



Impact of the Rozelle Interchange

Report 23

July 2024

6



Portfolio Committee No. 6 - Transport and the Arts

Impact of the Rozelle Interchange

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Chair: Ms Cate Faehrmann MLC



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Table of contents

	Terms of reference	vi
	Committee details	vii
	Chair’s foreword	viii
	Findings	x
	Recommendations	xi
	Conduct of inquiry	xiii
	Glossary	xiv
Chapter 1	Background	1
	WestConnex	1
	Rozelle Interchange	2
	Rozelle Parklands	4
	Key stakeholders	6
	Transport for NSW	6
	Infrastructure NSW	7
	NSW Treasury	7
	Department of Planning and Environment	7
	NSW Environmental Protection Authority	7
	WestConnex Delivery Authority	8
	Sydney Motorway Corporation	8
	Sydney Transport Partners	9
	Transurban	9
	John Holland and CPB Contractors – joint venture	10
	Chronology	10
	2013 design	10
	2015 design	11
	2017 design	12
	Key reviews	13
	Inquiry into the impact of the WestConnex Project	13
	Performance audit of WestConnex changes since 2014	14
	Committee comment	14
Chapter 2	Planning and development	17
	Financial model and privatisation of WestConnex	17

	Design decisions	20
	Northward realignment	20
	Removal of the Camperdown Interchange	24
	Were key design decisions financially motivated?	25
	Role of operators and contractors	26
	Role in design decisions	26
	Regulation of traffic	27
	Traffic modelling	29
	NSW Government traffic modelling	29
	Criticisms of the modelling	31
	Community expectations	34
	Active transport	35
	Committee comment	36
Chapter 3	Community engagement	41
	Engagement strategies	41
	Community response	45
	Limited information	45
	Inadequate community consultation	46
	Community concerns ignored during consultation process	49
	Complaints management	52
	Lack of engagement following the opening of Rozelle Interchange	53
	Committee comment	55
Chapter 4	Impacts	59
	Traffic congestion	59
	Travel time	59
	Impact on local roads	60
	Local business	64
	Health and safety of local communities	66
	Safety of children	66
	Air quality	67
	Active transport	68
	Use and functionality of active transport infrastructure	68
	Impacts on safety	70
	Asbestos in the Rozelle Parklands	72
	Impact of the discovery of asbestos	73
	Committee comment	75

Chapter 5	Moving forward	81
	Lessons learned	81
	Improving consultation and community engagement	81
	Improving and prioritising public transport and active transport	83
	Ongoing projects	87
	Sydney Metro West	87
	Western Distributor	88
	Western Harbour Tunnel and Warringah Freeway upgrades	89
	Committee comment	92
Appendix 1	Submissions	95
Appendix 2	Witnesses at hearings	101
Appendix 3	Minutes	104
Appendix 4	Dissenting statement	126

Terms of reference

1. That Portfolio Committee No. 6 – Transport and the Arts inquire into and report on the impact of the Rozelle Interchange, and in particular:
 - (a) the planning, design and development of the Rozelle Interchange project and its impact on traffic flow, including the prioritisation of traffic from toll roads including WestConnex over local traffic
 - (b) all traffic modelling that was undertaken, including for WestConnex, all surrounding arterial roads and all local roads
 - (c) design decisions that restricted or compromised traffic flows, including any changes from the original plans or modelling
 - (d) the planning, design and development of the Rozelle Interchange project and its impact on the efficient and on-time running of buses, ferries and all other public transport
 - (e) the communication and consultation processes undertaken by Transport for NSW and other relevant stakeholders throughout the lifespan of the Rozelle Interchange Project
 - (f) the social, environmental and economic impacts of the Rozelle Interchange project on impacted communities
 - (g) the impact on foot traffic and active transport options, including due to the closure of Rozelle Parklands
 - (h) the cause of asbestos detected in the Rozelle Parklands and the adequacy and appropriateness of the responses by government agencies and contractors to reports of asbestos in and near the Parklands
 - (i) solutions to ease the congestion and gridlock that the opening of the Rozelle Interchange has created, including the impact of the Western Harbour Tunnel after opening
 - (j) the adequacy of Transport for NSW planning, resource allocation and public communication in the period leading to and directly after the opening of the Rozelle Interchange
 - (k) the cost of the Rozelle Interchange and the total cost of WestConnex
 - (l) any other related matters.
2. That the committee report by 15 July 2024.¹

The terms of reference for the inquiry were referred to the committee by the Legislative Council on 7 February 2024.²

¹ *Minutes*, NSW Legislative Council, 9 May 2024, pp 1110-1111.

² *Minutes*, NSW Legislative Council, 7 February 2024, pp 884-887.

Committee details

Committee members

Ms Cate Faehrmann MLC	The Greens	<i>Chair</i>
Hon Sam Farroway MLC	The Nationals	<i>Deputy Chair</i>
Hon Mark Banasiak MLC	Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party	
Hon Anthony D'Adam MLC	Australian Labor Party	
Hon Dr Sarah Kaine MLC	Australian Labor Party	
Hon Bob Nanva MLC	Australian Labor Party	
Hon Natalie Ward MLC	Liberal Party	

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Chair's foreword

I am pleased to present the committee's report into the Impact of the Rozelle Interchange. This inquiry has been very valuable, enabling the committee to shine a light on all aspects of the controversial Rozelle Interchange project – from its planning and design, construction and opening, and its impact on the community. Given the significant negative impacts experienced by local communities and commuters as a result of the Rozelle Interchange's opening, it was important for the committee to investigate why certain decisions were made and by who. However, what became apparent as the committee undertook its work was the lack of accountability and transparency within government for the decisions made.

This lack of transparency and accountability was evident throughout the various design phases of the Rozelle Interchange project. In particular, there was an unacceptable lack of transparency around the decision to introduce the northward realignment of Stage 3 of the WestConnex project, which later became Rozelle Interchange.

Another key issue was the financial model of the WestConnex project and its inherent impact on decision making. The committee found that this model was based on maximising the sale value of WestConnex for it to be sold to the private sector. This ultimately led to design decisions that were financially motivated and made at the expense of community interests.

The evidence presented throughout this inquiry also called into question the suitability and effectiveness of government consultation processes, specifically those used for large infrastructure projects. Frustrated residents, community representatives and businesses were critical of the lack of information provided throughout the Rozelle Interchange project and described consultation as inadequate and dismissive. The committee believes these frustrations are warranted and represent a lack of meaningful engagement, including information sharing and consultation, with impacted communities.

Another significant area of concern was the opening of the Rozelle Interchange. Local communities have endured increased traffic congestion, rat running, unsuitable and at times unusable active transport options, negative impacts on local business and increased road safety risks. The committee is thankful to the various participants – from residents to business owners, active transport users and community advocates – for their invaluable input throughout the inquiry which gave insight to the daily experiences of the local community navigating the impacts of the Rozelle Interchange.

The committee believes that the NSW Government must reflect on the lessons learnt from the experience of the Rozelle Interchange and take action to prevent similar outcomes from reoccurring in the future. The committee supports many of the solutions put forward by inquiry participants, including the need to prioritise public and active transport options and ensure meaningful and transparent community engagement.

To this end, the committee has made a suite of recommendations in response to the evidence raised in this inquiry. A number of recommendations seek to improve the current issues caused by the Rozelle Interchange, including delivering active transport infrastructure that meets the needs of its users, investigating and implementing rat running mitigation measures, introducing more and safer pedestrian crossings, and investigating additional public transport options.

Other recommendations aim to ensure that the problems identified through the WestConnex project are avoided for all future road-based infrastructure projects. These include rejecting any further privatisation of the State's roads, adopting a 'vision and validate' traffic modelling approach, improving consultation practices and policies for large infrastructure projects to ensure greater transparency,

accessibility and accountability of community consultation, and ensure future road-based projects prioritise safe and accessible active transport infrastructure. In recognition of the ongoing themes raised in this inquiry, the committee has also recommended that the NSW Government implement the recommendations from the Auditor-General's 2021 report *WestConnex: Changes since 2014* and the Legislative Council's Public Accountability Committee's 2018 report *The Impact of the WestConnex Project*.

The committee urges the NSW Government to pay heed to the evidence of this inquiry to inform its considerations for each of these projects, in particular, the Western Harbour Tunnel. The committee sincerely hopes that the recommendations in this report will go some way towards ensuring that the unacceptable impacts of the Rozelle Interchange on local communities aren't experienced again as a result of future infrastructure projects built in NSW.

I am grateful to all inquiry participants who have made invaluable contributions to this inquiry that have informed the findings and recommendations set out in this report.

I would also like to thank my committee colleagues and the secretariat for their efforts.

Ms Cate Faehrmann MLC
Committee Chair

Findings

- Finding 1** **37**
That the financial model of WestConnex was based on maximising its sale value, which in turn has driven design decisions that have increased traffic congestion on the Anzac Bridge and its surrounds.
- Finding 2** **37**
That the lack of transparency and accountability for the design decisions resulting in the Rozelle Interchange is unacceptable given the magnitude of the project and the significant impacts it has had on the community.
- Finding 3** **38**
That there is a concerning lack of clarity and transparency around the contractual arrangements between the NSW Government and Transurban in relation to the regulation of traffic on the WestConnex network, particularly at the Rozelle Interchange.
- Finding 4** **39**
That impacted communities were promised benefits from the Rozelle Interchange that have not been realised.
- Finding 5** **56**
That there was a lack of meaningful engagement, including information sharing and consultation, with impacted communities during the design, construction and opening of the Rozelle Interchange.
- Finding 6** **75**
That there has been significantly increased traffic congestion, particularly on local roads, following the opening of the Rozelle Interchange which has resulted in extensive negative impacts on residents and local businesses.
- Finding 7** **76**
That the increased traffic congestion following the opening of the Rozelle Interchange is unreasonable and unacceptable, given the size, planning and cost involved in the Rozelle Interchange and broader WestConnex project.
- Finding 8** **79**
That the discovery of asbestos led to significant community concern and frustration over the closure of the Rozelle Parklands, and distrust in Transport for NSW, Transurban and the joint venture of John Holland and CPB Contractors.

Recommendations

- Recommendation 1** **15**
 That the NSW Government implement the recommendations included in the:
- Legislative Council’s Public Accountability Committee’s 2018 report, *The Impact of the WestConnex Project*
 - Auditor-General's 2021 report *WestConnex: Changes since 2014*.
- Recommendation 2** **37**
 That the NSW Government reject:
- any further privatisation of the State's roads
 - new major road-based infrastructure projects that do not align with government strategy and which are not in the public interest.
- Recommendation 3** **38**
 That Transport for NSW review its traffic modelling approach, with a view to adopting the 'vision and validate' model as an alternative to the 'predict and provide' model.
- Recommendation 4** **39**
 That Transport for NSW ensure that existing active transport links along Lilyfield and Victoria Roads meet the needs of active transport users, particularly cyclists, by addressing any gaps and concerns raised by active transport advocates, including delivering safe separated cycleways for these routes.
- Recommendation 5** **57**
 That the NSW Government consider reviewing its consultation practices and policies for large infrastructure projects to ensure community consultation is meaningful and genuine and that there is greater transparency, accessibility and accountability of community consultation processes.
- Recommendation 6** **57**
 That Transport for NSW provide an update to Portfolio Committee No. 6 on the status of the proposed joint consultative committee comprising Transport for NSW, City of Canada Bay Council and Drummoyne Residents' Traffic Committee, and if established, provide information regarding its operations and outcomes, particularly as they relate to the traffic study undertaken in the Drummoyne area led by Transport for NSW.
- Recommendation 7** **76**
 That Transport for NSW, as an immediate priority and in a consultative and transparent manner, review the traffic light signalling on local roads in Balmain, Rozelle and Drummoyne that intersect with Victoria Road to mitigate traffic congestion on local roads.
- Recommendation 8** **77**
 That Transport for NSW, as an immediate priority, investigate and implement mitigation strategies to prevent rat running on local roads that is occurring as a result of the Rozelle Interchange.

- Recommendation 9** 77
That Transport for NSW, as an immediate priority, review the left turn only lane and the effectiveness of the dedicated bus lane on Victoria Road, as well as the need for a continual dedicated bus lane approaching Anzac Bridge.
- Recommendation 10** 77
That Transport for NSW, as an immediate priority, install an operational red light speed camera at the intersection of Darling Street and Victoria Road.
- Recommendation 11** 78
That the NSW Environment Protection Authority work with the local community to install air quality monitors that provide accessible and real-time information to the public, at appropriate locations to monitor particulates from the exhaust stacks and increased traffic from the Rozelle Interchange.
- Recommendation 12** 78
That Transport for NSW address concerns regarding pedestrian safety along Victoria Road by installing more, and safer, pedestrian crossings including pedestrian overpasses.
- Recommendation 13** 79
That Transport for NSW work with cycling advocates to undertake an urgent safety and useability assessment of cycling infrastructure in areas impacted by the Rozelle Interchange, including Victoria and Lilyfield Roads and surrounding local streets, and commit to a plan to improve and upgrade that cycling infrastructure to best standard.
- Recommendation 14** 93
That the NSW Government ensure there is ongoing and genuine community engagement and consultation between Transport for NSW, local councils and community members to address issues and concerns following the opening of the Rozelle Interchange.
- Recommendation 15** 93
That the NSW Government ensure that all future road-based projects prioritise the inclusion of safe and accessible active transport infrastructure.
- Recommendation 16** 93
That the NSW Government ensure all public transport solutions are exhausted through a comprehensive options analysis before committing to major new road projects.
- Recommendation 17** 94
That Transport for NSW, as an immediate priority, investigate additional public transport options, including bus and ferry services, to assist impacted communities and improve traffic congestion resulting from the Rozelle Interchange.

Conduct of inquiry

The terms of reference for the inquiry were referred to the committee by the Legislative Council on 7 February 2024.

The committee received 166 submissions and two supplementary submissions.

The committee held four public hearings at Parliament House in Sydney. The committee also held one public forum at Parliament House in Sydney.

The committee conducted two site visits to The Transport Management Centre, Eveleigh and the streets of Balmain on 10 April 2024 and a tour through the streets of Drummoyne on 30 May 2024.

Inquiry related documents are available on the committee's website, including submissions, hearing transcripts, tabled documents and answers to questions on notice.

The committee received 1,034 responses from inquiry participants to an online questionnaire.

Glossary

The following acronyms are commonly used throughout the report.

CEM	Community Environmental Monitoring
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
EPA	NSW Environment Protection Authority
ERG	Expert Review Group
IWC	Inner West Council
RMS	Roads and Maritime Services
RTA	Roads and Traffic Authority
SMC	Sydney Motorway Corporation
STP	Sydney Transport Partners
WDA	WestConnex Delivery Authority

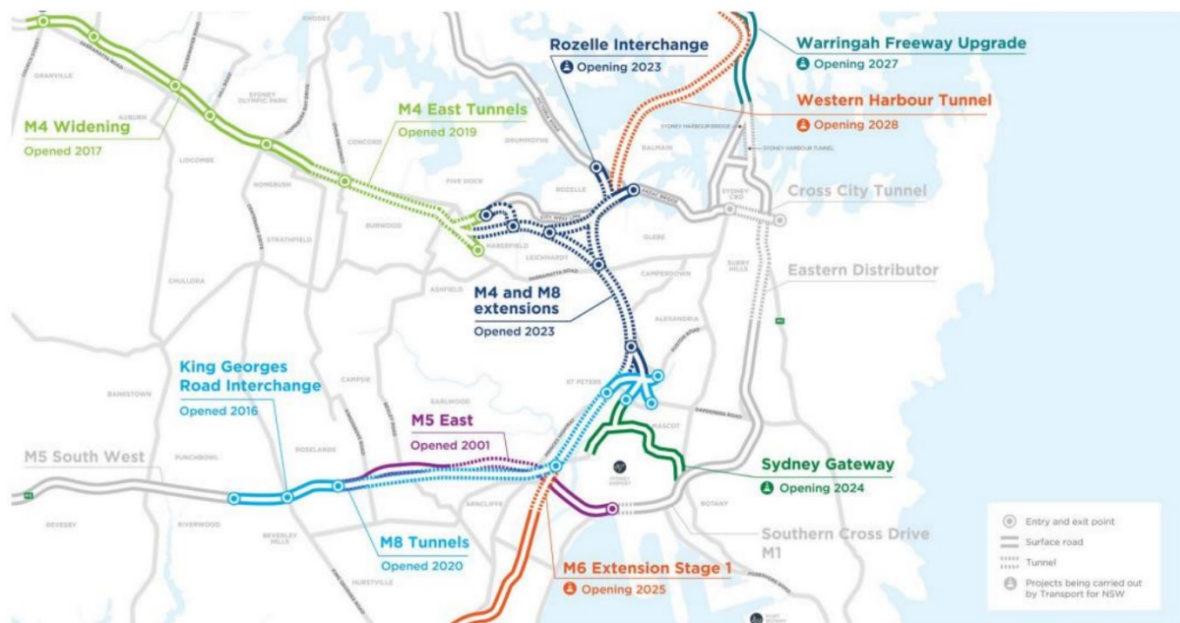
Chapter 1 Background

This chapter provides background to the Rozelle Interchange and its development as part of Stage 3 of the WestConnex project. It identifies the key stakeholders involved in the planning, development, delivery and management of the Rozelle Interchange. This chapter also outlines a chronology of events, including when changes were made to the design and scope of Stage 3 in 2015 and 2017. Finally, the chapter briefly discusses key reviews of the WestConnex project.

WestConnex

- 1.1 The WestConnex is described as 'one of the largest road infrastructure projects delivered globally'.³ It includes a series of interconnected motorways and road upgrades to increase the capacity of the M4 and M8 motorways and provides an underground link between these motorways.⁴ A map of the WestConnex is provided in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1 Map of WestConnex



Source: Submission 138, NSW Government, p 8.

- 1.2 The WestConnex was implemented over a number of stages. The first stage involved widening the M4 West from Parramatta to Homebush (Stage 1A).⁵ This was followed by the creation of the new M4 East tunnel from Homebush to Haberfield (Stage 1B).⁶ Stage 2 involved the development of the new M8 Motorway.⁷ This was followed by the development of twin 7.5-kilometre tunnels connecting the M4 extension and the M8 between Haberfield

³ Submission 27, Transurban, p 1.

⁴ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 9.

⁵ Submission 27, Transurban, p 1.

⁶ Submission 27, Transurban, p 1.

⁷ Submission 27, Transurban, p 2.

and St Peters (Stage 3A).⁸ The Rozelle Interchange and the Iron Cove Link were developed as part of the final stage of the WestConnex project (Stage 3B).

- 1.3** In explaining the rationale for the WestConnex, the NSW Government advised that prior to its development, major routes in Sydney were experiencing significant congestion, including along Victoria Road and Anzac Bridge.⁹ The NSW Government also noted that there were 'missing links in Sydney's motorway network'.¹⁰ In particular, there was a lack of arterial roads connecting the M4 East Motorway at Haberfield and the M5 Motorway at St Peters. This meant motorists 'were required to travel along local and sub-arterial roads or traverse the Sydney CBD to access existing key north and south corridors such as the M1 Motorway'.¹¹
- 1.4** The NSW Government further explained that traffic congestion and missing links in Sydney's motorway network impacted the 'efficient flow of traffic to important economic centres'.¹² Congestion also impacted 'road-based public transport contributing to increased bus travel times and journey time variability'.¹³
- 1.5** According to the NSW Government, investment in transport infrastructure, such as through the development of the WestConnex, was necessary to meet the demands of Sydney's growing population:
- In 2014, the then NSW Government indicated that from 2011 to 2031, Sydney's population was forecast to grow by an average of 80,000 additional residents per year. Moreover, by 2036, the number of trips made around Sydney each day was forecast to increase by 31 per cent.¹⁴
- 1.6** In addition to the development of the WestConnex, the NSW Government acknowledged the role of public and active transport initiatives, such as the Sydney Metro project, 'to reduce the reliance on and demand for private vehicles on the road network'.¹⁵
- 1.7** \$8.067 billion in funding was allocated to deliver the WestConnex project.¹⁶ Of this, \$3.554 billion was allocated to the development of the Rozelle Interchange.¹⁷

Rozelle Interchange

- 1.8** Stage 3 of the WestConnex project concerned the development the Rozelle Interchange and the M4-M5 Link. A map of the Rozelle Interchange and M4-M5 link is provided in Figure 2.

⁸ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 8.

⁹ Submission 138, NSW Government, pp 7-10.

¹⁰ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 7.

¹¹ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 7.

¹² Submission 138, NSW Government, p 7.

¹³ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 7.

¹⁴ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 7.

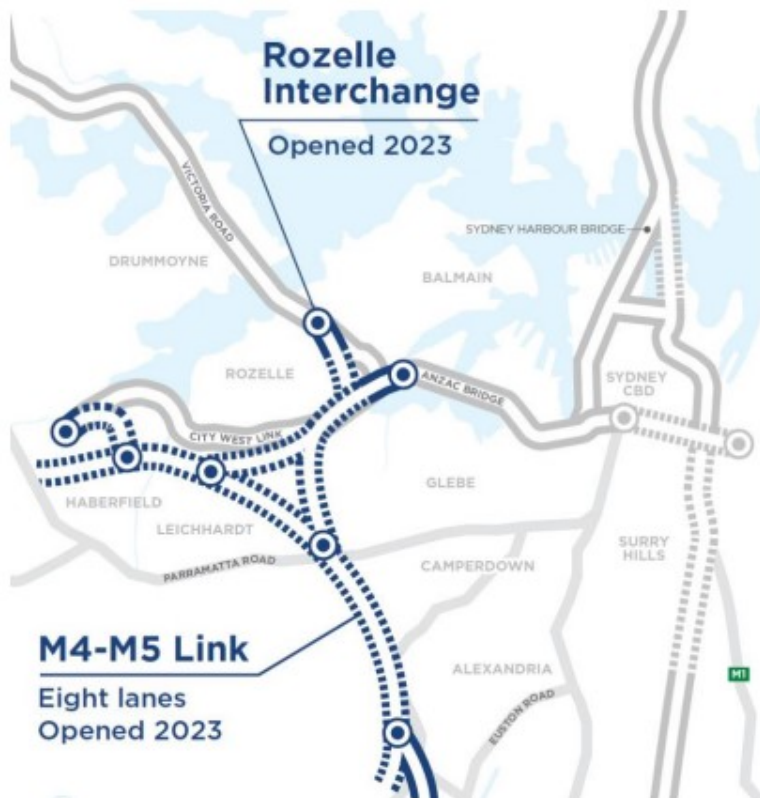
¹⁵ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 8.

¹⁶ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 23.

¹⁷ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 23.

- 1.9 The Rozelle Interchange and the Iron Cove Link were developed as part of the final stage of the WestConnex project. This final stage involved 'connecting the mainline tunnels directly to [and] from the M8 and M4 motorways with [the] City West Link, Western Distributor and Victoria Road via an underground interchange'.¹⁸ The Rozelle Interchange includes a 'toll free-underground bypass' between Iron Cove Bridge and Anzac Bridge that enables motorist to 'bypass seven sets of traffic lights' on Victoria Road.¹⁹

Figure 2 Map of the Rozelle Interchange and M4-M5 link



Source: Submission 138, NSW Government, p 9.

- 1.10 The NSW Government advised the committee that the Rozelle Interchange 'also delivered the Crescent Overpass and active transport links, as well as enabling works for the Western Harbour Tunnel'.²⁰ The NSW Government added that these 'enabling works' will ensure 'less disruption for the community overall from the Western Harbour Tunnel project'.²¹
- 1.11 When the Rozelle Interchange opened to the public on 26 November 2023,²² significant congestion was experienced by many commuters from Sydney's inner western suburbs.²³ This will be explored in detail in chapter 4.

¹⁸ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 8.

¹⁹ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 9.

²⁰ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 9.

²¹ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 9.

²² Submission 138, NSW Government, p 4.

Rozelle Parklands

- 1.12** The Rozelle Parklands was considered to be a welcomed benefit to the community as part of the construction of the WestConnex.²⁴
- 1.13** As the Rozelle Interchange is almost entirely underground, this provided space for the development of the Rozelle Parklands.²⁵ The Parklands is built on the site of the former Rozelle Railyards.²⁶ According to the NSW Government, improving urban amenity was a 'central component of the WestConnex'.²⁷
- 1.14** The Rozelle Parklands contains 10 hectares of green space, over 3,000 trees, 170,000 plants and 14 kilometres of active transport connections.²⁸ The active transport links 'connect existing paths from Drummoyne, Chiswick and Russell Lea to the Anzac Bridge and Sydney CBD'.²⁹ A map of the Rozelle Parklands is provided in Figure 3. This figure include includes yellow markings to indicate active transport links.

Figure 3 Map of the Rozelle Parklands



Source: Submission 138, NSW Government, p 10.

- ²³ See for example, Evidence, Mr Mark Chapman, Committee Executive, The Leichardt Collective, 10 April 2024, p 24; Submission 3, Inner West Council, pp 4 and 32; Submission 9, Ms Stephanie Di Pasqua MP, p 6.
- ²⁴ See for example, Evidence, Ms Kobi Shetty MP, Member for Balmain, 10 April 2024, p 2; Submission 1, Inner West Bicycle Coalition, p 1.
- ²⁵ Submission 138, NSW Government, pp 4 and 17; Evidence, Ms Camilla Drover, Deputy Secretary, Infrastructure and Place, Transport for New South Wales, 3 May 2024, p 22.
- ²⁶ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 10.
- ²⁷ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 10.
- ²⁸ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 10.
- ²⁹ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 10.

- 1.15** The Rozelle Parklands opened to the public on 17 December 2023.³⁰
- 1.16** Criticism of the delivery of the Rozelle Parklands and active public transport infrastructure will be dealt with in chapter 4.
- Asbestos in the Rozelle Parklands***
- 1.17** Shortly after the Rozelle Parklands were opened, they were formally closed by Transport for NSW on 10 January 2024, following the detection of asbestos in the mulch.³¹
- 1.18** Transport for NSW was initially alerted to the asbestos by a member of the public who emailed on 2 January 2024.³² The presence of asbestos contaminated material in the Parklands was later confirmed on 9 January 2024 and the NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA) was notified on 10 January 2024. The NSW Government stated: 'Within 24 hours the site was formally closed to the public and fenced off to prevent access'.³³
- 1.19** The issue received significant media attention and caused significant disruption.³⁴
- 1.20** The EPA subsequently issued clean up notices requiring Transport for NSW to remove and dispose of all mulch that was used in the Rozelle Parklands and additional landscaped areas outside the Parklands.³⁵
- 1.21** By 28 March 2024, the clean up notices had been complied with, with all mulch removed from the public areas of Rozelle Parklands and nearby pocket parks and roadsides.³⁶ Part of the Rozelle Parklands were reopened, with the staged reopening of further areas planned for April/May 2024.³⁷ The Parklands were later fully reopened on 2 May 2024.³⁸
- 1.22** A NSW EPA-led Asbestos Taskforce was announced on 15 February 2024.³⁹ The role of the Taskforce is to investigate how contaminated mulch ended up in the Rozelle Parklands,

³⁰ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 33; Media release, Transport for New South Wales, 'Rozelle Parklands Opening Date Locked In', 11 December 2023.

³¹ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 32.

³² Submission 138, NSW Government, p 36.

³³ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 32.

³⁴ See for example, Madeleine Achenza, 'Asbestos discovered in mulch at newly-opened Rozelle Parklands', *The Australian*, 10 January 2024; 'Asbestos contamination forces Rozelle Parklands closure', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 10 January 2024; Alexander Lewis, 'Rozelle Parklands temporarily closed after asbestos discovered in mulch near children's playground', *ABC News*, 10 January 2024.

³⁵ Submission 138, NSW Government, pp 36-37.

³⁶ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 38.

³⁷ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 32.

³⁸ Answers to questions on notice, John Holland Group, 22 May 2024, p 1.

³⁹ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 37.

amongst other sites.⁴⁰ The Taskforce is considering the potential presence of legacy asbestos and the mulch supply chain.⁴¹

1.23 The Government advised the committee that the initial phase of supply chain testing, involving the tracing of asbestos contaminated mulch originally found at the Rozelle Parklands, is now complete.⁴² The Taskforce is continuing to monitor the situation, while a criminal investigation undertaken by the EPA was current throughout this inquiry and at the time this report was published.⁴³

1.24 A comprehensive timeline of the whole-of-government response to the detection of asbestos in the Rozelle Parklands is set out in Appendix B of the NSW Government's submission.⁴⁴

Key stakeholders

1.25 A number of government agencies and private sector organisations were involved in the design, delivery and construction of the Rozelle Interchange. Their roles and responsibilities are summarised below.

Transport for NSW

1.26 Transport for NSW is the central government agency responsible for the design, delivery and management of the WestConnex, including the Rozelle Interchange.⁴⁵

1.27 The former Roads and Maritime Services (RMS), which was an amalgamation of the NSW Roads and Traffic Authority (RTA) and NSW Maritime, was actively involved in the WestConnex project until it was dissolved in 2019. RMS was the lead public sector agency for the WestConnex project and undertook the 'client role' on behalf of the NSW Government.⁴⁶ When RMS was dissolved, its roles and responsibilities were transferred to Transport for NSW.⁴⁷

⁴⁰ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 32.

⁴¹ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 32.

⁴² Submission 138, NSW Government, pp 32-33.

⁴³ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 33.

⁴⁴ Submission 138, NSW Government, pp 36-38.

⁴⁵ Audit Office of New South Wales, *WestConnex: changes since 2014*, 17 June 2021, p 1 <https://www.audit.nsw.gov.au/our-work/reports/westconnex-changes-since-2014>.

⁴⁶ Public Accountability Committee, NSW Legislative Council, *The Impact of the WestConnex Project* (2018), p 7.

⁴⁷ Submission 138, NSW Government, pp 8-9.

Infrastructure NSW

- 1.28 Infrastructure NSW first recommended the WestConnex project in 2012,⁴⁸ and, together with Transport for NSW, identified the need to provide vital infrastructure connections within and between Sydney's travel corridors.⁴⁹

NSW Treasury

- 1.29 NSW Treasury held a number of funding and financing responsibilities relevant to the WestConnex project. This included monitoring the performance of Sydney Motorway Corporation (SMC) (see below), the private company established by the NSW Government to deliver the WestConnex, on behalf of government shareholders.⁵⁰ The agency was also responsible for facilitating transactions relating to the sale of the SMC.⁵¹

Department of Planning and Environment

- 1.30 The then Department of Planning and Environment was responsible for assessing the infrastructure applications for the WestConnex project, with the Minister for Planning being the consent authority. With the approval of the five stages of the project, a compliance team within the department was responsible for ensuring that the conditions of approval were applied.⁵²

NSW Environmental Protection Authority

- 1.31 The EPA is the lead government agency responsible for responding to the detection of asbestos in the Rozelle Parklands. As noted previously, the NSW EPA-led Asbestos Taskforce is currently undertaking an investigation into the contaminated mulch at the Rozelle Parklands and other sites.⁵³

⁴⁸ Public Accountability Committee, NSW Legislative Council, *The Impact of the WestConnex Project* (2018), p 4.

⁴⁹ Submission 183, NSW Government, p 7.

⁵⁰ Public Accountability Committee, NSW Legislative Council, *The Impact of the WestConnex Project* (2018), p 38.

⁵¹ Public Accountability Committee, NSW Legislative Council, *The Impact of the WestConnex Project* (2018), p 10.

⁵² Public Accountability Committee, NSW Legislative Council, *The Impact of the WestConnex Project* (2018), p 10.

⁵³ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 32.

WestConnex Delivery Authority

- 1.32** WestConnex Delivery Authority (WDA) was established by the NSW Government as a public subsidiary corporation of RMS in November 2013.⁵⁴ The WDA was initially established to manage the planning and delivery of WestConnex.⁵⁵
- 1.33** In October 2015, the functions of the WDA were subsumed by the RMS and the SMC, discussed below.⁵⁶ The government client functions of the WDA were incorporated into RMS, and the project procurement functions of the WDA were integrated into the SMC.⁵⁷ In November 2015, the WDA formally merged into the SMC.⁵⁸

Sydney Motorway Corporation

- 1.34** The Sydney Motorway Corporation (SMC) was established in September 2014 by the NSW Government as a private company under the *Corporations Act 2001* (Cth).⁵⁹ At its inception, SMC was owned by the NSW Government, with the Treasurer, and Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight as shareholders.⁶⁰
- 1.35** The role of SMC was to finance, design, procure and deliver WestConnex.⁶¹ As previously noted, RMS was the government client for the project, while SMC delivered it. Figure 4 outlines the split of responsibilities between the two.
- 1.36** SMC was later sold in two tranches by the former government for a total of \$21.625 billion.⁶² A 51 per cent majority interest was sold to Sydney Transport Partners (STP), discussed below, in August 2018. STP acquired the remaining 49 per cent in September 2021.⁶³ Following the sale, SMC was renamed the WestConnex Project Company.⁶⁴

⁵⁴ Answers to questions on notice, Transport for New South Wales, 31 May 2024, p 2; *Transport Administration (General) Amendment (WestConnex Delivery Authority) Regulation 2013*.

⁵⁵ Evidence, Mr Peter Regan, Former Chief Financial Officer and Deputy Secretary, Finance and Investment, Transport for New South Wales; Former Senior Director, Commercial Finance, NSW Treasury; Former Chief Executive Officer, Sydney Motorway Corporation, 30 May 2024, p 2.

⁵⁶ WestConnex, *WestConnex Updated Strategic Business Case*, November 2015, p 61.

⁵⁷ Evidence, Mr Peter Regan, Former Chief Financial Officer and Deputy Secretary, Finance and Investment, Transport for New South Wales; Former Senior Director, Commercial Finance, NSW Treasury; Former Chief Executive Officer, Sydney Motorway Corporation, 30 May 2024, p 2.

⁵⁸ Answers to questions on notice, Transport for New South Wales, 31 May 2024 p 2.

⁵⁹ WestConnex, *WestConnex Updated Strategic Business Case*, November 2015, p 299.

⁶⁰ WestConnex, *WestConnex Updated Strategic Business Case*, November 2015, p 299.

⁶¹ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 8.

⁶² Submission 138, NSW Government, p 35.

⁶³ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 35.

⁶⁴ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 8.

Figure 4 Split of responsibilities between Sydney Motorway Corporation and Roads and Maritime Services

Table E.6 Split of responsibilities between deliverer and client

Sydney Motorway Corporation	Roads and Maritime Services
Deliverer	Client
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project management of the delivery of WestConnex. • Contract engagement and management. • Funding and financing of WestConnex. • Management of day-to-day communication and customer inquiries, under the direction of the Government. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acts on behalf of the Government, as the client. • Commissioning agency for the motorway. • Property acquisition on behalf of the Government. • Management of concession arrangement from Government side of contract. • Proponent for Environmental Impact Statement/planning approvals.

Source: WestConnex, *WestConnex Updated Strategic Business Case*, November 2015, p 44.

Sydney Transport Partners

1.37 Sydney Transport Partners (STP) is an Australian-led consortium comprised of:

- Transurban
- AustralianSuper
- Canada Pension Plan Investment Board (CPPIB)
- Platinum Tawreed Investments A 2010 RSC Limited
- Caisse de dépôt et placement du Québec (CDPQ).⁶⁵

1.38 The operation and maintenance of the Rozelle Interchange passed into the hands of STP on the eve of 23 November 2023.⁶⁶

Transurban

1.39 Transurban is an ASX-listed toll road company and the operator of WestConnex. Transurban is responsible for asset management, 24/7 traffic management, monitoring and incident response.⁶⁷ The company also operates the Cross City Tunnel, Eastern Distributor, Hills M2, Lane Cover Tunnel and NorthConnex.⁶⁸

⁶⁵ Submission 27, Transurban, p 1.

⁶⁶ Evidence, Ms Denise Kelly, General Manager, WestConnex, Transurban, 23 April 2024, p 10.

⁶⁷ Submission 27, Transurban, p 1.

⁶⁸ Transurban, *Sydney*, Transurban, <https://www.transurban.com/roads-and-projects/sydney>.

John Holland and CPB Contractors – joint venture

- 1.40** The Rozelle Interchange was constructed by John Holland and CPB Contractors (the joint venture), a 50/50 unincorporated joint venture. The joint venture is described by Mr Jim Salmon, Executive General Manager, Major Projects Support, John Holland, as 'equally providing resources, people, systems and expertise to deliver on the scope provided by our customer, Transport for NSW'.⁶⁹ The joint venture won the tender to construct the Rozelle Interchange in 2018.⁷⁰
- 1.41** John Holland is a tunnelling and rail contractor operating in Australia and New Zealand. In addition to the Rozelle Interchange, the company has been responsible for delivering other major tunnelling projects in New South Wales including Sydney Metro Northwest, Eastlink and AirportlinkM7.⁷¹
- 1.42** CPB Contractors is a construction company and Australasia's largest tunnelling contractors. CPB Contractors has also been responsible for the delivery of the Sydney Metro Northwest, Sydney Harbour Tunnel and the Lane Cove Tunnel.⁷²

Chronology

- 1.43** As previously noted, the WestConnex project was recommended by Infrastructure NSW in 2012 and endorsed by the O'Farrell Government in its *State Infrastructure Strategy 2012-2032*.⁷³ Since then, the design and scope of Stage 3 of the WestConnex has changed significantly. This section provides a timeline of the relevant design changes, including the introduction of the concept for the Rozelle Interchange in 2015. This chronology also includes reference to two business cases produced in 2013 and 2015, and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) released in 2017.

