

Item No: C0417 Item 2

Subject: WESTCONNEX UPDATE REPORT: PROCUREMENT FOR LOCAL AREA TRAFFIC IMPROVEMENT STRATEGY AND ASSESSMENT OF STAGE 3 (M4-M5 LINK) DESIGN PLANS; AND SUBMISSION ON PROPOSED MODIFICATION OF SECRETARY'S ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS FOR STAGE 3

File Ref: 16/6116/38131.17

Prepared By: Kendall Banfield - Manager WestConnex Unit

Authorised By: Simon Manoski - Group Manager Strategic Planning

SUMMARY

This report relates to progress of two WestConnex items. The first is procurement for Council's WestConnex traffic modelling study (or Local Area Traffic Improvement Strategy - LATIS) and assessment of Stage 3 (M4-M5) Link design plans. For this item, the report recommends the direct appointment of a consultant to undertake the project. It also recommends that Council notes that a request for quote (RFQ) has recently been issued to a selection of suitable consultants to assess the forthcoming WestConnex Stage 3 design plans. The second item is Council's recent submission on the proposed modification to the Secretary's Environmental Impact Assessment Requirements (SEARs) for the Stage 3 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). For this item, the report recommends that Council forwards to the Department of Planning & Environment (DP&E) any comments additional to those raised in the Council officers' submission as a late addendum to the submission.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT:

1. Council receives and notes this report;
 2. Pursuant to section 55(3)(i) of the Local Government Act 1993, the Council resolves that a satisfactory result would not be achieved by inviting tenders for the provision of the subject traffic modelling study due to the following extenuating circumstances:
 - a) The services to be performed are specialised, particularly due to the proprietary nature of the software to which the services relate;
 - b) A request for quote (RFQ) through Local Government Procurement did not identify any consultants capable of carrying out the scope of work;
 - c) There is insufficient time to conduct an open tender and still have the service performed to meet the timeframe to which council is working.
 3. Council delegates authority to the Interim General Manager to enter into negotiations directly with Veitch Lister Consulting (VLC) and execute a contract for the provision of a traffic modelling study;
 4. Council notes that staff will issue a RFQ to select a suitable consultant to undertake a peer review of the traffic modelling to be undertaken by VLC.
 5. Council notes that staff have recently issued a RFQ to select a suitable consultant to undertake an assessment of the forthcoming WestConnex Stage 3 design plans;
-

-
6. Council forwards to the Department of Planning & Environment (DP&E) any comments additional to those raised in the Council officers' submission on proposed modifications to the Secretary's Environmental Impact Assessment Requirements (SEARs) for the WestConnex Stage 3 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) - as a late addendum to the submission.
-

BACKGROUND

Item 1: Procurement for Council's Local Area Traffic Improvement Strategy and assessment of Stage 3 design plans

1. Local Area Traffic Improvement Strategy

A progress report on this item was considered at Council's 11 April 2017 Local Representation Advisory Committee (LRAC). It was explained that at its 6 December 2016 meeting, Council considered an Administrator's Minute: *WestConnex Traffic in Local Neighbourhoods & Streets & Assessing Stage 3 Impacts*. Council resolved (among other things) to commission a study to assess the impacts of each stage of WestConnex will have on residential neighbourhoods and streets following the progressive opening of each stage of WestConnex. The study would recommend appropriate traffic management measures based on traffic modelling outcomes to respond to the impacts predicted to occur. A Strategic Transport Model (STM) was considered to be the key tool for predicting these impacts. Council resolved to allocate \$250,000 to this study.

In early 2017, Council staff developed a project brief and called for quotations through Local Government Procurement. The RFQ sought a suitable consultant to work with Council and other relevant stakeholders to develop this study – now known as the Local Area Traffic Improvement Strategy (LATIS). Only one submission was received and it has been determined that this submission does not satisfy the project's requirements.

Council staff have investigated the availability of strategic transport modelling software and determined the following:

- Roads & Maritime Services (RMS) has a WestConnex Road Traffic Model (WRTM) and microsimulation models for each portal area which considers *main* roads only;
- Veitch Lister Consulting (VLC) have a transport model (known as the 'Zenith model') for the Sydney metropolitan area that can model traffic on *local* roads;
- There is no other strategic transport model available for council to model traffic on IWC local roads which is what is necessary to achieve the goals of the study.

