

**TEMPE 2020**

**SUBMISSION IN RELATION TO THE M5 CORRIDOR  
EXPANSION TO THE ROADS & TRAFFIC AUTHORITY**

**12 MARCH 2010**

**Contents**

Introduction .....	3
1. Community Impact.....	4
The destruction of picnic area/trees/kids playground in Tempe Reserve .....	4
Destruction of Tempe Reserve playing fields and blocking of the bike path.....	4
Destruction of dog off-leash area .....	4
Tempe Eco Wetlands .....	5
Cooks River as a Wildlife Corridor Biodiversity Strategy - Marrickville Council .....	5
Pollution – Visual / Noise / Atmospheric.....	6
2. Efficacy of Proposed Road .....	7
Connection to Airport Drive from the Southern Sydney Connection.....	7
End of the road – St Peters & Surrounding Suburbs .....	7
Port Botany Access .....	8
The M4 East.....	9
IKEA Development and Traffic Generation.....	9
3. Other Alternatives.....	10
Improvements to Public Transport and Rail Freight Facilities.....	10
Parallel Public Transport Improvements to assist Transport Corridor Congestion .....	11
Airport Access, Demand Management and Public Transport .....	12
Active Transport, Bicycle and Walking Tracks.....	14
Active Transport and the M5 Expansion Proposal.....	14
4. Project Execution .....	15
M5 Tunnel Duplication and lack of stack filtration.....	15
Potential fast track delivery timetable and Environmental Assessment.....	16
The F6 Corridor and the M5 Expansion.....	16
5. Conclusion.....	17
APPENDIX A.....	18
Discussion Paper regarding the process of the M5 Transport Corridor Feasibility Study and the development of the Indicative Preferred Option, and associated documentation .....	18
Cover Letter January 22.....	19
Meeting 22 Jan 2009 Premiers Department/ Transport Ministry.....	20
Overview .....	20
A) Refinement of preferred strategic option .....	20
B) Option D .....	21
Budget.....	21
Rapid Economic Analysis.....	22
Traffic Modelling.....	22
Multi-criteria analysis (MCA) of strategic options.....	22
Comparative appraisal.....	22
C) Comparison of Rapid Economic Appraisal with the IPO and Option D .....	23
Benefit Cost Ratio .....	23
Estimated Capital Cost.....	23
Direct User Benefits.....	23
Summary.....	24
Request for Clarification.....	25

## **Introduction**

Residents of the area of Tempe east of the Princes Highway have chosen to present a group submission on the M5 Corridor Expansion, because the community as a whole is extremely concerned about what this will mean to both our neighbourhood and that of St Peters. Residents have come together in their hundreds as they have learned about what has been proposed, and they are incredulous, horrified and angry.

Our primary concern is the arterial road referred to in the RTA's Transport Corridor Feasibility Study of November 2009 as the 'Southern Sydney Connection Road'. This road was developed as a "concept" to improve access to Port Botany, the airport, the CBD and surrounding areas, due to the M5 East freeway and the Princes Highway exceeding capacity in the very near future. Tempe 2020 believes that the justifications given in the Feasibility Study are not correct, and will detail this later in our submission.

In the first instance, the Transport Minister's statement of 1<sup>st</sup> February 2010 that the Southern Sydney Connection Road "has no status" makes the request for submissions pretty much a moot point. What is the point of preparing a submission on a road that has no status? However, given that the road in question is still part of the proposal, we believe that a submission stating our opposition in the strongest of terms is essential to ensuring that the State Government and the RTA are under no illusions that the residents of Tempe, St Peters and surrounding suburbs will ever agree to, sanction or be coerced into agreeing to the Southern Sydney Connection Road or any similar proposed road.

The RTA's officers have stated that the RTA is seeking residents' input to help them develop options by supplying submissions. Tempe 2020 believes that developing options for roads as part of the M5 Corridor Expansion is the task of the RTA and the State Government, not the residents of this area. As members of our group were responsible for highlighting failings in the Feasibility Study, resulting in the RTA backtracking to develop the other four options not fully explored through the original study, we as a group do not intend to offer suggestions as to what the new preferred option should be (see Appendix A for further details). That both the RTA and the State Government would even suggest we should points to an unfortunate waste of taxpayers' money. Why spend \$15 million on a feasibility study in the first place if you are first going to ignore much of the study's findings, and then call for community suggestions to effectively start the whole process again? If you are serious we wonder about the competence of the process; if you are not, the process itself seems, at best, disingenuous.

## **1. Community Impact**

The impacts of this proposed road on the community are many and varied, and we detail them as follows.

### **The destruction of picnic area/trees/kids playground in Tempe Reserve**

Tempe Reserve has recently seen the end of a two year period of disruption while Sydney Water's desalination pipeline was laid through Tempe Reserve. During this period, the children's playground was relocated for several months, the picnic facilities were removed, the walking/bike paths were blocked, and the use of the playing fields were limited due to construction and pipe storage areas. Hundreds of families, both locals and those from out of area, use the picnic and playground areas both during the week and particularly on weekends.