2013 design

- 1.44** In September 2013, RMS published the *WestConnex Business Case Executive Summary* which outlined the proposed design of WestConnex.⁷⁴ This design focused on capacity and connectivity between the M4 Motorway, M5 Motorway and the Sydney Airport.⁷⁵

⁶⁹ Evidence, Mr Jim Salmon, Executive General Manager, Major Projects Support, John Holland, 23 April 2024, p 26.

⁷⁰ Evidence, Mr Jim Salmon, Executive General Manager, Major Projects Support, John Holland, 23 April 2024, pp 30 and 33.

⁷¹ Rozelle Interchange WestConnex, *About John Holland CPB*, Rozelle Interchange WestConnex, <https://rozelleinterchange.com.au/about-jhpcb/>.

⁷² Rozelle Interchange WestConnex, *About John Holland CPB*, Rozelle Interchange WestConnex, <https://rozelleinterchange.com.au/about-jhpcb/>.

⁷³ Public Accountability Committee, NSW Legislative Council, *The Impact of the WestConnex Project* (2018), p 4.

⁷⁴ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 13.

⁷⁵ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 14.

- 1.45 The 2013 design was to be completed over three stages:
- Stage 1: M4 widening from Parramatta to Homebush and the M4 East and a new tunnel from Homebush to Haberfield
 - Stage 2: M5 widening from Beverly Hills to Bexley North, the M5 East and a new tunnel from Bexley to St Peters, and a six lane Airport Link
 - Stage 3: 8.5 kilometre tunnel between the new M4 East and M5 East between Haberfield and St Peters
- 1.46 One of the broader objectives of the WestConnex program was to revitalise the Parramatta Road corridor.⁷⁶ The government at the time said that this objective would be met under Stage 3 of the 2013 design, 'by extending the tunnelled route from Haberfield to St Peters, reintroducing traffic to Parramatta Road near Camperdown'.⁷⁷
- 1.47 The 2013 design did not approach Rozelle nor include the Rozelle Interchange.⁷⁸

2015 design

- 1.48 In November 2015, the SMC published the *WestConnex Updated Strategic Business Case*, which included changes to Stage 3 of WestConnex and marked the genesis of the Rozelle Interchange.⁷⁹
- 1.49 One of the key changes, involved the realignment of the M4-M5 Link tunnel, via a northern extension, which would become known as the Rozelle Interchange, to provide direct connection to the Anzac Bridge and Victoria Road.⁸⁰ Under the proposed 2015 design, the Rozelle Interchange was predominately above ground.⁸¹
- 1.50 Further changes to the planning and design of the WestConnex included:
- accelerating the delivery of Stage 2 to 2019 through Australian Government funding
 - investigating a Northern Connection (Western Harbour Tunnel and Beaches Link) and a Southern Connection (M6 Stage 1)
 - proceeding with Infrastructure NSW's enhanced Sydney Gateway solution.⁸²

⁷⁶ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 14.

⁷⁷ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 14.

⁷⁸ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 14; Evidence, Mr Peter Regan, Former Chief Financial Officer and Deputy Secretary, Finance and Investment, Transport for New South Wales; Former Senior Director, Commercial Finance, NSW Treasury; Former Chief Executive Officer, Sydney Motorway Corporation, 30 May 2024, p 3.

⁷⁹ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 14.

⁸⁰ Audit Office of New South Wales, *WestConnex: changes since 2014*, 17 June 2021, p 15 <https://www.audit.nsw.gov.au/our-work/reports/westconnex-changes-since-2014>.

⁸¹ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 17.

⁸² Submission 138, NSW Government, p 15.

2017 design

- 1.51** In August 2017, the RMS publicly exhibited the *M4-M5 Environmental Impact Statement* which outlined further changes to the design of Stage 3 of WestConnex, including design changes to the Rozelle Interchange.⁸³
- 1.52** Four substantial changes were made:
- undergrounding of the Rozelle Interchange
 - introducing the Iron Cove Link
 - removing the Camperdown Interchange
 - increasing from three to four lanes in each direction throughout the M4-M5 Link.⁸⁴
- 1.53** According to the NSW Government, changes to the design and delivery of the Rozelle Interchange were 'influenced by broader planning objectives and feedback from the community'.⁸⁵ This included a 'major community engagement program' which took place in July and August 2016.⁸⁶
- 1.54** The changes to the Rozelle Interchange enabled the development of the Rozelle Parklands.⁸⁷ The NSW Government advised that while further refinements were made to the design, such as the introduction of The Crescent Overpass, 'the 2017 design materially represents the Rozelle Interchange as it appears today, which opened to traffic on 26 November 2023'.⁸⁸
- 1.55** A report by the NSW Auditor-General on the WestConnex, outlined at the end of the chapter, includes a visual representation of key changes made to Stage 3 of the WestConnex project between 2013 and mid-2016 (Figure 5).⁸⁹
- 1.56** An analysis of the design changes, including the rationale for these changes, can be found in chapter 2.

⁸³ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 15.

⁸⁴ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 15.

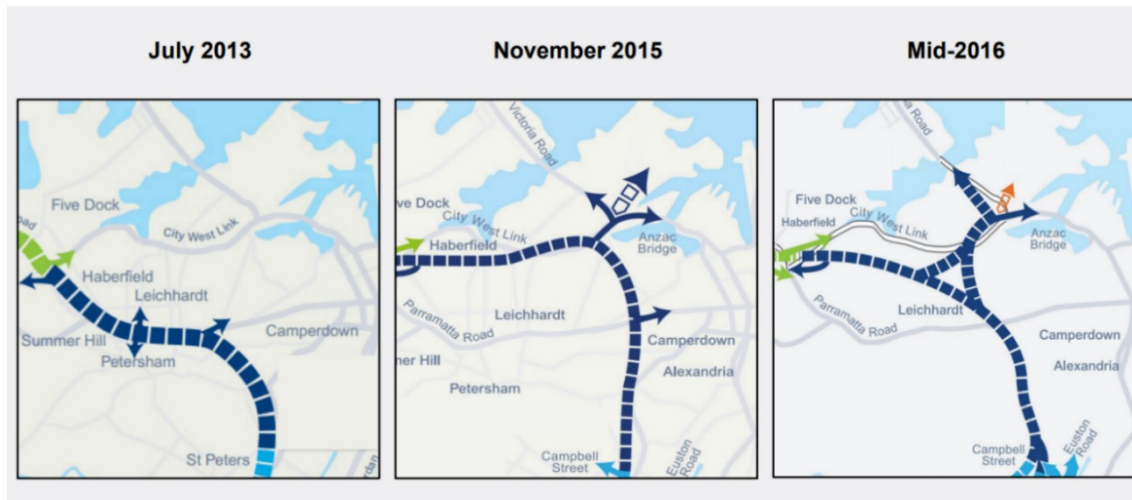
⁸⁵ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 4.

⁸⁶ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 15.

⁸⁷ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 4.

⁸⁸ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 15.

⁸⁹ Audit Office of New South Wales, *WestConnex: changes since 2014*, 17 June 2021, p 22 <https://www.audit.nsw.gov.au/our-work/reports/westconnex-changes-since-2014>.

Figure 5 Design changes made to Stage 3 of the WestConnex project

Source: Audit Office of New South Wales, 'WestConnex changes since 2014', p 22.

Key reviews

1.57 Key reviews of the broader WestConnex project have been undertaken in recent years, including the 2018 Public Accountability Committee's inquiry into the impact of the WestConnex Project and the 2021 Auditor-General's performance audit of WestConnex changes since 2014. These reviews are briefly outlined below.

Inquiry into the impact of the WestConnex Project

1.58 In 2018, the NSW Legislative Council Public Accountability Committee established an inquiry into the impact of the WestConnex Project.⁹⁰ The inquiry examined a range of issues including the cost of the project, the adequacy of the business case, and WestConnex's relationship with other road projects.⁹¹

1.59 The Public Accountability Committee made 16 findings and 23 recommendations in its final report, tabled on 17 December 2018.⁹² Amongst its findings, the committee concluded that the transparency arrangements pertaining to the WestConnex business case were unsatisfactory. It also found that the sale of the majority interest in SMC to the private sector would likely exacerbate existing transparency and accountability concerns relating to the project. The committee welcomed the additional green space that the project would provide

⁹⁰ Public Accountability Committee, NSW Legislative Council, *The Impact of the WestConnex Project* (2018), p vi.

⁹¹ Public Accountability Committee, NSW Legislative Council, *The Impact of the WestConnex Project* (2018), p vi.

⁹² Public Accountability Committee, NSW Legislative Council, *The Impact of the WestConnex Project* (2018), pp x-xiv.

but noted that, while extensive consultation for the project was undertaken, it appeared to be ineffective and lacked an empathetic approach to community members.⁹³

- 1.60** To this end, the committee made recommendations seeking to strengthen transparency arrangements when delivering major infrastructure projects, improve community consultation and complaints handling, and address construction impacts and preserve community amenity.⁹⁴

Performance audit of WestConnex changes since 2014

- 1.61** Following a performance audit, the Auditor-General's Report '*WestConnex: changes since 2014*' was published on 17 June 2021. The purpose of the audit was to assess whether Transport for NSW and Infrastructure NSW had effectively assessed and justified major scope changes to the WestConnex project since 2014.⁹⁵ In doing so, the Auditor-General's report 'examined the November 2015 Updated Strategic Business Case and related projects that were necessary for WestConnex to fully realise its stated objectives and benefits'.⁹⁶
- 1.62** The report made a number of findings, including that there was 'a lack of public transparency on the total cost and benefits of the WestConnex project'.⁹⁷ Concerns about transparency were also found in relation to Transport for NSW's record keeping practices.⁹⁸
- 1.63** Additionally, the report found that in 2016, Transport for NSW had 'revised the design of the M4-M5 Link and Rozelle to address traffic and integration issues'.⁹⁹ However, the report noted that Transport for NSW 'documented, but did not publish, the rationale for the design changes', including the decision to remove the Camperdown ramps.¹⁰⁰

Committee comment

- 1.64** The committee acknowledges the reviews undertaken by the NSW Legislative Council Public Accountability Committee and the NSW Auditor-General, and notes the recommendations

⁹³ Public Accountability Committee, NSW Legislative Council, *The Impact of the WestConnex Project* (2018), pp x-xi.

⁹⁴ Media release, Reverend the Hon Fred Nile MLC, 'WestConnex inquiry report tabled', 17 December 2018.

⁹⁵ Audit Office of New South Wales, *WestConnex: changes since 2014*, 17 June 2021, p 1 <https://www.audit.nsw.gov.au/our-work/reports/westconnex-changes-since-2014>.

⁹⁶ Audit Office of New South Wales, *WestConnex: changes since 2014*, 17 June 2021, p 12 <https://www.audit.nsw.gov.au/our-work/reports/westconnex-changes-since-2014>.

⁹⁷ Audit Office of New South Wales, *WestConnex: changes since 2014*, 17 June 2021, p 6 <https://www.audit.nsw.gov.au/our-work/reports/westconnex-changes-since-2014>.

⁹⁸ Audit Office of New South Wales, *WestConnex: changes since 2014*, 17 June 2021, p 7 <https://www.audit.nsw.gov.au/our-work/reports/westconnex-changes-since-2014>.

⁹⁹ Audit Office of New South Wales, *WestConnex: changes since 2014*, 17 June 2021, p 7 <https://www.audit.nsw.gov.au/our-work/reports/westconnex-changes-since-2014>.

¹⁰⁰ Audit Office of New South Wales, *WestConnex: changes since 2014*, 17 June 2021, p 7 <https://www.audit.nsw.gov.au/our-work/reports/westconnex-changes-since-2014>.

included in both reports. Many of these recommendations are relevant to key issues identified throughout this inquiry. Therefore, the committee calls on the NSW Government to implement the recommendations included in the:

- Legislative Council's Public Accountability Committee's 2018 report, *The Impact of the WestConnex Project* report
- Auditor-General's 2021 report, *WestConnex: Changes since 2014*.

Recommendation 1

That the NSW Government implement the recommendations included in the:

- Legislative Council's Public Accountability Committee's 2018 report, *The Impact of the WestConnex Project*
 - Auditor-General's 2021 report *WestConnex: Changes since 2014*.
-

Chapter 2 Planning and development

As a key aspect of the inquiry, this chapter considers the planning and development of the Rozelle Interchange by examining the financial model and design decisions which led to its development, and the criticisms of these approaches. This chapter goes on to consider the roles of the operators and contractors in the design and development of the Rozelle Interchange, and finally considers the planning and design expectations of the community.

Financial model and privatisation of WestConnex

- 2.1** Intrinsically linked to the planning and development of the WestConnex are the financial arrangements underpinning the project. This section will consider the financial model and privatisation of WestConnex, including the basis for the selected financial model, and subsequent implications and criticisms of this approach raised by inquiry participants.
- 2.2** As outlined in chapter 1, the Sydney Motorway Corporation (SMC) was set up to facilitate the finance and subsequent sale of the WestConnex stages to the private sector.¹⁰¹ In order to do this, the SMC established subsidiary corporations for each of the stages of WestConnex, with each stage being structured into concession agreements which were the basis of public-private partnership structures.¹⁰² The subsidiaries entered into concession deeds with the then Roads and Maritime Service (RMS), contracted design and construction providers, and functioned as the entities through which private sector debt and equity would be brought into WestConnex.¹⁰³
- 2.3** SMC, and effectively the WestConnex, was sold to Sydney Transport Partners (STP) in two tranches, as discussed in chapter 1.¹⁰⁴ In the first tranche, the NSW Government sold its 51 per cent stake in the SMC to STP in August 2018¹⁰⁵, and reported the following financial benefits from this sale:
- \$9,260 million in proceeds
 - \$1,081 million in return of capital on the M4 Motorway (as advised by the Crown Finance Entity in NSW Treasury)
 - \$476 million cash release from the SMC.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰¹ Evidence, Mr Peter Regan, former Chief Financial Officer and Deputy Secretary, Finance and Investment, Transport for New South Wales, former Senior Director, Commercial Finance, NSW Treasury, former Chief Executive Officer, Sydney Motorway Corporation, 30 May 2024, p 3.

¹⁰² WestConnex, *WestConnex Updated Strategic Business Case*, November 2015, p 300; Evidence, Mr Peter Regan, former Chief Financial Officer and Deputy Secretary, Finance and Investment, Transport for New South Wales, former Senior Director, Commercial Finance, NSW Treasury, former Chief Executive Officer, Sydney Motorway Corporation, 30 May 2024, p 4.

¹⁰³ WestConnex, *WestConnex Updated Strategic Business Case*, November 2015, p 300.

¹⁰⁴ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 35; Submission 27, Transurban, p 1.

¹⁰⁵ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 35.

¹⁰⁶ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 35.

- 2.4** In the second tranche, the NSW Government sold its remaining 49 per cent stake in the SMC to STP in September 2021.¹⁰⁷ The NSW Government reported that this resulted in \$11.1 billion in sale proceeds across the two 24.5 per cent stakes in WestConnex.¹⁰⁸
- 2.5** As noted previously, when SMC was sold, it became the WestConnex Project Company, fully owned by the STP consortium.¹⁰⁹ Following the opening of the Rozelle Interchange in November 2023, the WestConnex Project Company assumed operational and maintenance responsibilities, with Transurban (within the STP consortium) taking on these responsibilities.¹¹⁰
- 2.6** Mr Peter Regan, former Chief Financial Officer and Deputy Secretary, Finance and Investment at Transport for NSW, former Senior Director, Commercial Finance at NSW Treasury and former Chief Executive Officer of the Sydney Motorway Corporation, was the head of Infrastructure Finance at NSW Treasury between November 2012 to March 2014.¹¹¹ This role included responsibility for developing the financing strategy for WestConnex.¹¹²
- 2.7** Mr Regan told the committee that toll roads in Australia are generally developed through public-private partnership structures.¹¹³ However, in 2012-2013, he stated that there was little appetite from the private sector to take on toll risk as the global financial markets were still depressed following the Global Financial Crisis, and previous toll roads in Australia had gone into receivership.¹¹⁴ Mr Regan claimed this is the reason that a public-private partnership was not possible, and therefore WestConnex was set up to access private capital when it became available in future, and according to Mr Regan, while the NSW Government was paying in the interim, the intent was that it would recycle that capital.¹¹⁵ Mr Regan further asserted that the

¹⁰⁷ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 35.

¹⁰⁸ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 35.

¹⁰⁹ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 8.

¹¹⁰ Answers to questions on notice, Transport for NSW, 31 May 2024, p 2; Submission 27, Transurban, p 1.

¹¹¹ Evidence, Mr Peter Regan, former Chief Financial Officer and Deputy Secretary, Finance and Investment, Transport for New South Wales, former Senior Director, Commercial Finance, NSW Treasury, former Chief Executive Officer, Sydney Motorway Corporation, 30 May 2024, p 2.

¹¹² Evidence, Mr Peter Regan, former Chief Financial Officer and Deputy Secretary, Finance and Investment, Transport for New South Wales, former Senior Director, Commercial Finance, NSW Treasury, former Chief Executive Officer, Sydney Motorway Corporation, 30 May 2024, p 2.

¹¹³ Evidence, Mr Peter Regan, former Chief Financial Officer and Deputy Secretary, Finance and Investment, Transport for New South Wales, former Senior Director, Commercial Finance, NSW Treasury, former Chief Executive Officer, Sydney Motorway Corporation, 30 May 2024, p 5.

¹¹⁴ Evidence, Mr Peter Regan, former Chief Financial Officer and Deputy Secretary, Finance and Investment, Transport for New South Wales, former Senior Director, Commercial Finance, NSW Treasury, former Chief Executive Officer, Sydney Motorway Corporation, 30 May 2024, p 5.

¹¹⁵ Evidence, Mr Peter Regan, former Chief Financial Officer and Deputy Secretary, Finance and Investment, Transport for New South Wales, former Senior Director, Commercial Finance, NSW Treasury, former Chief Executive Officer, Sydney Motorway Corporation, 30 May 2024, p 9.

objective of this strategy was to enable WestConnex to be built faster and to free up capital for other infrastructure projects.¹¹⁶

- 2.8** Four former senior transport officials and experts collectively appeared before the committee with extensive experience in 'planning, procuring, delivering and operating complex, large-scale infrastructure projects, particularly in the transport sector', including WestConnex.¹¹⁷ They were Mr Chris Ford, former Director, Traffic and Transport, Roads and Traffic Authority, Mr Paul Forward, former Chief Executive Officer, Roads and Traffic Authority, Mr Les Wielinga AM, former Chief Executive Officer, Roads and Traffic Authority, former Chief Executive Officer, Metro Trains, and former Director-General of Transport for NSW, and Mr Stuart McCreery, Civil Engineer.¹¹⁸ They argued that the motivation to set up WestConnex in this way was to maximise the sale of WestConnex to the private sector. They explained:

WestConnex represents a different approach where the Government takes the traffic, construction and financial risk and manages the process through a separate single asset entity (Sydney Motorway Corporation). After which time the Government hopes to cover its costs by selling the motorway to the highest bidder. Treasury were motivated to obtain the maximum price for WestConnex and to minimize its cost.¹¹⁹

- 2.9** A number of inquiry participants have similarly claimed that the motivation behind the WestConnex design was profitability, and have argued that the Rozelle Interchange was designed to funnel cars onto WestConnex to the ultimate benefit of STP/Transurban.¹²⁰ As one inquiry participant expressed '[t]he impacts from the flawed end result of the Rozelle Interchange comes as no surprise, many transport experts warned the government against further inducement of traffic over building of mass public transport, however Transurban won the day and now we have total gridlock during the peak times and rat running in our streets'.¹²¹
- 2.10** Similarly, the Transport Workers' Union of NSW argued that 'the current lived situation of the Rozelle Interchange makes it difficult to accept the notion that the project was planned for tackling congestion. It may be more accurate to suggest that the Interchange serves as a vessel for funnelling even greater sums of money to Transurban by forcing motorists onto toll

¹¹⁶ Evidence, Mr Peter Regan, former Chief Financial Officer and Deputy Secretary, Finance and Investment, Transport for New South Wales, former Senior Director, Commercial Finance, NSW Treasury, former Chief Executive Officer, Sydney Motorway Corporation, 30 May 2024, p 9.

¹¹⁷ Evidence, Mr Paul Forward, former Chief Executive Officer, Roads and Traffic Authority, 3 May 2024, p 2.

¹¹⁸ Submission 166, Mr Chris Ford, Mr Paul Forward, Mr Les Wielinga AM and Mr Stuart McCreery, p 2.

¹¹⁹ Submission 166, Mr Chris Ford, Mr Paul Forward, Mr Les Wielinga AM and Mr Stuart McCreery, p 7.

¹²⁰ Submission 18, Ms Kathryn Calman, p 4; Submission 19, Mr Nathan English, p 13; Submission 20, Transport Workers' Union of NSW, p 7; Submission 46, Name suppressed, p 1; Submission 48, Name suppressed, p 2; Submission 104, Name suppressed, p 1.

¹²¹ Submission 104, Name suppressed, p 1.

roads'.¹²² The notion of decision making being driven by financial motivations is discussed further in the next section.

- 2.11** When asked whether the flaws structurally with the project can be traced back to the delivery model that was established in the very first instance with WestConnex, Mr Forward told the committee:

...[Y]es. Remember the model that we've got with WestConnex is very similar to the CityLink model in Melbourne ... Victoria, has now changed back to a more government-controlled model. It's a different approach. They've now gone back to what we were doing with the Eastern Distributor, Western Sydney Orbital et cetera.¹²³

Design decisions

- 2.12** Amongst the key issues raised in relation to the planning and development of the Rozelle Interchange is the nature of the design decisions made over the course of the WestConnex project. This section will consider the evidence received about the decision making that led to the Rozelle Interchange, and the concerns raised by inquiry participants over the motivations behind these design decisions.

Northward realignment

- 2.13** As outlined in chapter 1, the SMC published the *WestConnex Updated Strategic Business Case* in 2015.¹²⁴ The key change in the 2015 design relevant to this inquiry was the northward realignment of Stage 3 which brought WestConnex to Rozelle.¹²⁵
- 2.14** The 2013 Stage 3 design had the M4-M5 link following Parramatta Road to Camperdown.¹²⁶ Following release of the 2013 design, the NSW Government made a decision to investigate a Northern Connection (Western Harbour Tunnel and Beaches Link).¹²⁷ Following this investigation, a decision was made by the NSW Government to duplicate the City West Link to Rozelle for the M4-M5 Link.¹²⁸
- 2.15** The NSW Government confirmed that the investigation of a Northern Connection 'would go on to drive substantial updates to the WestConnex program's reference design, including the northward realignment of the M4-M5 Link and addition of what later became the Rozelle

¹²² Submission 20, Transport Workers' Union of NSW, p 7.

¹²³ Evidence, Mr Paul Forward, former Chief Executive Officer, Roads and Traffic Authority, 3 May 2024, p 16.

¹²⁴ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 14.

¹²⁵ WestConnex, *WestConnex Updated Strategic Business Case*, November 2015, p 52; Submission 138, NSW Government p 15.

¹²⁶ WestConnex, *WestConnex Updated Strategic Business Case*, November 2015, p 52.

¹²⁷ Submission 138, NSW Government, pp 14-15.

¹²⁸ WestConnex, *WestConnex Updated Strategic Business Case*, November 2015, p 52.

Interchange'.¹²⁹ At that stage, the Camperdown connection was still within the design for the Rozelle Interchange.¹³⁰

- 2.16** The committee attempted to clarify the decision-making process behind the northward realignment of Stage 3 of WestConnex.
- 2.17** The NSW Government stated that 'the NSW Government made three decisions which generated several necessary design changes captured in the 2015 design change', including the decision to investigate a Northern Connection.¹³¹ When questioned as to who was meant by the NSW Government, Transport for NSW provided in answers to questions taken on notice that 'references to decisions made by the NSW Government refer to Ministers of the day'.¹³²
- 2.18** In evidence about the decision making surrounding the preparation of the *WestConnex Updated Strategic Business Case*, Ms Camilla Drover, Deputy Secretary, Infrastructure and Place, Transport for NSW, told the committee that SMC prepared the *WestConnex Updated Strategic Business Case* under the Infrastructure NSW assurance process.¹³³ Ms Drover could not confirm whether there was any direction from a Minister to produce the *WestConnex Updated Strategic Business Case*, and stated that she 'suspect[ed] the Government would have been fully across what was being prepared at the time, given the scale and nature of the project ...'.¹³⁴ The Hon John Graham MLC, Minister for Roads informed the committee that the usual practice would be 'for the government to be informed'.¹³⁵
- 2.19** The *WestConnex Updated Strategic Business Case* included information about the process for the decision for a northward realignment. As reported in the business case, in mid-2014, the NSW Government directed the WestConnex Delivery Authority (WDA) to investigate northern and southern extensions.¹³⁶ In late 2014, the WDA recommended to the NSW Government that a northern extension be incorporated into the alignment of WestConnex Stage 3.¹³⁷
- 2.20** This change in alignment was from the M4-M5 Link 'diverting from the previous Parramatta Road alignment, to instead follow a City West Link alignment to Rozelle, before turning south to Camperdown'.¹³⁸ This change in alignment underwent an options evaluation and testing process, of which the *WestConnex Updated Strategic Business Case* reported:

¹²⁹ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 15.

¹³⁰ Evidence, Ms Camilla Drover, Deputy Secretary, Infrastructure and Place, Transport for New South Wales, 3 May 2024, p 22.

¹³¹ Submission 138, NSW Government, pp 14-15.

¹³² Answers to questions on notice, Transport for New South Wales, 31 May 2024, p 2.

¹³³ Evidence, Ms Camilla Drover, Deputy Secretary, Infrastructure and Place, Transport for New South Wales, 3 May 2024, pp 21-22.

¹³⁴ Evidence, Ms Camilla Drover, Deputy Secretary, Infrastructure and Place, Transport for New South Wales, 3 May 2024, p 22.

¹³⁵ Evidence, the Hon John Graham MLC, Minister for Roads, 3 May 2024, p 23.

¹³⁶ WestConnex, *WestConnex Updated Strategic Business Case*, November 2015, p 137.

¹³⁷ WestConnex, *WestConnex Updated Strategic Business Case*, November 2015, p 138.

¹³⁸ WestConnex, *WestConnex Updated Strategic Business Case*, November 2015, p 138.

- there were 16 options, and a number of sub options were identified and evaluated in relation to the change in alignment for Stage 3
- the purpose of the options was to facilitate the northern extension and allow a future connection to a Western Harbour Tunnel and Beaches Link, while still delivering on the objective of WestConnex
- the analysis of the options was based on expected traffic outcomes on Parramatta Road, the broader road network (the impact on the Anzac Bridge in particular) and the impact on Stage 3 itself.¹³⁹

2.21 The amended design duplicating the City West Link to Rozelle was chosen. According to the business case, this was because the design delivered the functionality of the northern extension but did so within the main WestConnex project.¹⁴⁰ This reason was explained in further detail:

This provides better connectivity to the Anzac Bridge and Victoria Road, while still providing an alternative to Parramatta Road.

...

Importantly, the new Stage 3 alignment also enables connection to the future Western Harbour Tunnel and Beaches Link.¹⁴¹

2.22 Transport for NSW in answers to questions on notice, also noted that the recommended design for the M4-M5 Link realignment that was pursued was more cost effective and provided similar reductions to surface traffic flows for WestConnex that followed the Parramatta Road corridor.¹⁴²

2.23 The NSW Government accepted this change in October 2014.¹⁴³

Criticisms of the northward realignment

2.24 The northward realignment of Stage 3 was heavily criticised by some inquiry participants because of repeated warnings it would overload the Anzac Bridge, and the motivation behind the decision.

2.25 The committee heard that former senior departmental officers Mr Forward and Mr Ford, and civil engineer Mr McCreery were on an Expert Review Group (ERG) working with Transport for NSW, Infrastructure NSW and RMS to refine the design of WestConnex between 2012 and early 2015.¹⁴⁴ Mr Forward and Mr McCreery were Principals of Evans & Peck, and Mr

¹³⁹ WestConnex, *WestConnex Updated Strategic Business Case*, November 2015, p 138.

¹⁴⁰ WestConnex, *WestConnex Updated Strategic Business Case*, November 2015, p 138.

¹⁴¹ WestConnex, *WestConnex Updated Strategic Business Case*, November 2015, p 52.

¹⁴² Answers to questions on notice, Transport for NSW, 31 May 2024, p 5.

¹⁴³ WestConnex, *WestConnex Updated Strategic Business Case*, November 2015, p 139.

¹⁴⁴ Submission 166, Mr Chris Ford, Mr Paul Forward, Mr Les Wielinga AM and Mr Stuart McCreery, p 4.

Ford, a member of the Evans & Peck team.¹⁴⁵ Evans & Peck was a consulting firm commissioned by Infrastructure NSW to provide advice to the NSW Government on the WestConnex as Sydney's motorway priority.¹⁴⁶ The ERG also conducted extensive analysis of the northern design of the WestConnex, including traffic modelling assessing the impact of connecting the WestConnex and the Anzac Bridge.¹⁴⁷

2.26 The ERG commissioned four leading teams of road designers and civil construction companies, and considered 15 different schemes in relation to Stage 3, with modelling undertaken for each.¹⁴⁸ At that stage, the designs proposed by the ERG kept to the Parramatta Road alignment and did not go near Rozelle.¹⁴⁹ The committee was told that late in that process, the WDA Board advised they wanted to consider future access to the Western Harbour Tunnel.¹⁵⁰

2.27 In September 2014, the WDA/SMC developed a reference scheme that included the Rozelle connection,¹⁵¹ in response to which Mr Wielinga, Mr Forward, Mr Ford and Mr McCreery claimed the ERG identified 'significant challenges':

The ERG identified significant challenges, modelled the associated traffic and found it had negative impacts on morning peak traffic flows to the Anzac Bridge. The Evans & Peck team advised against further development of this option.¹⁵²

2.28 Mr Forward maintained in evidence to the committee that 'the 15 different options all had traffic modelling undertaken for them', and emphasised that '[w]hat the traffic modelling demonstrated was that connecting to the Anzac Bridge would, in fact, overload the Anzac Bridge'.¹⁵³ Noting that the WestConnex has had 'more traffic modelling undertaken than any other road project in Sydney', Mr Forward asserted: 'What is happening now was predicted in the traffic modelling'.¹⁵⁴ Traffic modelling is considered in greater detail later in the chapter.

¹⁴⁵ Submission 166, Mr Chris Ford, Mr Paul Forward, Mr Les Wielinga AM and Mr Stuart McCreery, p 2.

¹⁴⁶ Submission 166, Mr Chris Ford, Mr Paul Forward, Mr Les Wielinga AM and Mr Stuart McCreery, p 3.

¹⁴⁷ Evidence, Mr Paul Forward, former Chief Executive Officer, Roads and Traffic Authority, 3 May 2024, p 2.

¹⁴⁸ Submission 166, Mr Chris Ford, Mr Paul Forward, Mr Les Wielinga AM and Mr Stuart McCreery, pp 4-5.

¹⁴⁹ Submission 166, Mr Chris Ford, Mr Paul Forward, Mr Les Wielinga AM and Mr Stuart McCreery, p 5.

¹⁵⁰ Submission 166, Mr Chris Ford, Mr Paul Forward, Mr Les Wielinga AM and Mr Stuart McCreery, pp 5-6.

¹⁵¹ Submission 166, Mr Chris Ford, Mr Paul Forward, Mr Les Wielinga AM and Mr Stuart McCreery, p 6.

¹⁵² Submission 166, Mr Chris Ford, Mr Paul Forward, Mr Les Wielinga AM and Mr Stuart McCreery, p 6.

¹⁵³ Evidence, Mr Paul Forward, former Chief Executive Officer, Roads and Traffic Authority, 3 May 2024, p 2.

¹⁵⁴ Evidence, Mr Paul Forward, former Chief Executive Officer, Roads and Traffic Authority, 3 May 2024, p 2.

- 2.29** In considering who was responsible for the final design decision for the Rozelle Interchange, Mr Forward and Mr McCreery told the committee they believed that SMC had ownership of the Rozelle Interchange design.¹⁵⁵
- 2.30** However, Mr McCreery also acknowledged the lack of clarity and transparency in the decision making for the Rozelle Interchange more broadly, stating:
- Who's had authority and influence at a particular time to be able to make a decision? It's not clear to me. I think if anything is to be learnt out of this, it's to make sure that those processes work going forward.¹⁵⁶

Removal of the Camperdown Interchange

- 2.31** As mentioned in chapter 1, the removal of the Camperdown Interchange was included as part of the release of the 2017 design in the *M4-M5 Link Environmental Impact Statement* (EIS). The NSW Government advised that the Camperdown Interchange was removed following an assessment of traffic, environmental and community impacts, and substantial negative community feedback.¹⁵⁷
- 2.32** The NSW Government confirmed that impacts on traffic had been foreseen with the removal of the Camperdown Interchange:

[t]he Camperdown Interchange was removed from the Project, despite predicted likely impacts on broader traffic conditions on the Project...

Whilst the removal of the Camperdown Interchange has diverted traffic from local Camperdown roads, it has resulted in increased traffic throughout Anzac Bridge/Western Distributor, The Crescent and Parramatta Road'.¹⁵⁸

Criticism of the decision to remove the Camperdown Interchange

- 2.33** Criticisms of the decision to remove the Camperdown Interchange have centred on the lack of transparency around the decision, and the assertion that the removal was to cause an increase in the number of toll trips, which in turn increased the sale value of WestConnex.
- 2.34** In reference to the transparency of the changes, Mr Wielinga, Mr Forward, Mr Ford and Mr McCreery drew attention to the Auditor-General's report, *WestConnex: Changes since 2014*.¹⁵⁹ In the report, the Auditor-General stated that "Transport for NSW documented, but did not

¹⁵⁵ Evidence, Mr Paul Forward, former Chief Executive Officer, Roads and Traffic Authority, 3 May 2024, p 8; Evidence, Mr Stuart McCreery, Civil Engineer, 3 May 2024, p 8.

¹⁵⁶ Evidence, Mr Stuart McCreery, Civil Engineer, 3 May 2024, p 17.

¹⁵⁷ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 17.

¹⁵⁸ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 17.

¹⁵⁹ Submission 166, Mr Chris Ford, Mr Paul Forward, Mr Les Wielinga AM and Mr Stuart McCreery, p 7; Audit Office of New South Wales, *WestConnex: changes since 2014*, 17 June 2021, p 7 <https://www.audit.nsw.gov.au/our-work/reports/westconnex-changes-since-2014>.

publish, the rationale for the design changes',¹⁶⁰ which included the deletion of the Camperdown intersection.¹⁶¹

2.35 In response to a question on notice regarding the Auditor-General's observation, Transport for NSW directed the committee to the *WestConnex Updated Strategic Business Case* and the M4-M5 Link EIS.¹⁶² It also informed the committee that the Camperdown Interchange was removed in response to feedback received during formal community consultation undertaken in September 2016 and to avoid potential impacts on the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, its Cyclotron medical research facility, and the University of Sydney.¹⁶³

2.36 Mr Wielinga, Mr Forward, Mr Ford and Mr McCreery argued that these major changes occurred without visibility by the public or the ERG.¹⁶⁴ They claimed the impact of the deletion of the Camperdown ramps was significant, arguing it had the following effects:

- an increase of traffic load on the Rozelle Interchange causing a negative outcome for users
- traffic modelling suggesting that the removal of the ramps would increase the volume of tolled trips which would in turn increase the sale price of WestConnex to the private sector to the benefit of Treasury
- the capital cost of the project would be reduced by deleting the Camperdown ramps.¹⁶⁵

Were key design decisions financially motivated?

2.37 In considering the pursuit of a northward realignment in the 2015 design and the removal of the Camperdown Interchange in the M4-M5 Link EIS, a number of inquiry participants suggested that these key design decisions were based on financial motivations.

2.38 For example, Mr Forward argued that, in the earlier design phase, an option that would push more traffic on the motorway would make the motorway more valuable to potential investors:

...[T]he models that we had a look at demonstrated that pushing the traffic onto the Anzac Bridge – and remember, you've got 14 lanes going into 4 on the Anzac Bridge – actually generated more traffic on the motorway, which meant the motorway was more valuable as an asset when it was sold.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶⁰ Audit Office of New South Wales, *WestConnex: changes since 2014*, 17 June 2021, p 7 <https://www.audit.nsw.gov.au/our-work/reports/westconnex-changes-since-2014>.

¹⁶¹ Audit Office of New South Wales, *WestConnex: changes since 2014*, 17 June 2021, p 7 <https://www.audit.nsw.gov.au/our-work/reports/westconnex-changes-since-2014>.

¹⁶² Answers to questions on notice, Transport for NSW, 31 May 2024, p 5.

¹⁶³ Answers to questions on notice, Transport for NSW, 31 May 2024, p 5.

¹⁶⁴ Submission 166, Mr Chris Ford, Mr Paul Forward, Mr Les Wielinga AM and Mr Stuart McCreery, p 6.

¹⁶⁵ Submission 166, Mr Chris Ford, Mr Paul Forward, Mr Les Wielinga AM and Mr Stuart McCreery, p 6.

¹⁶⁶ Evidence, Mr Paul Forward, former Chief Executive Officer, Roads and Traffic Authority, 3 May 2024, p 3.