Having found no suitable consultants through the initial LGP RFQ process, then determining that there was only one consultant in the market who could be considered able to satisfactorily perform the role, as well as noting the tight timeframes to complete the work; it is considered that direct negotiations should be entered into with this consultant, rather than undertake an open tender process. This is allowed by section 55 of the Local Government Act 1993 where extenuating circumstances warrant it. In this case, the extenuating circumstances are:

- a) The services to be performed are specialised, particularly due to the proprietary nature of the software to which the services relate;
- b) An RFQ through Local Government Procurement did not identify any consultants capable of carrying out the scope of work;
- c) There is insufficient time to conduct an open tender and still have the service performed to meet the timeframe to which Council is working.

Council staff intend to request VLC submit a proposal for the traffic modelling studies for evaluation and negotiation to ensure Council's objectives will be fully achieved. It is noted that VLC has been previously engaged by a private company working for WestConnex, so in order to minimize any perception of potential conflict of interest, council intends to engage through RFQ an independent traffic consultant to peer-review VLC's findings.

2. *M4-M5 Link assessment*

A progress report on this item was considered at the 11 April 2017 LRAC meeting. The LRAC report explained that as part of consideration of an Administrator's Minute: *WestConnex Traffic In Local Neighbourhoods & Streets & Assessing Stage 3 Impacts* at its 6 December 2016 meeting, Council had resolved (among other things) to allocate \$250,000 for suitable consultants to assess of the design plans and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for WestConnex Stage 3.

SMC has advised that the design plans will be publicly exhibited in "coming weeks", while the EIS will be exhibited later in 2017. The exhibition of the design plans is non-statutory and the extent and nature of the information within these plans is not known. It is however expected that they will include information on key issues of concern to Council and the community, such as mid-tunnel construction dive-sites, end-portals, the Rozelle Interchange and the alignment of the main tunnel. The start date and length of the exhibition period is also not known, but it is expected to commence in late April or early May 2017 and run for about four to six weeks.

In early 2017 in anticipation of the exhibition, Council staff had called for expressions of interest (EOIs) from four potentially suitable consultants to assess the design plans and EIS and to assist the preparation of Council's submission. Council has received and reviewed the four EOIs received. Given the exhibition of the Stage 3 design plans is imminent, Council staff have issued a request for quote (RFQ) from the four consultants that had submitted EOIs. The RFQ applies only to the assessment of the design plans (not to the EIS), so it is estimated that only approximately \$50,000 of the available \$250,000 budget will be required for this task. A separate larger RFQ or tender process will be undertaken for the EIS later in 2017, pending the final estimated value of that scope.

The RFQ requests these consultants to submit a formal quote as soon as the design plans are available at the commencement of the exhibition. It is necessary for the consultants to wait for the commencement of exhibition to allow them to assess the extent and nature of information available so they are able to submit an accurate quote. A suitable consultant will be selected as soon as possible to ensure the assessment work commences soon after the commencement of exhibition. It may be appropriate for Council to separately engage other specialist consults to assess niche topics (e.g. social impacts) if the need is identified.

Item 2: Council submission on proposed modification of Secretary's Environmental Impact Assessment Requirements (SEARs) for the Stage 3 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

On 17 March 2017, Council was notified by the Department of Planning & Environment (DP&E) that a proposal by WestConnex proponent RMS to modify to the Secretary's Environmental Impact Assessment Requirements (SEARs) for the Stage 3 EIS would be on public exhibition until 3 April 2017. Council officers made a preliminary draft submission (at **ATTACHMENT 1**), which explained that the exhibition did not allow time for the submission to be considered by Council before it was lodged. This report recommends that any comments additional to those raised in the Council officers' submission be forwarded to the DP&E as a late addendum to the submission.