Now, after all of these facilities have been restored, and families can once again make use of the picnic area and the playground for birthday parties, barbeques and relaxation under beautiful fig trees, a four lane road is proposed to destroy all of these amenities. In a local council area with a limited amount of green space, to take away facilities such as these will affect families over many suburbs.

### **Destruction of Tempe Reserve playing fields and blocking of the bike path**

While the route of the proposed road as per the Feasibility Study does not invade the playing fields of Tempe Reserve to a great extent, having a 15 metre high road overhanging the playing fields will impose noise, atmospheric and visual pollution on a leisure and sporting area used by hundreds of people each week. The noise of hundreds of cars each hour will make the area extremely unpleasant to hold sporting fixtures, as players won't be able to hear each other on the field. The Reserve is used for cricket, soccer, rugby league, touch football, volleyball, jogging, dog walking and cycling. The road will also potentially block the cycling track that goes from the Reserve crossing Alexandria Canal and along Airport Drive to Mascot and Alexandria, cutting off a non-main road alternative for cyclists to ride into the CBD.

### **Destruction of dog off-leash area**

As the proposed road goes up the ridge from Tempe Reserve, it effectively takes out the dog off-leash area adjacent to the container terminal. This will take away an area which is constantly in use 7 days a week by both locals and non-locals, including many dog walking businesses. There is no comparable nearby area for off-leash dog exercise, and the community will suffer greatly from the loss of this much used amenity.

### **Tempe Eco Wetlands**

Marrickville Council has spent millions of dollars to repatriate the current wetlands area from the old Tempe Tip. The result is a fantastic, tranquil area filled with flourishing native plants, species of fauna that are being regenerated and walking tracks for locals to enjoy. To have an overhanging road with cars and trucks emitting fumes immediately adjacent to this ecologically sensitive environment will be disastrous.

All the plants used are native to our Cooks River Valley, an area with very little native vegetation left. Some of those plants were grown from seed collected in the few tiny pockets of actual remnant bushland (the original vegetation growing on un-cleared land) left in our area, and then grown on by local volunteers, so these plants are the offspring of our original local flood plain and sandstone forests and heaths.

This valuable habitat has become home to many species of fauna including frogs and small birds which are increasingly rare in our suburbs. The grey-headed flying fox (a threatened species) can be found in Tempe Lands. The Lands also provide an opportunity for our children to learn about ecology, biodiversity and other sciences.

Pollution from motorways has a devastating effect on both plant and aquatic life and will destroy this high quality habitat, leaving only the species that can best cope with such environmental pressure. Such plant species loss will, in turn, have a significant impact on the fauna living there now, since they will no longer enjoy the full range of habitat required for survival.

### **Cooks River as a Wildlife Corridor Biodiversity Strategy - Marrickville Council**

In November 2009 the Marrickville Council endorsed the "Cooks River as a Wildlife Corridor Biodiversity Strategy" for the Marrickville area which brings into context the broader need to develop and conserve wildlife corridors for vegetation and fauna in urban areas.

The quality of life for present and future generations is dependent on both the conservation of biological diversity and the sustainable use of natural resources. Biodiversity is important for both its intrinsic value and the ecosystem services it provides to communities.

Local government is increasingly being asked by the community and required by law to take a greater role in the management, protection and enhancement of the natural environment. Recent changes to Local Government legislation mean that sustainability considerations are now a core function of all Council operations. One of the key aspirations in Marrickville Council's Community Plan 2025 is to be "a centrepiece of inner-city ecologically sustainable development (ESD)" and 'Conservation of Biodiversity' is one of four components of ESD.

## Tempe 2020 Submission

A defined plan to enhance wildlife corridors in Sydney came with the GreenWeb – Sydney project, undertaken by the Sydney Regional Organisations of Councils in 1997 to begin to address vegetation management across the metropolitan area. Central to the plan is the establishment of habitat corridors which link fragmented patches of bushland to facilitate the migration of wildlife and natural dispersal of native plants. A number of existing corridors have been identified as important in this process, two of them being the Cooks River foreshore and the GreenWay: Iron Cove to Cooks River.

Marrickville Council is one of the key supporters of the Cooks River Foreshores Working Group (CRFWG), which aims to collectively improve the health and amenity of the Cooks River and its foreshores. Guided by the Cooks River Foreshores Strategic Plan 1997, a main objective is to involve stakeholders in creating wildlife corridor opportunities.

**The Southern Sydney Connection and any development of the M5/F6 Corridor from Marsh St and Eve St Wetlands to St Peters through Tempe Reserve, Tempe Wetlands and Sydney Park Wetlands is at odds with strongly felt community resolve and Council objectives to preserve and create urban wildlife corridors and protect biodiversity along the Cooks River and large areas of adjoining lands.**

### **Pollution – Visual / Noise / Atmospheric**

Situated as we are between a large airport terminal and a major national highway, the last thing the area of East Tempe needs is the addition of up to 80,000 vehicles per day within close proximity to our residential and leisure areas. When combined with the existing pollution load coming from both Sydney Airport and the Princes Highway, this new pollution load could well push overall air pollution to dangerous levels for residents.