- 2.39** With regard to the decision to remove the Camperdown Interchange, Mr Forward further claimed that the intersection at Camperdown was vital to make sure that the Anzac Bridge would not be overloaded,¹⁶⁷ and ultimately argued that 'the final design was an attempt to maximise the value of the motorway when it was put out for sale, because it had a larger number of toll trips on it than some of the previous options'.¹⁶⁸
- 2.40** This sentiment is shared by other inquiry participants, who similarly claimed that the design of the Rozelle Interchange generates greater traffic on WestConnex to the benefit of STP/Transurban.¹⁶⁹ Ms Kathryn Calman asserted: 'We have wasted a decade in improving the mobility of people and freight on an infrastructure asset for the benefit of the private tollroad operator Transurban. This was never a transport plan to benefit the public'.¹⁷⁰
- 2.41** Likewise, Mr Nathan English argued that 'the only *real* winner, was *Transurban* and its shareholders/investors ... the entire Rozelle Interchange project could now be seen as something designed to entice as many motorists from all over Sydney, into *Transurban's* coveted "funnel for fortune"'.¹⁷¹

Role of operators and contractors

- 2.42** Further to the concerns raised around the financial motivations for the final design of the Rozelle Interchange, inquiry participants questioned the role of the operator and contractors involved in the development and delivery of the project, namely Transurban, and the joint venture of John Holland CPB Contractors. This section will consider the role of these entities and examines whether contractual arrangements have prevented government agencies from improving traffic conditions for certain road users.

Role in design decisions

- 2.43** During the inquiry, both Transurban and joint venture representatives were questioned as to their role, if any, in the design of the Rozelle Interchange.
- 2.44** In relation to the joint venture, Mr Jim Salmon, Executive General Manager, Major Projects Support, John Holland, told the committee that the joint venture received a reference design, a scope of work, and completed a design that was independently verified to be compliant with the reference design and scope of criteria.¹⁷² Mr Salmon denied that the joint venture provided

¹⁶⁷ Evidence, Mr Paul Forward, former Chief Executive Officer, Roads and Traffic Authority, 3 May 2024, p 5.

¹⁶⁸ Evidence, Mr Paul Forward, former Chief Executive Officer, Roads and Traffic Authority, 3 May 2024, p 8.

¹⁶⁹ Submission 18, Ms Kathryn Calman, p 4; Submission 19, Mr Nathan English, p 13; Submission 20, Transport Workers' Union of NSW, p 7; Submission 46, Name suppressed, p 1; Submission 104, Name suppressed, p 1.

¹⁷⁰ Submission 18, Ms Kathryn Calman, p 4.

¹⁷¹ Submission 19, Mr Nathan English, p 13.

¹⁷² Evidence, Mr Jim Salmon, Executive General Manager, Major Projects Support, John Holland, 23 April 2024, p 30.

any advice to Government about any impacts on local traffic as this was outside their responsibility, and also denied that they were privy to any modelling that showed any traffic impacts on the Anzac Bridge.¹⁷³

2.45 Similarly, representatives of Transurban were questioned on their role in the design of the Rozelle Interchange. Ms Alisa Hitchcock, Head of Public Affairs, Transurban, told the committee that 'Transurban wasn't involved in the design or the construction phase', and that 'the design [was] already complete as part of the environmental impact statement, of which there were some modifications later on, but largely the design was complete. We had no involvement in the procurement, the design and delivery of the contract. That was with Transport'.¹⁷⁴

2.46 In response to a question about whether there were any discussions that took place between Transurban and the NSW Government on the design of the Rozelle Interchange, Ms Hitchcock maintained that it would not be unusual for Transurban to have had discussions with the government on a range of aspects of projects they are involved in, but noted that during a transaction process, discussions would have been limited:

Transurban has been in Sydney for 20 years and we've had many discussions with the Government about all of the roads that we either own or operate or own with partners, so it's not unusual for us to have discussions with government. Whether they're design discussions, operational discussions, we have a whole range of conversations. During the transaction process itself, obviously, we were in a competitive transaction. It was a bidding process that was subject to probity arrangements, so our discussions during that transaction were very limited apart from what was allowed throughout the transaction. But we have had many conversations with government about a whole range of roads in Sydney over that 20-year period.¹⁷⁵

2.47 Transurban was also asked about whether the previous NSW Government approached them about any potential systematic structural issues which could cause traffic congestion, and how this might be ameliorated. Ms Hitchcock told the committee that there was 'no dialogue [with the NSW Government] about changing the design or the construction', however she did inform the committee that there was some feedback given to the NSW Government during the process.¹⁷⁶ According to Ms Hitchcock, the feedback was in relation to 'the operations, the maintenance, and ... some feedback around traffic...'.¹⁷⁷

Regulation of traffic

2.48 During the inquiry, agreements between Transurban and the NSW Government in relation to the regulation of traffic, including ramp metering and changes to the WestConnex network, were also discussed.

¹⁷³ Evidence, Mr Jim Salmon, Executive General Manager, Major Projects Support, John Holland, 23 April 2024, p 30.

¹⁷⁴ Evidence, Ms Alisa Hitchcock, Head of Public Affairs, Transurban, 23 April 2024, p 6.

¹⁷⁵ Evidence, Ms Alisa Hitchcock, Head of Public Affairs, Transurban, 23 April 2024, p 3.

¹⁷⁶ Evidence, Ms Alisa Hitchcock, Head of Public Affairs, Transurban, 23 April 2024, pp 6-7.

¹⁷⁷ Evidence, Ms Alisa Hitchcock, Head of Public Affairs, Transurban, 23 April 2024, p 7.

- 2.49** Transurban advised that Transurban is responsible for asset management, 24/7 traffic management, monitoring and incident response in relation to WestConnex.¹⁷⁸ Additionally, Ms Denise Kelly, General Manager, WestConnex, Transurban, insisted that the NSW Government has control of relieving congestion on surface roads, and Transurban does not have control over traffic line sequencing, lane configuration or signage on adjacent surface roads.¹⁷⁹
- 2.50** According to Ms Kelly, Transurban has responsibility for ramp metering technology and systems, and specified that Transport for NSW has control over their location and operation.¹⁸⁰
- 2.51** With regard to the contents of the ramp metering agreement between Transurban and the NSW Government, Ms Kelly advised that the agreement 'covers the maintenance of the actual ramp metering technology and systems'.¹⁸¹ When questioned as to why three attachments to the agreement, including an operations management plan, an operating procedure and a fault management procedure, were not released, Ms Kelly told the committee that these documents and the ramp metering agreement do not govern how Transport for NSW decides to use the ramp meters in any given situation.¹⁸² The committee was later advised that a request to publicly release the attachments would be 'more appropriately directed to [Transport for NSW] as it is [Transport for NSWs'] operating procedure'.¹⁸³
- 2.52** Ms Kelly denied Transurban has any role in operating ramp meters,¹⁸⁴ or that there are any contractual arrangements with the NSW Government relating to the prioritisation or otherwise of cars onto WestConnex.¹⁸⁵ Nonetheless, some inquiry participants expressed concern and frustration over the lack of transparency about Transurban's involvement.¹⁸⁶ For example, Ms Kobi Shetty MP, Member for Balmain, articulated these concerns about the lack of transparency:

... I have raised the need for our community to understand what arrangements the Government has entered into with Transurban about the prioritisation of traffic coming onto the Anzac Bridge from the WestConnex tunnels. This seems to be what is preventing the potential solution of metering traffic coming from the M4 onto the Anzac Bridge, or removing the metering that further slows un-tolled traffic entering the Anzac Bridge, to restore some equity in traffic flow.¹⁸⁷

¹⁷⁸ Submission 27, Transurban, p 1.

¹⁷⁹ Evidence, Ms Denise Kelly, General Manager, WestConnex, Transurban, 23 April 2024, p 3.

¹⁸⁰ Evidence, Ms Denise Kelly, General Manager, WestConnex, Transurban, 23 April 2024, p 11.

¹⁸¹ Evidence, Ms Denise Kelly, General Manager, WestConnex, Transurban, 23 April 2024, p 11.

¹⁸² Evidence, Ms Denise Kelly, General Manager, WestConnex, Transurban, 23 April 2024, pp 11-12.

¹⁸³ Answers to questions on notice, Transurban, 22 May 2024, p 2.

¹⁸⁴ Evidence, Ms Denise Kelly, General Manager, WestConnex, Transurban, 23 April 2024, pp 11-12.

¹⁸⁵ Evidence, Ms Denise Kelly, General Manager, WestConnex, Transurban, 23 April 2024, p 3.

¹⁸⁶ Submission 46, Name suppressed, p 1; Submission 48, Name suppressed, p 2; Submission 8, Ms Kobi Shetty MP, Member for Balmain, p 4.

¹⁸⁷ Submission 8, Ms Kobi Shetty MP, Member for Balmain, p 4.

2.53 Transurban was questioned about whether the NSW Government could make changes to the WestConnex network that Transurban operates and maintains, without approval from Transurban. Ms Kelly responded that the NSW Government must consult with Transurban about any changes, however, did not provide a definitive answer as to whether there is or is not a contractual arrangement requiring the NSW Government to have Transurban's approval.¹⁸⁸

Traffic modelling

2.54 As indicated previously, evidence was received about the extensive traffic modelling conducted prior to the construction of the Rozelle Interchange. During the inquiry, numerous inquiry participants discussed whether such modelling revealed the significant congestion issues experienced after the opening of the Interchange. These issues, resulting in rat running and overall disruption to motorists, are examined further in chapter 4.

2.55 In addition, stakeholders also raised concerns regarding the type of traffic modelling conducted by Transport for NSW, and the lack of transparency around the modelling data. In addition, stakeholders told the committee about mixed messages they received from Transport for NSW about the impact of the Rozelle Interchange on Victoria Road, and initial plans to create a boulevard. These issues are explored in detail below.

NSW Government traffic modelling

2.56 According to the NSW Government, extensive traffic modelling was undertaken for WestConnex, involving multiple layers of strategic demand models as the program evolved.¹⁸⁹

2.57 Various levels of traffic modelling were undertaken by the NSW Government, including modelling as part of the following:

- WestConnex Updated Strategic Business Case
- M4 East Environmental Impact Statement
- New M5 Environmental Impact Statement
- M6 Stage 1 Environmental Impact Statement
- Sydney Gateway Environmental Impact Statement
- M4-M5 Link Environmental Impact Statement (includes both stage 3a and 3b)
- Western Harbour Tunnel and Warringah Freeway Environmental Impact Statement
- Western Distributor Smart Motorway Environmental Impact Statement
- Bays West Stage 1 Master Plan Draft Transport and Traffic Impact Report Environmental Impact Statement.¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁸ Evidence, Ms Denise Kelly, General Manager, WestConnex, Transurban, 23 April 2024, p 14.

¹⁸⁹ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 10.

¹⁹⁰ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 10 -11.

- 2.58** NSW Government witnesses informed the committee that 'significant traffic modelling'¹⁹¹ would have been undertaken to inform the M4-M5 Link EIS and would have included both strategic traffic modelling and localised operational traffic modelling.¹⁹²
- 2.59** As a result of the modelling, Ms Drover, Transport for NSW, advised that it was 'quite clear' from the M4-M5 Link EIS that there would be disruption with the delivery of the Rozelle Interchange.¹⁹³ Mr Steve Issa, Executive Director, Community & Place, Greater Sydney, Transport for NSW, agreed, confirming that it was known and forecast from the M4-M5 Link EIS that an anticipated impact of Stage 3 and its delivery would be increased traffic congestion in and around the Inner West, including on Victoria Road and the City West Link.¹⁹⁴
- 2.60** As a specific condition of the planning approval in 2018, Transport for NSW was therefore required to undertake a network plan.¹⁹⁵ This was developed in late 2023, just prior to the opening of the Rozelle Interchange.¹⁹⁶ The network plan was undertaken to 'redo' the modelling and 'assess what the actual conditions were across the network at the time and to assess what interventions were required prior to the opening of the Rozelle Interchange'.¹⁹⁷
- 2.61** When asked whether there had been network planning prior to 2023, Ms Drover noted that apart from the initial modelling undertaken as part of the M4-M5 Link EIS, there were some network integration initiatives pursued during the construction of the project, some of which were developed in parallel to the delivery of the project.¹⁹⁸
- 2.62** Mr Issa explained that, as part of the pre-opening road network performance plan, data was collected across both the M4-M8 Link and the 3B project, as well as intersection modelling and performance-based modelling.¹⁹⁹
- 2.63** In response to the updated modelling, Ms Drover advised that a number of mitigations and interventions had been identified prior to the opening of the Rozelle Interchange.²⁰⁰ The NSW

¹⁹¹ Evidence, Ms Camilla Drover, Deputy Secretary, Infrastructure and Place, Transport for New South Wales, 3 May 2024, p 25.

¹⁹² Evidence, Ms Camilla Drover, Deputy Secretary, Infrastructure and Place, Transport for New South Wales, 3 May 2024, p 25.

¹⁹³ Evidence, Ms Camilla Drover, Deputy Secretary, Infrastructure and Place, Transport for New South Wales, 3 May 2024, p 23.

¹⁹⁴ Evidence, Mr Steve Issa, Executive Director, Community & Place, Greater Sydney, Transport for New South Wales, 3 May 2024, p 24.

¹⁹⁵ Evidence, Ms Camilla Drover, Deputy Secretary, Infrastructure and Place, Transport for New South Wales, 3 May 2024, p 23.

¹⁹⁶ Evidence, Ms Camilla Drover, Deputy Secretary, Infrastructure and Place, Transport for New South Wales, 3 May 2024, p 24.

¹⁹⁷ Evidence, Ms Camilla Drover, Deputy Secretary, Infrastructure and Place, Transport for New South Wales, 3 May 2024, p 23.

¹⁹⁸ Evidence, Ms Camilla Drover, Deputy Secretary, Infrastructure and Place, Transport for New South Wales, 3 May 2024, p 24.

¹⁹⁹ Evidence, Mr Steve Issa, Executive Director, Community & Place, Greater Sydney, Transport for New South Wales, 3 May 2024, p 25.

²⁰⁰ Evidence, Ms Camilla Drover, Deputy Secretary Infrastructure and Place, Transport for New South Wales, 3 May 2024, p 23.

Government explained that these initiatives are 'currently in delivery and under development to provide short, medium and long-term corridor mitigation measures'.²⁰¹ Further, the committee was told that these measures range from the installation of digital and dynamic gantries to targeted widening of the Western Distributer and the introduction of 'tidal flow' lands to Anzac Bridge during peak periods.²⁰²

- 2.64** Mr Issa reported that across the full Stage 3, including the M4 to M8 link, a total of 21 initiatives were developed. Of those 21 initiatives, Mr Issa informed the committee that 17 have been implemented, three are in delivery and one is yet to commence. With regards to Rozelle, Mr Issa advised that there are nine initiatives of which six are currently in place and are assisting in managing the network.²⁰³
- 2.65** Whilst acknowledging that there had been a disruptive period in December, Transport for NSW stated that there is now a 'better performance than predicted'²⁰⁴ and that 'it would take some time to settle in'.²⁰⁵ Indeed, Transport for NSW had anticipated that it would take about six months for traffic to settle following the opening of the Interchange.²⁰⁶
- 2.66** According to Ms Drover, modelling from the M4-M5 Link EIS predicted worse levels of service than what the network experienced at opening:

In fact, if we look at the results of that network plan, many of the levels of service across the network were predicted in the EIS to be worse than what we are experiencing today, given the interventions that have occurred just prior to the opening and that continue.²⁰⁷

- 2.67** However, the Minister for Roads, the Hon John Graham MLC, acknowledged the significant disruptions experienced by Drummoyne residents and noted that Drummoyne was not better than predicted and had to improve.²⁰⁸ Further discussion about the impact of the Rozelle Interchange on local communities can be found in chapter 4.

Criticisms of the modelling

- 2.68** There was a lot of discussion about the traffic modelling done by Transport for NSW for the WestConnex project and the Rozelle Interchange specifically and whether early modelling indicated issues with congestion and rat running. Stakeholders criticised the use of the 'predict

²⁰¹ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 26.

²⁰² Submission 138, NSW Government, p 26.

²⁰³ Evidence, Mr Steve Issa, Executive Director, Community & Place, Greater Sydney, Transport for New South Wales, 3 May, p 24.

²⁰⁴ Evidence, Mr Steve Issa, Executive Director, Community & Place, Greater Sydney, Transport for New South Wales, 3 May, p 26.

²⁰⁵ Evidence, Mr Steve Issa, Executive Director, Community & Place, Greater Sydney, Transport for New South Wales, 3 May, p 25.

²⁰⁶ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 4.

²⁰⁷ Evidence, Ms Camilla Drover, Deputy Secretary, Infrastructure and Place, Transport for New South Wales, 3 May 2024, p 23.

²⁰⁸ Evidence, the Hon John Graham MLC, Minister for Roads, 3 May 2024, p 26.

and provide' model and also expressed concerns about mixed messages the community received about the plan for Victoria Road from Transport for NSW and the transparency around the modelling data more broadly.

Use of 'predict and provide' model

- 2.69** According to inquiry participants, the basis of the traffic modelling conducted by Transport for NSW was the 'predict and provide' model. The predict and provide model is described as the 'traditional traffic engineering approach to solving traffic problems'²⁰⁹ where a road network is developed based on forecasted future traffic.
- 2.70** Some inquiry participants called the model 'inappropriate and disproved',²¹⁰ 'not fit for purpose'²¹¹ and 'flawed'.²¹² For example, one stakeholder explained that under this model, intersections or sections of roads are widened in response to congestion, leading to an 'endless process of providing more traffic capacity, all at the expense of liveability and economic viability'.²¹³
- 2.71** Mr Kim Woodbury, Chief Operating Officer, City of Sydney, argued that the NSW Government relied heavily on the predict and provide model. Mr Woodbury also contended that the model was not specific to 'inner-city reality'²¹⁴ and did not take into account a holistic transport approach including public transport, walking and cycling.²¹⁵
- 2.72** Similarly, Mr Kendall Banfield, Senior Strategic Transport Planner, Inner West Council (IWC) claimed that a predict and provide model makes it more difficult for people to get around easily and advocated for a holistic approach. He recommended the 'vision and validate' model which he described as incorporating community input into the design process, so that 'all the traffic planning is rallied around the vision rather than the traditional approach where it rallies around the model'.²¹⁶
- 2.73** The IWC also argued that the predict and provide model when applied to WestConnex predicted an additional 20,000 – 40,000 cars per day of 'induced demand' of traffic.²¹⁷ The council also suggested that a vision and validate model should have been adopted with a view

²⁰⁹ Evidence, Mr Kendall Banfield, Senior Strategic Transport Planner, Inner West Council, 10 April 2024, p 15.

²¹⁰ Evidence, Mr Kim Woodbury, Chief Operating Officer, City of Sydney, 23 April 2024, p 41.

²¹¹ Submission 2, City of Sydney, p 11.

²¹² Evidence, Professor Wendy Bacon, Investigative Journalist, Community Environmental Monitoring, 23 April 2024, pp 19-20.

²¹³ Evidence, Mr Kendall Banfield, Senior Strategic Transport Planner, Inner West Council, 10 April 2024, p 15.

²¹⁴ Evidence, Mr Kim Woodbury, Chief Operating Officer, City of Sydney, 23 April 2024, p 44.

²¹⁵ Evidence, Mr Kim Woodbury, Chief Operating Officer, City of Sydney, 23 April 2024, p 47.

²¹⁶ Evidence, Mr Kendall Banfield, Senior Strategic Transport Planner, Inner West Council, 10 April 2024, p 15.

²¹⁷ Submission 3, Inner West Council, p 13.

to improve community well-being through public domain and environmental improvements.²¹⁸

- 2.74 The IWC echoed sentiments of other witnesses that it was clear from traffic modelling that WestConnex would induce demand and create traffic.²¹⁹

Impact on Victoria Road

- 2.75 For the IWC, the mixed messages regarding the impact on Victoria Road was a particular issue. The committee received evidence that the NSW Government at the time had stated traffic would be reduced by 50 per cent on Victoria Road.²²⁰ After the 2023 State election, however, Transport for NSW advised that in fact this would not be the case.²²¹

- 2.76 Similarly, Ms Shetty, Member for Balmain, told the committee that there was not a great deal of communication about the single-lane merge point where Victoria Road joins the Anzac Bridge. Ms Shetty noted that it would have been clear to anyone doing the modelling that there would be serve impacts and said that it was 'incredibly disappointing and frustrating for the community to not have this explained in advance'.²²²

- 2.77 In addition, IWC asserted that it was initially told there would be tree planting and active transport lanes, however, was later informed there was no budget for public domain improvements on Victoria Road.²²³

Lack of transparency

- 2.78 Another criticism of the traffic modelling undertaken by Transport for NSW was that it was not made readily available to the public. For example, Mr Woodbury told the committee that whilst the City of Sydney had requested detailed traffic modelling from the department multiple times, only limited data was provided.²²⁴

- 2.79 Further, City of Sydney asserted that there was a general 'lack of transparency' regarding key inputs to the traffic modelling process, which form the basis of the analysis and assessment of many key impacts associated with the Rozelle Interchange.²²⁵ On this point, City of Sydney noted that there had been a consistent failure by Transport for NSW to provide the community with access to information to understand motorway expansion projects more broadly.²²⁶

²¹⁸ Submission 3, Inner West Council, p 13.

²¹⁹ Evidence, Cr Darcy Byrne, Mayor, Inner West Council, 10 April 2024, p 12.

²²⁰ Evidence, Cr Darcy Byrne, Mayor, Inner West Council, 10 April 2024, p 12.

²²¹ Evidence, Cr Darcy Byrne, Mayor, Inner West Council, 10 April 2024, p 12.

²²² Evidence, Ms Kobi Shetty MP, Member for Balmain, 10 April 2024, p 7.

²²³ Evidence, Cr Darcy Byrne, Mayor, Inner West Council, 10 April 2024, p 12.

²²⁴ Evidence, Mr Kim Woodbury, Chief Operating Officer, City of Sydney, 23 April 2024, p 43-44.

²²⁵ Submission 2, City of Sydney, p 12.

²²⁶ Submission 2, City of Sydney, p 12.

Community expectations

2.80 The committee received significant evidence about what was communicated at the time by the NSW Government to the community about the design of the Rozelle Interchange, and what was ultimately delivered.

2.81 Councillor Michael Megna, Mayor of City of Canada Bay Council, said that based on the initial designs:

By the workshops that we had with Transport officials, it was going to be—this was the nirvana; this was going to be the new way of travelling. It would take cars off the road. It would be easier to get into the city. Rat-running wouldn't even occur; it would be just a dream run.²²⁷

2.82 In terms of the broader community expectations of any benefits that the Rozelle Interchange was going to bring to local communities, Ms Belinda Daly, Vice President, Balmain Rozelle Chamber of Commerce, argued that the community was 'told a different story of what the Rozelle Interchange would actually bring',²²⁸ noting that there were plans for a beautification of Victoria Road, however:

What happened when the Rozelle interchange opened was a surprise for all people, I think—residents, businesses, and people who travel to and from the area. It wasn't what we were promised throughout the whole construction period.²²⁹

2.83 When asked what the community was promised as part of the Rozelle Interchange, Ms Annabelle Berriman, President, Parents and Citizens' Association, Rozelle Public School, told the committee that the community was promised 'enhancement' to the community as there would be less above ground traffic, with traffic going underneath in the tunnel.²³⁰ In addition, Ms Berriman advised that the community was also promised a tree lined boulevard along Victoria Road for pedestrians and cyclists.²³¹

2.84 Similarly, Councillor Darcy Byrne, Mayor of the Inner West Council, explained that 'there have been so many assertions that Victoria Road was going to be a tree-lined boulevard and that traffic flows were going to be reduced by 50 per cent'²³² Based on this assumption, the IWC developed its own Rozelle master plan for Victoria Road and Darling Street which was largely completed when Transport for NSW advised that there would not be a 50 per cent reduction:

²²⁷ Evidence, Cr Michael Megna, Mayor, City of Canada Bay Council, 10 April 2024, p 16.

²²⁸ Evidence, Ms Belinda Daly, Vice President, Balmain Rozelle Chamber of Commerce, 10 April 2024, p 21.

²²⁹ Evidence, Ms Belinda Daly, Vice President, Balmain Rozelle Chamber of Commerce, 10 April 2024, p 21.

²³⁰ Evidence, Ms Annabelle Berriman, President, Parents and Citizens' Association, Rozelle Public School, 10 April 2024, p 30.

²³¹ Evidence, Ms Annabelle Berriman, President, Parents and Citizens' Association, Rozelle Public School, 10 April 2024, pp 30-31.

²³² Evidence, Cr Darcy Byrne, Mayor, Inner West Council, 10 April 2024, p 15.

... [W]e went away and undertook our own Rozelle master plan for Victoria Road and Darling Street based on those assumptions. That involved additional active transport lanes on Victoria Road, tree planting. It was all predicated on the idea that there was going to be space opened up for active transport and for greater—not pedestrianisation, but to make the place a more pleasant place to be.

We'd already completed that work, largely, when we got the truth out of Transport for NSW, after the Government changed, that there wasn't going to be a 50 per cent reduction.²³³

- 2.85** Further, Cr Byrne expressed frustration with how much the plan for WestConnex had changed overtime, noting that when it was first announced, it was going to run along or underneath Parramatta Road and is 'completely different to the design that we've ended up with'.²³⁴

Active transport

- 2.86** Another area of concern raised by many local residents was what was promised in relation to active transport infrastructure and not delivered. According to Mr Keith Stallard, Public Officer, Rozelle Parklands Active Transport and Community Hub Incorporated, these included separated cycleways along Victoria Road from City West Link to the Iron Cove Bridge as well as along the full length of Lilyfield Rd from Victoria Road to northern end of GreenWay and the Bay Run.²³⁵ As a result, active transport users told the committee how they have had to navigate a poor network of connecting cycleways and pedestrian infrastructure. following the opening of the Rozelle Interchange.
- 2.87** Further, Mr Stallard contended that while Transport for NSW maintains that the project is compliant with the conditions of approval for the Rozelle interchange, the failure to deliver active transport along Victoria and Lilyfield Roads means that, in fact, the agency has breached its binding conditions of approval.²³⁶
- 2.88** When asked about evidence from the NSW Government suggesting various active transport links have been built, specifically in relation to The Crescent Overpass and works for the Western Harbour Tunnel, Mr Stallard maintained that works promised to the cycling community had not been completed.²³⁷
- 2.89** According to the NSW Government, the Rozelle Interchange has delivered important urban amenities, including 10 hectares of new open space and new pedestrian and cycleway connections to link Rozelle and Lilyfield with Annandale, Balmain, Glebe and The Bays

²³³ Evidence, Cr Darcy Byrne, Mayor, Inner West Council, 10 April 2024, p 15.

²³⁴ Evidence, Cr Darcy Byrne, Mayor, Inner West Council, 10 April 2024, p 16.

²³⁵ Evidence, Mr Keith Stallard, Public Officer, Rozelle Parklands Active Transport and Community Hub Incorporated, 23 April 2024, p 35.

²³⁶ Evidence, Mr Keith Stallard, Public Officer, Rozelle Parklands Active Transport and Community Hub Incorporated, 23 April 2024, p 38.

²³⁷ Evidence, Mr Keith Stallard, Public Officer, Rozelle Parklands Active Transport and Community Hub Incorporated, 23 April 2024, p 35.

Precinct.²³⁸ On this issue, Mr Stallard asserted that these amenities are not located on the main route on Lilyfield and Victoria Roads.²³⁹

2.90 The issue of impacts of the Rozelle Interchange on cycling and pedestrian infrastructure is discuss further in chapter 4.

Committee comment

2.91 The committee acknowledges that the planning and development of the Rozelle Interchange was complex, multifaceted and involved multiple government and private sector entities. While we accept the complexity of such projects, the committee cannot deny evidence suggesting that poor design decisions that were financially motivated have led to significant traffic congestion and ultimately made at the expense of community interests.

2.92 Central to this inquiry was the financing model for WestConnex, including the former government's intention for WestConnex to ultimately be sold off to the private sector. The committee was informed by Mr Peter Regan, former Chief Financial Officer and Deputy Secretary, Finance and Investment at Transport for NSW, former Senior Director, Commercial Finance at NSW Treasury and former Chief Executive Officer of the SMC that this model was decided upon early to free up capital for other infrastructure and allow for a more expedient delivery. The committee believes that this model ensured that WestConnex was treated as a financial commodity early in its design phase which would have inherently drove decision making.

2.93 The key decision to proceed with a northward realignment reflected in the 2015 design was examined closely by the committee because it ultimately led to the Rozelle Interchange. The committee acknowledges the compelling evidence of former senior executives across Transport for NSW and the former Roads and Maritime Services which suggested that the former NSW Government was advised early on against pursuit of the northward realignment to Rozelle as it would overload the Anzac Bridge. The committee understands that such advice was based on traffic modelling very clearly indicating that the northward realignment through Rozelle would cause high levels of congestion in local streets and connecting arterials.

2.94 The committee shares the views of inquiry participants who believe that the rationale for the decision to remove the Camperdown Interchange, reflected in the 2017 design, lacked transparency, led to increased traffic load on the Rozelle Interchange, reduced capital costs of the project, and increased the volume of tolled trips. The committee accepts that this increase in the volume of tolled trips would ultimately increase the value of WestConnex. The committee is persuaded by the evidence suggesting that key design decisions of the Rozelle Interchange were made to maximise the value of WestConnex, despite the known level of traffic congestion the design would generate.

²³⁸ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 10.

²³⁹ Evidence, Mr Keith Stallard, Public Officer, Rozelle Parklands Active Transport and Community Hub Incorporated, 23 April 2024, p 39.

- 2.95** The committee therefore finds that the financial model of WestConnex was based on maximising its sale value, which in turn has driven design decisions that have increased traffic congestion on the Anzac Bridge and beyond.

Finding 1

That the financial model of WestConnex was based on maximising its sale value, which in turn has driven design decisions that have increased traffic congestion on the Anzac Bridge and its surrounds.

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- 2.96** The privatisation of road-based infrastructure has shown to cause design decisions which are financially motivated rather than made in the public interest. The committee urges the NSW Government to learn from the implications of applying this financial model, and in doing so reject any further privatisation of the state's roads, and new major road-based infrastructure projects that do not align with government strategy and which are not in the public interest.

Recommendation 2

That the NSW Government reject:

- any further privatisation of the State's roads
- new major road-based infrastructure projects that do not align with government strategy and which are not in the public interest.

-
- 2.97** When investigating the decision to introduce the northward realignment to Rozelle, the committee found it difficult to determine with certainty who bore responsibility for that decision. It was unclear who, or what agencies, were ultimately responsible for the genesis of the Rozelle Interchange given varying evidence on this point. Ownership of this decision was vague from the evidence received from Transport for NSW, while Transurban/Sydney Transport Partners, who acquired Sydney Motorway Corporation and now fully own WestConnex, denied any involvement. This lack of transparency is deeply troubling to the committee, particularly when discussing a project of this magnitude and the significant impacts it has had on the community from before construction to months after it has opened. The committee expects that the highest standards of transparency and accountability apply.

- 2.98** The committee therefore finds that the lack of transparency and accountability for the design decisions resulting in the Rozelle Interchange is unacceptable given the magnitude of the project and the significant impacts it has had on the community.

Finding 2

That the lack of transparency and accountability for the design decisions resulting in the Rozelle Interchange is unacceptable given the magnitude of the project and the significant impacts it has had on the community.

- 2.99** The committee also acknowledges that Transurban and the broader consortium of Sydney Transport Partners are significant financial beneficiaries of the Rozelle Interchange and WestConnex. The committee sought evidence from Transurban about the current arrangements with the NSW Government, particularly with regard to traffic regulation. The committee notes Transurban's evidence that they have no role in operating ramp meters nor have any contractual arrangements relating to the control of traffic onto the WestConnex. The committee also notes the lack of clarity around approval for changes to the WestConnex network. In this regard, the committee considers the concerns of inquiry participants around transparency of the arrangements between the NSW Government and Transurban to be valid.
- 2.100** The committee therefore finds that there is a concerning lack of clarity and transparency around the contractual arrangements between the NSW Government and Transurban in relation to the regulation of traffic on the WestConnex network, particularly at the Rozelle Interchange.

Finding 3

That there is a concerning lack of clarity and transparency around the contractual arrangements between the NSW Government and Transurban in relation to the regulation of traffic on the WestConnex network, particularly at the Rozelle Interchange.

- 2.101** The committee found the views of inquiry participants on the traffic modelling conducted convincing. In particular, the criticism of Transport for NSW in pursuing a 'predict and provide' model, rather than a 'vision and validate' as a basis for traffic modelling. The committee was persuaded by the evidence suggesting that the 'predict and provide' model lacks a holistic approach to infrastructure development, and that the alternative may be a more beneficial model to road users and the broader community.
- 2.102** In this regard, the committee recommends that Transport for NSW review its traffic modelling approach, including consideration of the 'vision and validate' model as an alternative to the 'predict and provide' model.

Recommendation 3

That Transport for NSW review its traffic modelling approach, with a view to adopting the 'vision and validate' model as an alternative to the 'predict and provide' model.

- 2.103** The committee also acknowledges the evidence that community expectations of what the Rozelle Interchange would bring have not been met, and that the design that was communicated to the community was not what was delivered. In particular, the committee notes the frustrations of impacted communities who were told there would be a

'beautification' of Victoria Road and that the Rozelle Interchange would be an enhancement to the community.

- 2.104** We are troubled by the discrepancy in the information communicated to the community over time, in particular the compelling evidence that a 50 per cent reduction in traffic was promised but was later withdrawn. It is clear to the committee that impacted communities were promised benefits from the Rozelle Interchange that have not been realised.

Finding 4

That impacted communities were promised benefits from the Rozelle Interchange that have not been realised.

-
- 2.105** The committee shares the frustrations of active transport users, that active transport links have not been delivered to the degree that was promised, in particular on the main routes of Lilyfield and Victoria Roads. The committee urges Transport for NSW to ensure that existing active transport links along Lilyfield and Victoria Roads meet the needs of active transport users, particularly cyclists, by addressing any gaps and concerns raised by active transport advocates, including delivering safe separated cycleways for these routes.

Recommendation 4

That Transport for NSW ensure that existing active transport links along Lilyfield and Victoria Roads meet the needs of active transport users, particularly cyclists, by addressing any gaps and concerns raised by active transport advocates, including delivering safe separated cycleways for these routes.

Chapter 3 Community engagement

This chapter examines consultation undertaken in connection to the design, construction and opening of the Rozelle Interchange. This chapter will identify actions undertaken by the NSW Government and its agencies to inform and engage various stakeholder throughout the phases of the Rozelle Interchange project. Then, finally it will consider the impact and effectiveness of this engagement and consultation, in reference to evidence and information provided by inquiry participants.

Engagement strategies

3.1 Various community engagement strategies were deployed by the NSW Government and key partners in delivering the Rozelle Interchange, with the NSW Government advising the committee that 'detailed consultation' took place during each stage of the WestConnex program:

Throughout each stage of the WestConnex program, detailed consultation occurred with the community, local businesses, road users and interested stakeholders [...] This included specific consultation on Environmental Impact Statements and other requirements as set out by the then Department of Planning and Environment.²⁴⁰

3.2 As noted in chapter 1, the proposed scope and design of the Rozelle Interchange was outlined in the 2015 *WestConnex Updated Strategic Business Case* prepared by Sydney Motorway Corporation (SMC).²⁴¹

3.3 Additional changes to the design and scope of the Rozelle Interchange were made in 2017. According to the NSW Government, these changes were made in response to broader planning objectives and community feedback, including a 'major community engagement program' conducted in July and August 2016.²⁴²

3.4 These changes were included in the *M4-M5 Link Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)*.²⁴³ The EIS was displayed for an extended period in late 2017²⁴⁴ and interested stakeholders were invited to make a submission outlining any concerns and feedback for consideration. Around the same time, in September 2017, community information sessions were held in Leichhardt, Haberfield, Newtown and Camperdown.²⁴⁵ The M4-M5 Link EIS was approved in April 2018.²⁴⁶

3.5 The NSW Government reported that it, and in particular Transport for NSW, used a range of engagement tools to engage and inform the community about the Rozelle Interchange project. This included:

²⁴⁰ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 13.

²⁴¹ Submission 138, NSW Government, pp 14 and 15.

²⁴² Submission 138, NSW Government, p 15.

²⁴³ Submission 138, NSW Government, pp 13 and 15.

²⁴⁴ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 13; *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*, s 5.8(1)(b).

²⁴⁵ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 13.

²⁴⁶ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 13.

- distribution of hard copy notifications to impacted areas
- doorknocking in impacted areas
- targeted phone calls
- a community hotline (1800 number)
- electronic notifications
- geotargeted social media
- a project inbox
- a project website with interactive content and updates.
- media releases
- community pop up events and street meetings
- hardcopy Environmental Impact Statements and modification documents in local libraries.²⁴⁷

3.6 Community engagement also took place during the construction of the Rozelle Interchange. The committee was advised that targeted strategies were used to engage with residents living in close proximity to construction zones. This included the Iron Cove area, Railyards zone and Annandale zone.²⁴⁸ Transport for NSW also 'conducted monthly interfaces with the Inner West Council and quarterly WestConnex Community Reference Group meetings'.²⁴⁹

3.7 The NSW Government informed that during the construction of the Rozelle Interchange:

- more than 970 notifications were distributed
- more than 5,500 subscribers signed up for weekly notifications and construction updates
- more than 2,500 phone inquiries were received regarding the Rozelle Interchange
- thirty-eight factsheets were created
- the Rozelle Interchange web portal received more than 370,000 views
- the Rozelle Parklands flythrough video received more than 28,000 views
- Transport for NSW conducted 5 community days involving tunnel and site tours
- there was extensive engagement between Transport for NSW, contractors and local councils.²⁵⁰

3.8 The NSW Government further advised that the broader community, including commuters, were informed of road changes and ongoing construction via 'variable message signs, posters

²⁴⁷ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 13.