In its submission, Council expresses its continued opposition to WestConnex and preference to public transport solutions to Sydney's traffic problems. A summary of issues raised for each of the proposed modifications is as follows:

1. *Removal of traffic interchange at Camperdown* – Council generally supports this change, as traffic impacts in the densely developed Camperdown area would be avoided – however, it is noted that this may result in additional traffic impacts at the Rozelle and St Peters interchanges.
2. *Realignment of mainline tunnels* – Council generally supports this change, mainly on the basis that tunnelling would not affect sensitive equipment at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital.
3. *Refinement of the Rozelle Interchange design* – Concerns are raised about the increased tunnelling area (and consequently increased number of properties at risk of cracking) and possible impact on future light rail to White Bay and Balmain.
4. *Increasing the mainline tunnel configuration from three to four lanes* – Council opposes this modification because increasing road capacity will lead to greater car use and ultimately increased congestion. Council is also concerned that the increased capacity was not a consideration for the planning of Stages 1 and 2, and as a result traffic at Stage 1 and 2 portals will be at higher levels than forecast. The added capacity will also increase construction timeframes and consequent construction impacts, and will increase the area subject to risk of subsidence and consequently cracking of buildings.
5. *Removal of Easton Park from the project construction footprint* – This is supported, but Council notes that there may be indirect impacts from construction activities within the nearby Rozelle Rail Yards.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Nil. Though this report deals with processes for engaging consultants, the required funds have already been allocated according to a Council resolution in December 2016.

OTHER STAFF COMMENTS

Relevant Council staff have been involved in the drafting of this report.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Nil. WestConnex is a NSW Government project and Council is an external stakeholder. There is no need or requirement for Council to undertake consultation additional to that undertaken by the WestConnex proponent. There is also no requirement for Council to undertake public consultation for procurement of consultants to undertake WestConnex studies.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Council's submission to the DP&E on proposed SEARs modifications for WestConnex Stage 3



16/6116

6 April 2017

Naomi Moss
Senior Planning Officer
Transport Assessments
Department of Planning & Environment
GPO Box 39
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Dear Ms Moss

**Application for amended SEARs for
WestConnex Stage 3 (M4-M5 Link) (SSI 7485)**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the above. As there has not been sufficient time to allow this submission to be formally considered by Council, the comments below are from Council officers only. This submission will be reported at Council's next ordinary meeting on 26 April 2017, at which time additional comments may be raised. If so, these comments will be forwarded to you as a separate addendum to this submission.

Inner West Council continues to strongly oppose WestConnex, preferring public transport solutions to Sydney's traffic problems. Notwithstanding, Council reluctantly accepts that Stages 1 and 2 are approved and under construction, and planning for Stage 3 is underway. On this basis, Council continues to work with the project's proponents, the Inner West community and other relevant stakeholders to ensure that impacts from the planning, construction and operation of WestConnex are minimised and that every opportunity is taken to achieve positive outcomes from this project.

It is within this context that the following Council officers' comments on the proposed SEARs modifications are offered.

1. Removal of traffic interchange at Camperdown

Council has previously expressed its support for the removal of the traffic interchange at Camperdown and continues to support this change. Council has however previously noted that removal of this interchange may lead to additional traffic at the Rozelle and St Peters interchanges. When the Camperdown traffic interchange was originally proposed in 2016, Council was concerned about the traffic impacts on already congested streets in this densely developed area. Council shared the concerns of health authorities about tunneling construction impacts on sensitive equipment within the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital (RPAH) precinct, as well as traffic-related noise and safety impacts within this precinct. Council was also concerned that that the Camperdown interchange proposal conflicted with State and local government plans for rejuvenation of the Parramatta Road corridor, which includes

[Customer Service Centres](#)

Ashfield | P (02) 9716 1800 | E info@ashfield.nsw.gov.au | 260 Liverpool Road Ashfield NSW 2131
Leichhardt | P (02) 9367 9222 | E leichhardt@lmc.nsw.gov.au | 7-15 Wetherill Street Leichhardt NSW 2040
Petersham | P (02) 9335 2222 | E council@marrickville.nsw.gov.au | 2-14 Fisher Street Petersham NSW 2049

additional development, improved public transport and an improved environment for pedestrians and cyclists.

