide additional information and the following comment:

- The noise emissions predictions provide for a 2 dB increase in noise levels over the long term than would otherwise be present without WestConnex. Whilst this is small and not considered perceptible, we refer to the magnitude of noise levels presented in the tables. These are already considerably higher in many locations than those maximum levels recommended for local roads and local collector roads in the *NSW EPA Road Noise Policy (2011)*. As a consequence, WestConnex does not serve to provide an environmental

improvement to the existing road traffic noise situation for those affected residents.

- The accuracy of the noise impact prediction will depend on the accuracy of the average annual daily traffic volumes. We note that it is difficult to predict these future 2021 and 2031 traffic volume figures and that without commitment to not re-align or provide for capacity upgrade of the additional roads considered in future as a result of unforeseen demand and congestion associated with delivery of vehicles with WestConnex would risk accuracy of the reported information.

Land use and property

The Submissions Report confirms that the acquisition of land to the south of Sydney Park will be temporary.

Given the Campbell Street elevated structure is not supported, the City does not support the acquisition of this land.

St Peters Interchange

The Submissions Report claims that due to the level of contamination, using the existing Alexandria Landfill site for residential and mixed use purposes would not be feasible. The City challenges this point. **There are a number of examples of difficult and contaminated sites being transformed into vibrant and useful urban areas.**

Green Square Town Centre site was heavily contaminated and is subject to flooding. The site required extensive earthworks to remediate the site. It is now being transformed into a vibrant urban centre with residential, retail, parkland and world-class community facilities. Similarly, Sydney Park was contaminated and remediated. It is now a significant multi-use regional park providing significant amenity in a dense urban environment.

The City's view is that options for re-use of the Alexandria Landfill site with a higher value to the public should have been evaluated rather than summarily dismissed.

The examples given of other motorway projects next to park land are not appropriate comparisons. In response,

- Tumbalong Park, Darling Harbour – this motorway is relatively contained in width and is elevated well above this area which is continuous underneath. There are no 'leftover' spaces within the motorway;
- Bradfield Park, Milsons Point - As above;
- Moore Park - The motorway is contained in a narrow trench and protected by planting. There are no 'leftover' spaces within the motorway; and
- Royal Botanic Gardens - The motorway is contained in a low trench walled and protected by screen planting. There are no 'leftover' spaces within the motorway.

The above mentioned examples indicate that a tightly contained motorway area is preferable. The proposal is clearly distinct from the examples as it is a sprawling multi-level configuration with large areas of residual space.

Urban Design Review Panel

The formation of an Urban Design Review Panel should be a condition of consent, should the project proceed.

The Urban Design Review Panel should consist of membership including (but not limited to) representatives from Roads and Maritime Services, Transport for NSW, UrbanGrowth, and City of Sydney with the Department of Planning and Environment as Chair.

Use of residual interchange land

The City notes the intention of Roads and Maritime to hold regular forums regarding the use of open space. However, a forum does not constitute meaningful engagement.

The City recommends a condition of consent to maximise the amount of open space and to follow Council's Open Space strategies to deliver usable and valuable open space. This would include an independent consultation process and formal procedure between Roads and Maritime and Local Government.

The City has legitimate concerns about the air quality at the St Peters Interchange and the adjoining roadways, and the use of open space. **The City recommends that air quality be measured as a base for making decisions on the appropriate use of open space.**

Campbell Road extension to Gardeners Road

The Submissions Report has not addressed the issue raised by the City in its submission about the requirement for the Campbell Road extension including a bridge over Alexandra Canal. This connection cannot be used by motorway traffic and is not intended to serve the motorway traffic.

There are significant risks that this connection will enable a new east-west route between Petersham/Stammore and Mascot/Botany that will have a detrimental impact on urban amenity.

The Campbell Road extension to Gardeners Road and bridge should be removed from the project scope and design.

Motorway Operation Complexes

The design of the Motorway Operation Complexes should be subject to separate design and approval processes, with those applications demonstrating consideration of consolidating the two buildings.

It is recommended that use of the Dynamo building should be subject to a Conservation Management Plan as a condition of consent. This plan should guide the building's use and the approval for this element could be referred to the Heritage Council.

Regarding car parking for staff at the MOCs, it is recommended that this is reduced as far as possible to encourage public transport use (while acknowledging a 24 hour roster). Parking should be visible from the street and underground if possible.