²⁴⁸ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 20.

²⁴⁹ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 20.

²⁵⁰ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 20.

with QR codes, social media posts and operational 'Transport [for NSW] media releases'.²⁵¹ Additionally, resident tours, meet the team events, family days, and 'viewing windows in the hoarding at Iron Cove Link' were carried out by 'Transport for NSW'.²⁵²

3.9 The committee was also told that throughout the construction of the Rozelle Interchange, community engagement and consultation was also undertaken by John Holland and CPB Contractors, including site inspections²⁵³ and complaints management.²⁵⁴ John Holland CPB Contractors also informed the committee that they regularly engaged with councils and Bicycle NSW.²⁵⁵

3.10 The NSW Government stated that, in the months prior to and following the opening of the Rozelle Interchange, community engagement was ongoing. This included:

- an advertising campaign
- media releases and events
- social media posts
- digital billboards
- fourteen explainer videos that described how motorists would be able to navigate the Rozelle Interchange
- media interviews by Transport for NSW representatives.²⁵⁶

3.11 Mr Steve Issa, Executive Director Community & Place, Greater Sydney, Transport for NSW, stated that 'Transport for NSW conducted a 'pretty comprehensive engagement' strategy in the months leading up to, and following the opening of the Rozelle Interchange:

The Minister, the secretary and the coordinator general were out from August talking about disruption, the six months to settle in. On top of that, we ran an advertising campaign throughout November, December, January and February, and we had millions of views. We had reaches across Greater Sydney more broadly, and in October we launched video animation, driver animations to help people learn and educate their trip. So we built a campaign to help inform people of what to expect, and we think that worked more broadly.²⁵⁷

²⁵¹ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 20.

²⁵² Submission 138, NSW Government, p 20.

²⁵³ Evidence, Mr Neil Tonkin, Advocacy Coordinator, Inner West Bicycle Coalition, 10 April 2024, p 35.

²⁵⁴ Evidence, Mr Jim Salmon, Executive General Manager, Major Projects Support, John Holland, 23 April 2024, p 32.

²⁵⁵ Evidence, Mr Jim Salmon, Executive General Manager, Major Projects Support, John Holland, 23 April 2024, p 33.

²⁵⁶ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 25.

²⁵⁷ Evidence, Mr Steve Issa, Executive Director Community & Place, Greater Sydney, Transport for New South Wales, May 3 2024, p 35.

3.12 Ms Alisa Hitchcock, Head of Public Affairs, Transurban, also advised the committee that Transurban developed a communication strategy prior to and following the opening of the Rozelle Interchange:

In that six months prior to opening, we worked very closely with Transport for NSW to support their primary opening campaign. Obviously they were responsible for opening the asset, but we felt it was very important that we were speaking with Transport for NSW about the broader communication.²⁵⁸

3.13 Transurban's communication strategy included:

- Plan your Journey tool
- marketing campaign
- radio spots
- social media engagement
- billboards
- working groups
- hotlines.²⁵⁹

3.14 Ms Denis Kelly, General Manager, WestConnex, Transurban, explained that the 'Plan your Journey' tool was developed to enable motorists to familiarise themselves with the WestConnex, including the Rozelle Interchange:

... [Y]ou could go onto the website and put in your origin and your destination and then work out how to travel. That tool actually shows you the exact signage, lane choice et cetera, that you would use in order to make your journey.²⁶⁰

3.15 Separately, following the detection of asbestos in the Rozelle Parklands on 9 January 2024, information was made accessible to the public via the NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA) and the NSW Government Asbestos in NSW webpages.²⁶¹ Further information was made available through the EPA's Environment Line, media statements, press conferences, social media posts and interviews.²⁶²

²⁵⁸ Evidence, Ms Alisa Hitchcock, Head of Public Affairs, Transurban, April 23 2024, p 7.

²⁵⁹ Evidence, Ms Denise Kelly, General Manager, WestConnex, Transurban, April 23 2024, pp 2, 7 and 8; Evidence, Ms Alisa Hitchcock, Head of Public Affairs, Transurban, April 23 2024, pp 8, 9 and 16.

²⁶⁰ Evidence, Ms Denise Kelly, General Manager, WestConnex, Transurban, April 23 2024, p 7.

²⁶¹ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 33.

²⁶² Submission 138, NSW Government, p 33.

Community response

3.16 Most inquiry participants were highly critical of the community engagement undertaken throughout the Rozelle Interchange project. Representing impacted communities, these inquiry participants raised key issues including:

- limited information sharing
- inadequate community consultation
- community concerns ignored during consultation process
- an inadequate response to complaints
- a lack of engagement and consultation following the opening of Rozelle Interchange.

Limited information

3.17 A number of inquiry participants reported that there was limited information provided during the earlier stages of the Rozelle Interchange project and upon its opening. For example, City of Canada Bay told the committee that initial advice from Transport for NSW was that the Rozelle Interchange would reduce traffic and make it easier to get into the city.²⁶³ However, Councillor Michael Megna, Mayor of City of Canada Bay, asserted that the council was not told much detail of the plans, including the existence of two bus lanes, stating: 'It was just all the pretty pictures and that was it'.²⁶⁴ Additionally, Mr Megna told the committee that from the Transport for NSW workshops, council was not expecting 'any drama to the extent of what we're getting now'.²⁶⁵

3.18 Echoing similar sentiments, Ms Belinda Daly, Vice President, Balmain Rozelle Chamber of Commerce, told the committee that the issues regarding congestion and traffic were not communicated to the community throughout the whole construction period.²⁶⁶ Ms Marguerite Young told the committee: 'I found the communications during the construction phase just absolutely, totally inadequate. As I said, there was a wall of empathy with no information'.²⁶⁷

3.19 Some inquiry participants told the committee that they were not informed of when the Rozelle Interchange would open. One respondent to the committee's online questionnaire said that they 'didn't hear anything about the opening until it suddenly opened one weekend'.²⁶⁸ This was also the case for, Ms Stephanie Di Pasqua MP, Member for Drummoyne, who advised the committee that she had not been informed beforehand, thereby missing the opportunity to let the wider community know:

²⁶³ Evidence, Cr Michael Megna, Mayor, City of Canada Bay Council, 10 April 2024, p 16.

²⁶⁴ Evidence, Cr Michael Megna, Mayor, City of Canada Bay Council, 10 April 2024, p 16.

²⁶⁵ Evidence, Cr Michael Megna, Mayor, City of Canada Bay Council, 10 April 2024, p 16.

²⁶⁶ Evidence, Ms Belinda Daly, Vice President, Balmain Rozelle Chamber of Commerce, 10 April 2024, p 21.

²⁶⁷ Public forum, Ms Marguerite Young, 10 April 2024, p 48,

²⁶⁸ Portfolio Committee No. 6, Inquiry into the impact of the Rozelle Interchange, *Online questionnaire report*, p 11.

[...] I had no briefing before the Rozelle interchange opened. What made it worse is that I had a senior communications employee from Transport [for NSW] contact me on the Monday after the opening to say, 'Rozelle interchange opens on Sunday 26 November'—a day after. Had we been included and consulted with, we could have spread the message out to our community. That opportunity wasn't given to us.²⁶⁹

Inadequate community consultation

3.20 Another issue of concern to many inquiry participants was what they saw as a lack of community consultation and engagement undertaken throughout the various stages of the project. Local council representatives shared this view. For example, Councillor Zac Miles, Mayor of Hunters Hill Council, asserted that 'there was no significant consultation' with representatives and constituents in the Hunter Hill area in the lead-up to the development of the Rozelle Interchange.²⁷⁰ Similarly, Councillor Zoë Baker, Mayor of North Sydney Council, contended that 'from get-go' Transport for NSW was reluctant to engage in 'real community consultation'.²⁷¹

3.21 This was also reflected in the committee's online questionnaire. Three quarters of the 1034 people who responded reported that they were not aware of any stakeholder consultation in relation to the Rozelle Interchange.²⁷² Furthermore, of the respondents who were aware of and participated in stakeholder consultation events, most felt that the information provided was unsatisfactory.²⁷³ Respondents also criticised the lack of consultation undertaken during the initial design stage of the project, with one saying:

I felt there was no real opportunity to consult beforehand. The government streamrolled ahead with their plans even though traffic experts and local communities (who are on the ground and live in these suburbs) could always see it was not going to work.²⁷⁴

3.22 Local business owners who gave evidence also reported that there was a lack of consultation throughout the project. Mr Serge Derkatch, President, Drummoyne Business Centre, claimed that there was no engagement between Transport for NSW and Drummoyne Business Chamber prior to the development of the Rozelle Interchange.²⁷⁵ Likewise, Mr Johnathon Fletcher, a member of the Balmain Rozelle Chamber of Commerce, stated that he could not recall 'any consultative process with local business owners'.²⁷⁶

²⁶⁹ Ms Stephanie Di Pasqua MP, Member for Drummoyne, April 10 2024, p 8.

²⁷⁰ Evidence, Cr Zac Miles, Mayor, Hunter Hill Council, 23 April 2024, p 48.

²⁷¹ Evidence, Cr Zoë Baker, Mayor, North Sydney Council, 23 April 2024, p 43.

²⁷² Portfolio Committee No. 6, Inquiry into the impact of the Rozelle Interchange, *Online questionnaire report*, p- 9.

²⁷³ Portfolio Committee No. 6, Inquiry into the impact of the Rozelle Interchange, *Online questionnaire report*, p 9.

²⁷⁴ Portfolio Committee No. 6, Inquiry into the impact of the Rozelle Interchange, *Online questionnaire report*, p 9.

²⁷⁵ Evidence, Mr Serge Derkatch, President, Drummoyne Business Chamber, 10 April 2024, p 22.

²⁷⁶ Evidence, Mr Jonathan Fletcher, Member, Balmain Rozelle Chamber of Commerce, 10 April 2024, p 21.

3.23 Mr Mark Chapman, Committee Executive, The Leichardt Collective (formerly Leichardt Annadale Business Chamber), similarly maintained there was a lack of consultation with local businesses during the initial design stage:

... there was no clear engagement or direct engagement with us for our feedback on those initial design processes. It was only when proposals for the changes actually came through and were published for feedback that we then were able to engage. By that stage it was almost like the horse had bolted. The beast was moving and we didn't have any real, clear opportunity to provide constructive feedback, which we attempted to do.²⁷⁷

3.24 Mr Chapman also expressed frustration that, there was a lack of clear communication of the 'endgame or big-picture plan' by Transport for NSW:

From a planning perspective, there was never a clear communication of the endgame or a big-picture plan provided [...] Traffic proposals that were submitted at different stages for change to the surrounding arterial and local roads did not show a consideration for the businesses or the residential conditions in these areas. [...] outcomes and responses were vague or deflected, with no further engagement or follow-up. There are still no clear indications of some of the proposed roadworks and changes or the timing of these works— or, in fact, if they're still being planned.²⁷⁸

3.25 Community Environmental Monitoring (CEM), a community-based group of scientists, journalists and community advocates, advised that State significant projects like, the WestConnex often require the use of community consultative committees as part of the EIS conditions of consent. CEM explained that community consultative committees are 'supposed to give the community a voice during the construction process',²⁷⁹ however, the community consultative committee for Stage 3 of WestConnex, which included the Rozelle Interchange, was seemingly cancelled 'with little warning'.²⁸⁰

3.26 The committee also heard evidence that local residents, businesses and representatives were not informed or properly consulted about further changes to the design of the Rozelle Interchange²⁸¹ following the approval of the M4-M5 Link EIS in April 2018.²⁸²

3.27 For example, Professor Wendy Bacon, investigative journalist and member of CEM, claimed that a proper EIS process was not conducted in relation to The Crescent Overpass that was announced in August 2019.²⁸³ She also noted that the EPA advised the NSW Government that 'more work' should have been undertaken before they started building the Overpass,

²⁷⁷ Evidence, Mr Mark Chapman, Committee Executive, The Leichardt Collective, 10 April 2024, pp 20-21.

²⁷⁸ Evidence, Mr Mark Chapman, Committee Executive, The Leichardt Collective, 10 April 2024, p 20.

²⁷⁹ Submission 16, Community Environmental Monitoring, p 11.

²⁸⁰ Submission 16, Community Environmental Monitoring, p 11.

²⁸¹ See for example, Evidence, Professor Wendy Bacon, Investigative Journalist, Community Environmental Monitoring, p 21; Evidence, Mr Neil Tonkin, Advocacy Coordinator, Inner West Bicycle Coalition, 10 April 2024, p 36.

²⁸² Submission 138, NSW Government, p 13.

²⁸³ Evidence, Professor Wendy Bacon, Investigative Journalist, Community Environmental Monitoring, 23 April 2024, p 21; Submission 138, NSW Government, p 17.

telling the committee that the EPA wrote to Transport for NSW stating: 'We've already said to you that we don't resile from our previous advice that this should not be going ahead. There should have been more work before you went ahead with this'.²⁸⁴

3.28 The NSW Government response to questions from the committee about this issue was that this design amendment had been proposed by the joint venture, John Holland and CPB Contractors, to 'improve local traffic performance in the vicinity of The Crescent, City West Link, Johnston Street and Chapman Road'.²⁸⁵

3.29 A similar issue was raised by Mr Neil Tonkin, Advocacy Coordinator, Inner West Bicycle Coalition, who claimed that there was no consultation prior to the removal of the Beattie Bush Bridge Overpass:

They wanted an extra lane on the City West Link. In doing so they took away our cycleway on the Rozelle Bay side. That bridge was very useful for us because it enabled people to come from Balmain and go straight over towards Annandale.²⁸⁶

3.30 In response to criticism from active transport advocates and cyclists, John Holland and CPB Contractors advised the committee, that 'at all times the [joint venture] attempted to find solutions to the concerns along and around the site, particularly throughout the delivery of the project'.²⁸⁷

3.31 Other concerns were raised in relation to a lack of consultation on changes to the management of traffic on Victoria Road. For example, representatives of City of Canada Bay Council advised that the council was not told about the new bus lane on Victoria Road.²⁸⁸ The committee heard that council was also not informed of traffic management strategies introduced by Transport for NSW, including changes to light sequencing.²⁸⁹ Dr Joseph Cordaro, Councillor, City of Canada Bay Council, and General Practitioner, Drummoyne Medical Centre, argued that, as a result, this lack of engagement and consultation has undermined community trust in state and local government. He explained:

We don't know what's going on. Council aren't informed of traffic light changes that are made or sequencing changes that are made. We weren't even informed of the change of a 300-metre stretch of lane previously open to traffic on Lyons Road coming onto Victoria Road. It was changed into a bus lane without notice. On Monday morning, after a weekend of work by Transport for NSW contractors,

²⁸⁴ Evidence, Professor Wendy Bacon, Investigative Journalist, Community Environmental Monitoring, 23 April 2024, p 21.

²⁸⁵ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 18.

²⁸⁶ Evidence, Mr Neil Tonkin, Advocacy Coordinator, Inner West Bicycle Coalition, 10 April 2024, p 36.

²⁸⁷ Evidence, Mr Neil Tonkin, Advocacy Coordinator, Inner West Bicycle Coalition, 10 April 2024, p 36.

²⁸⁸ See for example, Evidence, Dr Joseph Cordaro, General Practitioner, Drummoyne Medical Centre; Councillor, City of Canada Bay Council, 30 May 2024, p 24; Evidence, Cr Michael Megna, Mayor, City of Canada Bay Council, 10 April 2024, p 16; Evidence, Mr Serge Derkatch, President, Drummoyne Business Chamber, 10 April 2024, p 22.

²⁸⁹ Evidence, Dr Joseph Cordaro, General Practitioner, Drummoyne Medical Centre; Councillor, City of Canada Bay Council, 30 May 2024, p 24.

suddenly we get bombarded as a council from residents ringing up saying, "What has happened? There's a bus lane now. I can't get in that lane." We know nothing about it. It completely undermines trust in two levels of government.²⁹⁰

- 3.32** Some stakeholders also questioned whether the government had correctly identified and consulted relevant stakeholders. Mr Derkatch asserted that even though he was confident that the government 'had meetings with various parties', there was a lack of consultation with 'the right people'.²⁹¹ Similarly, the Transport Workers' Union of NSW advised that there was limited consultation with heavy vehicle drivers who could have used their knowledge and road experience to provide 'valuable feedback' in relation to the design of the Rozelle Interchange.²⁹²

Community concerns ignored during consultation process

- 3.33** Numerous inquiry participants told the committee that feedback that was provided was not given genuine consideration, including that submissions made during the EIS process were largely ignored.²⁹³ The Inner West Council (IWC) argued 'submissions provided during such exhibitions are often given cursory consideration'.²⁹⁴ This was reiterated by Dr Christopher Standen who said that '[d]uring the EIS consultation process, numerous submissions highlighted errors in the traffic modelling [...] however, the response to submissions did not address these concerns'.²⁹⁵

- 3.34** CEM stated that 'the feeling that consultation processes are merely procedural rather than meaningful has bred deep cynicism in the local community'.²⁹⁶ Professor Bacon contended that this, in part, was a consequence of the NSW Government having already decided to undertake the Rozelle Interchange project before the EIS approval process was complete:

But there's a huge problem with the fact that they've already decided to do the project, and yet there's this approval process. I think the best that could be said about it is some conditions get put in place, and sometimes there are minor changes. But if there are big flaws, they're likely not to be responsive.²⁹⁷

- 3.35** When asked about the consultation undertaken across the broader Rozelle Interchange project, Mr Peter McLean, Chief Executive Officer, Bicycle NSW, stated that there was a lack of 'two-way communication' with the relevant authorities:

²⁹⁰ Evidence, Dr Joseph Cordaro, General Practitioner, Drummoyne Medical Centre; Councillor, City of Canada Bay Council, 30 May 2024, p 24.

²⁹¹ Evidence, Mr Serge Derkatch, President, Drummoyne Business Centre, 10 April 2024, p 24.

²⁹² Submission no. 20 Transport Workers Union, p 9.

²⁹³ For example, Submission 10, Dr Christopher Standen, p 11; Submission 16, Community Environmental Monitoring, p 9; Evidence, Mr Peter McLean, Chief Executive Officer, Bicycle NSW, 10 April 2024, p 35

²⁹⁴ Submission 3, Inner West Council (Sydney Australia), p 19.

²⁹⁵ Submission 10, Dr Christopher Standen, p 11.

²⁹⁶ Submission 16, Community Environmental Monitoring, p 9.

²⁹⁷ Evidence, Professor Wendy Bacon, Investigative Journalist, Community Environmental Monitoring, 23 April 2024, p 21.

We often get briefings and updates, but it's not a two-way conversation; it's not two-way communication. That, fundamentally, is not as in-depth or as genuine as certainly we would feel, particularly when we've got some really good ideas to share.²⁹⁸

3.36 Similarly, Mr Tonkin expressed frustration with the lack of meaningful consultation, describing the process as a 'sham':

[...] as far as I'm concerned the community consultation process was a bit like a lot of these other motorways—a bit of a sham. We were sort of listened to but we were also told that that's not in the plans and that's it. We were just trying to give some advice and we were pretty annoyed.²⁹⁹

3.37 Other inquiry participants discussed the lack of responsiveness to the feedback being provided during consultations, noting a visible shift from consultation to information sharing, and a sense of not being taken seriously by those receiving the feedback.

3.38 The IWC was involved in community engagement and consultation regarding the WestConnex from the very beginning.³⁰⁰ The council observed that consultations during the early stages of the broader WestConnex project 'were very positive and provided an interactive consultation between [Transport for NSW] and the relevant councils.'³⁰¹ However, the IWC asserted that as changes were made to the WestConnex, specifically the introduction of the northern alignment, which was to later become the Rozelle Interchange, 'the focus of communication became more oriented towards information than consultation'.³⁰²

3.39 According to Councillor Darcy Byrne, Mayor, Inner West Council, feedback and input from the council was not taken seriously:

We had very little engagement or discussion. It was always about what they were going to do to us, rather than talking about what we could do together. [...] we weren't provided with transparent information, we weren't included in planning or decision-making [...] One thing that's been constant throughout the design process is that we've had bugger all input. Our submissions—which, as it turns out, were perfectly correct—were not taken seriously, and that's a big part of our frustration.³⁰³

3.40 Mr Kim Woodbury, Chief Operating Officer, City of Sydney, also highlighted that the City of Sydney provided 'substantial feedback' to the WestConnex project that has 'never been satisfactorily addressed'.³⁰⁴ Mr Woodbury also claimed that the consultation processes undertaken for large government projects, such as the WestConnex and Rozelle Interchange, tend to be 'fairly dismissive':

²⁹⁸ Evidence, Mr Peter McLean, Chief Executive Officer, Bicycle NSW, 10 April 2024, p 35.

²⁹⁹ Evidence, Mr Neil Tonkin, Advocacy Coordinator, Inner West Bicycle Coalition, 10 April 2024, p 35.

³⁰⁰ Evidence, Cr Darcy Byrne, Mayor, Inner West Council, 10 April 2024, p 16.

³⁰¹ Submission 3, Inner West Council (Sydney Australia), p 19.

³⁰² Submission 3, Inner West Council (Sydney Australia), p 19.

³⁰³ Evidence, Cr Darcy Byrne, Mayor, Inner West Council, 10 April 2024, p 16.

³⁰⁴ Evidence, Mr Kim Woodbury, Chief Operating Officer, City of Sydney, 23 April 2024, p 41.

... [T]he [C]ity has generally a very good relationship with Transport for NSW. We do a lot of projects jointly together, and we wouldn't have got those up without working collaboratively together. I think there's a difference with the mega projects. They seem to have a different dynamic, where it's not open. It's basically, "We'll tell you what we're doing, and don't really take much notice of anything," and fairly dismissive of any technical information that's provided.³⁰⁵

- 3.41** Ms Young, a participant in the inquiry's public forum, observed that during consultation there was a lot of sympathy towards the concerns and issues raised by local residents, but a lack of action taken in response:

I've coined a new term and that's a 'wall of empathy', and that's dealing with bureaucracy. [...] It is when people empathise with you and they might say they'll talk to someone but nothing happens.³⁰⁶

- 3.42** Respondents to the committee's online questionnaire who attended stakeholder consultation sessions said that they felt unheard. One respondent who participated in several meetings said: 'No I was not satisfied. It was lip service. We were shut down in meetings'.³⁰⁷

- 3.43** The committee was told that there was a lack of transparency during consultation process, specifically in relation to why community feedback and proposals would not be implemented. Mr Woodbury, asserted that Transport for NSW decision making processes have not been transparent:

The project and objectives have changed substantially over time. The city has consistently said that investment in WestConnex could have been better spent on alternatives like metro and other public transport options. Transport for NSW has never revealed the secret traffic model assumptions that underpin the project's design and investment justifications or the true cost...³⁰⁸

- 3.44** Ms Kobi Shetty MP, Member for Balmain, said that following the opening of the Rozelle Interchange she reached out to the Minister, the Minister's Office and Transport for New South Wales to discuss issues and potential solutions.³⁰⁹ Ms Shetty acknowledged that discussions with Transport for New South Wales were a useful mechanism to provide feedback from her community and receive 'real time' updates about strategies implemented to manage traffic.³¹⁰ However, Ms Shetty asserted that when proposed strategies she took to the government to address congestion were not accepted, the basis for this decisions was not always clear:

When I raised the possibility of [Transport for NSW] investigating slowing down the tolled traffic or doing something to restore the balance so that the local traffic wasn't

³⁰⁵ Evidence, Mr Kim Woodbury, Chief Operating Officer, City of Sydney, 23 April 2024, p 43.

³⁰⁶ Public forum, Ms Marguerite Young, 10 April 2024, p 45.

³⁰⁷ Portfolio Committee No. 6, Inquiry into the impact of the Rozelle Interchange, *Online questionnaire report*, pp 9-10.

³⁰⁸ Evidence, Mr Kim Woodbury, Chief Operating Officer, City of Sydney, 23 April 2024, p 41.

³⁰⁹ Evidence, Ms Kobi Shetty MP, Member for Balmain, 10 April 2024, p 3; Submission 8, Ms Kobi Shetty MP, Member for Balmain, p 4.

³¹⁰ Submission 8, Ms Kobi Shetty MP, Member for Balmain, 10 April 2024, p 4.

being pushed back in order to allow the prioritisation, I was told initially that it could be looked into but then when I raised it again after the school holidays in January, it was taken off the table completely. ... I was told after January that that's not something they were looking at doing and that it was around safety issues, about which the information has never been presented.³¹¹

- 3.45** Councillor Andrew Ferguson, City of Canada Bay Council, argued that government needs to give greater consideration to the feedback provided by local residents, suggesting that the experts are the people who 'live and breathe the problem':

... I think the real experts are people who live and breathe the problem 24/7. Ordinary people – they're not all tertiary qualified, and they don't have degrees in engineering – have invaluable feedback about issues. ... I think government need to listen more to the community. [Currently] I think the exercise is really ticking the box and going through the motions. I don't think people are listening.³¹²

- 3.46** Likewise, Cr Miles, Mayor of Hunters Hill Council, explained why it is important to consult with impacted residents and their representatives, noting the 'significant knock-on effects':

I think that the department needs to hear the experiences that are being felt by the community in the implementation of the opening of the interchange. They've had significant knock-on effects [...] that I don't [Transport for NSW are] recognising.³¹³

- 3.47** WalkSydney called on governments and their agencies, to update their consultation processes to ensure they 'engage [and] don't just inform'. In doing so, WalkSydney identified examples of good practice for the committee to consider, including the 'Gunning Principles' used by Transport for London, and the 'Best Practice Consultation' produced by the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet.³¹⁴

Complaints management

- 3.48** Some inquiry participants raised concerns with the committee in relation to the management of complaints. One individual told the committee that responses from Transport for NSW and the Minister were 'dismissive, patronising and wrong – wait and it will resolve itself seemed to be the official policy'.³¹⁵

- 3.49** Ms Shetty gave evidence that some complainants had been asked by the joint venture, John Holland and CPB, to sign confidentiality agreements before receiving compensation:

In recognition of the community's suffering the government's contractors would sometime offer affected households some level of compensation, ranging from token gift vouchers to noise-cancelling headphones and the occasional stay in alternative accommodation depending on the severity of the impact. These offerings were

³¹¹ Evidence, Ms Kobi Shetty MP, Member for Balmain, 10 April 2024, p 3.

³¹² Evidence, Cr Andrew Ferguson, Councillor, City of Canada Bay Council, 30 May 2024, p 12.

³¹³ Evidence, Cr Zac Miles, Mayor, Hunter Hill Council, 23 April 2024, p 45.

³¹⁴ Submission 17, WalkSydney, p 6.

³¹⁵ Submission 70, Name suppressed, p 1.

accompanied by non-disclosure agreements that many in the community felt uncomfortable entering into, but felt they had little choice but to sign.³¹⁶

- 3.50** Mr Jim Salmon, Executive General Manager, Major Projects Support, John Holland, stated that use of non-disclosure agreements (NDAs) is a standard practice. He explained that the purpose of such agreements is to protect both the joint venture and the privacy of the complaint. However, Mr Salmon stated that the NDAs were later withdrawn in consultation with Transport for NSW.³¹⁷

Lack of engagement following the opening of Rozelle Interchange

- 3.51** Multiple stakeholders expressed frustration about what they considered to be a lack of meaningful consultation with residents and their representatives following the opening of the Rozelle Interchange. Residents and representatives consistently argued that their feedback and concerns have not been given due consideration.
- 3.52** The majority of respondents to the committee's online questionnaire were unsatisfied with the level of communication in the six months prior to and following the opening of the Rozelle Interchange.³¹⁸ Following its opening, respondents complained of insufficient communication about traffic changes, tolls and road designs and a lack of communication about potential solutions.³¹⁹
- 3.53** As mentioned earlier in this chapter, City of Canada Bay Council representatives reported that they were not consulted or informed of traffic management strategies implemented by Transport for NSW following the opening of the Rozelle Interchange.³²⁰
- 3.54** Similarly, Ms Di Pasqua, Member for Drummoyne, stated that she was disappointed with the level of engagement from the Minister for Roads, his Office, and Transport for NSW:

I am extremely disappointed that Transport for NSW has not widely engaged with my community. Despite correspondence that I sent to the Minister for Roads on 1 December 2023 seeking a community town-hall style meeting, this was not forthcoming to residents living in my electorate. It was afforded to residents of the Inner West Council area, and I am astounded that it was not extended to those living in the City of Canada Bay Council area/Drummoyne electorate.³²¹

³¹⁶ Submission 8, Ms Kobi Shetty MP, Member for Balmain, 10 April 2024, p 2.

³¹⁷ Evidence, Mr Jim Salmon, Executive General Manager, Major Projects Support, John Holland, 23 April 2024, p 32.

³¹⁸ Portfolio Committee No. 6, Inquiry into the impact of the Rozelle Interchange, *Online questionnaire report*, pp 10 and 13.

³¹⁹ Portfolio Committee No. 6, Inquiry into the impact of the Rozelle Interchange, *Online questionnaire report*, p 14.

³²⁰ See for example, Submission 9, Ms Stephanie Di Pasqua MP, Member for Drummoyne, p 9; Evidence, Ms Stephanie Di Pasqua MP, Member for Drummoyne, 10 April 2024, p 4; Evidence, Dr Joesph Cordaro, General Practitioner, Drummoyne Medical Centre; Councillor, City of Canada Bay Council, 30 May 2024, p 24.

³²¹ Submission 9, Ms Stephanie Di Pasqua MP, Member for Drummoyne, 10 April 2024, p 8.

- 3.55** Ms Di Pasqua advised that she sent correspondence to the Minister on 1 December 2023 and did not receive a written response until Friday 15 March 2024.³²²
- 3.56** During his evidence, the Hon John Graham MLC, Minister for Roads acknowledged the correspondence from Ms Di Pasqua, and committed to holding a community meeting alongside Transport for NSW with Ms Di Pasqua and residents in the local area.³²³
- 3.57** Similarly, Cr Miles advised the committee that he wrote to the Minister for Roads on 7 March 2024, 'seeking an urgent meeting [...] to discuss and immediately review traffic congestion generated on Victoria Road as a result of the Rozelle Interchange'.³²⁴ Cr Miles advised the committee that, as of 23 April 2024, he had not yet received a response.³²⁵
- 3.58** During the inquiry, particular attention was drawn to a community meeting that was held on 18 March 2024 at Oxford Hotel in Drummoyne with senior representatives from Transport for NSW with some inquiry participants expressing concerns about the community meeting.³²⁶ Ms Di Pasqua told the inquiry that the event was not widely advertised and the location was inaccessible.³²⁷ Cr Megna, Mayor of City of Canada Bay, advised that the council would have been happy to facilitate this meeting at the council's headquarters to enable greater accessibility and participation: '[W]e could've had 150, 200 people there. It'd be live streamed'.³²⁸ In addition to concerns about awareness and accessibility, Ms Di Pasqua expressed concern that 'preferential treatment' had been shown to Labor councillors, which enabled the coordination of this community meeting.³²⁹
- 3.59** In response, Cr Ferguson, informed the committee of the steps he had taken to coordinate this event, which included multiple emails sent to relevant Government representatives.³³⁰ Additionally, Cr Ferguson advised that he spoke with and arranged reserve seating for the Mayor and Member for Drummoyne. He also explained that the venue was chosen in consultation with Drummoyne residents: 'The advice from local residents was that the hotel was the most central location. In fact, it's at the epicentre of the problem, on the corner of Lyons Road and Victoria Road'.³³¹
- 3.60** Following the 18 March meeting, the Drummoyne Resident's Traffic Committee was formed on 24 March 2024. Ms Claudia Campbell, co-chair of Drummoyne Resident's Traffic

³²² Submission 9, Ms Stephanie Di Pasqua MP, Member for Drummoyne, 10 April 2024, p 8.

³²³ Evidence, the Hon John Graham MLC, Minister for Roads, 3 May 2024, pp 26-27.

³²⁴ Evidence, Cr Zac Miles, Mayor, Hunter Hill Council, 23 April 2024, p 42.

³²⁵ Evidence, Cr Zac Miles, Mayor, Hunter Hill Council, 23 April 2024, p 42.

³²⁶ See for example, Submission 9, Ms Stephanie Di Pasqua MP, Member for Drummoyne, p 9; Evidence, Cr Michael Megna, Mayor, City of Canada Bay Council, 10 April 2024, p 14; Evidence, Cr Andrew Ferguson, Councillor, City of Canada Bay Council, 30 May 2024, p 13.

³²⁷ Submission 9, Ms Stephanie Di Pasqua MP, Member for Drummoyne, p 8-9; Evidence, Ms Stephanie Di Pasqua MP, Member for Drummoyne, 10 April 2024, p 4.

³²⁸ Evidence, Cr Michael Megna, Mayor, City of Canada Bay Council, 10 April 2024, p 14.

³²⁹ Submission 9, Ms Stephanie Di Pasqua MP, Member for Drummoyne, 10 April 2024, p 9.

³³⁰ Evidence, Cr Andrew Ferguson, Councillor, City of Canada Bay Council, 30 May 2024, p 13.

³³¹ Evidence, Cr Andrew Ferguson, Councillor, City of Canada Bay Council, 30 May 2024, p 13.

Committee, advised that the group was established to hold Transport for NSW accountable to respond to any suggestions raised by residents at the community meeting.³³²

- 3.61** Of particular interest to the group is a traffic study of the Drummoyne area being led by Transport for NSW. Mr Simon Gatward, Co-Chair of Drummoyne Resident's Traffic Committee, stated that the Drummoyne Residents' Traffic Committee has asked Transport for NSW to engage with residents to ensure the study incorporates the lived experience of Drummoyne residents and is not limited to an analysis of travel times and the volume of traffic on local roads:

What we've asked for is that, through their study process, Transport actually engage with residents to get the local colour, to get the lived experience and add to what otherwise might be a spreadsheet of averages. As we know, averages kill the truth. So on any one given day it might be clear, but the next day it might be awful.³³³

- 3.62** In response to this evidence from the Drummoyne Resident's Traffic Committee, and similarly from representatives of Canada Bay City Council, the committee called for the establishment of a joint consultative committee to inform the traffic study being undertaken of the Drummoyne area by Transport for NSW.³³⁴ This joint consultative committee would include Transport for NSW, City of Canada Bay Council and the Drummoyne Residents' Traffic Committee and have the aim of providing 'collective ongoing input into the traffic study and give appropriate consideration to issues and suggestions made by impacted residents and community members'.³³⁵ This is discussed further in chapter 5.

Committee comment

- 3.63** The committee acknowledges the evidence that an extensive community engagement strategy and information campaign was conducted by the relevant authorities throughout the various stages of the Rozelle Interchange project. However, it is the evidence by members of local communities who presented to this inquiry, and their representatives, strongly suggests that the relevant authorities did not engage in appropriate and genuine community consultation.
- 3.64** The evidence calls into question the suitability and effectiveness of government consultation processes, specifically those used for large infrastructure projects. Many stakeholders felt that there was insufficient consultation and that their feedback had been dismissed or not genuinely considered. In this regard, the frustrations felt by these impacted communities is warranted.

³³² Evidence, Ms Claudia Campbell, Co-chair, Drummoyne Resident' Traffic Committee, 30 May 2024, p 29.

³³³ Evidence, Mr Simon Gatward, Co-chair, Drummoyne Resident' Traffic Committee, 30 May 2024, p 29.

³³⁴ Media release, Ms Cate Faehrmann MLC, 'Rozelle Interchange inquiry – Committee calls for joint government and community consultative committee', 5 June 2024.

³³⁵ Media release, Ms Cate Faehrmann MLC, 'Rozelle Interchange inquiry – Committee calls for joint government and community consultative committee', 5 June 2024.

- 3.65** The committee acknowledges that similar criticism was raised and considered in the Legislative Council's Public Accountability Committee report, *The impact of the WestConnex Project*. The evidence presented at this inquiry appear to indicate that lessons have not been learnt in this space.
- 3.66** Whilst the committee appreciates the challenges that are likely to arise during consultation for large and complex infrastructure projects, we find that, overall there was a lack of meaningful engagement, including information sharing and consultation, with impacted communities during the design, construction and opening of the Rozelle Interchange.

Finding 5

That there was a lack of meaningful engagement, including information sharing and consultation, with impacted communities during the design, construction and opening of the Rozelle Interchange.

- 3.67** The committee is concerned about evidence suggesting there was limited information and communication in the months leading up to and following the opening of the Rozelle Interchange. The evidence we heard regarding people being unaware of when it would be opened or of the changes to traffic management that the Rozelle Interchange would bring is also concerning.
- 3.68** In this regard, the committee believes that consultation processes, particularly for large infrastructure projects such as the Rozelle Interchange, should facilitate accessibility, transparency and accountability.
- 3.69** Noting that the experience of many inquiry participants did not reflect this, the government should consider how to ensure relevant stakeholders are identified and appropriately consulted during each stage of a major infrastructure project. In doing so, consideration must be given to how stakeholders are kept informed of consultation activities and are provided with support throughout the process.
- 3.70** The NSW Government should also consider how they can enhance transparency during consultation, specifically when key decisions are made in areas of particular interest to stakeholders. For example, this could apply to those with particular interests in traffic mitigation strategies, the placement and design of cycleways and pedestrian safety.
- 3.71** To this end, the committee believes that a review of consultation practices is warranted to ensure greater transparency, accessibility and accountability. The committee therefore recommends that the NSW Government consider reviewing its consultation practices and policies for large infrastructure projects to ensure community consultation is meaningful and genuine and that there is greater transparency, accessibility and accountability of community consultation processes.