2. Realignment of mainline tunnels

Council has previously expressed concerns about the original alignment, mainly on the basis of construction impacts on RPAH. Council is satisfied that the amended alignment has addressed this concern as it will now not pass beneath the RPAH precinct. From the maps within the SEARs modification report, Council cannot (at this stage) identify any specific location where tunneling may be problematic on the basis of land-use or geology.

Notwithstanding, Council shares general concerns held by the community about the potential for cracking of buildings from tunneling, even though it is noted the proponent has established a process for compensating property owners that may be affected in this way.

3. Refinement of the Rozelle interchange design

From the indicative maps within the SEARs modification report, Council's concern with this change is the widening of the area affected by tunneling in the Lilyfield/Rozelle area. This would increase construction impacts and the number of properties potentially affected by tunneling-related cracking. Council is also concerned that extension of tunneling beneath Victoria Road at Rozelle to link to the proposed Western Harbour Tunnel could have a negative impact on future public transport, including a future light rail link to White Bay and Balmain.

4. Increasing the mainline tunnel configuration from three lanes to four

Council opposes this change because increasing road capacity will ultimately lead to greater car use at the expense of public transport patronage, further exacerbating Sydney's traffic and liveability problems. The cost of the added road capacity also directs vital funds away from public transport.

Council is concerned that the added road capacity for Stage 3 will significantly alter the results of the traffic modelling in the Stage 1 and Stage 2 Environmental Impact Statements (EISs). Council is already concerned about the potential for rat-running in the areas around the Haberfield, Rozelle and St Peters interchanges as a result of WestConnex Stages 1 & 2. With increased road capacity for Stage 3, this concern is heightened. It is critical that the forthcoming Stage 3 design plans and EIS comprehensively and accurately assess the added traffic impacts from this added capacity and outline how the impacts will be mitigated. It is apparent to Council that this change to Stage 3 and its retrospective impact on Stages 1 & 2 has created anxiety in the community about the staged EIS approvals process for WestConnex.

Note that as a result of local traffic concerns, Council has resolved to undertake its own traffic modelling study to identify local streets that would be affected by WestConnex-related traffic increases. It is intended this study be used to target streets for traffic-calming works ahead of the opening of each stage of WestConnex - not after opening, as prescribed by the project's conditions of consent.

Council is concerned that the increased capacity will result in increased construction timeframes (and consequent impacts on the community) due to the need to extract a significant additional volume of spoil from Stage 3 construction sites. Alternatively, should SMC retain the currently proposed timeline, a significantly increased number of trucks and/or extended working hours would be needed – again, this would increase impacts on the community. Council's experience with construction work underway for the M4 East is that these impacts are significant, wide-ranging and, for some affected residents, intolerable. Impacts include noise and traffic disruption from trucks, employee parking demand, out-of-hours noise issues and damage to roads. Council is also concerned that increasing tunnel widths will increase the area where buildings would be at risk of tunneling-related cracking,

and that larger portals in the Rozelle Rail Yards would reduce the amount of usable open space that can be provided for the community within that site.

Notwithstanding Council's concerns about additional traffic around WestConnex portals, it is acknowledged that Stage 3, with its additional capacity, is likely to reduce surface traffic in some locations. Wherever this is shown to be the case, Council would like to see surface road capacity reduced. By way of example, the Parramatta Road corridor represents a good opportunity to reduce surface road capacity for private vehicles and implement improved public transport. In this regard, Council has been advocating to the NSW Government a high quality guided electric bus service using the centre lanes of Parramatta Road.

5. Removal of Easton Park from the project construction footprint

As Council had previously opposed any direct impact on Easton Park from WestConnex, it follows that Council supports removal of Easton Park from the project's construction footprint. However from the SEARs modification report, Council notes there may be indirect impacts on users of Easton Park from construction activities in the nearby Rozelle Rail Yards site, including traffic, construction noise and dust impacts.

I trust this submission is of assistance. Should you have any queries, please contact me on 9335 2179.

Yours sincerely



Kendall Banfield
Manager WestConnex Unit