It is recommended that as a condition of consent, built forms on the Princes Highway are built to the street alignment with active frontages.

Landform

Further detail is required to understand whether mature trees will be planted at the outset, or whether trees will be planted with a view to develop their canopy. If the latter, an understanding is required of what interim measures will be put in place.

Consideration should also be given to the level of soil available following the capping of the land, which may stunt tree growth in large trees.

In order to provide a beneficial public resource, objectives should go beyond the provision of a 'green volume', and aspire to create a meaningful, useable space. The interface between the road infrastructure and spaces around is complex, and a considered design response is required. These aspects should form the remit of the Urban Design Review Panel.

Safety

The current configuration of open space has large areas with no surveillance, no access control indicated, no territorial reinforcement and no proposed space management.

The response in the Submissions Report is inadequate and further work should be undertaken before approval for this aspect of the proposal is granted. This applies to both the open space and the elevated structure on Campbell Street.

Active transport infrastructure design

The City in its submission made reference multiple times to design widths for active transport infrastructure. These have been summarily dismissed.

The New M5 is part of WestConnex, the largest motorway project in Australia. To not cater for active transport users as a multi-faceted user base, or to design to minimum standards is unacceptable.

The City recommends that as a condition of consent, Roads and Maritime Services collaborate with local government and Transport for NSW's Active Transport team to ensure best connectivity and user experience is delivered. This collaboration should be formalised.

While the redesign of the Bourke Road intersection in the Preferred Infrastructure Report is an improvement, it still does not cater for the primary desire line along the Bourke Road cycleway. This should be reflected in the design.

King Street Gateway

The City supports the development of the King Street Gateway to be subject to an independent approval process. However, **the King Street Gateway should be implemented as part of WestConnex – New M5** given a reduction of traffic on King Street is claimed as a benefit of WestConnex.

Campbell Road residential amenity

The remaining terraces on Campbell Road near the St Peters Interchange exit will be subject to a significantly altered urban environment should the project go ahead.

The property frontages along Campbell Road will be immediately adjacent a six lane highway.

The City proposes that alternative mitigation measures be considered to expand the frontage of the Campbell Road properties, implement an access road with two-way residential access and allow enough space to deliver the cycleway. This should be supplemented by tree plantings to screen the noise for these properties.

This type of intervention would also extend the leafy form of Sydney Park and lessen the noise impact on park users. It would also provide an opportunity to manage the demand for traffic growth through reduced capacity or potentially lesser lane widths. **Improving the residential amenity of these properties should be considered as part of the Urban Design Review Panel.**

Water quality

The City notes the comment on page 4-345 about potential to excess water from the St Peters Interchange within the Sydney Park system and would welcome an opportunity to discuss this further.

The adoption of the targets from the Botany Bay and Catchment Water Quality Improvement Plan are welcomed. It is unclear when these targets were adopted as upon the City's reading of the EIS, lower targets were initially adopted.

The City supports consultation on the detailed water design including discharge into Alexandra Canal.

Groundwater

The City's recommendations for conditions of consent with regard to groundwater should be implemented as conditions of consent should the project be approved.

Non-Aboriginal heritage

The City acknowledges and supports the Roads and Maritime Services re-use of heritage items.

Biodiversity

The Submissions Report does not adequately respond to the biodiversity concerns raised by the City in its submission.

The Submissions Report has not demonstrated support for the mitigation measures supported by the City.

It is recommended that the Department of Planning and Environment consider these mitigation measures and require them as conditions of consent. These mitigation measures should include aspects of the urban design as a means to maximise habitat opportunities and connections to Sydney Park.

It appears, even from the Submissions Report that a consistent approach to the Biodiversity Assessment has not occurred, with examples of key data not being included in the report despite it being part of the FBA.

The Submission Report gives no reason why consultation did not occur with local councils to obtain local knowledge, particularly given the expertise in this area and the minimal surveys carried out.

Sustainability

The Submissions Report does not adequately respond to the City's concerns about sustainability targets, particularly around material use.

The Roads and Maritime Services have not provided a reason why such a low target has been set, even as a minimum. The amount of resources being used in this project will be massive. It is not environmentally responsible to use as much sustainable product as possible.

The City recommends that more ambitious targets for use of sustainable materials be adopted, in line with other major transport infrastructure projects.

TTM Consulting Report

General comments

Many of the specific issues regarding the traffic modelling and impacts in the Submissions Report have already been responded to throughout this response.