Recommendation 5

That the NSW Government consider reviewing its consultation practices and policies for large infrastructure projects to ensure community consultation is meaningful and genuine and that there is greater transparency, accessibility and accountability of community consultation processes.

- 3.72** The committee is also of the view that the NSW Government should continue to proactively consult with impacted stakeholders to address issues and concerns following the opening of the Rozelle Interchange.
- 3.73** The committee believes that one avenue for this is the joint consultative committee that was envisioned by the committee in a proposal made during the inquiry. Comprising Transport for NSW, City of Canada Bay Council and Drummoyne Residents Traffic Committee, the committee believes that such a forum provides an opportunity for meaningful community consultation and appropriate consideration to issues and suggestions made by impacted community members as they relate to the Drummoyne traffic study and potentially beyond.
- 3.74** The committee is interested in being kept up to date on the establishment of this committee and its progress. We therefore recommend that we be provided with an update on the status of the proposed joint consultative committee, and if established, information regarding its operations and outcomes, particularly as they relate to the traffic study undertaken in the Drummoyne area led by Transport for NSW.
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Recommendation 6

That Transport for NSW provide an update to Portfolio Committee No. 6 on the status of the proposed joint consultative committee comprising Transport for NSW, City of Canada Bay Council and Drummoyne Residents' Traffic Committee, and if established, provide information regarding its operations and outcomes, particularly as they relate to the traffic study undertaken in the Drummoyne area led by Transport for NSW.

Chapter 4 Impacts

This chapter will consider the impacts of the Rozelle Interchange on local communities, in particular, businesses, residents, commuters, cyclists, pedestrians and school children. Inquiry participants identified traffic congestion, impacts on businesses, concerns about air quality and impacts on active transport, including pedestrian safety as the key impacts of the Rozelle Interchange. This chapter will consider these impacts in turn, and finally consider the cause, response and impact of the discovery of asbestos in the Rozelle Parklands.

Traffic congestion

- 4.1** An increase in traffic congestion was undoubtedly a key impact of the Rozelle Interchange. As Mr Mark Chapman, Committee Executive, The Leichardt Collective (formerly Leichhardt Annandale Business Chamber), described it, his local area has been bookended with congestion such that '[w]e're almost being turned into an island in some ways that people don't want to come and try to get in or out of'.³³⁶
- 4.2** Indeed, much evidence was received detailing how traffic congestion has resulted in significant increases to travel time, congestion on local roads caused by traffic light signalling and rat running was particularly severe, and the adverse impacts this was having on local businesses. This section will consider these issues in turn.

Travel time

- 4.3** Inquiry participants have claimed that their travel times have increased significantly following the opening of the Rozelle Interchange. The City of Canada Bay Council, Inner West Council (IWC) and local members for Balmain and Drummoyne unanimously agreed that their communities have suffered increases in travel times.³³⁷ The committee similarly heard of increased travel times from residents and local community members.
- 4.4** The IWC claimed that '[t]he opening of Rozelle Interchange resulted in journey time increases in excess of 400%, with many residents taking over an hour to leave the Peninsula'.³³⁸ Ms Stephanie Di Pasqua MP, Member for Drummoyne, shared constituent feedback with the committee which claimed that 'travel time has doubled and lanes are more confusing now'.³³⁹
- 4.5** The frustration that residents have been experiencing due to increases in travel time following the opening of the Rozelle Interchange, was conveyed to the committee in many submissions:

³³⁶ Evidence, Mr Mark Chapman, Committee Executive, The Leichardt Collective, 10 April 2024, p 24.

³³⁷ Submission 3, Inner West Council (Sydney Australia), pp 4 and 32; Submission 4, City of Canada Bay Council, p 2; Submission 8, Ms Kobi Shetty MP, Member for Balmain, p 2; Submission 9, Ms Stephanie Di Pasqua MP, Member for Drummoyne, pp 5 and 7.

³³⁸ Submission 3, Inner West Council (Sydney Australia), pp 4 and 32.

³³⁹ Submission 9, Ms Stephanie Di Pasqua MP, Member for Drummoyne, p 5.

- 'I have noted a marked degradation in travel times from Balmain to the city since the opening of the Rozelle Interchange'.³⁴⁰
- 'Since the Rozelle [Interchange] was opened my travel time by vehicle has increased from 15 mins to 45 mins. In the last week I left the vehicle I was sharing and walked – it took me 60 mins and the vehicle arrived at the same time'.³⁴¹
- '[t]ravel times to the CBD have dramatically increased since the Rozelle Interchange opened. It has created dangerous rat runs through residential streets, major delays for local and commuter traffic and increased air pollution levels. It has made this area of the inner west less desirable to travel to and from and favours the paid road system over publicly funded roads'.³⁴²
- '[i]t used to take me 20 minutes to drive to work - from Rozelle to Crows Nest. Now it takes 45 minutes'.³⁴³

4.6 Similarly, in the committee's online questionnaire, many inquiry participants stated that following the opening of the Rozelle Interchange traffic congestion which led to prolonged commute time were a significant impact.³⁴⁴ This is consistent with the evidence received from local members, councils and other residents who claimed longer travel times following the opening.³⁴⁵

4.7 Evidence from Transurban and Transport for New South Wales, however, was also received that commute times had reduced for commuters travelling from Western Sydney.³⁴⁶

Impact on local roads

4.8 Congestion on local roads was a significant impact identified by inquiry participants, which was broadly attributed to traffic light signalling, rat running and design flaws, including the position of bus lanes.

³⁴⁰ Submission 29, Name suppressed, p 1.

³⁴¹ Submission 30, Name suppressed, p 1.

³⁴² Submission 63, Name suppressed, p 1.

³⁴³ Submission 83, Mr Cory Watson, p 1.

³⁴⁴ Portfolio Committee No. 6, Inquiry into the impact of the Rozelle Interchange, *Online questionnaire report*, p 4.

³⁴⁵ Submission 3, Inner West Council (Sydney Australia), pp 4 and 32; Submission 4, City of Canada Bay Council, p 2; Submission 8, Ms Kobi Shetty MP, Member for Balmain, p 2; Submission 9, Ms Stephanie Di Pasqua MP, Member for Drummoyne, pp 5 and 7; Submission 29, Name suppressed, p 1; Submission 30, Name suppressed, p 1, Submission 63, Name suppressed, p 1; Submission 83, Mr Cory Watson, p 1; Submission 91, Cr Andrew Ferguson, p 1; Submission 100, Mr Les Johnston, p 2; Submission 145, Name suppressed, p 1.

³⁴⁶ Evidence, Ms Denise Kelly, General Manager, WestConnex, 'Transurban', 23 April 2024, p 2; Evidence, Mr Josh Murray, Secretary, Transport for NSW, 3 May 2024, p 18.

Traffic light signalling

- 4.9** The committee heard evidence that traffic light signalling from local roads onto Victoria Road has slowed, causing congestion on local roads. They asserted this is primarily happening in Drummoyne, which has had flow on effects to other suburbs.
- 4.10** The following key intersections on Victoria Road were highlighted as being impacted by traffic light signalling: Lyons Road³⁴⁷, Edwin Street³⁴⁸, Day Street³⁴⁹, Darling Street³⁵⁰, and Park Avenue.³⁵¹
- 4.11** In Drummoyne, some inquiry participants complained about being unable to move around their suburb. For example, Ms Di Pasqua, argued that 'traffic light sequencing means that people from the eastern side of Drummoyne can't cross Victoria Road. Not everybody is going eastbound to the city. They just can't get on'.³⁵²
- 4.12** This sentiment was echoed by Ms Claudia Campbell, Co-Chair of the Drummoyne Residents' Traffic Committee, who claimed that '[s]ignalling changes are now causing local streets to become congested leaving residents struggling to egress or re-enter their own suburbs'.³⁵³
- 4.13** The committee heard that the impact of the signalling in Drummoyne has had flow on effects. Councillor Michael Megna, Mayor of City of Canada Bay Council, told the committee that 'traffic light sequencing to ease congestion in Rozelle and Balmain, which holds back traffic in Drummoyne so as to ease congestion at the Anzac Bridge ... is just kicking the can down the road, shifting traffic further west and creating enormous problems in our area'.³⁵⁴
- 4.14** Councillor Zac Miles, Mayor of Hunters Hill Council, similarly expressed the flow on effect for his community, telling the committee that 'it [the light timings in Drummoyne] means that often on peak hour you will have traffic up to the peak of the Gladesville Bridge and it will take at least an hour to get from there to the opening of the interchange at Iron Cove'.³⁵⁵
- 4.15** Ms Kobi Shetty MP, Member for Balmain also claimed local traffic congestion as a result of the opening of the Rozelle Interchange was an issue in Balmain, telling the committee that 'the lights are preventing people from being able to flow freely from the local streets onto the

³⁴⁷ Evidence, Ms Stephanie Di Pasqua MP, Member for Drummoyne, 10 April 2024, p 4; Evidence, Cr Zac Miles, Mayor, Hunters Hill Council, 23 April 2024, p 45; Evidence, Ms Claudia Campbell, Co-chair, Drummoyne Residents' Traffic Committee, 30 May 2024, p 30; Submission 23, Professor Dale L Bailey, p 1.

³⁴⁸ Evidence, Ms Stephanie Di Pasqua MP, Member for Drummoyne, 10 April 2024, p 4.

³⁴⁹ Evidence, Ms Stephanie Di Pasqua MP, Member for Drummoyne, 10 April 2024, p 4; Submission 23, Professor Dale L Bailey, p 1.

³⁵⁰ Evidence, Ms Annabelle Berriman, President, Parents and Citizens' Association, Rozelle Public School, 10 April 2024, p 31.

³⁵¹ Evidence, Ms Stephanie Di Pasqua MP, Member for Drummoyne, 10 April 2024, p 4; Submission 23, Professor Dale L Bailey, p 1.

³⁵² Evidence, Ms Stephanie Di Pasqua MP, Member for Drummoyne, 10 April 2024, p 3.

³⁵³ Submission 93, Ms Claudia Campbell, p 2.

³⁵⁴ Evidence, Cr Michael Megna, Mayor, City of Canada Bay Council, 10 April 2024, p 11.

³⁵⁵ Evidence, Cr Zac Miles, Mayor, Hunters Hill Council, 23 April 2024, p 45.

Anzac Bridge³⁵⁶ and that the 'traffic chaos it had created would now keep them locked in their suburbs'.³⁵⁷ Ms Shetty inferred that this is 'giving real priority to the traffic coming from the M4 tolled tunnels'.³⁵⁸

- 4.16** Transport for NSW rejected claims that traffic light signalling has been reduced for local streets going onto Victoria Road. Mr Steve Issa, Executive Director, Community and Place, Greater Sydney, Transport for NSW, told the committee that 'no significant changes' have been made in this regard:

[Transport for NSW] haven't done anything with the traffic signals in Drummoyne that substantially changes egress from the local community onto Victoria Road. ...

There's been tweaking. There have been changes to the way that the corridor performs and the way that the traffic signals on the corridor work for the main thoroughfare, but no significant change in the egress from side streets in that Drummoyne community post-opening.³⁵⁹

- 4.17** Despite these claims by Transport for NSW, the community has generally expressed frustration with the traffic light signalling. A common theme in the committee's online questionnaire was disruption to surrounding roads, with one participant claiming: '... Local roads are blocked up, honking horns and chaos, it's absolutely ridiculous ...'.³⁶⁰

Rat running

- 4.18** Many inquiry participants complained that the opening of the Rozelle Interchange has resulted in drivers using local streets during peak periods to avoid congestion on main roads, colloquially known as 'rat running'. These stakeholders argued that rat running through local streets has contributed to congestion on local roads, increased safety concerns for pedestrians on local roads, and an inability to move around certain suburbs with ease.

- 4.19** For example, Cr Megna, highlighted the impact of rat running on his community, describing the transformation of his local streets into 'frantic rat-running arteries'³⁶¹ and the 'daunting task'³⁶² of traversing these streets:

Canada Bay feels it every morning and every afternoon as their quiet neighbourhood streets transform into frantic rat-running arteries. Commuters face the choice of either creeping along Victoria Road through the Drummoyne peninsula or turning off the main artery and taking suburban streets to get to work on time. Cars speed down quiet streets. Commuters deliberately drive the wrong way down one-way streets. They

³⁵⁶ Evidence, Ms Kobi Shetty MP, Member for Balmain, 10 April 2024, p 3.

³⁵⁷ Submission 8, Ms Kobi Shetty MP, Member for Balmain, p 2.

³⁵⁸ Evidence, Ms Kobi Shetty MP, Member for Balmain, 10 April 2024, p 3.

³⁵⁹ Evidence, Mr Steve Issa, Executive Director, Community and Place, Greater Sydney, Transport for NSW, 3 May 2024, p 31.

³⁶⁰ Portfolio Committee No. 6, Inquiry into the impact of the Rozelle Interchange, *Online questionnaire report*, p 6.

³⁶¹ Evidence, Cr Michael Megna, Mayor, City of Canada Bay Council, 10 April 2024, p 11.

³⁶² Evidence, Cr Michael Megna, Mayor, City of Canada Bay Council, 10 April 2024, p 11.

run red lights to cut through intersections ... For residents, crossing roads and walking kids to school has become a daunting task.³⁶³

4.20 Councillor Andrew Ferguson, City of Canada Bay Council, expressed a similar sentiment, arguing that rat running contributes to 'the erosion of the amenity for residents in these streets and safety'.³⁶⁴

4.21 Other local community members emphasised the safety concerns of rat running, with Mr Simon Gatward, Co-Chair of the Drummoyne Residents' Traffic Committee telling the committee:

... [P]eople who are rat-running are not reasonable and rational drivers. They are already frustrated because they've been in traffic for a long period of time. They're using our local streets, which are not built for large volumes of traffic, and are not overly welcoming or overly well engaged with the road rules.³⁶⁵

4.22 The Hon John Graham MLC, Minister for Roads, acknowledged and expressed concern that rat running was occurring on local roads.³⁶⁶ Likewise, Mr Josh Murray, Secretary, Transport for NSW, recognised that experiences of congestion and rat running have 'tested the local community's patience'.³⁶⁷ However, Mr Issa explained such outcomes had not been anticipated, and attributed rat running to the use of AI in-vehicle navigation directing drivers off the main street, into side streets to then re-enter the main street to save travel time on their trip, as well as the randomness of individual behaviour.³⁶⁸

Bus lanes

4.23 Some inquiry participants raised the issue of bus lanes on Victoria Road contributing to traffic congestion.

4.24 The 2015 *WestConnex Updated Strategic Business Case* recommended public transport measures as a priority, in particular for buses, which resulted in a dedicated bus lane along Victoria Road. The NSW Government explained:

A new offset citybound bus lane provides dedicated continuous connection on approach to the Anzac Bridge. A new outbound kerbside bus lane was also installed to replace an outbound general traffic lane and operates during the weekday peak periods. The dedicated and continuous citybound and outbound bus lanes were developed to mitigate the risk of general traffic congestion and queuing which would impact bus performance and reliability, particularly during the period of adjusting to major changes to the network.

³⁶³ Evidence, Cr Michael Megna, Mayor, City of Canada Bay Council, 10 April 2024, p 11.

³⁶⁴ Submission 91, Cr Andrew Ferguson, p 1.

³⁶⁵ Evidence, Mr Simon Gatward, Co-chair, Drummoyne Residents' Traffic Committee, 30 May 2024, p 35.

³⁶⁶ Evidence, the Hon John Graham MLC, Minister for Roads, 3 May 2024, p 20.

³⁶⁷ Evidence, Mr Josh Murray, Secretary, Transport for NSW, 3 May 2024, p 18.

³⁶⁸ Evidence, Mr Steve Issa, Executive Director Community & Place, Greater Sydney, Transport for New South Wales, 3 May, p 25.

Further enhancements to the bus lane signage and pavement markings were added to the bus lanes through Drummoyne and Balmain to reduce incidents of non-compliance and general vehicles using the bus lanes.³⁶⁹

- 4.25** The dedicated bus lane travelling into the city is next to the 'left turn only' lane on Victoria Road. However, several inquiry participants were critical of this decision. Ms Di Pasqua, told the committee that the 'additional bus lane and dedicated left hand turn lane are causing traffic congestions'.³⁷⁰ Ms Campbell, asserted that with both lanes occupied, there is often only a single lane for cars city bound:

The moving of the bus lane to the middle lane, and the left lane now a "left-only" lane also means that during off-peak times and at the weekend there is a single lane for cars on a major road citybound. People are trying to get kids to sport, do groceries, get to other inner-west suburbs, and otherwise go about their business and are heavily impacted by this, and hampered in their efforts to simply move around their suburbs.³⁷¹

- 4.26** Further, Mr Chapman, The Leichhardt Collection, drew attention to the challenge of buses merging with traffic to get onto the Anzac Bridge, increasing congestion:

But the surprise, I think, for many—and the bus lanes have come up—is how ineffective the bus lanes are coming out of our areas now, where there isn't the dedicated bus lane, and why buses are being made to merge with traffic to get onto the Anzac Bridge. Why aren't those bus lanes dedicated, as they are from the Lane Cove Tunnel and the M2, where they just had a clear run and people were happy to get on the bus?³⁷²

- 4.27** Mr Chapman added that, amongst other factors, bus lane design has impacted the choice to commute by bus:

Whereas now people are not going on the bus because (a) you can't get on one because they're too full and (b) you're probably sitting on a bus longer than you are in a car because of all the stops you've got to go through, plus you've got to merge in with all the traffic congestion there.³⁷³

Local business

- 4.28** The committee also heard from local businesses negatively impacted by traffic congestion following the opening of the Rozelle Interchange, in particular, from businesses in the Drummoyne, Rozelle, Leichhardt and Balmain areas.

- 4.29** They told the committee that they had been impacted in the following ways:

³⁶⁹ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 21.

³⁷⁰ Submission 9, Ms Stephanie Di Pasqua MP, Member for Drummoyne, p 5.

³⁷¹ Submission 93, Ms Claudia Campbell, p 1.

³⁷² Evidence, Mr Mark Chapman, Committee Executive, The Leichhardt Collective, 10 April 2024, p 25.

³⁷³ Evidence, Mr Mark Chapman, Committee Executive, The Leichhardt Collective, 10 April 2024, p 25.

- reduced customer traffic as a result of customers avoiding areas due to traffic congestion³⁷⁴
- local residents, customers and businesses adapting their travel behaviour to avoid entering and leaving congested areas during peak hours³⁷⁵
- difficulty with courier and supply deliveries due to congestion³⁷⁶
- workers having longer commutes to get to work leading to local business owners having difficulty attracting and retaining staff.³⁷⁷

4.30 Representatives of the Balmain Rozelle Chamber of Commerce, the Drummoyne Business Chamber and the Leichardt Collective all argued that the businesses they represent reported seeing a change in consumer behaviour, with customers avoiding their areas and limiting their trading following the opening of the interchange.³⁷⁸ Ms Belinda Daly, Vice-President, Balmain Rozelle Chamber of Commerce, told the committee of the general concern about the future amongst local business owners:

What we fear as a chamber of commerce with so many businesses in our area is that that change of behaviour converts to changes of behaviour to trade outside our area because it just gets too hard. People are smart. They've got access to so many options. They may choose to go elsewhere for their services, their goods, their shopping. The long-term effects of that are really what we're afraid of.³⁷⁹

4.31 Mr Chapman also told the committee about the delay in delivery times caused by congestion:

[A]s far as where Leichhardt is, there is that congestion being caused in regards to the traffic for delivery times. Businesses that require deliveries at certain times of the morning to be able to open for their day's trade are now being pushed back. I've seen that, and the congestion that's causing, where deliveries are coming in later just so they

³⁷⁴ Submission 6, Balmain Rozelle Chamber of Commerce, p 1; Evidence, Ms Belinda Daly, Vice-President, Balmain Rozelle Chamber of Commerce, pp 19 and 26; Evidence, Mr Mark Chapman, Committee Executive, The Leichardt Collective, 10 April 2024, p 24; Evidence, Ms Annabelle Berriman, President, Parents and Citizens' Association, Rozelle Public School, p 33.

³⁷⁵ Submission 6, Balmain Rozelle Chamber of Commerce, p 1; Evidence, Ms Belinda Daly, Vice-President, Balmain Rozelle Chamber of Commerce, 10 April 2024, p 23; Evidence, Mr Mark Chapman, Committee Executive, The Leichardt Collective, 10 April 2024, p 24.

³⁷⁶ Evidence, Mr Mark Chapman, Committee Executive, The Leichardt Collective, 10 April 2024, p 24; Submission 3, Inner West Council (Sydney Australia), p 20.

³⁷⁷ Evidence, Ms Belinda Daly, Vice-President, Balmain Rozelle Chamber of Commerce, 10 April 2024, p 19; Submission 6, Balmain Rozelle Chamber of Commerce, p 1.

³⁷⁸ Evidence, Mr Mark Chapman, Committee Executive, The Leichardt Collective, 10 April 2024, p 24; Evidence, Ms Belinda Daly, Vice-President, Balmain Rozelle Chamber of Commerce, 10 April 2024, p 23; Evidence, Mr Serge Derkatch, President, Drummoyne Business Chamber, 10 April 2024, p 19.

³⁷⁹ Evidence, Ms Belinda Daly, Vice-President, Balmain Rozelle Chamber of Commerce, 10 April 2024, p 23.

can stay out of the traffic, effectively—or they just can't get there. That's that knock-on effect as well.³⁸⁰

- 4.32** The impacts on local business were also addressed in the committee's online questionnaire, with inquiry participants identifying both small business local income and negative impacts on workers and businesses as issues following the opening of the Rozelle Interchange.³⁸¹

Health and safety of local communities

- 4.33** Inquiry participants also raised the negative impact on the health and safety of local communities following the opening of the Rozelle Interchange. This section will outline, in particular, the road safety impacts on local school children and community concerns regarding air quality.

Safety of children

- 4.34** The committee heard from witnesses about concerns for the safety of children accessing their school due to the traffic congestion resulting from the opening of the Rozelle Interchange.

- 4.35** Ms Annabelle Berriman, President, Parents and Citizens' Association, Rozelle Public School, spoke of the danger of children crossing Victoria Road onto Darling St to get to Rozelle Public School. She explained that as the school catchment is on the peninsula side and extends to the other side of Victoria Road, the school has 'many, many, many students that have to cross ...Victoria Road ... to get onto the other side and therefore access the school each day'.³⁸²

- 4.36** Ms Berriman argued that motorists crossing at the intersection either block the walk crossing, or drive during through the walk signal. According to Ms Berriman, this safety concern has only emerged following the opening of the Rozelle Interchange:

... [T]raffic that continues to either go through the walk lanes during the walk signal or blocks them. Kids and other community members have to weave through traffic, so it's dangerous, and that has become apparent only after the interchange has opened.³⁸³

- 4.37** Mr Gatward expressed similar concerns about pedestrian and child safety. He told the committee that 'people walking their kids to school and trying to get across Victoria Road are now dealing with frustrated commuters trying to get to their meeting or tradies trying to get to

³⁸⁰ Evidence, Mr Mark Chapman, Committee Executive, The Leichhardt Collective, 10 April 2024, p 24.

³⁸¹ Portfolio Committee No. 6, Inquiry into the impact of the Rozelle Interchange, *Online questionnaire report*, pp 3, 4 and 6.

³⁸² Evidence, Ms Annabelle Berriman, President, Parents and Citizens' Association, Rozelle Public School, 10 April 2024, p 30.

³⁸³ Evidence, Ms Annabelle Berriman, President, Parents and Citizens' Association, Rozelle Public School, 10 April 2024, p 29.

a job. It's not just the volume of the traffic. It's also now the speed of the traffic and the impact on the safety of pedestrians'.³⁸⁴

- 4.38** Ms Berriman argued that the implementation of a red-light speed camera at the intersection of Darling Street and Victoria Road could dissuade motorists from continuing across the crossings and endangering pedestrians.³⁸⁵ Ms Berriman reported that this camera was promised to the community by the end of 2023 and it had not yet been delivered.³⁸⁶

Air quality

- 4.39** The broader WestConnex project includes three unfiltered exhaust stacks at the Rozelle Parklands, and an unfiltered exhaust stack at Iron Cove Bridge,³⁸⁷ with witnesses raising concerns about air quality from the unfiltered stacks, as well as from the general increase in traffic through the area.

- 4.40** Ms Berriman informed the committee that the Parents and Citizens' Association at Rozelle Public School has funded air quality monitoring at their school out of concerns over air quality.³⁸⁸ Ms Berriman gave evidence to the committee that this monitoring has resulted in the air quality alarms going off but that parents have no recourse to address it:

That blow of air into the school is not of good quality; it is below the quality standards. However, there's nothing we can do about it when those alarms are received, other than know that that's what's happening.³⁸⁹

- 4.41** Community Environmental Monitoring (CEM) argued that the Rozelle Interchange could have health implications on local air quality from roadside pollution.³⁹⁰ CEM asserted that 'there are no safe levels of fine particulate pollution and each additional unit of PM 2.5 carries health risks. Roadside real time monitoring using low cost air monitors of the area around the Rozelle Interchange and other busy intersections should be conducted'.³⁹¹

³⁸⁴ Evidence, Mr Simon Gatward, Co-chair, Drummoyne Residents' Traffic Committee, 30 May 2024, p 35.

³⁸⁵ Evidence, Ms Annabelle Berriman, President, Parents and Citizens' Association, Rozelle Public School, 10 April 2024, p 32.

³⁸⁶ Evidence, Ms Annabelle Berriman, President, Parents and Citizens' Association, Rozelle Public School, 10 April 2024, p 32; Answers to questions on notice 2, Ms Annabelle Berriman, President, Parents and Citizens' Association, Rozelle Public School, 11 April 2024, p 2.

³⁸⁷ Submission 8, Ms Kobi Shetty MP, Member for Balmain, p 7.

³⁸⁸ Evidence, Ms Annabelle Berriman, President, Parents and Citizens' Association, Rozelle Public School, 10 April 2024, p 31.

³⁸⁹ Evidence, Ms Annabelle Berriman, President, Parents and Citizens' Association, Rozelle Public School, 10 April 2024, p 32.

³⁹⁰ Submission 16, Community Environmental Monitoring, pp 13-14.

³⁹¹ Submission 16, Community Environmental Monitoring, p 14.

4.42 Inquiry participants who responded to the committee's online questionnaire similarly expressed concerns about the impact on health of air pollution and air quality following the opening of the Rozelle Interchange.³⁹²

Active transport

4.43 Further to the issues identified in chapter 2 regarding the planning and development of active transport infrastructure, inquiry participants drew particular attention to the impact of the interchange on cycling and pedestrian safety, in particular, the poor functionality of new cycling infrastructure provided and the lack of safe pedestrian crossings.

Use and functionality of active transport infrastructure

4.44 Active transport advocates told the committee that active transport connections that the community was promised would be delivered as part of the Rozelle Interchange project have either failed to be delivered, are unsafe or of such poor design or functionality that they are largely unusable. Common concerns include:

- accessing the CBD from the west via active transport being more difficult and time-consuming than prior to opening³⁹³
- pedestrian and cycle crossings to access and leave the Rozelle Parklands have not been delivered as promised, creating difficulties for pedestrians and cyclists to utilise the Parklands³⁹⁴
- cycling and pedestrian infrastructure along the Victoria Road, Lilyfield Road and other key corridors are non-existent, unsafe or difficult to use.³⁹⁵

4.45 The below pictures from the Inner West Bicycle Coalition demonstrate some of these concerns:

- Figure 6 – no protection from errant vehicles mounting kerb³⁹⁶
- Figure 7 – Victoria Road shared path east of Terry St still has inadequate room to accommodate cyclists and bus patrons³⁹⁷
- Figure 8 – Victoria Rd shared path at Darling St Rozelle bus stop is still too narrow, only allowing one way cycle traffic³⁹⁸

³⁹² Portfolio Committee No. 6, Inquiry into the impact of the Rozelle Interchange, *Online questionnaire report*, pp 3 and 6.

³⁹³ Evidence, Mr Keith Stallard, Public Officer, Rozelle Parklands Active Transport and Community Hub Incorporated, 23 April 2024, p 39; Evidence, Mr Neil Tonkin, Advocacy Coordinator, Inner West Bicycle Coalition, 10 April 2024, p 36.

³⁹⁴ Submission 5, Bicycle NSW, p 3.

³⁹⁵ Submission 5, Bicycle NSW, p 4; Evidence, Mr David Haertsch, Honorary Treasurer, WalkSydney, 23 April 2024, pp 36-37.

³⁹⁶ Submission 1, Inner West Bicycle Coalition, p 3.

³⁹⁷ Submission 1, Inner West Bicycle Coalition, p 7.

- Figure 9 – Newly constructed shared path adjacent to James Craig Rd is narrow, not complying with Austroads specifications; noting, that the adjacent motor traffic lanes are 5 metres wide.³⁹⁹



Figure 6



Figure 7

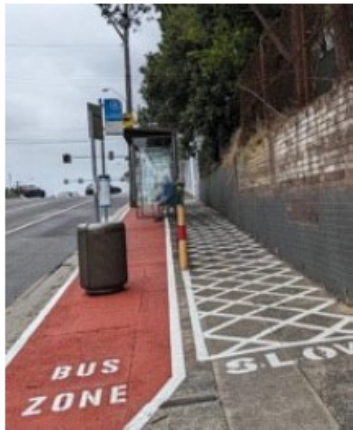


Figure 8



Figure 9

Source: Submission 1, Inner West Bicycle Coalition, pp 3, 6, 7 and 10.

- 4.46** Mr Neil Tonkin, Advocacy Coordinator, Inner West Bicycle Coalition, told the committee 'during the early construction stage, a lot of our bits and pieces of relatively good cycleway were removed. The bridge across Victoria Road at the end of Lilyfield Road and also the Beattie Bush Bridge that goes across further towards White Bay—all that was just summarily removed'.⁴⁰⁰ Mr Tonkin argued that, in its place, a more convoluted route has been established.⁴⁰¹
- 4.47** Mr Keith Stallard, Public Officer, Rozelle Parklands Active Transport and Community Hub Incorporated, also reported that removing the bridge that crosses Lilyfield Road has made

³⁹⁸ Submission 1, Inner West Bicycle Coalition, p 6.

³⁹⁹ Submission 1, Inner West Bicycle Coalition, p 10.

⁴⁰⁰ Evidence, Mr Neil Tonkin, Advocacy Coordinator, Inner West Bicycle Coalition, 10 April 2024, p 35.

⁴⁰¹ Evidence, Mr Neil Tonkin, Advocacy Coordinator, Inner West Bicycle Coalition, 10 April 2024, p 36.

commuting down Lilyfield Road from the suburbs to the west a slower journey than prior to the Rozelle Interchange.⁴⁰²

- 4.48** While active transport groups acknowledged the introduction of shared paths in the Rozelle Parklands was positive, these groups argued that access to the Rozelle Parklands as a cyclist from the west is difficult.⁴⁰³ Mr Stallard noted that while some shared paths through the Rozelle Parklands had been delivered, they are not considered suitable for commuting cyclists as they slow down the commute along Lilyfield Road to the city with a 10km/h speed limit.⁴⁰⁴ Further, he added that the main objectives to provide better cycling links through separated paths along Victoria and Lilyfield Roads have not been started:

As promised in the EIS, there should be separated cyclepaths all the way from the beginning of the Rozelle interchange—that's the junction between Victoria Road and the City West Link—all the way up and over, up Victoria Road and over the top and down the other side to the Iron Cove Bridge. That was promised in the EIS, as was a separate cycleway which I think is over two kilometres along Lilyfield Road. None of those have been built at all.⁴⁰⁵

Impacts on safety

- 4.49** Active transport groups also held concerns about the safety of active transport users when using available infrastructure. For example:
- obstructions along key active transport corridors during and after construction⁴⁰⁶
 - lack of appropriate pedestrian and cycle crossings over key corridors, including Victoria Road and Lilyfield Road, causing pedestrians and cyclists to move dangerously to cross the road⁴⁰⁷
 - vehicle and cycling speed limits in the inner west and within the Parklands create safety issues for cyclists and pedestrians.⁴⁰⁸

⁴⁰² Evidence, Mr Keith Stallard, Public Officer, Rozelle Parklands Active Transport and Community Hub Incorporated, 23 April 2024, p 39.

⁴⁰³ Evidence, Mr Keith Stallard, Public Officer, Rozelle Parklands Active Transport and Community Hub Incorporated, 23 April 2024, p 39; Evidence, Mr Neil Tonkin, Advocacy Coordinator, Inner West Bicycle Coalition, 10 April 2024, pp 37 and 40.

⁴⁰⁴ Evidence, Mr Keith Stallard, Public Officer, Rozelle Parklands Active Transport and Community Hub Incorporated, 23 April 2024, p 39.

⁴⁰⁵ Evidence, Mr Keith Stallard, Public Officer, Rozelle Parklands Active Transport and Community Hub Incorporated, 23 April 2024, p 36.

⁴⁰⁶ Evidence, Mr Neil Tonkin, Advocacy Coordinator, Inner West Bicycle Coalition, 10 April 2024, p 36; Evidence, Mr Keith Stallard, Public Officer, Rozelle Parklands Active Transport and Community Hub Incorporated, 23 April 2024, p 38.

⁴⁰⁷ Evidence, Mr David Haertsch, Honorary Treasurer, WalkSydney, 23 April 2024, pp 36-37; Evidence, Ms Annabelle Berriman, President, Parents and Citizens' Association, Rozelle Public School, 10 April 2024, p 30; Evidence, Mr Neil Tonkin, Advocacy Coordinator, Inner West Bicycle Coalition, 10 April 2024, pp 37-38.

⁴⁰⁸ Submission 5, Bicycle NSW, p 6; Evidence, Mr Keith Stallard, Public Officer, Rozelle Parklands Active Transport and Community Hub Incorporated, 23 April 2024, p 39.

- 4.50** Mr David Haertsch, Treasurer, Walk Sydney, advised the committee that the community was promised a new cycleway down Victoria Road with widened footpaths that would become a public transport corridor.⁴⁰⁹ In terms of these plans, he noted that no change has occurred and that there is now a 'huge gap' between crossability at one end of Anzac Bridge and at Evans Road. On this, Mr Haertsch observed that it is a 'disaster for walkability'.⁴¹⁰
- 4.51** Mr Stallard contended that the failure to deliver the promised infrastructure has made cycling in and through the Inner West 'more arduous and dangerous than it should be'.⁴¹¹

Obstructions on cycleways and shared paths

- 4.52** Mr Tonkin highlighted obstructions on cycleways and shared paths during the construction phase of the Rozelle Interchange.⁴¹² The group advised that Lilyfield Road is often used by cyclists coming from the west, and that during construction a number of construction vehicles were active and parked along Lilyfield Road, creating unsafe conditions for cyclists.⁴¹³
- 4.53** In fact, active transport groups argued that obstructions to cyclists have not ceased since the opening of the Rozelle Interchange. Mr Stallard told the committee that '[i]n 1.2 kilometres along the Victoria Road shared path there is one [pole] every 14 metres, and they're extremely dangerous'.⁴¹⁴ Mr Tonkin expressed a similar concern, telling the committee that 'the bike route that goes from the Iron Cove Bridge to The Crescent is littered with obstructions. We have all sorts of massive big signs plonked there and it's right in the bike path'.⁴¹⁵
- 4.54** Ms Shetty, Member for Balmain, told the committee that, while there were improvements in active transport links for people travelling from Lilyfield through the Rozelle Parklands and underneath Victoria Road and onto the Anzac Bridge, 'unfortunately for people travelling onto the Anzac Bridge from the peninsula, there's a very narrow, very unsafe footpath that's a shared path that's been created with a post in the middle of it'.⁴¹⁶

Lack of appropriate crossings

- 4.55** The inability for pedestrians to safely cross over Victoria Road was also identified as a key concern for active transport users.⁴¹⁷ According to Ms Shetty, the Victoria Road underpass is

⁴⁰⁹ Evidence, Mr David Haertsch, Honorary Treasurer, WalkSydney, 23 April, p 36.

⁴¹⁰ Evidence, Mr David Haertsch, Honorary Treasurer, WalkSydney, 23 April, pp 36-37.

⁴¹¹ Evidence, Mr Keith Stallard, Public Officer, Rozelle Parklands Active Transport and Community Hub Incorporated, 23 April 2024, p 35.

⁴¹² Evidence, Mr Neil Tonkin, Advocacy Coordinator, Inner West Bicycle Coalition, 10 April 2024, p 36.

⁴¹³ Evidence, Mr Neil Tonkin, Advocacy Coordinator, Inner West Bicycle Coalition, 10 April 2024, p 36.

⁴¹⁴ Evidence, Mr Keith Stallard, Public Officer, Rozelle Parklands Active Transport and Community Hub Incorporated, 23 April 2024, p 38.

⁴¹⁵ Evidence, Mr Neil Tonkin, Advocacy Coordinator, Inner West Bicycle Coalition, 10 April 2024, p 39.

⁴¹⁶ Evidence, Ms Kobi Shetty MP, Member for Balmain, 10 April 2024, pp 5-6.

