

Siranda Torvaldsen

President

Sydney Secondary College Leichhardt P&C

The President

Annandale Primary P&C

Urgent:

Re proposed Westconnex tunnelling ‘dive’ site beside/at Leichhardt High School 2018-2022

Dear Sir/Madam,

We write to inform you of the Westconnex ‘dive’ site proposal affecting our school and its oval that will also impact the local primary school community and its students.

We think your school community may have a stake in this issue which is half the reason for this correspondence. The other half is to seek your support.

Sydney Motorway Corporation, responsible for the Westconnex, have recently revealed that their ‘latest’ preferred midway ‘dive’ site option for the ‘latest’ tunnel route between Ashfield and Rozelle is on land directly abutting Leichhardt High School. Specifically, on the heritage Tram Sheds wrapping the oval.

Sydney Motorway Corporation describe the proposed site as *Derbyshire Rd, Leichhardt*. (see attached map) What this doesn’t tell you is that they would be virtually digging on a high school’s grounds, if not actually doing so on its oval should the need arise to further expand. What this doesn’t tell you is that the Tram Sheds were earmarked for the school’s expansion in the context of an exploding student population, and that the Westconnex would retain a permanent presence there.

If the land directly abutting the Leichhardt High oval and the school became a midway ‘dive’ site, this would involve an approximately 4 year period of 24hrs per day major excavation and digging work on land that is effectively **20m from one of the school’s main entrance gates, 36m from an indoor classroom and flanks two entire sides of its only oval**. (see an expanded list of the deleterious effects at the bottom of this letter) The health, safety and education of what would amount to almost 2000 students over four years would be unacceptably impacted. Teachers’ occupational health and safety would obviously be compromised too.

To rob a high school of the amenity of its solitary oval (if not of the entire use of it) is an extraordinary proposal, particularly in an era where health and obesity issues for children and young people appear almost daily as a priority issue in the media.

Some primary schools in the area currently walk to Leichhardt High to use its hall for school musicals or recognition days, including rehearsals for these events. These walks would become safety and health hazards for young children. Parking for such events at our school would become a nightmare for primary school parents and teachers too.

Additionally, the safety of primary-aged children walking to and from their current school, crossing City West Link, either independently or accompanied, or walking to other extra-curricular activities on the narrow footpaths of Balmain Rd, Norton St and Devonshire Rds would be seriously compromised by these masses of daily truck movements and dust in the air.

Finally, local sporting groups use the oval on weekends in a municipality desperately short of playing fields.

Our P&C has formally passed a motion stridently opposing the proposal and has written to the NSW Education Minister requesting his intervention.

If you are as concerned as we are, we ask you to consider also proposing a motion that would have your P&C adopt a formal position on the proposal as well. Following that, you might wish to consider writing as a P&C to the NSW Education Minister requesting his intervention.

The more support we get in rallying the whole community against this proposal, the greater our chances of defeating it. As such, we ask you to inform your members and the wider community of all these issues and to encourage them to object individually also.

Our P&C also hopes to hold a community rally to express opposition to the proposal on Sunday April 2nd from 11-1 on the school's oval, but await confirmation of several details. Any support you can give us either formally as a P&C or individually as members in attending that event will be greatly welcomed. Perhaps your members who are concerned or outraged might pencil in the date and we will imminently confirm details.

We urge you to give priority to this issue at your earliest convenience, preferably your next meeting, as time is of the essence in defeating this proposal. Attached is further information, including a list of relevant politicians and media outlets, all of whom can be sent letters of concern or objection, but suggest that the Education Department must be pressed to stand up for its students. .

We thank you, in advance, for your time in taking this issue to your members.

Kind Regards,


Siranda Torvaldsen

SSC Leichhardt P&C President

For further information or questions please contact Ann-Therese King

Westconnex Subcommittee Co-ordinator at ferfol1@hotmail.co



NO WESTCONNEX AT LEICHHARDT HIGH!

<https://www.facebook.com/No.Westconnex.at.Leichhardt.High/>

Expanded Deleterious Effects of the Westconnex Dive site proposal at Leichhardt High

- an approximately 4 year period of 24hrs per day major excavation and digging work on land that is effectively 20m from one of the school's main entrance gates, 36m from an indoor classroom and flanks two entire sides of its only oval.
- It would involve scores of daily truck movements, predicted, at best, to be one every 5 minutes between 7am and 8pm, but likely to blow out to be more than that. It also directly abuts a major parent vehicular drop-off point.
- Combined with the traffic and parking dislocation inflicted on the entire area to accommodate the project, including workers' cars, this would have an unacceptable impact on the safety of students and sporting families travelling to and from both the school and the oval.
- Attending simple events and meetings at Leichhardt High would become time-consuming and frequently prohibitive
- The dust, vibration and noise issues on similar sites elsewhere are reportedly little ameliorated by so-called acoustic sheds.
- Already parents are saying they would remove their students from the school, particularly asthma sufferers.
- the major arterial route, Balmain Rd, will also be a major access point, leading to traffic gridlock on this crucial arterial route whose fluidity is already highly challenged at key times of day.
- the amenity of Leichhardt Memorial Park, Norton Street and the schedules of the bus depot will also be severely impacted, not to mention local residents.

CONTACT DETAILS FOR OBJECTION LETTERS

NSW Government Ministers.

The Hon Rob Stokes MP

The Minister for Education

<https://www.nsw.gov.au/your-government/ministers/minister-for-education/>

The Hon Stuart Ayres MP

The Minister for

Westconnex

<https://www.nsw.gov.au/your-government/ministers/minister-for-western-sydney-minister-for-westconnex-and-minister-for-sport/>

The Hon. Gladys Berejiklian MP

Premier of NSW

<https://www.nsw.gov.au/contact-us/contact-the-premier/>

Department of Education

1) **Murat Dizdar**

Executive Director of Department of Education

Murat.Dizdar@det.nsw.edu.au

2) Mark Scott

Secretary Department of Education

Media

- editor@innerwestcourier.com.au
- letters@smh.com.au

Local Reps opposing the proposal with whom you may wish to register opposition:

The Hon Jamie Parker MP

NSW State Member for Balmain

Balmain@parliament.nsw.gov.au.

The Hon Anthony Albanese MP

Federal member for Grayndler

Email: A.Albanese.MP@aph.gov.au

Richard Pearson

Administrator/General Manager

Inner West Council

Kendall Banfield

Westconnex complaints officer

kendall.banfield@innerwest.com.au

To follow our campaign:

<https://www.facebook.com/No.Westconnex.at.Leichhardt.High/>