⁴¹⁷ Evidence, Mr Neil Tonkin, Advocacy Coordinator, Inner West Bicycle Coalition, 10 April 2024, p 40; Evidence, Mr David Haertsch, Honorary Treasurer, WalkSydney, 23 April 2024, pp 36-37.

the only crossing for cyclists and pedestrians between the Crescent and Gordon Street.⁴¹⁸ She told the committee:

There's been a very big pedestrian amenity impact where we've lost overpasses for pedestrians. We've lost pedestrian safety amenity and, as a result, we see currently—when I went to visit the Traffic Management Centre myself a couple of weeks ago—people taking really risky behaviour and running across the intersection of Robert Street, where the diversion is 700 metres for them to cross safely at an intersection or an underpass that would be appropriate.⁴¹⁹

4.56 A further gap in crossability was identified near the Anzac Bridge up to Evans Street, Rozelle by Mr Haertsch from WalkSydney.⁴²⁰ Mr Tonkin and Ms Shetty, both specifically raised reports of pedestrians dangerously crossing Victoria Road at Robert Street as there is no pedestrian crossing.⁴²¹

4.57 Mr John McNeil, Committee Member, Inner West Bicycle Coalition and Secretary, Better Streets Australia, highlighted the dangers for children in particular:

I've seen a kid almost run over at the entrance to Lilyfield Road by someone coming off the Anzac Bridge, sweeping around through the lights and then going left and the kid – there's no pedestrian crossing, no facility for pedestrians or bicyclists to cross. Two kids were crossing and one almost got cleaned up by a car because that's a high-speed route and there's absolutely no warning or slowing for cyclists that are going up Victoria Road.⁴²²

4.58 In their submission Bicycle NSW advocated for a reduction in vehicular speed limit from 50km/h to 40km/h across the inner west, and a reduction to 30km/h on streets with a high concentration of pedestrian activity and those which form part of the Inner West Bicycle Network, including Lilyfield Road and Gordon Street.⁴²³

Asbestos in the Rozelle Parklands

4.59 The discovery of asbestos in the Rozelle Parklands following the opening of the Rozelle Interchange has had significant impacts on the community. This section considers the impacts of this discovery, with further detail about the NSW Government's response to the asbestos in the Parklands in chapter 1.

4.60 Briefly, the committee explored the potential cause of the asbestos. According to Mr Jim Salmon, Executive General Manager, Major Projects Support, John Holland, the contaminated

⁴¹⁸ Submission 8, Ms Kobi Shetty MP, Member for Balmain, p 5.

⁴¹⁹ Evidence, Ms Kobi Shetty MP, Member for Balmain, 10 April 2024, p 2.

⁴²⁰ Evidence, Mr David Haertsch, Honorary Treasurer, WalkSydney, 23 April 2024, pp 36-37.

⁴²¹ Submission 8, Ms Kobi Shetty MP, Member for Balmain, p 5; Evidence, Mr Neil Tonkin, Advocacy Coordinator, Inner West Bicycle Coalition, 10 April 2024, p 40.

⁴²² Evidence, Mr John McNeil, Committee Member, Inner West Bicycle Coalition, 10 April 2024, p 40.

⁴²³ Submission 5, Bicycle NSW, p 6.

mulch was recycled mulch purchased from a NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA) accredited facility, producing recycled mulch pursuant to an EPA resource recovery order.⁴²⁴

- 4.61** Mr Graeme Silvester, General Manager, Safety, Health, Environment, Quality and Sustainability, CPB Contractors, explained that the joint venture, John Holland and CPB Contractors, engaged WSP Environmental to develop a process for the recycled mulch, approved by the EPA-accredited site environmental auditor.⁴²⁵ Mr Silvester told the committee that the joint venture followed this process, including sending samples away to identify the presence of any material outside the EPA recycled mulch order 2016.⁴²⁶ Mr Silvester confirmed that the results were clear and no asbestos or other contaminant was detected.⁴²⁷
- 4.62** Mr Silvester denied that there was ever concern expressed to them that asbestos could potentially be in recycled mulch.⁴²⁸ Mr Silvester claimed that the joint venture had an independent contractor test the mulch at the supplier's premises before transporting it offsite and into the Rozelle Parklands.⁴²⁹

Impact of the discovery of asbestos

- 4.63** As outlined in chapter 1, the Rozelle Parklands were opened on 17 December 2023⁴³⁰ but later closed on 10 January 2024⁴³¹ following the detection of asbestos in the mulch. The Parklands were later re-opened in its entirety on 2 May 2024.⁴³²

⁴²⁴ Evidence, Mr Jim Salmon, Executive General Manager, Major Projects Support, John Holland, 23 April 2024, pp 26 and 28 (Note: In correspondence to the committee received on 22 May 2024, Mr Graeme Silvester, General Manager, Safety, Health, Environment, Quality and Sustainability, CPB Contractors, clarified this evidence).

⁴²⁵ Evidence, Mr Graeme Silvester, General Manager, Safety, Health, Environment, Quality and Sustainability, CPB Contractors, 23 April 2024, pp 28-29.

⁴²⁶ Evidence, Mr Graeme Silvester, General Manager, Safety, Health, Environment, Quality and Sustainability, CPB Contractors, 23 April 2024, p 29.

⁴²⁷ Evidence, Mr Graeme Silvester, General Manager, Safety, Health, Environment, Quality and Sustainability, CPB Contractors, 23 April 2024, p 29.

⁴²⁸ Evidence, Mr Graeme Silvester, General Manager, Safety, Health, Environment, Quality and Sustainability, CPB Contractors, 23 April 2024, p 27; (Note: In correspondence to the committee received on 17 May 2024, Mr Jim Salmon, Executive General Manager, Major Projects Support, John Holland, clarified this evidence)

⁴²⁹ Evidence, Mr Graeme Silvester, General Manager, Safety, Health, Environment, Quality and Sustainability, CPB Contractors, 23 April 2024, pp 28-29; (Note: In correspondence to the committee received on 17 May 2024, Mr Jim Salmon, Executive General Manager, Major Projects Support, John Holland, clarified this evidence).

⁴³⁰ Media release, Transport for New South Wales, 'Rozelle Parklands Opening Date Locked In', 11 December 2023.

⁴³¹ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 32.

⁴³² Answers to questions on notice, John Holland Group, 22 May 2024, p 1.

- 4.64** The discovery of asbestos sparked widespread concern amongst the local community, and frustration over what many locals considered to be the one benefit of the Rozelle Interchange.⁴³³ Some of the key impacts and concerns identified by inquiry participants were:
- health and safety fears amongst the community⁴³⁴
 - increased distrust of Transport for NSW and the joint venture based on how the asbestos made its way into the mulch initially and how it was not identified in testing⁴³⁵
 - disappointment and frustration at the immediate closure of the Parklands following their opening.⁴³⁶
- 4.65** In respect of this community distrust and frustration, a local resident, Ms Catherine Dornan expressed that it was 'so disappointing to have waited so long for and then attended the opening of the parklands, only to have them shut down after asbestos was discovered in the mulch ... [w]hatever testing & safeguards are in place, they are clearly inadequate and the entire system for certification, monitoring and penalties needs to be overhauled. This is clearly within societal health and community expectations'.⁴³⁷
- 4.66** Along similar lines, another resident told the committee that '[t]he extensive existence of asbestos on public land as now known is a sad manifestation of how the use of public money over such a great period of time can lead to personal enrichment at the expense of public safety. A tremendous breach of public trust'.⁴³⁸
- 4.67** Councillor Darcy Byrne, Mayor of Inner West Council, also commented on the lack of community trust in Transport for NSW, John Holland, CPB Contractors and Transurban, particularly with the response and clean up of the asbestos:
- Everyone's already had a very bad experience of them over the last decade or more. Now when they're saying, "Just trust us on the clean-up of the asbestos," or, "No, we're definitely doing all the mitigations," people don't believe them – and I don't believe them.⁴³⁹
- 4.68** Ms Shetty, told to the committee about the impact of the closure of the Parklands on her community:

⁴³³ Submission 68, Ms Catherine Dornan, p 4; Submission 70, Name suppressed, p 1; Submission 95, Name suppressed, p 1; Submission 101, Name suppressed, p 1; Submission 124, Name suppressed, p 1; Submission 127, Name suppressed, p 1; Submission 129, Ms Carolyn Ienna, p 1; Submission 137, Name suppressed, p 1; Submission 160, Name suppressed, p 1.

⁴³⁴ Submission 127, Name suppressed, p 1; Submission 68, Ms Catherine Dornan, p 4.

⁴³⁵ Submission 68, Ms Catherine Dornan, p 4; Submission 108, Ms Colette Foran, pp 1-2; Submission 137, Name suppressed, p 1; Submission 160, Name suppressed, p1.

⁴³⁶ Submission 68, Ms Catherine Dornan, p 4; Submission 70, Name suppressed, p 1; Submission 101, Name suppressed, p 1; Submission 108, Ms Colette Foran, p 1; Submission 137, Name suppressed, p 1.

⁴³⁷ Submission 68, Ms Catherine Dornan, p 4.

⁴³⁸ Submission 137, Name suppressed, p 1.

⁴³⁹ Evidence, Cr Darcy Byrne, Mayor, Inner West Council, 10 April 2024, p 14.

[T]he one positive that we were looking at getting out of this interchange was some more public, open green space, which was very welcome. For that to have been interrupted within weeks of the opening of the parklands – to the extent that we've only just regained some of our sporting fields and some of our pedestrian access to the park lands, and much of the parkland remain closed – has been incredibly disappointing.⁴⁴⁰

Committee comment

- 4.69** The committee acknowledges that with large transport infrastructure projects like the Rozelle Interchange, there will inevitably be impacts on local communities and settling in periods post-opening. However, the committee considers that the scale of impacts experienced by the community is unacceptable and considers these impacts to be largely due to the fundamental flaws of the design and delivery of the Rozelle Interchange.
- 4.70** It is clear to the committee that the impacts on local residents following the opening of the Rozelle Interchange have been significant, particularly the increased traffic congestion on their local roads, which has consequently led to longer travel times. The committee acknowledges the deep frustration of impacted residents and communities whose ability to simply and freely move within local streets has, at times, been severely restricted.
- 4.71** The committee is concerned by the evidence that increased traffic congestion has had negative impacts on local businesses, including on staff retention, deliveries and on some consumers who are reportedly choosing to avoid shopping precincts and high streets as a result of the congestion.
- 4.72** The committee agrees that there has been significantly increased traffic congestion, particularly on local roads, following the opening of the Rozelle Interchange which has resulted in extensive negative impacts on residents and local businesses.
- 4.73** In addition, the committee finds that the increased traffic congestion following the opening of the Rozelle Interchange is unreasonable and unacceptable, given the size, planning and cost involved in the Rozelle Interchange and broader WestConnex project.

Finding 6

That there has been significantly increased traffic congestion, particularly on local roads, following the opening of the Rozelle Interchange which has resulted in extensive negative impacts on residents and local businesses.

⁴⁴⁰ Evidence, Ms Kobi Shetty MP, Member for Balmain, 10 April 2024, pp 2-3.

Finding 7

That the increased traffic congestion following the opening of the Rozelle Interchange is unreasonable and unacceptable, given the size, planning and cost involved in the Rozelle Interchange and broader WestConnex project.

- 4.74** The committee accepts the evidence from multiple inquiry participants that one of the key causes of the congestion on local roads has been slowed traffic light signalling from local roads, particularly in Drummoyne, onto Victoria Road which in turn has had flow on effects to other suburbs. The committee also acknowledges that Balmain and Rozelle residents have claimed slowed traffic light signalling has also increased congestion on their local roads. These issues were identified consistently throughout the inquiry and have clearly had a significant impact on the ability of local residents to commute safely and freely around their suburbs.
- 4.75** While the committee notes the evidence of Transport for NSW that there has not been substantial changes to traffic light signals in Drummoyne affecting egress from the local community onto Victoria Road, we are troubled by the volume of evidence from inquiry participants claiming the contrary. We have confidence in the local road users who experience them daily, and find it difficult to believe there has been no significant changes to light signalling based on the evidence of inquiry participants.
- 4.76** We therefore urge Transport for NSW, as an immediate priority and in a consultative and transparent manner, review the traffic light signalling on local roads in Balmain, Rozelle and Drummoyne that intersect with Victoria Road to mitigate traffic congestion on local roads.
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Recommendation 7

That Transport for NSW, as an immediate priority and in a consultative and transparent manner, review the traffic light signalling on local roads in Balmain, Rozelle and Drummoyne that intersect with Victoria Road to mitigate traffic congestion on local roads.

- 4.77** The committee accepts that rat running through local suburbs has increased congestion on local roads, and created safety issues in local areas. We have heard the frustration of inquiry participants who have had their quiet local streets disrupted by an increasing number of cars, together with reports of unsafe driving, impacting on the safety of their community. The committee notes that the NSW Government has acknowledged rat running is an issue and their evidence that they did not foresee this problem prior to the opening of the Rozelle Interchange.
- 4.78** To this end, the committee recommends that Transport for NSW investigate and implement mitigation strategies to prevent rat running on local roads, as an immediate priority.
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Recommendation 8

That Transport for NSW, as an immediate priority, investigate and implement mitigation strategies to prevent rat running on local roads that is occurring as a result of the Rozelle Interchange.

- 4.79** The committee also acknowledges the concerns of inquiry participants about the inclusion of a left turn only lane and a separate dedicated bus lane along Victoria Road. We recognise that this dedicated bus lane and left turn only lane has increased traffic congestion and limited the availability of lanes for cars on Victoria Road.
- 4.80** The committee also recognises how buses merging with other traffic when approaching the Anzac Bridge can be particularly challenging and can contribute to congestion. We support the inclusion of bus lanes to encourage public transport use, and believe the dedicated bus lane on Victoria Road should remain as it approaches the Anzac Bridge.
- 4.81** The committee therefore urges Transport for NSW, as an immediate priority, to review the left turn only lane and the effectiveness of the dedicated bus lane on Victoria Rd, as well as the need for a continual dedicated bus lane approaching Anzac Bridge.
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Recommendation 9

That Transport for NSW, as an immediate priority, review the left turn only lane and the effectiveness of the dedicated bus lane on Victoria Road, as well as the need for a continual dedicated bus lane approaching Anzac Bridge.

- 4.82** It's unacceptable that congestion along Victoria Road and Darling Street has made it less safe for children making their way to and from Rozelle Public School. It's also concerning that motorists are blocking walk signals and driving through intersections causing such risks to safety.
- 4.83** We are particularly concerned about the evidence that a red light safety camera at the intersection of Victoria Rad (eastbound) and Darling Street that was expected to be delivered by the end of 2023 still not been installed.
- 4.84** The committee therefore recommends that Transport for NSW, as an immediate priority, install an operational red light speed camera at the intersection of Darling Street and Victoria Road.
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Recommendation 10

That Transport for NSW, as an immediate priority, install an operational red light speed camera at the intersection of Darling Street and Victoria Road.

- 4.85** The committee was troubled by the evidence that monitoring has shown that the air around Rozelle is of low quality. The committee acknowledges the concerns of the community around this and the air pollution reported by inquiry participants.
- 4.86** The committee therefore recommends that the NSW Environment Protection Authority work with the local community to install air quality monitors that provide accessible and real-time information to the public, at appropriate locations to monitor particulates from the exhaust stacks and increased traffic from the Rozelle Interchange.
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Recommendation 11

That the NSW Environment Protection Authority work with the local community to install air quality monitors that provide accessible and real-time information to the public, at appropriate locations to monitor particulates from the exhaust stacks and increased traffic from the Rozelle Interchange.

- 4.87** The committee also acknowledges the frustration and disappointment expressed by active transport users following their experience during construction and following the opening of the Rozelle Interchange. We accept that active transport routes to access the CBD from the west have become more difficult following the opening of the Rozelle Interchange, and the lack of appropriate infrastructure has made accessing the Rozelle Parklands difficult for active transport users.
- 4.88** The committee also accepts the safety issues for active transport users raised by inquiry participants. We acknowledge how frustrating using active transport infrastructure would have been during the construction phase of the Rozelle Interchange given the obstructions noted by inquiry participants. We also acknowledge that obstructions are still an identified issue by active transport users following the opening.
- 4.89** We also recognise there is a lack of appropriate pedestrian and cycle crossings over key corridors which has caused safety issues for active transport users. Concerns for speed limits have also been raised, with foreseen dangers identified in the Parklands from speed limits being too low, and too high in residential areas used by active transport users.
- 4.90** To this end, the committee recommends that Transport for NSW address concerns regarding pedestrian safety along Victoria Road by installing more, and safer, pedestrian crossings including pedestrian overpasses. The committee also urges Transport for NSW work with cycling advocates to undertake an urgent safety and useability assessment of cycling infrastructure in areas impacted by the Rozelle Interchange, including Victoria and Lilyfield Roads and surrounding local streets, and commit to a plan to improve and upgrade that cycling infrastructure to best standard.
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Recommendation 12

That Transport for NSW address concerns regarding pedestrian safety along Victoria Road by installing more, and safer, pedestrian crossings including pedestrian overpasses.

Recommendation 13

That Transport for NSW work with cycling advocates to undertake an urgent safety and useability assessment of cycling infrastructure in areas impacted by the Rozelle Interchange, including Victoria and Lilyfield Roads and surrounding local streets, and commit to a plan to improve and upgrade that cycling infrastructure to best standard.

- 4.91** The committee acknowledges the frustration and distrust caused by the discovery of asbestos and subsequent closure of the Parklands. The impacts of this discovery only compounded the negative community sentiment felt by local residents towards the Rozelle Interchange.
- 4.92** We acknowledge and accept the concerns around the safety of community members, and the frustration around of the closure of the Parklands. We particularly acknowledge the distrust that this discovery has caused for the community in Transport for New South Wales, the joint venture and Transurban.
- 4.93** We recognise that while the Parklands have reopened, the investigation of this issue is ongoing.
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Finding 8

That the discovery of asbestos led to significant community concern and frustration over the closure of the Rozelle Parklands, and distrust in Transport for NSW, Transurban and the joint venture of John Holland and CPB Contractors.

Chapter 5 Moving forward

This chapter identifies measures that can be undertaken to help mitigate the impacts experienced by local communities, as a result of the opening of the Rozelle Interchange, and to prevent communities from experiencing similar impact from major infrastructure projects in the future. In doing so, this chapter recognises public sentiment over the importance of improving community consultation processes, and improving and prioritising public and active transportation. This chapter will also refer to government infrastructure projects currently underway, and unpack key issues raised by participants and suggested solutions.

Lessons learned

- 5.1** Throughout the inquiry, stakeholders identified various solutions to mitigate traffic impacts and improve outcomes in communities affected by the development and opening of the Rozelle Interchange. Inquiry participants shared examples of best practice that should be considered for ongoing and future infrastructure projects, emphasising the need to improve community consultation and engagement, and prioritise public and active transportation.
- 5.2** Inquiry participants impressed upon the committee that they hope the lessons learnt from the different impacts encountered throughout the Rozelle Interchange project will ensure they don't happen again. For example, Councillor Zoë Baker, Mayor, North Sydney Council, when urging the committee to ensure that the same mistakes are not made with the Warringah Freeway Upgrade and Western Harbour Tunnel project, said we have, 'a unique opportunity to draw from the past and the present to shape and improve on what is otherwise yet to come'.⁴⁴¹ In their submission to the inquiry, Mr Chris Ford, Mr Paul Forward, Mr Les Wielinga AM, and Mr Stuart McCreery, former senior executives from Transport for NSW, NSW Treasury, the former Roads and Maritime Services, and Sydney Motorway Corporation, stated that: '[c]oncrete has a way of being unforgiving'.⁴⁴²

Improving consultation and community engagement

- 5.3** As outlined in chapter 3, evidence from inquiry participants demonstrated a need for improved consultation and community engagement during all stages of infrastructure projects. This includes consultation in response to Environmental Impact Statements, modifications, and mitigation strategies undertaken prior to and following the opening of any major transport infrastructure project. Inquiry participants also told the committee that there was a lack of meaningful consultation concerning the project, as well as a lack of transparency regarding decisions made by the government following consultation.⁴⁴³ For example, a number of

⁴⁴¹ Evidence, Cr Zoë Baker, Mayor, North Sydney Council, 23 April 2024, p 41.

⁴⁴² Submission 166, Mr Chris Ford, Mr Paul Forward, Mr Les Wielinga AM and Mr Stuart McCreery, p 2.

⁴⁴³ See for example, Submission 17, WalkSydney, p 6; Evidence, Cr Andrew Ferguson, Councillor, City of Canada Bay Council, 30 May 2024, p 12; Evidence, Mr Kim Woodbury, Chief Operating Officer, City of Sydney, 23 April 2024, p 41; Evidence, Ms Kobi Shetty MP, Member for Balmain, 10 April 2024, p 3.

inquiry participants said that residents were not always kept informed or consulted about solutions that were implemented to prevent and manage traffic impacts.⁴⁴⁴

- 5.4** Councillor Zac Miles, Mayor, Hunters Hill Council, told the committee that it is probable that Transport for NSW had not considered the 'downstream effects' experienced by Hunters Hill residents prior to implementing traffic management strategies following the opening of the Rozelle Interchange:

It would be nice to have, as I have invited, someone from the comms team or maybe even a decision-maker from within RMS or Transport to come and visit us so that we can have a public forum to explain to them the frustrations that we're having with the infrastructure because there have obviously been some changes to the physical implementation that have had downstream effects.⁴⁴⁵

- 5.5** The committee's online questionnaire asked inquiry participants to consider what could have been done to improve communication prior to and following the opening of the Rozelle Interchange. Common themes included the need for greater communication with neighbouring suburbs, a wider scope of communication channels, and more helpful information.⁴⁴⁶ However, many respondents also emphasised that communication was not their main concern, but rather the design and execution of the interchange itself.
- 5.6** As noted in chapter 3, Mr Simon Gatward and Ms Claudia Campbell, co-chairs of Drummoyne Resident's Traffic Committee, met with Transport for NSW and Canada City Bay Council to discuss the traffic study of the Drummoyne area led by Transport for NSW. During this meeting, they reiterated the importance of community consultation and input.⁴⁴⁷
- 5.7** Ms Campbell explained to the committee that it is 'imperative' that an analysis of traffic impacts incorporates the lived experiences of residents.⁴⁴⁸ Further, Mr Gatward noted, without the lived experiences of residents, an analysis of traffic conditions is just a spreadsheet of averages, and 'averages kill the truth'.⁴⁴⁹ Moving forward, Mr Gatward and Ms Campbell called for greater transparency from, and engagement with Transport for NSW.⁴⁵⁰

⁴⁴⁴ See for example, Evidence, Mr Simon Gatward, Co-chair, Drummoyne Resident' Traffic Committee, 30 May 2024, p 29; Evidence, Cr Zac Miles, Mayor, Hunters Hill Council, 23 April 2024, p 45.

⁴⁴⁵ Evidence, Cr Zac Miles, Mayor, Hunters Hill Council, 23 April 2024, p 45.

⁴⁴⁶ Portfolio Committee No. 6, Inquiry into the impact of the Rozelle Interchange, *Online questionnaire report*, p 15.

⁴⁴⁷ Evidence, Ms Claudia Campbell, Co-chair, Drummoyne Residents' Traffic Committee, 30 May 2024, pp 29, 33, 34; Evidence, Mr Simon Gatward, Co-chair, Drummoyne Residents' Traffic Committee, 30 May 2024, p 29.

⁴⁴⁸ Evidence, Ms Claudia Campbell, Co-chair, Drummoyne Residents' Traffic Committee, 30 May 2024, p 33.

⁴⁴⁹ Evidence, Mr Simon Gatward, Co-chair, Drummoyne Residents' Traffic Committee, 30 May 2024, p 29.

⁴⁵⁰ Evidence, Ms Claudia Campbell, Co-chair, Drummoyne Residents' Traffic Committee, 30 May 2024, p 29; Evidence, Mr Simon Gatward, Co-chair, Drummoyne Residents' Traffic Committee, 30 May 2024, p 29.

- 5.8** The Hon John Graham MLC, Minister for Roads, advised that the traffic study would be completed by the end of June.⁴⁵¹
- 5.9** To this end, the committee reached out to Transport for NSW, City of Canada Bay Council, and Drummoyne Resident's Traffic Committee to stress the importance of meaningful community consultation and proposed the establishment of a joint consultative committee.⁴⁵² It was envisaged that the consultative committee would provide collective ongoing input into the traffic study, led by Transport for NSW, and give appropriate consideration to issues and suggestions made by impacted residents and community members. At the time of writing, the committee has not been advised if this proposal was adopted.

Improving and prioritising public transport and active transport

- 5.10** Inquiry participants also emphasised the need to enhance public transport options to improve outcomes for communities impacted by the Rozelle Interchange.⁴⁵³ A number of inquiry participants told the committee that, moving forward, alternatives to driving, should be prioritised ahead of the development of motorways.⁴⁵⁴

Improving public transport along and around the Rozelle Interchange

- 5.11** To improve outcomes in Rozelle, Balmain, Drummoyne and other areas surrounding the Rozelle Interchange, inquiry participants advocated for improving the quantity and quality of public transport, including buses, ferries and metro services.⁴⁵⁵ For example, Councillor Darcy Byrne, Mayor, Inner West Council, told the committee that additional ferry and bus services would make a difference in improving outcomes for Inner West residents.⁴⁵⁶ Additionally, Mr David Haertsch, Honorary Treasurer, WalkSydney, stated that the future metro station in White Bay 'should go some way towards alleviating the transport issues' for residents in Balmain.⁴⁵⁷

⁴⁵¹ Evidence, Mr Simon Gatward, Co-chair, Drummoyne Residents' Traffic Committee, 30 May 2024, p 34.

⁴⁵² Media release, Ms Cate Faehrmann MLC, 'Rozelle Interchange inquiry – Committee calls for joint government and community consultative committee', 5 June 2024.

⁴⁵³ See for example, Submission 8, Ms Kobi Shetty MP, Member for Balmain, p 5; Evidence, Cr Darcy Byrne, Mayor, Inner West Council, 10 April 2024, p 15; Evidence, Mr David Haertsch, Honorary Treasurer, WalkSydney, 23 April 2024, p 40; Submission 9, Ms Stephanie Di Pasqua MP, Member for Drummoyne, p 6.

⁴⁵⁴ See for example, Submission 5, Bicycle NSW, p 2; Submission 14, Mr Benjamin Prag, p 2; Submission 73, Name suppressed, p 1; Submission 75, Name suppressed, p 2; Submission 114, Name Suppressed, p 1; Submission 165, Thomas Oskar, p 1.

⁴⁵⁵ Evidence, Mr David Haertsch, Honorary Treasurer, WalkSydney, 23 April 2024, p 40; Submission 132, Name suppressed, p 1.

⁴⁵⁶ Evidence, Cr Darcy Byrne, Mayor, Inner West Council, 10 April 2024, p 15.

⁴⁵⁷ Evidence, Mr David Haertsch, Honorary Treasurer, WalkSydney, 23 April 2024, p 40.

5.12 Ms Kobi Shetty MP, Member for Balmain, argued there is a need for 'significant investment in public transport' to encourage people to change their behaviour as road users and consider alternative options for travel.⁴⁵⁸ She explained:

Buses such as the 441, 442 and 437 that get stuck in traffic, or buses such as the 445 that do not connect with nearby ferry services to the city, are hardly likely to encourage people to leave the car at home and consider these alternative options. These services require quick improvements, including the extension of bus services from Gladstone Park to the Balmain East ferry wharf, the resumption of ferry services to Elliot Street - West Balmain, and the expansion of the F-10 service to include a stop at Annandale.⁴⁵⁹

5.13 Ms Stephanie Di Pasqua MP, Member for Drummoyne, advocated for increasing ferry services around the Drummoyne peninsula and reopening the Birkenhead Point Ferry Wharf.⁴⁶⁰ Ms Di Pasqua also advocated for ferry services 'starting further down the river' in Cabarita or Abbotsford, to ensure residents are not left behind due to ferries already being at capacity when they arrive in Drummoyne:

What happens is that Drummoyne is one of the last stops on that route. Essentially, because they get full earlier on the river, once they get to Drummoyne those commuters cannot get on. It's a particular problem on the weekends ... I get emails every single weekend that people have been left abandoned on ferry wharves. It is a problem.⁴⁶¹

5.14 Mr Forward, former Chief Executive Officer, Roads and Traffic Authority (RTA), told the committee that Inner West residents should be compensated for financial loss and reduced accessibility in their community.⁴⁶² Mr Forward, alongside Mr Ford, Mr Wielinga AM, and Mr McCreery, identified specific improvements to public transport could be actioned immediately:

- upgrading the frequency of morning peak hour buses along Victoria Road, City West Link and Parramatta Road
- investigating the possibility of having an express bus service through the Iron Cove Link tunnel to the Anzac Bridge
- reviewing and upgrading morning peak hour ferry services between Circular Quay/Barangaroo and the Balmain peninsular, Birkenhead Point, Drummoyne, Hunters Hill, Huntleys' Cove, Chiswick, and Abbotsford
- identifying other potential ferry wharves along the Parramatta River to upgrade the ferry service into the Sydney CBD

⁴⁵⁸ Submission 8, Ms Kobi Shetty MP, Member for Balmain, 10 April 2024 p 5.

⁴⁵⁹ Submission 8, Ms Kobi Shetty MP, Member for Balmain, 10 April 2024, p 5.

⁴⁶⁰ Submission 9, Ms Stephanie Di Pasqua MP, Member for Drummoyne, 10 April 2024, p 6.

⁴⁶¹ Evidence, Ms Stephanie Di Pasqua MP, Member for Drummoyne, 10 April 2024, p 6.

⁴⁶² Evidence, Mr Paul Forward, former Chief Executive Officer, Roads and Traffic Authority, 3 May 2024, p 15.

- developing a comprehensive ferry strategy for Sydney Harbour and the Parramatta River.⁴⁶³

5.15 The Minister for Roads stated that investment in public transport is part of the NSW Government's plan 'in the medium term' to improve outcomes following the opening of the Rozelle Interchange.⁴⁶⁴

Prioritising public and active transport

5.16 Many inquiry participants urged that, moving forward, public and active transport must be prioritised over future motorway projects. Dr Christopher Standen, Research Fellow, School of Population Health, University of NSW, stated that public transport has the capacity to move larger groups of people from one location to another than private vehicles explaining that '[a] three-lane motorway can transport maybe 6,000 people an hour under optimum conditions. Railway can transport maybe 60,000 people over the same time'.⁴⁶⁵ Similarly, the City of Sydney compared the capacity of metro, buses and motorways:

Metro moves 250,000 people/hour compared, bus priority corridor (i.e.2 lanes) moves 20,000 people/hour the equivalent space for a motorway (i.e.: 2 lanes) that can only move around 4,000 people/hour.⁴⁶⁶

5.17 Inquiry participants also told the committee that another benefit of prioritising alternative modes of transport over vehicular travel will reduce pollution and congestion with Mr Thomas Oskar arguing:

Increasing supply of roads, only creates more private car use, which only creates more pollution and congestion. We need to REDUCE private car use, not increase it. We need to create more active and public transport, because these modes of transport reduce pollution, congestion and promote physical and mental health.⁴⁶⁷

5.18 Bicycle NSW stressed the need for future road-based projects to adopt a 'multi-modal strategic model' that involves 'reallocating road space for public and active transport'.⁴⁶⁸

Transport for NSW must use a multi-modal strategic model for road-based projects that takes account of impacts on buses, walking and cycling and considers all options to improve access. All infrastructure planning must be consistent with a Net Zero goal. Mode shift, reducing vehicle kilometres travelled and enabling walking and riding are critical.⁴⁶⁹

⁴⁶³ Submission 166, Mr Chris Ford, Mr Paul Forward, Mr Les Wielinga AM and Mr Stuart McCreery, p 9; Evidence, Mr Paul Forward, former Chief Executive Officer, Roads and Traffic Authority, 3 May 2024, p 13.

⁴⁶⁴ Evidence, the Hon John Graham, Minister for Roads, 3 May 2024, p 29.

⁴⁶⁵ Evidence, Dr Chris Standen, Research Fellow, School of Population Health, University of NSW, 30 May 2024, p 19.

⁴⁶⁶ Submission 2, City of Sydney, p 9.

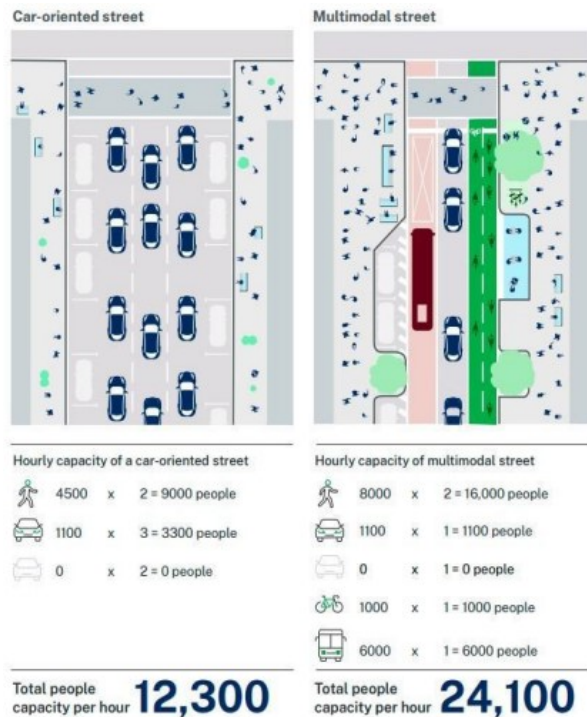
⁴⁶⁷ Submission 165, Thomas Oskar, p 1.

⁴⁶⁸ Submission 5, Bicycle NSW, pp 7 and 8.

⁴⁶⁹ Submission 5, Bicycle NSW, p 8.

5.19 Figure 6 below demonstrates the difference between a multi-modal street and car-oriented street.

Figure 6 Comparison of a car-oriented street and multi-modal street



Source: *Future Transport Strategy, Transport for NSW, as cited in Submission 5, Bicycles NSW, p 7.*

5.20 However, the committee also heard that public and active transport is not always a preferred or suitable mode of transportation. While acknowledging improvements to public transport, Ms Annabelle Berriman, President, Parents and Citizens' Association, Rozelle Public School, suggested there is still a need to facilitate car use:

Public transport is always something that can be improved. However, I can't speak for how everyone in our community's lives work and whether or not public transport feeds into where they need to be going that day. If they've got to pick their kids up with sporting equipment and go to activities after school, that's not always something that can occur with access via public transport.⁴⁷⁰

5.21 Additionally, Dr Joesph Cordaro, General Practitioner, Drummoyne Medical Centre and Councillor, City of Canada Bay Council, flagged the need to consider the suitability of active transport options for 'an ageing population'. But in doing so, Dr Cordaro also recognised the benefits of increasing public transport:

[T]he truth of the matter is—coming from a GP's perspective, and with an ageing population—that a large proportion of the population will never be able to use a bicycle for transport. It's a leisure activity. Luckily, with the advent of electrification

⁴⁷⁰ Evidence, Ms Annabelle Berriman, President, Parents and Citizens' Association, Rozelle Public School, 10 April 2024, p 32.

and electric bikes, that could be a possibility. Obviously, more bus services would be a big plus.⁴⁷¹

Ongoing projects

5.22 The committee was told that infrastructure projects currently underway will alleviate traffic conditions along the Rozelle Interchange. Specific reference was made to the Sydney Metro West, Western Distributor, Western Harbour Tunnel and Warringah Freeway. However, the committee also heard concerns that some of the impacts experienced by local communities as a result of the construction and opening of the Rozelle Interchange project would be repeated as a result of these future projects if changes were not made. This section discusses each of these infrastructure projects and their associated issues in turn.

Sydney Metro West

5.23 The NSW Government advised that in addition to ongoing road-related infrastructure projects, the Sydney Metro West will provide individuals with 'access to alternative turn-up-and-go public transport services to the CBD'.⁴⁷² Further, the government stated that the Sydney Metro West is part of a 'multi-modal response to existing and future transport challenges'.⁴⁷³

5.24 Inquiry participants agreed that the opening of the Sydney Metro West will assist with alleviating traffic conditions along the Rozelle Interchange.⁴⁷⁴ However, some critiqued the NSW Government's decision to prioritise the development of the Rozelle Interchange ahead of the Sydney Metro West.⁴⁷⁵

5.25 Mr Wielinga AM, former Chief Executive Officer, Roads and Traffic Authority, former Chief Executive Officer, Metro Trains, and former Director-General of Transport for NSW, told the committee that the Metro should have been built prior to the opening of the Rozelle Interchange to reduce traffic along Victoria Road.⁴⁷⁶

⁴⁷¹ Evidence, Dr Joesph Cordaro, General Practitioner, Drummoyne Medical Centre; Councillor, City of Canada Bay Council, 30 May 2024, p 26.

⁴⁷² Submission 138, NSW Government, p 5.

⁴⁷³ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 8.

⁴⁷⁴ See for example, Evidence, Mr David Haertsch, Honorary Treasurer, WalkSydney, 23 April 2024, p 40; Submission 5, Bicycle NSW, p 9; Submission 166, Mr Chris Ford, Mr Paul Forward, Mr Les Wielinga AM and Mr Stuart McCreery, p 9.

⁴⁷⁵ Evidence, Cr Darcy Byrne, Mayor, Inner West Council, 10 April 2024, p 15; Evidence, Mr Les Wielinga AM, Former Chief Executive Officer, Roads and Traffic Authority, Former Chief Executive Officer, Metro Trains, and Former Director-General of Transport for New South Wales, 3 May 2024, p 15.

⁴⁷⁶ Evidence, Mr Les Wielinga AM, Former Chief Executive Officer, Roads and Traffic Authority, Former Chief Executive Officer, Metro Trains, and Former Director-General of Transport for New South Wales, 3 May 2024, p 15.

Western Distributor

- 5.26** The NSW Government advised that the Western Distributor Network Improvements will 'improve traffic efficiency, network resilience and road safety', including in relation to the Rozelle Interchange.⁴⁷⁷ These include:
- improvements to the Allen Street intersection – to improve efficiency of the intersection and reduce queuing back onto the Western Distributor. This work is expected to be completed by mid-2024
 - improvements to the Pyrmont Bridge Road intersection – in response to the relocation of the Sydney Fish Markets. This work is expected to commence in 2025
 - a new Fig Street weave ramp – to reduce delays by eliminating the requirement for motorist travelling from Harris Street to the Sydney Harbour Bridge to cross merge with motorist heading to King Street.⁴⁷⁸
- 5.27** Some inquiry participants argued that the planned upgrades to the Western Distributor will 'bring more traffic into Pyrmont' and are inconsistent with the government's strategic plans.⁴⁷⁹ Inquiry participants also asserted that planned improvements will adversely impact the quality of life for local residents and undermine 'many years of hard work to improve pedestrian amenity'.⁴⁸⁰
- 5.28** Mr Kim Woodbury, Chief Operating Officer, City of Sydney, told the committee that modelling undertaken for Western Distributor upgrades and Allen Street intersection focus on providing space for 'more traffic to feed into Pyrmont' and in doing so remove space for pedestrians.⁴⁸¹
- 5.29** Additionally, the City of Sydney contended that the planned upgrades, combined with the decision to delay the construction of the city's cycleway network, demonstrates 'Transport for NSW's continued prioritisation of road transportation ahead of active transport options:
- [...] the delay in the construction of the final missing link in the City's cycleway network at King Street due to concerns about "possible" queuing on the Western Distributor. Despite thousands of cyclists risking road trauma every day by riding on King Street in the City Centre, [Transport for NSW] has prioritised road space on King Street for WestConnex traffic to avoid the very unlikely risk of congestion on the Western Distributor, rather than reduce the risk of road trauma for people riding.⁴⁸²

⁴⁷⁷ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 29.

⁴⁷⁸ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 30.

⁴⁷⁹ See for example, Submission 5, Bicycle NSW, p 1, Evidence, Mr Kim Woodbury, Chief Operating Officer, City of Sydney, 23 April 2024, p 44.

⁴⁸⁰ See for example, Submission 5, Bicycle NSW, p 1; Submission 2, City of Sydney, p 10; Submission 26, Friends of Ultimo, pp 1-2; Evidence, Mr Kim Woodbury, Chief Operating Officer, City of Sydney, 23 April 2024, p 44.

⁴⁸¹ Evidence, Mr Kim Woodbury, Chief Operating Officer, City of Sydney, 23 April 2024, p 44.

⁴⁸² Submission 2, City of Sydney, p 10.

Western Harbour Tunnel and Warringah Freeway upgrades

- 5.30** During the inquiry, the NSW Government informed the committee that the opening of the Western Harbour Tunnel will 'substantially' improve traffic conditions in Rozelle and surrounding suburbs by reducing demand along the Anzac Bridge and Western Distributor.⁴⁸³ This reflects what the community has also been told.
- 5.31** However, several inquiry participants raised concerns with the Western Harbour Tunnel and Warringah Freeway upgrades project, particularly with regards to:
- the design of Western Harbour Tunnel, including its connection to Warringah Freeway and the impact on local communities in the North Sydney local area when it opens.
 - the lack of meaningful community consultation
 - the connection between the Western Harbour Tunnel and Sydney Metro West

Design

- 5.32** Mr Forward told the committee that he is concerned about the potential emissions inside the Western Harbour Tunnels and the number of lanes included at the Lane Cove Tunnel exit, echoing concerns regarding the Rozelle Interchange.⁴⁸⁴
- 5.33** Mr Forward argued that the Western Harbour Tunnel will increase the amount of traffic coming onto the Warringah Freeway, which could have a similar impact to what was seen following the opening of the Rozelle Interchange on Victoria Road.⁴⁸⁵
- We now have three motorways— Sydney Harbour Bridge, the [Sydney] harbour tunnel and the Western Harbour Tunnel—all coming onto the Warringah Freeway at very similar locations. Have a look at the work that is underway now on the Warringah Freeway and the question, clearly, to the Committee is: Is this another Rozelle interchange about to happen?⁴⁸⁶
- 5.34** Mr Ford, Mr Forward, Mr Wielinga AM and Mr McCreery recommended that the government 'review the design of the Western Harbour Tunnel and its north facing portal locations on the Warringah Freeway'.⁴⁸⁷ In doing so, they urged the government to assess whether the

⁴⁸³ Submission 138, NSW Government, p 29.

⁴⁸⁴ Evidence, Mr Paul Forward, former Chief Executive Officer, Roads and Traffic Authority, 3 May 2024, pp 10-11.

⁴⁸⁵ Evidence, Mr Paul Forward, former Chief Executive Officer, Roads and Traffic Authority, 3 May 2024, p 3.

⁴⁸⁶ Evidence, Mr Paul Forward, former Chief Executive Officer, Roads and Traffic Authority, 3 May 2024, p 3.

⁴⁸⁷ Submission 166, Mr Chris Ford, Mr Paul Forward, Mr Les Wielinga AM and Mr Stuart McCreery, p 11.

WestConnex and the Rozelle Interchange connections will encourage more cross-harbour traffic and adversely impact the flow of traffic onto the Warringah Freeway.⁴⁸⁸

5.35 Cr Baker, Mayor of North Sydney Council, also raised concerns about the design of the Western Harbour Tunnel, highlighting the impact it is likely to have on the environment, pedestrian safety, and public and active transport options.⁴⁸⁹

5.36 Cr Baker added that the opening of the Western Harbour Tunnel will make traffic conditions even more complicated than what has been observed along the Rozelle Interchange. Cr Baker told the committee the council and community are concerned that that this will ultimately lead to increased congestion and traffic impacts on the local streets of North Sydney:

The Pacific Highway, Military Road, the Warringah Freeway, the Sydney Harbour Bridge and the Sydney Harbour Tunnel traffic corridors all converge at North Sydney. The completion of the Western Harbour Tunnel will make North Sydney a traffic interchange arguably more complex than that you are facing at the Rozelle interchange now. Since the announcement of these major road projects, North Sydney Council and our community have been raising serious and significant concerns that this toll road to nowhere will funnel increased traffic to local roads and then into the same traffic pinch points of the Harbour Bridge, the harbour tunnel and the new toll road itself, which will magnify and increase existing traffic congestion.⁴⁹⁰

Community consultation

5.37 Some inquiry participants expressed concern regarding the community consultation being undertaken for the Western Harbour Tunnel. Mr Forward claimed that communications about the Western Harbour Tunnel have been 'very poor', making it difficult for local residents to understand what is being done:

It is very difficult as a layperson—as a citizen—to find out what they're actually doing there. All I see around North Sydney is slogans. Have a look at it. Have a look at what they're doing there. It's a very poor way of developing a major motorway for Sydney.⁴⁹¹

5.38 Cr Baker advised the committee that there has been a 'great deal of community interest' in the design and development of the Western Harbour Tunnel, however, the community has been left 'very frustrated' with the quality of engagement undertaken by the NSW Government.⁴⁹² Cr Baker acknowledged that Transport for NSW had conducted pop-up events and other common community engagement activities.⁴⁹³ However, she also stated that there were no

⁴⁸⁸ Submission 166, Mr Chris Ford, Mr Paul Forward, Mr Les Wielinga AM and Mr Stuart McCreery, p 11.

⁴⁸⁹ Evidence, Cr Zoë Baker, Mayor, North Sydney Council, 23 April 2024, p 41-42.

⁴⁹⁰ Evidence, Cr Zoë Baker, Mayor, North Sydney Council, 23 April 2024, p 41.

⁴⁹¹ Evidence, Mr Paul Forward, former Chief Executive Officer, Roads and Traffic Authority, 3 May 2024, p 11.

⁴⁹² Evidence, Cr Zoë Baker, Mayor, North Sydney Council, 23 April 2024, p 48.

⁴⁹³ Evidence, Cr Zoë Baker, Mayor, North Sydney Council, 23 April 2024, p 48.

'practical discussions' about the project or about what could be done to avoid the problems experienced in the Rozelle Interchange project.⁴⁹⁴

- 5.39** Cr Baker also told the committee that the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process is perceived by her constituents as a 'window-dressing exercise'.⁴⁹⁵

We have an amazing community with various expertise who trawled through [the EIS for the Warringah Freeway Western Harbour Tunnel works]. All of these things that we're raising now have been raised in detail during that EIS period. [...] [The government] went through the process performatively, and they approved the project. There was nothing that was in response to these serious concerns about induced demand and what it would mean.⁴⁹⁶

Connection to Sydney Metro

- 5.40** The Hon John Graham MLC, Minister for Roads, told the committee that public transport options in North Sydney, including the Sydney Metro West, will make a difference in ensuring that the negative impacts experienced in the Inner West and City of Canada Bay areas are not experienced by North Sydney residents.⁴⁹⁷

- 5.41** Cr Baker advised the committee that under the conditions of consent, the planning and design for the Western Harbour Tunnel needed to be consistent with North Sydney's Integrated Transport Program, which includes 'planning around transport hubs to increase pedestrianisation and to support it'.⁴⁹⁸

- 5.42** However, Cr Baker, stated that modelling undertaken for the Western Harbour Tunnel did not consider the role of the Sydney Metro West. Cr Baker also noted that there seems to be a 'disconnect' between the design of the Western Harbour Tunnel and Sydney Metro West.⁴⁹⁹ As such, Cr Baker believed that traffic modelling for the Western Harbour Tunnel should be reassessed by the NSW Government: 'The circumstances have changed, and they ought to be doing proper modelling and rethinking whether it's now necessary'.⁵⁰⁰

- 5.43** Mr Ford, Mr Forward, Mr Wielinga AM and Mr McCreery also stated that additional traffic modelling should be undertaken in relation to the Western Harbour Tunnel, and should include consideration of:

- the impact of Western Harbour Tunnel on traffic flow along Victoria Road and City West Link Road corridors⁵⁰¹

⁴⁹⁴ Evidence, Cr Zoë Baker, Mayor, North Sydney Council, 23 April 2024, p 43.

⁴⁹⁵ Evidence, Cr Zoë Baker, Mayor, North Sydney Council, 23 April 2024, p 48.

⁴⁹⁶ Evidence, Cr Zoë Baker, Mayor, North Sydney Council, 23 April 2024, p 48.

⁴⁹⁷ Evidence, the Hon John Graham, Minister for Roads, 3 May 2024, p 29.

⁴⁹⁸ Evidence, Cr Zoë Baker, Mayor, North Sydney Council, 23 April 2024, p 44.

⁴⁹⁹ Evidence, Cr Zoë Baker, Mayor, North Sydney Council, 23 April 2024, p 44.

⁵⁰⁰ Evidence, Cr Zoë Baker, Mayor, North Sydney Council, 23 April 2024, p 44.

⁵⁰¹ Submission 166, Mr Chris Ford, Mr Paul Forward, Mr Les Wielinga AM and Mr Stuart McCreery, p 11.

- traffic movements following the opening of the WestConnex, including the Rozelle Interchange⁵⁰²
- the specific tolling regime for the Western Harbour Tunnel, Sydney Harbour Bridge and Sydney Harbour Tunnel.⁵⁰³

5.44 When asked why a review of the Western Harbour Tunnel has not been conducted, Minister Graham advised the committee the tunnel is needed to ensure 'resilience for the traffic network when there are issues on the [Sydney] Harbour Bridge and [Sydney] Harbour Tunnel'.⁵⁰⁴ Nonetheless, Minister Graham informed the committee that Transport for NSW is undertaking 'careful assessment of the traffic network' to ensure the lessons learnt from the Rozelle Interchange are reflected in the development and opening of the Western Harbour Tunnel.⁵⁰⁵

Committee comment

5.45 This inquiry has provided the committee with an important opportunity to examine all aspects of the Rozelle Interchange, from its planning and design, to its construction and impacts. In taking this opportunity, the committee must consider the lessons learnt and determine how best to address the many concerns raised during this inquiry, both for the communities impacted by the Rozelle Interchange and for major infrastructure projects currently being developed or planned in the future. After all, as one inquiry participant described it 'concrete has a way of being unforgiving'.

5.46 While the committee recognises that we cannot go back in time and make structural changes to the design and delivery of the Rozelle Interchange, we can make recommendations to improve the current situation and prevent, or help mitigate the impacts experienced throughout this project. Many of these have already been captured throughout the report.

5.47 In addition to recognising the extensive evidence on community engagement discussed in chapter 3, the committee draws particular attention to the need for improvement in this space. The committee acknowledges the collective call for better communication and meaningful discussion with all relevant stakeholders prior to, during and after the completion of a major infrastructure project like the Rozelle Interchange. This is why we have already called for the establishment of a joint consultative committee comprising Transport for NSW, City of Canada Bay Council and Drummoyne Residents Traffic Committee.

5.48 Looking ahead, the committee agrees with inquiry participants who believe that meaningful and transparent consultation should be at the forefront of decision making, that the lived experience of those impacted by major works should be considered and that opportunities be actively given for people to contribute their thoughts and solutions.

⁵⁰² Submission 166, Mr Chris Ford, Mr Paul Forward, Mr Les Wielinga AM and Mr Stuart McCreery, p 11.

⁵⁰³ Submission 166, Mr Chris Ford, Mr Paul Forward, Mr Les Wielinga AM and Mr Stuart McCreery, p 11.

⁵⁰⁴ Evidence, the Hon John Graham, Minister for Roads, 3 May 2024, p 28.

⁵⁰⁵ Evidence, the Hon John Graham, Minister for Roads, 3 May 2024, p 28.

- 5.49 To this end, the committee recommends that the NSW Government ensure there is ongoing and genuine community engagement and consultation between Transport for NSW, local councils and community members to address issues and concerns following the opening of the Rozelle Interchange.

Recommendation 14

That the NSW Government ensure there is ongoing and genuine community engagement and consultation between Transport for NSW, local councils and community members to address issues and concerns following the opening of the Rozelle Interchange.

-
- 5.50 The committee also recognises the evidence that public transport and active transport should be prioritised in considering the future transport needs of the people of New South Wales. In particular, public and active transport options should be thoroughly considered and prioritised where it provides a greater community benefit over road-related infrastructure.
- 5.51 With regard to the Rozelle Interchange, the committee agrees with the views of inquiry participants who insist that better public transport options must be provided as a priority to improve traffic impacted by the Rozelle Interchange. This includes providing additional bus and ferry services and ensuring that services are frequent and well connected.
- 5.52 Therefore, the committee recommends that the NSW Government ensure that all future road-based projects prioritise the inclusion of safe and accessible active transport infrastructure. In addition, we urge the NSW Government to ensure all public transport solutions are exhausted through a comprehensive options analysis before committing to major new road projects.
- 5.53 With particular regard to the Rozelle Interchange, the committee recommends that Transport for NSW, as an immediate priority, investigate additional public transport options, including bus and ferry services, to assist impacted communities and improve traffic congestion resulting from the Rozelle Interchange.

Recommendation 15

That the NSW Government ensure that all future road-based projects prioritise the inclusion of safe and accessible active transport infrastructure.

Recommendation 16

That the NSW Government ensure all public transport solutions are exhausted through a comprehensive options analysis before committing to major new road projects.

Recommendation 17

That Transport for NSW, as an immediate priority, investigate additional public transport options, including bus and ferry services, to assist impacted communities and improve traffic congestion resulting from the Rozelle Interchange.

- 5.54** The committee also acknowledges the evidence relating to ongoing infrastructure projects, including Sydney Metro West, Western Distributor, Western Harbour Tunnel and Warringah Freeway upgrades.
- 5.55** In particular, the committee finds some merit in the view that the Sydney Metro West project should have been prioritised and completed prior to the opening of the Rozelle Interchange. The committee recognises that this may have alleviated traffic congestion and impacts on local residents, and potentially enabled traffic to settle sooner.
- 5.56** The committee acknowledges the evidence in relation to the development of the Western Harbour Tunnel and shares the North Sydney community's concern that they could experience similar impacts to those of the Rozelle Interchange unless improvements are made.
- 5.57** The committee urges the NSW Government to pay heed to the evidence of this inquiry to inform its considerations for each of these projects, in particular, the Western Harbour Tunnel. The committee sincerely hopes that the recommendations in this report will go some way towards ensuring that the unacceptable impacts of the Rozelle Interchange on local communities aren't experienced again as a result of future infrastructure projects built in NSW.

Appendix 1 Submissions⁵⁰⁶

No.	Author
1	Inner West Bicycle Coalition
2	City of Sydney
3	Inner West Council (Sydney Australia)
4	City of Canada Bay
5	Bicycle NSW
6	Balmain Rozelle Chamber of Commerce
7	Action for Public Transport (NSW) Inc.
8	Ms Kobi Shetty MP
9	Ms Stephanie Di Pasqua MP
10	Dr Christopher Standen
11	Mr Tim Giles
12	Ms Karin Kolbe
13	Mr Matt Mushalik
14	Mr Benjamin Prag
15	Mr Joseph McCowage
16	Community Environmental Monitoring
17	WalkSydney
18	Kathryn Calman
19	Mr Nathan English
20	Transport Workers' Union of NSW
21	Rozelle Parklands Active Transport and Community Hub Incorporated
22	Pymont Action Inc.
23	Professor Dale L Bailey
24	Patricia Madden
25	Rachael de Zylva
26	Friends of Ultimo
27	Transurban
28	Drummoyne Business Chamber

⁵⁰⁶ Due to an administrative error, three submissions were not processed and have subsequently been published as correspondence on the inquiry webpage. Relevant correspondence can be accessed [here](#).

No.	Author
29	Name suppressed
30	Name suppressed
31	Phillip Foxman
32	Name suppressed
33	Mr Grant Mistler
34	Confidential
35	Confidential
36	Name suppressed
37	Name suppressed
38	Name suppressed
39	Mr John Piubello
40	Name suppressed
41	Confidential
42	Name suppressed
43	Name suppressed
44	Name suppressed
45	Name suppressed
46	Name suppressed
47	Name suppressed
48	Name suppressed
49	Name suppressed
50	Name suppressed
51	Mrs Fiona Hilary Henshaw
52	Name suppressed
53	Name suppressed
54	Name suppressed
55	Dr Louise Dolan
56	Name suppressed
57	Dr David Thorp
58	Mrs Rebecca Jourdan
59	Name suppressed
60	Name suppressed
61	Name suppressed
62	Confidential
63	Name suppressed

No.	Author
64	Name suppressed
65	Name suppressed
66	Name suppressed
67	Name suppressed
68	Catherine Dornan
69	Kurt & Gill Worden
70	Name suppressed
71	Name suppressed
72	Confidential
73	Name suppressed
74	Name suppressed
75	Name suppressed
76	Name suppressed
77	Name suppressed
78	Confidential
79	Name suppressed
80	Name suppressed
81	Geoffrey Heber
82	Name suppressed
83	Cory Watson
84	Name suppressed
85	Howard Lovatt
86	Alan Thilo
87	Confidential
88	Susan Trousdale
89	Kate O'Connor
90	Rick Whaite
91	Cr Andrew Ferguson
92	Name suppressed
93	Claudia Campbell
94	Anne Goodrick
95	Name suppressed
96	Andrew Dalton
97	Name suppressed
98	Edwina Kirkby

No.	Author
99	Name suppressed
100	Mr Les Johnston
100a	Mr Les Johnston
101	Name suppressed
102	Name suppressed
103	Name suppressed
104	Name suppressed
105	Name suppressed
106	Name suppressed
107	Dr Michael J Booth
108	Colette Foran
109	Name suppressed
110	Name suppressed
111	Name suppressed
112	Simon Gatward
113	Rozelle Public School Parents and Citizens Association
114	Name suppressed
115	Confidential
116	Petra Kick
117	Name suppressed
118	Name suppressed
119	Name suppressed
120	Name suppressed
121	Name suppressed
122	Name suppressed
123	Confidential
124	Name suppressed
125	Kelvin O'Keefe
126	Name suppressed
127	Name suppressed
128	Name suppressed
129	Ms Carolyn Ienna
130	Name suppressed
131	Name suppressed
132	Name suppressed

No.	Author
133	Name suppressed
134	Name suppressed
135	Name suppressed
136	Name suppressed
137	Name suppressed
138	NSW Government
139	Stan Baker
140	Name suppressed
141	Name suppressed
142	Name suppressed
143	Michael and Marianne Edgerton
144	Pauline Corrigan
145	Name suppressed
146	Name suppressed
147	Name suppressed
148	Name suppressed
149	Name suppressed
150	Name suppressed
151	Name suppressed
152	Colleen McKeown
153	Name suppressed
154	Name suppressed
155	Name suppressed
156	Name suppressed
157	Name suppressed
158	Name suppressed
159	Sergio Puente
160	Name suppressed
160a	Name suppressed
161	Name suppressed
162	Megan Consalvi
164	Mr I Mackenzie
165	Thomas Oskar
166	Chris Ford, Paul Forward, Les Wielinga AM and Stuart McCreery

Appendix 2 Witnesses at hearings

Date	Name	Position and Organisation
Wednesday, 10 April 2024 Macquarie Room Parliament House, Sydney	Ms Kobi Shetty MP	Member for Balmain
	Ms Stephanie Di Pasqua MP	Member for Drummoyne
	Cr Darcy Byrne	Mayor, Inner West Council
	Mr Kendall Banfield	Senior Strategic Transport Planner, Inner West Council
	Cr Michael Megna	Mayor, City of Canada Bay.
	Ms Belinda Daly	Vice-President, Balmain Rozelle Chamber of Commerce
	Mr Jonathan Fletcher	Member, Balmain Rozelle Chamber of Commerce
	Mr Mark Chapman	Committee Executive, The Leichardt Collective (formerly Leichardt Annandale Business Chamber)
	Mr Serge Derkatch	President, Drummoyne Business Chamber
	Ms Annabelle Berriman	President, Parents and Citizens' Association, Rozelle Public School
	Mr Neil Tonkin	Advocacy Coordinator, Inner West Bicycle Coalition
	Mr John McNeil	Committee member, Inner West Bicycle Coalition, and Secretary, Better Streets Australia
	Mr Peter McLean	CEO, Bicycle NSW
	Ms Sarah Bickford	Active Transport Planner, Bicycle NSW
	Ms Elizabeth Elenius	Public forum participant
	Mr Keith Stallard	Public forum participant
Ms Marguerite Young	Public forum participant	
Mr William Atkins	Public forum participant	

Date	Name	Position and Organisation
	Mr Ben Prag	Public forum participant
	Mr Richard Hughes	Public forum participant
	Mr JP Alexandre	Public forum participant
	Ms Maire Sheehan	Public forum participant
Wednesday, 23 April 2024 Preston Stanley Room Parliament House, Sydney	Ms Denise Kelly	General Manager, WestConnex, Transurban
	Ms Alisa Hitchcock	Head of Public Affairs, Transurban
	Professor Wendy Bacon	Investigative Journalist and Community Environmental Monitoring
	Mr Jim Salmon <i>(via videoconference)</i>	Executive General Manager – Major Projects Support, John Holland
	Mr Graeme Silvester <i>(via videoconference)</i>	General Manager, SHEQ & Sustainability, CPB Contractors
	Mr Keith Stallard <i>(via videoconference)</i>	Public Officer, Rozelle Parklands Active Transport and Community Hub Incorporated
	Mr David Haertsch	Hon. Treasurer, WalkSydney
	Mr Kim Woodbury	Chief Operating Officer, City of Sydney
	Cr Zac Miles	Mayor, Hunters Hill Council
	Cr Zoë Baker	Mayor, North Sydney Council
	Witness A	
	Witness B	
Friday, 3 May 2024 Preston Stanley Room Parliament House, Sydney	Mr Les Wielinga AM	Former CEO, Roads and Traffic Authority (RTA), former CEO, Metro Trains and former Director General of Transport for NSW
	Mr Paul Forward	Former CEO, RTA

Date	Name	Position and Organisation
	Mr Chris Ford	Former Director Traffic, RTA
	Mr Stuart McCreery	Civil Engineer
	Hon John Graham MLC	Minister for Roads
	Mr Josh Murray	Secretary, Transport for New South Wales
	Ms Camilla Drover	Deputy Secretary, Infrastructure and Place, Transport for New South Wales
	Mr Howard Collins	Coordinator General, Transport for New South Wales
	Mr Steve Issa	Executive Director, Community and Place, Greater Sydney, Transport for New South Wales
Thursday 30 May 2024 Macquarie Room Parliament House, Sydney	Mr Peter Regan	Former Chief Financial Officer and Deputy Secretary, Finance and Investment, Transport for NSW, Former Senior Director, Commercial Finance, NSW Treasury, Former Chief Executive Officer, Sydney Motorway Corporation
	Cr Andrew Ferguson	Councillor, City of Canada Bay Council
	Dr Christopher Standen	Research Fellow, School of Population Health, UNSW
	Dr Joseph Cordaro	General Practitioner at Drummoyne Medical Centre, Councillor, City of Canada Bay Council
	Mr Simon Gatward	Co-chair, Drummoyne Residents' Traffic Committee
	Ms Claudia Campbell	Co-chair, Drummoyne Residents' Traffic Committee
	Mr Roger Colman	Drummoyne Resident

Appendix 3 Minutes

Minutes no. 12

Friday 9 February 2024

Portfolio Committee No. 6 – Transport and the Arts

Performance Studio, Campbelltown Arts Centre, Campbelltown, 9.47 am

1. Members present

Ms Faehrmann, *Chair*

Mr D'Adam

Ms Merton (substituting for Mr Farraway)

Mr Nanva (via videoconference) (until 10.56 am, from 11.58 am until 12.18 pm, then from 1.00 pm until 4.00 pm)

Dr Kaine (via videoconference) (until 12.45 pm, from 2.29 pm until 2.35 pm, then from 3.49 pm to 4.00 pm)

Mrs Ward (until 2.10 pm)

2. Apologies

Mr Banasiak

3. Inquiry into the impact of the Rozelle Interchange

3.1 Terms of reference

The committee noted the following terms of reference referred by the House on 7 February 2024:

1. That Portfolio Committee No. 6 – Transport and the Arts inquire into and report on the impact of the Rozelle Interchange, and in particular:
 - (a) the planning, design and development of the Rozelle Interchange project and its impact on traffic flow, including the prioritisation of traffic from toll roads including WestConnex over local traffic
 - (b) all traffic modelling that was undertaken, including for WestConnex, all surrounding arterial roads and all local roads
 - (c) design decisions that restricted or compromised traffic flows, including any changes from the original plans or modelling
 - (d) the planning, design and development of the Rozelle Interchange project and its impact on the efficient and on-time running of buses, ferries and all other public transport
 - (e) the communication and consultation processes undertaken by Transport for NSW and other relevant stakeholders throughout the lifespan of the Rozelle Interchange Project
 - (f) the social, environmental and economic impacts of the Rozelle Interchange project on impacted communities
 - (g) the impact on foot traffic and active transport options, including due to the closure of Rozelle Parklands
 - (h) the cause of asbestos detected in the Rozelle Parklands and the adequacy and appropriateness of the responses by government agencies and contractors to reports of asbestos in and near the Parklands
 - (i) solutions to ease the congestion and gridlock that the opening of the Rozelle Interchange has created, including the impact of the Western Harbour Tunnel after opening

- (j) the adequacy of Transport for NSW planning, resource allocation and public communication in the period leading to and directly after the opening of the Rozelle Interchange
- (k) the cost of the Rozelle Interchange and the total cost of WestConnex
- (l) any other related matters.

2. That the committee report by 20 June 2024.

3.2 Closing date for submissions

Resolved, on the motion of Mr D'Adam: That the closing date for submissions be 10 March 2024.

3.3 Stakeholder list

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Nanva: That:

- the secretariat circulate to members the Chair's proposed list of stakeholders to be invited to make a submission
- members have two days from when the Chair's proposed list is circulated to make amendments or nominate additional stakeholders
- the committee agree to the stakeholder list by email, unless a meeting of the committee is required to resolve any disagreement.

3.4 Approach to submissions

Resolved, on the motion of Mrs Ward: That, to enable significant efficiencies for members and the secretariat while maintaining the integrity of how submissions are treated, in the event that 50 or more individual submissions are received, the committee may adopt the following approach to processing short submissions:

- All submissions from individuals 250 words or less in length will:
 - be published with the author's name or as name suppressed, or kept confidential, according to the author's request
 - be reviewed by the secretariat for adverse mention and sensitive/identifying information, in accordance with practice
 - be channelled into one single document to be published on the inquiry website
- All other submissions will be processed and published as normal.

3.5 Online questionnaire

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Nanva: That:

- the committee use an online questionnaire to capture individuals' views, and that the draft questions be circulated to the committee for comment, with a meeting on request from any committee member if there is disagreement on the questions
- the closing date for the online questionnaire be 10 March 2024
- the committee not accept proformas
- the media release announcing the establishment of the inquiry and emails to stakeholders note that there will be an online questionnaire to capture individuals' views
- the following wording, once approved by members, be included on the committee's website:
 - **Submissions**
Individuals are invited to submit their comments on the terms of reference [here](#) [hyperlink to online questionnaire]. This is a new way for individuals to participate in inquiries and it means we will no longer accept proformas. Individuals who want to make a more detailed submission (longer than 250 words) are still able to do so through our online submission portal or via email.
- the secretariat prepare a summary report of responses to the online questionnaire for publication on the website and use in the report, and that:
 - the committee agree to publication of the report via email, unless a member raises any concerns
 - individual responses be kept confidential on tabling.

4. Inquiry into current and future public transport needs in Western Sydney

4.1 Public hearing

Sequence of questions

Resolved, on the motion of Mrs Ward: That the allocation of questions to be asked at the hearing be left in the hands of the Chair.

Witnesses, the public and the media were admitted.

The Chair made an opening statement regarding the broadcasting of proceedings and other matters.

The following witnesses were sworn and examined:

- Mr Simon Hickey, Chief Executive Officer, Western Sydney Airport
- Mr Scott MacKillop, Chief Corporate Affairs Officer, Western Sydney Airport.

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

The following witness was sworn and examined:

- Ms Barbara Coorey, Councillor – Canterbury Bankstown Council, Private practice solicitor and community member of various community groups concerned about the South West Metro.

The evidence concluded and the witness withdrew.

The following witnesses were sworn and examined:

- Ms Estelle Grech, Policy Manager – Planning, Committee for Sydney
- Ms Harri Bancroft, Policy Manager – Mobility, Committee for Sydney
- Ms Juile Walton, Convenor, Action for Public Transport (NSW) Inc.

Ms Walton tendered the following documents:

- 'How dense are we?' Another look at urban density and transport patterns in Australia, Canada and the USA', Mr Paul Mees, Proceedings of the State of Australian Cities National Conference, dated 25 November 2009.
- Report, 'Outer Urban Public Transport: Improving accessibility in lower-density areas, Infrastructure Australia', dated 26 October 2018.

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

The following witnesses were sworn and examined:

- Mr Charles Wiafe, Principal Transport Planner, Liverpool City Council
- Mr Mahavir Arya, Transport Engineer, Liverpool City Council
- Mr Andrew Carfield, General Manager, Camden Council
- Mayor Todd Carney, Penrith City Council
- Mayor Matt Gould, Wollondilly Shire Council

The following witness was examined on their former oath:

- Mr Ben Taylor, Chief Executive Officer, Wollondilly Shire Council.

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

The following witnesses were sworn and examined:

- Mrs Catherine Van Laeren, Executive Director – Metro West, Planning, Land Use Strategy & Housing, Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure
- Ms Rebecca McPhee, Deputy Chief Executive and Head of Customer Operations & Outcomes, Sydney Metro
- Ms Peta Gamon, Executive Director – Western Sydney Aerotropolis, Transport for NSW
- Mr Simon Hunter, Chief Transport Planner, Transport for NSW
- Mr Adrian Dessanti, Director - Public Transport, Transport for NSW.

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

The public hearing concluded at 3.49 pm.

The public and media withdrew.

Tendered documents

Resolved, on the motion of Mr D'Adam: That the committee accept and publish the following documents tendered during the public hearing:

- "How dense are we?' Another look at urban density and transport patterns in Australia, Canada and the USA', Mr Paul Mees, Proceedings of the State of Australian Cities National Conference, dated 25 November 2009, tendered by Ms Julie Walton, Convenor, Action for Public Transport (NSW) Inc.
- Report, 'Outer Urban Public Transport: Improving accessibility in lower-density areas, Infrastructure Australia', dated 26 October 2018, tendered by Ms Julie Walton, Convenor, Action for Public Transport (NSW) Inc.

4.2 Extension of reporting date

Resolved, on the motion of Mr D'Adam: That the reporting date be extended to 17 April 2024, with the secretariat to canvass members' availability for a deliberative in April 2024.

5. Inquiry into the impact of the Rozelle Interchange

5.1 Hearing dates

Resolved, on the motion Ms Merton: That the committee hold 3 hearings and a reserve date in April and May 2024, the dates of which are to be determined by the Chair after consultation with members regarding their availability.

5.2 Site visits

Resolved, on the motion of Mr D'Adam: That the committee conduct a site visit to the Rozelle Interchange in April 2024, the date of which is to be determined by the Chair after consultation with members regarding their availability.

6. Inquiry into Budget Estimates 2023-2024

The committee considered Mr Farraway's email regarding the witness list for Budget Estimates 2023-2024 supplementary hearings for the portfolio of Regional Transport and Roads.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Nanva: That Ms Anna Zycki, Transport for NSW no longer be included on the witness list.

Ms Merton moved: That the following additional witnesses be invited to give evidence:

- Mr Martin Donaldson – Executive Director, Transport for NSW
- Mr Peter McNalley – Executive Director, Transport for NSW.

Question put.

Ayes: Ms Merton.

Noes: Mr D'Adam, Ms Faehrmann, Dr Kaine, Mr Nanva.

Question resolved in the negative.

7. Adjournment

The committee adjourned at 4.00 pm until 10.00 am, Monday 12 February 2024, Room 1254, Parliament House (report deliberative - Pressures on heavy vehicle drivers and their impact in New South Wales).

Lauren Evans
Committee Clerk

Minutes no. 17

Wednesday 10 April 2024

Portfolio Committee No. 6 – Transport and the Arts

Security Gatehouse, Macquarie Street, Sydney at 6.45 am

1. Members present

Ms Faehrmann, *Chair*
Mr D'Adam
Mr Fang (via videoconference) (from 10.51 am until 2.30 pm)
Dr Kaine (from 9.45 am)
Mr Nanva
Mr Rath (from 9.59 am until 10.51 am, and from 2.45 pm)
Mrs Ward (until 12.27 pm)

2. Apologies

Mr Banasiak
Mr Farraway, *Deputy Chair*

3. Inquiry into the impact of the Rozelle Interchange

3.1 Site visit

The committee travelled by bus to the Transport Management Centre (TMC) to observe the live traffic footage, specifically around the Rozelle Interchange and other WestConnex points. The committee met with TMC staff, including:

- Mr Craig Moran, Executive Director, Customer Journey Management
- Mr Grant Knoetze, Executive Director, Customer Journey Planning.

The committee then travelled from the TMC to Rozelle, then through Balmain via Darling Street, Montague Street, Mullens Street and Robert Street, to experience peak hour traffic around the Rozelle Interchange. The bus then returned to Parliament House.

The committee reconvened in the Macquarie Room, Parliament House at 9.47 am.

4. Draft minutes

Resolved on the motion of Mrs Ward: That draft minutes nos. 12 and 13 be confirmed.

5. Correspondence

The committee noted the following items of correspondence:

Received:

- 17 February 2024 – Correspondence from Ms Kate Beck, Director of Beck's Transport Training Pty Ltd, to committee in relation to the inquiry into the pressures on heavy vehicle drivers and their impact in New South Wales
- 20 February 2024 – Email from Mr Mitch Dudley, Manager, Parliamentary Services, Office of the Secretary, Transport for NSW, to secretariat, requesting an extension for Transport for NSW submission until 29 March
- 19 March 2024 – email from Lucilla Kong, Executive Assistant to the General Manger and Mayor of Hunter's Hill Council, to Chair, on behalf of Mayor Zac Miles, informing the committee that the Mayor would like to appear as a witness
- 22 March 2024 – Email from Mr Mitch Dudley, Manager, Parliamentary Services, Office of the Secretary, Transport for NSW, to secretariat, requesting an extension for Transport for NSW submission until 3 April 2024
- 22 March 2024 – Email from Dr Christopher Standen, Research Fellow, Urban Development, University of New South Wales, to committee, requesting that the committee accept his updated submission and retract his previous submission received on 15 March 2024
- 22 March 2024 – Email from Mr Tim Sowden, Senior Media and Government Relations Manager, Transurban, to secretariat, regarding the preference of Transurban to appear at the hearing on 24 April 2024

- 4 April 2024 – Email from Mr Clarence Brown, Manager Intergovernmental Coordination, NSW Environmental Protection Authority, to secretariat, regarding the preference of the EPA to appear at the hearing on 24 April 2024, and a request to give evidence *in camera*
- 10 April 2024 – Email from Mr Les Wielinga AM, Mr Paul Forward and Mr Chris Ford to Chair, requesting to appear at a hearing for the Inquiry into the impact of the Rozelle Interchange.

Sent:

- 27 March 2024 – Letter from Chair to Hon John Graham MLC, Minister for Roads, advising of the extension to submissions and reopening of the online questionnaire.

6. Request to appear *in camera*

Resolved, on the motion of Dr Kaine: That the committee agree to take evidence from the NSW Environmental Protection Authority *in camera* at the hearing for the Inquiry into the impact of the Rozelle Interchange on Tuesday 23 April 2024.

7. Election of Deputy Chair

The Chair noted the absence of the Deputy Chair for the meeting.

The Chair called for nominations for Deputy Chair.

Mr D'Adam moved: That Mrs Ward be elected Deputy Chair of the committee for the purposes of the meeting.

There being no further nominations, the Chair declared Mrs Ward Deputy Chair for the purposes of the meeting.

The Chair called for nominations for Deputy Chair, on the occasion of Mrs Ward's absence during the meeting.

Mrs Ward moved: That Mr Rath be elected Deputy Chair of the committee, on the occasion of Mrs Ward's absence during the meeting.

There being no further nominations, the Chair declared Mr Rath Deputy Chair of the committee, on the occasion of Mrs Ward's absence during the meeting.

8. Inquiry into the impact of the Rozelle Interchange

8.1 Public submissions

The committee noted the following submissions were published by the Committee Clerk under the authorisation of the resolution appointing the committee: submission nos. 1-15, 17-20, 22-28, 31-32, 37, 47-49, 54, 59, 66-70, 83, 85-86, 88-91, 93-94 and 113.

The committee noted that it agreed via email to replace submission no. 10 with a revised version, as per the request of the submission author.

8.2 Partially confidential submissions

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Nanva: That the committee keep the following information confidential, as per the request of the author: names and/or identifying information in submission nos. 32, 37, 46-49, 54, 59, 66-67, 70, 73 and 92.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Nanva: That the committee authorise the publication of submission no. 16, with the exception of identifying information which are to remain confidential, as per the request of the author.

8.3 Confidential submissions

Resolved, on the motion of Mrs Ward: That the committee keep submission nos. 34-35 and 41 confidential, as per the request of the author, as they contain identifying and/or sensitive information.

8.4 Online questionnaire report

Resolved, on the motion of Mr D'Adam: That the committee authorise the publication of the summary report of responses to the online questionnaire report.

8.5 Sequence of questions

Resolved, on the motion of Mrs Ward: That the allocation of questions to be asked at the hearing be left in the hands of the Chair

8.6 Public hearing

Witnesses, the public and the media were admitted.

The Chair made an opening statement regarding parliamentary privilege and other matters.

The Chair noted that Members of Parliament swear an oath to their office, and therefore do not need to be sworn prior to giving evidence before a committee.

The following witnesses were examined:

- Ms Kobi Shetty MP, Member for Balmain
- Ms Stephanie Di Pasqua MP, Member for Drummoyne.

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

The following witnesses were sworn and examined:

- Mr Darcy Byrne, Mayor, Inner West Council,
- Mr Kendall Banfield, Senior Strategic Transport Planner, Inner West Council
- Mr Michael Megna, Mayor, City of Canada Bay.

Mr Michael Megna tendered the following document:

- Map titled 'Drummoyne precinct – rat running'.

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

The following witnesses were sworn and examined:

- Ms Belinda Daly, Vice-President, Balmain Rozelle Chamber of Commerce
- Mr Jonathan Fletcher, Member, Balmain Rozelle Chamber of Commerce
- Mr Mark Chapman, Committee Executive, The Leichardt Collective (formerly Leichardt Annandale Business Chamber)
- Mr Serge Derkatch, President, Drummoyne Business Chamber.

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

The following witness was sworn and examined:

- Ms Annabelle Berriman, President, Parents and Citizens' Association, Rozelle Public School.

The evidence concluded and the witness withdrew.

The following witnesses were sworn and examined:

- Mr Neil Tonkin, Advocacy Coordinator, Inner West Bicycle Coalition
- Mr John McNeil, Committee member, Inner West Bicycle Coalition, and Secretary, Better Streets Australia
- Mr Peter McLean, CEO, Bicycle NSW
- Ms Sarah Bickford, Active Transport Planner, Bicycle NSW.

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

The public hearing concluded at 2.31 pm.

8.7 Public forum

The Chair made an opening statement regarding the conduct of the public forum.

The committee heard from the following public forum participants who were examined:

- Ms Elizabeth Elenius
- Mr Keith Stallard
- Ms Marguerite Young
- Mr William Atkins
- Mr Ben Prag
- Mr Richard Hughes
- Mr JP Alexandre
- Ms Maire Sheehan.

Mr Keith Stallard tendered the following document:

- 'Rozelle Interchange – Active Transport Non-Compliance and Defects Report' prepared for Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure, Transport for NSW, Sydney Transport Partners and Inner West Council by Rozelle Parklands Active Transport and Community Hub Incorporated – February 2024.

The public and media withdrew.

The public forum concluded at 3.28 pm.

9. **Tendered documents**

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Nanva: That the committee accept and publish the following documents tendered during the public hearing:

- Map titled 'Drummoyne precinct – rat running'
- 'Rozelle Interchange – Active Transport Non-Compliance and Defects Report' prepared for Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure, Transport for NSW, Sydney Transport Partners and Inner West Council by Rozelle Parklands Active Transport and Community Hub Incorporated – February 2024.

10. **Reserve hearing date – Thursday 2 May 2024**

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Nanva: That the committee vacate the reserve hearing date of Thursday 2 May 2024.

11. **Adjournment**

The committee adjourned at 3.33 pm until Monday 22 April 2024, Room 1043, Parliament House (Report deliberative – Western Sydney public transport inquiry).

Teneale Houghton/Helen Hong
Committee Clerk

Minutes no. 19

Tuesday, 23 April 2024

Portfolio Committee No. 6 – Transport and the Arts

Preston Stanley Room, Parliament House, Sydney, 10.17 am

1. **Members present**

Ms Faehrmann, *Chair*
 Mr Buttigieg (substituting for Mr D'Adam)
 Mr Fang (substituting for Mr Farraway from 10.31 am)
 Dr Kaine
 Mr Nanva (via videoconference)

Mrs Ward

2. Apologies

Mr Banasiak

3. Previous minutes

Resolved, on the motion of Mrs Ward: That draft minutes no. 17 be confirmed.

4. Correspondence

The committee noted the following items of correspondence:

Received

- 9 April 2024 – Letter and attaching mayoral minute from Councillor Zoë Baker, Mayor of North Sydney Council, to the Chair, raising design issues with the third stage of Westconnex, the Western Harbour Tunnel
- 10 April 2024 – Email from Mr Nathan English to Chair, responding to evidence given at the public hearing on 10 April 2024
- 11 April 2024 – Email from Mr Terry O'Brien to the committee, making comments about planning and design decisions for roads in Australia (*attached*)
- 12 April 2024 – Email from Professor Peter Thew to secretariat, declining the invitation to attend the hearing for the inquiry into the impact of the Rozelle Interchange on 23 April 2024
- 13 April 2024 – Email from Mr Les Wielinga AM to secretariat, advising that Mr Chris Ford is unable to attend the hearing and requesting an additional witness, Mr Stuart McCreery, to appear at the hearing for the Inquiry into the impact of the Rozelle Interchange on 23 April 2024
- 15 April 2024 – Email from Ms Tori Holliday, Office of the Hon John Graham MLC, advising that the Minister is unavailable for the hearing for the inquiry into the impact of the Rozelle Interchange on 24 April 2024
- 15 April 2024 – Email from Ms Amanda Concepcion Mullings, Office of the Lord Mayor, City of Sydney to secretariat, advising that the Lord Mayor is unavailable, and requesting an alternate witness, Mr Kim Woodbury, appear at the hearing for the Inquiry into the impacts of the Rozelle Interchange on 23 April 2024
- 15 April 2024 – Email from Ms Amy Lepke-Vose, Chief Operations Office, City of Sydney, to secretariat, confirming that Mr Kim Woodbury can attend the hearing for the Inquiry into the impacts of the Rozelle Interchange on 23 April 2024
- 15 April 2024 – Email from Dr Chris Standen, University of New South Wales Sydney, to secretariat, declining witness invitation to the hearing for the Inquiry into the impacts of the Rozelle Interchange on 23 April 2024
- 23 April 2024 – Email from Ms Jordana Millman, Senior Legal Counsel, John Holland to secretariat, requesting the committee remove identifying information relating to a John Holland employee in the Rozelle Parklands Active Transport and Community Hub Incorporated submission to the Inquiry into the impact of the Rozelle Interchange
- 23 April 2024 – Email from the Hon Mark Buttigieg MLC to the committee attaching questions from the Drummoyne Traffic Committee for Transport for NSW.

5. Election of Deputy Chair

The Chair noted the absence of the Deputy Chair for the meeting.

The Chair called for nominations for Deputy Chair.

Dr Kaine moved: That Mrs Ward be elected Deputy Chair of the committee for the purposes of the meeting.

There being no further nominations, the Chair declared Mrs Ward Deputy Chair for the purposes of the meeting.

6. Inquiry into the impact of the Rozelle Interchange

6.1 Public submissions

The committee noted that the following submissions were published by the committee clerk under the authorisation of the resolution appointing the committee: submission nos. 33, 39, 51, 55, 57-58, 81, 98, 100-100a, 107, 112, 116, 125, 129 and 138.

6.2 Partially confidential submissions

Resolved, on the motion of Dr Kaine: That the committee keep the following information confidential, as per the request of the author: names in submission nos. 29, 36-38, 40, 42-45, 50, 52-53, 56, 60-61, 63-65, 74-76, 79, 82, 95, 97, 101-102, 104, 106, 110 and 111.

Resolved, on the motion of Dr Kaine: That the committee keep the following information confidential, as per the request of the author: names and/or identifying and sensitive information in submission no. 103.

Resolved, on the motion of Mrs Ward: That the committee keep confidential identifying information contained in submission no. 21 and in the correspondence from Ms Jordana Millman, Senior Legal Counsel, John Holland to the secretariat, dated 23 April 2024.

6.3 Confidential submissions

Resolved, on the motion of Mrs Ward: That the committee keep submission nos. 62, 72, 78, 87 and 123 confidential, as per the request of the author, as it contains identifying and/or sensitive information.

6.4 Sequence of questions

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Buttigieg: That the allocation of questions to be asked at the hearing be left in the hands of the Chair.

6.5 Public hearing

Witnesses, the public and the media were admitted.

The Chair made an opening statement regarding parliamentary privilege and other matters.

The following witnesses were examined:

- Ms Denise Kelly, General Manager, WestConnex, Transurban
- Ms Alisa Hitchcock, Head of Public Affairs, Transurban

Ms Faehrmann tabled the following documents:

- Transport Roads & Maritime Services WestConnex M4-M5 Link Project Deed Schedules
- Schedule 33 Rozelle Interchange Compensation Principles

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

The following witness was sworn and examined:

- Professor Wendy Bacon, Investigative Journalist and Community Environment Monitoring

The evidence concluded and the witness withdrew.

The following witnesses were sworn and examined:

- Mr Jim Salmon, Executive General Manager – Major Projects Support, John Holland
- Mr Graeme Silvester, General Manager, SHEQ & Sustainability, CPB Contractors

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

The following witnesses were sworn and examined:

- Mr Keith Stallard, Public Officer, Rozelle Parklands Active Transport and Community Hub Incorporated
- Mr David Haertsch, Hon. Treasurer, WalkSydney

Mr Stallard tendered the following document:

- Rozelle Interchange Active Transport Non-compliance and Defects Report – Update to the Legislative Council Inquiry into the impacts of the Rozelle Interchange, Keith Stallard / the Hub 23 April 2024.

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

The following witnesses were sworn and examined:

- Mr Kim Woodbury, Chief Operating Officer, City of Sydney
- Cr Zac Miles, Mayor, Hunters Hill Council
- Cr Zoë Baker, Mayor, North Sydney Council

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

The public hearing concluded at 3.45 pm.

6.6 In camera hearing

The committee proceeded to take *in camera* evidence.

Persons present other than the committee: Rhia Victorino, Teneale Houghton, Kara McKee, James Ryan, Jaclyn Lyas, James Oake and James McLeod.

The witnesses were admitted.

The Chair made an opening statement regarding the proceedings and other matters.

The following witnesses were sworn and examined:

- Witness A
- Witness B

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

The *in camera* hearing concluded at 4.47 pm.

6.7 Tended documents

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Fang: That the committee accept the following document but defer consideration of publication until the secretariat has reviewed the documents for issues of confidentiality and/or adverse mention:

- Rozelle Interchange Active Transport Non-compliance and Defects Report – Update to the Legislative Council Inquiry into the impacts of the Rozelle Interchange, Keith Stallard / the Hub 23 April 2024.

6.8 Future committee activity

Resolved, on the motion of Dr Kaine: That the committee agree to the secretariat canvassing an additional reserve hearing date and confirm whether to proceed with this additional hearing at the committee's next meeting on Friday 3 May 2024.

7. Adjournment

The committee adjourned at 5.00 pm until 8.45 am on Friday 3 May 2024 (Inquiry into the impact of the Rozelle Interchange – public hearing).

Teneale Houghton/Kara McKee

Committee Clerk

Minutes no. 20

Friday 3 May 2024

Portfolio Committee no. 6 – Transport and the Arts

Jubilee Room, Parliament House, Sydney, 8.48 am

1. Members present

Ms Faehrmann, *Chair*

Mr Farraway, *Deputy Chair* (via videoconference from 9.16 am)

Mr Buttigieg (substituting for Dr Kaine)

Mr D'Adam

Mr Nanva (from 8.58 am)
Mrs Ward (from 9.00 am)

2. Apologies

Mr Banasiak

3. Previous minutes

Resolved, on the motion of Mr D'Adam: That draft minutes no. 18 and 19 be confirmed.

4. Correspondence

The committee noted the following items of correspondence:

Received

- 24 April 2024 – Email from Mr Keith Stallard, Public Officer, Rozelle Parklands Active Transport and Community Hub Incorporated to secretariat, requesting that the committee accept the Hub's updated submission and retract the previous submission received on 17 March 2024
- 26 April 2024 – Email from Mr Keith Stallard, Public Officer, Rozelle Parklands Active Transport and Community Hub Incorporated to secretariat, with updated tabled document.

5. Inquiry into the impact of the Rozelle Interchange

5.1 Public Submissions

The committee noted that the following submissions were published by the committee clerk under the authorisation of the resolution appointing the committee: submission nos. 96, 139, 143-144, 159, 162, 164 and 165.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Buttigieg: That the committee authorise the publication of submission no. 166.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr D'Adam: That the committee agree to replace submission no. 21 with the document previously tabled by Mr Keith Stallard on 10 April 2024, as per the author's request.

5.2 Partially confidential submissions

Resolved, on the motion of Mr D'Adam: That the committee keep the following information confidential, as per the request of the author: names in submission nos. 77, 105, 109, 114, 118-119, 121, 128, 130-132, 134, 136, 142, 145 and 158.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr D'Adam: That the committee authorise the publication of submission nos. 30 and 152, with the exception of identifying information which is to remain confidential, as per the request of the author.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr D'Adam: That the committee authorise the publication of submission no. 108, with the exception of identifying information which is to remain confidential, as per the recommendation of the secretariat.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr D'Adam: That the committee authorise the publication of the following submissions, with the exception of names and/or identifying information which is to remain confidential, unless otherwise later advised by the authors: submissions nos. 71, 73, 80, 84, 99, 117, 120, 122, 124, 126-127, 132-133, 135, 137, 140-141, 146-157, 160-160a and 161.

5.3 Confidential submissions

Resolved, on the motion of Mr D'Adam: That the committee keep submission nos. 115 confidential, as per the request of the author.

5.4 Tended documents from hearing on 23 April 2024

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Buttigieg: That the committee accept and replace the original tended document with the following document as the revised version, and authorise its publication, with the exception of identifying information which is to remain confidential, as per the recommendation of the secretariat:

- Rozelle Interchange Active Transport Non-compliance and Defects Report – Update to the Legislative Council Inquiry into the facts of the Rozelle Interchange, Keith Stallard / the Hub 26 April 2024.

5.5 Sequence of questions

Resolved, on the motion of Mr D'Adam: That the sequence of questions to be asked at the hearing is to alternate between opposition, crossbench and government members, in that order, with equal time allocated to each, beginning with rounds of 10 minutes each.

5.6 Public hearing

Witnesses, the public and the media were admitted.

The Chair made an opening statement regarding parliamentary privilege and other matters.

The following witnesses were examined:

- Mr Les Wielinga AM, Former CEO, Roads and Transport Authority (RTA), former CEO, Metro Trains and former Director General of Transport for NSW
- Mr Paul Forward, Former CEO, RTA
- Mr Chris Ford, Former Director Traffic, RTA
- Mr Stuart McCreery, Civil Engineer

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

The following witness was sworn and examined:

- Hon. John Graham MLC, Minister for Roads
- Mr Josh Murray, Secretary, Transport for New South Wales
- Ms Camilla Drover, Deputy Secretary Infrastructure and Place, Transport for New South Wales
- Mr Howard Collins, Coordinator General, Transport for New South Wales
- Mr Steve Issa, Executive Director Community & Place, Greater Sydney, Transport for New South Wales

Hon John Graham MLC tendered the following document:

- Schedule 33 - Rozelle Interchange Compensation Principles.

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

The public hearing concluded at 12.01 pm.

5.7 Tendered documents

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Nanva: That the committee accept and publish the following document tendered during the hearing:

- Schedule 33 - Rozelle Interchange Compensation Principles, tabled by Hon John Graham MLC.

6. Reserve hearing date and extension of reporting date

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Nanva: That the committee agree to hold a further hearing on Thursday 30 May 2024.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Nanva: That:

- the secretariat circulate to members the Chair's proposed witness list for the hearing on 30 May 2024
- members have two days from when the Chair's proposed witness list is circulated to make amendments or nominate additional witnesses
- the committee agree to the witness list by email, unless a meeting of the committee is required to resolve any disagreement.

Resolved, on the motion of Mrs Ward: That the committee conduct a short bus tour of the Drummoyne area leading to the Rozelle Interchange on Thursday 30 May 2024 prior to the public hearing.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Buttigieg: That the Chair seek a resolution from the House to extend the reporting date for the Rozelle interchange inquiry to Monday 15 July 2024.

7. Other business

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Buttigieg: That minutes no. 19 be amended to note the following correspondence:

- 23 April 2024 - Hon Mark Buttigieg MLC to the committee, attaching questions from the Drummoyne Traffic Committee for Transport for NSW.

Resolved, on the motion of Mrs Ward: That the committee note a discussion was raised at its meeting on 23 April 2024 regarding the correspondence tabled by Mr Buttigieg but was withdrawn on the basis of procedural objections.

Mrs Ward moved: That the committee note that Mrs Ward raised concerns regarding an unauthorised disclosure by Mr D'Adam about private committee deliberations.

Question put.

The committee divided.

Ayes: Mr Farraway, Mrs Ward.

Noes: Mr Buttigieg, Mr D'Adam, Ms Faehrmann, Mr Nanva.

Question resolved in the negative.

Mrs Ward moved: That the committee note there was discussion regarding a potential unauthorised disclosure and that the Chair advised the committee regarding respect for obligations of committee members to keep private committee deliberations confidential.

Question put.

The committee divided.

Ayes: Ms Faehrmann, Mr Farraway, Mrs Ward.

Noes: Mr Buttigieg, Mr D'Adam, Mr Nanva.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

8. Next meeting

The committee adjourned at 12.32 pm until Thursday 30 May 2024 (Inquiry into the impact of the Rozelle Interchange – site visit/public hearing).

Kara McKee/Teneale Houghton

Committee Clerk

Minutes no. 21

Thursday 16 May 2024

Portfolio Committee No. 6 – Transport and the Arts

Members Lounge, Parliament House, Sydney at 12.36 pm

1. Members present

Ms Faehrmann, Chair

Mr Farraway, Deputy Chair

Mr D'Adam

Dr Kaine

Mr Lawrence (substituting for Mr Nanva)

Mrs Ward

2. Apologies

Mr Nanva

3. Previous minutes

Resolved, on the motion of Mr D'Adam: That draft minutes nos. 19 (amended 3 May 2024) and 20 be confirmed.

4. Inquiry into the impact of the Rozelle Interchange**4.1 Proposed witness list – hearing 30 May 2024**

Mrs Ward moved: That the committee not invite Ms Gladys Berejiklian, Mr Mike Baird and Mr Andrew Constance to the hearing on 30 May 2024.

Question put.

The committee divided.

Ayes: Mr D'Adam, Mr Farraway, Dr Kaine, Mr Lawrence, Mrs Ward.

Noes: Ms Faehrmann.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr D'Adam: That the committee invite the following witnesses for the hearing on 30 May 2024:

- to appear individually:
 - Mr Peter Regan
 - Dr Chris Standen
 - Cr Andrew Ferguson
- to appear as part of a panel:
 - Panel 1
 - Mr Simon Gatward
 - Mr Roger Coleman
 - Ms Claudia Campbell
 - Panel 2
 - Dr Joe Cordaro
 - Ms Silvi Destro

5. Adjournment

The committee adjourned at 12.44 pm until Thursday 30 May 2024 (site visit and public hearing).

Teneale Houghton / Kara McKee

Committee Clerk

Minutes no. 22

Thursday 30 May 2024

Portfolio Committee No. 6 – Transport and the Arts

Security Gatehouse, Parliament House, Sydney, 7.36 am

1. Members present

Ms Faehrmann, *Chair*

Mr Farraway, *Deputy Chair* (via videoconference from 8.03 am to 8.27 am, from 9.34 am)

Mr Buttigieg (substituting for Mr D'Adam) (via teleconference from 8.11 am to 8.26 am, in person from 9.32 am)

Dr Kaine (via videoconference from 9.39 am)

Mr Nanva (from 9.32 am)

Mrs Ward

2. Apologies

Mr Banasiak

3. Inquiry into the impact of the Rozelle Interchange – Site visit

The committee travelled to Drummoyne via Lyons Road, Renwick Street, Cary Street, Day Street and Victoria Road to experience peak hour traffic conditions. The bus then returned to Parliament House.

The committee reconvened in the Macquarie Room, Parliament House, Sydney at 9.32 am.

4. Previous minutes

Resolved, on the motion of Mrs Ward: That draft minutes no. 21 be confirmed.

5. Correspondence

The committee noted the following items of correspondence:

Received

- 2 May 2024 – Email from Professor David Levinson, Professor of Transport, University of Sydney responding to the tabling of the committee’s report for the inquiry into Current and future public transport needs in Western Sydney
- 8 May 2024 – Email from Ms Stephanie Di Pasqua, Member for Drummoyne, requesting that names of constituents included in answers to questions on notice be kept confidential
- 9 May 2024 – Email from Mr Denis Allison to the committee, commenting on the Bicycle NSW submission relating to bicycle routes and prohibitions across Sydney
- 9 May 2024 – Email from Ms Belinda Daly, Balmain Rozelle Chamber of Commerce to secretariat, outlining the Balmain Rozelle Chamber of Commerce's interest in engaging further with the Inquiry into the impact of the Rozelle Interchange and advocating for further investment in the Balmain Rozelle area
- 17 May 2024 – Email from Mr Jim Salmon, Executive General Manager, John Holland, requesting clarifications to his evidence given at the hearing for the Inquiry into the impact of the Rozelle Interchange on 23 April 2024
- 22 May 2025 – Email from Mr Graeme Silvester, General Manager, CPB Contractors, requesting clarifications to his evidence given at the hearing for the Inquiry into the impact of the Rozelle Interchange on 23 April 2024.

Sent

- 10 May 2024 – Letter from Chair to Mr Mitch Dudley, Manager, Parliamentary Services, Office of the Secretary, Transport for NSW, thank you letter following committee site visit on 10 April.

Resolved, on the motion of Mrs Ward: That the committee authorise the publication of correspondence from the following witnesses clarifying their evidence at the hearing for the Inquiry into the impact of the Rozelle Interchange on Tuesday 23 April 2024 and the inclusion of a footnote in the relevant transcript noting the transcript clarifications:

- Email from Mr Jim Salmon, Executive General Manager, John Holland, dated 17 May 2024
- Email from Mr Graeme Silvester, General Manager, CPB Contractors, dated 22 May 2024.

6. Inquiry into the impact of the Rozelle Interchange

6.1 Answers to and supplementary questions

The committee noted that the following answers to questions on notice and supplementary of questions were published by the committee clerk under the authorisation of the resolution appointing the committee:

- answers to questions on notice from Ms Belinda Daly, Balmain Rozelle Chamber of Commerce, received 10 April 2024
- answers to questions on notice from Ms Annabelle Berriman, Parents and Citizens' Association, Rozelle Public School received 11 April 2024
- answers to supplementary questions from Ms Kobi Shetty MP, Member for Balmain, received 9 May 2024.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Nanva: That the committee authorise the publication of the following documents, with the exception of identifying and/or sensitive information which is to remain confidential, as per the request of the author:

- answers to questions on notice from Ms Stephanie Di Pasqua MP, Member for Drummoyne, received 6 May 2024, including:
 - email dated 29 September 2023 from constituent to Ms Stephanie Di Pasqua MP
 - letter dated 11 October 2023 from Ms Stephanie Di Pasqua MP to the Hon John Graham MLC, Minister for Roads
 - email dated 3 February 2024 from constituent to Ms Stephanie Di Pasqua MP
 - letter dated 6 February 2024 from Ms Stephanie Di Pasqua MP to the Hon John Graham MLC, Minister for Roads.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Nanva: That the committee keep the answers to questions on notice from the Environment Protection Agency, dated 20 May 2024, confidential, as per the recommendation of the secretariat.

6.2 Timeframes for answers to questions on notice and supplementary questions

Resolved, on the motion of Mrs Ward:

- That members provide any supplementary questions to the secretariat within 24 hours of receiving the transcript of evidence for today's hearing, and members be given 24 hours to consider proposed supplementary questions
- Witnesses be required to provide answers to questions on notice/supplementary within 7 days of receipt of the transcript.

6.3 Sequence of questions

Resolved, on the motion of Mrs Ward: That the allocation of questions to be asked at the hearing be left in the hands of the Chair.

6.4 Public hearing

Witnesses, the public and the media were admitted.

The Chair made an opening statement regarding parliamentary privilege and other matters.

The following witness was examined:

- Mr Peter Regan, Former Chief Financial Officer and Deputy Secretary, Finance and Investment, Transport for NSW, Former Senior Director, Commercial Finance, NSW Treasury, Former Chief Executive Officer, Sydney Motorway Corporation

The evidence concluded and the witness withdrew.

The following witness was examined:

- Cr Andrew Ferguson, Councillor, City of Canada Bay Council

The evidence concluded and the witness withdrew.

Mr Nanva left the meeting.

The following witness was examined:

- Dr Christopher Standen, Research Fellow, School of Population Health, UNSW

Dr Christopher Standen tendered the following document

- 'How the traffic modelling was manipulated'

Mr Nanva rejoined the meeting.

The evidence concluded and the witness withdrew.

The following witness was examined:

- Dr Joseph Cordaro, General Practitioner at Drummoyne Medical Centre, Councillor, City of Canada Bay Council

Mr Nanva left the meeting.

Dr Joseph Cordaro tendered the following documents:

- Transport for NSW - 'A vision for the Victoria Road Corridor'
- Transport for NSW - 'Victoria Road Vision' reviewed 29 November 2023.

The evidence concluded and the witness withdrew.

Mr Nanva rejoined the meeting.

The following witnesses were examined:

- Mr Simon Gatward, co-chair, Drummoyne Residents' Traffic Committee
- Ms Claudia Campbell, co-chair, Drummoyne Residents' Traffic Committee
- Mr Roger Colman, Drummoyne Resident

The evidence concluded and the witness withdrew.

6.5 Tendered documents

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Nanva: That the committee:

- accept the following documents tendered during the hearing:
 - Transport for NSW - 'A vision for the Victoria Road Corridor'
 - Transport for NSW - 'Victoria Road Vision' reviewed 29 November 2023
- accept and publish the following document tendered during the public hearing:
 - 'How the traffic modelling was manipulated'.

6.6 Proposed joint consultative committee to support the development and implementation of the current traffic study being undertaken in Drummoyne

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Buttigieg: That:

- Transport for NSW form a joint consultative committee with the City of Canada Bay Council and the Drummoyne Residents' Traffic Committee in order to give collective ongoing input into the current traffic study and give consideration to any suggestions by residents
- the Chair draft a letter (to be circulated to members) to Transport for NSW, City of Canada Bay Council and the Drummoyne Residents' Traffic Committee notifying these bodies of the committee's resolution, and issue a media release about the committee's resolution.

7. Adjournment

The committee adjourned at 1.07 pm until 10.30 am on Monday 24 June 2024, Room 1136, Parliament House, Sydney (report deliberative – Budget Estimates 2023-2024).

Teneale Houghton / Kara McKee
Committee Clerk

Draft minutes no. 24

Friday 5 July 2024

Portfolio Committee No. 6 – Transport and the Arts

Room 1043, Parliament House, Sydney at 1.01 pm

1. Members presentMs Faehrmann, *Chair*

Mr D'Adam

Mr Fang (substituting for Mr Farraway via videoconference)

Dr Kaine (via videoconference)

Mr Nanva (via videoconference)

Mr Rath (substituting for Mrs Ward)

2. Previous minutes

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Nanva: That draft minutes nos. 22 and 23 be confirmed.

3. Correspondence

The committee noted the following items of correspondence:

Received

- 1 July 2024 – Email from Mr Manod Wickramasinghe, Inner West Council, advising that the Inner West Council does not intend to provide answers to supplementary questions following its appearance at the hearing for the Inquiry into the impact of the Rozelle Interchange on 10 April 2024.

Sent

- 17 May 2024 – Email from secretariat to Mr Kendall Banfield, Inner West Council, confirming phone advice that the Inner West Council do not intend to provide answers to supplementary questions and seeking reasons for this, in relation to their attendance at the hearing for the Inquiry into the impact of the Rozelle Interchange on 10 April 2024
- 5 June 2024 – Letter from the Chair to Mr Josh Murray, Secretary Transport for NSW, Cr Michael Megna, Mayor, City of Canada Bay Council, Ms Claudia Campbell and Mr Simon Gatward, Co-chairs, Drummoyne Residents' Traffic Committee, proposing the establishment of a joint consultative committee to support the Drummoyne traffic study.

4. Inquiry into the impact of the Rozelle Interchange**4.1 Answers to questions on notice and supplementary questions**

The committee noted the following answers to questions on notice and supplementary questions, and additional information were published by the committee clerk under the authorisation of the resolution appointing the committee:

- answers to questions on notice from Professor Wendy Bacon, Investigative Journalist, Community Environmental Monitoring, received 7 May 2024
- answers to questions on notice and supplementary questions from Ms Denise Kelly, General Manager, WestConnex, Transurban, received 22 May 2024
- answers to questions on notice and supplementary questions from Mr Jim Salmon, Executive General Manager, Major Projects Support, John Holland, received 22 May 2024
- answers to questions on notice and supplementary questions from Mr Graeme Silvester, General Manager, SHEQ & Sustainability, CPB Contractors, received 22 May 2024
- answer to question on notice from the Hon. John Graham MLC, Minister for Roads, received 31 May 2024
- answers to questions on notice and supplementary questions from Transport for NSW, received 31 May 2024

- answer to question on notice from Mr Chris Ford, Former Director Traffic, RTA, received 3 June 2024
- additional information from Mr Roger Colman, Drummoyne Resident, received 3 June 2024
- answer to question on notice from Mr Simon Gatward, Co-chair, Drummoyne Residents' Traffic Committee, received 10 June 2024
- answer to question on notice from Dr Joseph Cordaro, General Practitioner at Drummoyne Medical Centre and Councillor, City of Canada Bay Council, received 11 June 2024
- answers to supplementary questions from Mr Peter Regan, Former Chief Financial Officer and Deputy Secretary, Finance and Investment, Transport for NSW Former Senior Director, Commercial Finance, NSW Treasury Former Chief Executive Officer, Sydney Motorway Corporation, received 11 June 2024.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr D'Adam: That the committee authorise the publication of the following documents:

- answers to questions on notice from Mr Stuart McCreery, former Traffic Engineer, received 2 July 2024.

4.2 Consideration of Chair's draft report

The Chair submitted her draft report entitled *Impact of the Rozelle Interchange*, which, having been previously circulated, was taken as being read.

The committee noted that Mr Rath will move amendments on behalf of Mrs Ward.

Mr Rath (on behalf of Mrs Ward) moved: That the following findings be omitted:

Finding 1

That the financial model of WestConnex was based on maximising its sale value, which in turn has driven design decisions that have increased traffic congestion on the Anzac Bridge and its surrounds.

Finding 2

That the lack of transparency and accountability for the design decisions resulting in the Rozelle Interchange is unacceptable given the magnitude of the project and the significant impacts it has had on the community.

Finding 3

That there is a concerning lack of clarity and transparency around the contractual arrangements between the NSW Government and Transurban in relation to the regulation of traffic on the WestConnex network, particularly at the Rozelle Interchange.

Finding 4

That impacted communities were promised benefits from the Rozelle Interchange that have not been realised.

Finding 5

That there was a lack of meaningful engagement, including information sharing and consultation, with impacted communities during the design, construction and opening of the Rozelle Interchange.

Finding 6

That there has been significantly increased traffic congestion, particularly on local roads, following the opening of the Rozelle Interchange which has resulted in extensive negative impacts on residents and local businesses.

Question put.

The committee divided.

Ayes: Mr Fang, Mr Rath.

Noes: Ms Faehrmann, Mr D'Adam, Dr Kaine, Mr Nanva.

Question resolved in the negative.

Mr Rath (on behalf of Mrs Ward) moved: That the following new findings be inserted:

Finding 9

The opening of the Rozelle Interchange was poorly planned which led to sub-optimal outcomes for the local community and drivers.

Finding 10

With Western Sydney's population expected to grow to over three million people by the early 2030s, the WestConnex program of works including the Rozelle Interchange is transformative for Sydney's road network.

Question put.

The committee divided.

Ayes: Mr Fang, Mr Rath.

Notes: Ms Faehrmann, Mr D'Adam, Dr Kaine, Mr Nanva.

Question resolved in the negative.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Nanva: That:

The draft report be the report of the committee and that the committee present the report to the House;

The transcripts of evidence, tabled documents, submissions, correspondence, responses and summary report to the online questionnaire, and answers to questions taken on notice and supplementary questions relating to the inquiry be tabled in the House with the report;

Upon tabling, all unpublished attachments to submissions be kept confidential by the committee;

Upon tabling, all unpublished transcripts of evidence, tabled documents, submissions, correspondence, responses and summary report to the online questionnaire, and answers to questions taken on notice and supplementary questions related to the inquiry be published by the committee, except for those documents kept confidential by resolution of the committee;

The committee secretariat correct any typographical, grammatical and formatting errors prior to tabling;

The committee secretariat be authorised to update any committee comments where necessary to reflect changes to recommendations or new recommendations resolved by the committee;

Dissenting statements be provided to the secretariat within 24 hours after receipt of the draft minutes of the meeting;

The secretariat is tabling the report at 10.30 am on Monday 15 July 2024;

The Chair to advise the secretariat and members if they intend to hold a press conference, and if so, the date and time.

5. Adjournment

The committee adjourned at 1.10 pm until Budget Estimates 2024-2025 – initial meeting, date to be confirmed.

Teneale Houghton / Kara McKee
Committee Clerk

Appendix 4 Dissenting statement

Hon Natalie Ward MLC, Liberal Party

On balance the Opposition cannot support the findings of this inquiry as it does not accurately portray the planning and design decisions of the project. However with the exception of recommendation 1 and 2, we do support the recommendations provided by the committee for the consideration by the Government and Transport for NSW.

The opening of the Rozelle Interchange was clearly sub-optimal for drivers and the local community, there was inappropriate signage, toll signs pointing to non-tolled roads and frankly it appeared there was no plan of action to address community concerns within the first days and weeks of the project opening.

As acknowledged by Transport for NSW, the fact that within weeks of the opening of the interchange the majority of traffic issues subsided demonstrates that had appropriate planning work been undertaken prior to the opening many of the impacts could have been addressed.

There clearly remains further work for Transport for NSW to address traffic issues on local roads particularly in the Balmain and Drummoyne communities.

Acknowledging the immediate unacceptable impacts to local communities within the early weeks of opening, the overall WestConnex project has been transformational to the Sydney road network.

Despite consistent opposition from sections of the public including the then Labor Opposition, the benefits of the project are already being realised with lower traffic across key arterial routes, and new public transport infrastructure projects being proposed because of the removal of traffic.

As a global city Sydney will continue to grow and responsible Governments must continue to invest in the critical road and public transport infrastructure to keep pace with the population.

WestConnex, including the Rozelle Interchange was designed to provide Western Sydney drivers the motorway connection to the Sydney CBD they deserve. With the population of the region expected to grow to three million people by the early 2030s, one can only imagine the traffic chaos without the delivery of the WestConnex programme of works.