This area is home to many young families. A large majority of the neighbourhood children walk to local schools and childcare centres, and already brave the noise and air pollution of the hundreds of trucks, cars and buses that flow along the Princes Highway. In fact, so great is the existing noise levels, it is not even possible to carry on a normal conversation whilst walking along the Princes Highway at Tempe. These nearby educational institutions, despite being on the other side of the highway to the proposed road, will still experience this extra level of pollution.

## **2. Efficacy of Proposed Road**

### **Connection to Airport Drive from the Southern Sydney Connection**

In the RTA's Feasibility Study, the Southern Sydney Connection is proposed to connect to Airport Drive to service traffic to and from the M5 East only (not from Campbell Road). Currently this traffic from the M5 East at Marsh St can either access the Airport via Qantas/Airport Drive or General Holmes Drive.

In the Study's examination of the Southern Sydney Connection, the same traffic can still access the Airport via Qantas/Airport Drive or General Holmes Drive, or join the Southern Sydney Connection and then connect to Airport Drive and onwards to the Domestic Terminal (not the International Terminal) – but for what purpose?

Tempe 2020 questions what real advantages the proposed route will offer when it will be longer and involve a confusing and complex mix of junctions and mergers. The result will not be to remove the bottleneck in this area, but simply to move it further along Airport Drive from the Marsh Street end, and perhaps even make it worse! While this proposed connection may make it faster to get to the Domestic Terminal during the PM peak, it will be no different and may even be worse during the AM peak; indeed, it would take a very savvy regular local driver to know the difference. It doesn't seem to provide any access to the International Terminal, and is relying on diverting traffic travelling to the Domestic Terminal to reduce congestion.

Given the cost of this road, the advantages are at best dubious and will do nothing but move the bottleneck along a few hundred metres, if that. The whole Southern Sydney Connection and connection to Airport Drive is nothing but a \$1 billion gamble that commuters would prefer to use it rather than the current roads.

### **End of the road – St Peters & Surrounding Suburbs**

The ending of the Southern Sydney Connection road at Campbell Road, St Peters, is one of the most ill-conceived elements of the proposal. The RTA's literature has stated that the road will "service the areas north of the airport". Sending up to 8000 cars per hour into an already crowded industrial area and surrounding residential suburbs via a road which is little bigger than a suburban laneway can not be considered to be servicing an area effectively. Why would a resident of a western suburb such as Liverpool want to travel to the CBD via an area which would experience major bottlenecks and traffic chaos?

## Tempe 2020 Submission

The residents not only of St Peters, but many surrounding suburbs, including Tempe, Marrickville, Alexandria, Mascot, Green Square, Redfern, Newtown, Enmore and Sydenham will all suffer greatly from increased traffic arriving at the end of the Southern Sydney Connection Road, as the flow-on effects will be felt for many kilometres around. For example, the close proximity of Campbell Road to the Princes Highway and King Street, Newtown will create a traffic nightmare for an already-choked major road.

Residents of Campbell Road itself will experience an unbearable deluge of new traffic into their already crowded neighbourhood. Users of Sydney Park will be affected in a similar fashion to the users of Tempe Reserve in terms of noise and atmospheric pollution. A number of local schools and childcare centres will also be impacted by the increased traffic and associated pollution that will flood surrounding streets, including St Peters Public School (directly off Campbell Road itself), St Pius School at Enmore, Camdenville Public School, Tempe Public School, Tempe High School, Tillman Park Child Care Centre and Betty Spears Child Care Centre.

The RTA has also stated that the suburbs of Waterloo and Redfern will see "substantial growth" with accommodation for 4000 new residents and 18,000 new jobs planned. This will inevitably bring additional vehicles into the area, on top of the influx that the Southern Sydney Connection Road will bring. Despite having train services and some buses in this area, these suburbs already suffer from high traffic volumes, particularly at peak times. This veritable logjam also affects traffic flowing into the CBD and to areas such as the Fox Studios/Sydney Cricket Ground/Sydney Football Stadium/Centennial Park precinct. The impact of additional traffic from the Southern Sydney Connection Road will have a profound effect for many kilometres beyond its end point.

It is absolutely astounding that the RTA has not provided traffic modelling or management plans for the St Peters end of the Southern Sydney Connection Road within the Feasibility Study. To omit this aspect is to indicate a complete lack of foresight of myriad potential problems that the location of this road end point will create.

### **Port Botany Access**

To deal with Sydney's long-term trade growth, the Ports Authority is building new facilities designed to last 100 years, with a projected three million container movements annually within 13 years.

The RTA is missing the opportunity to provide direct access from the Port to the M5, but is instead proposing to build the Southern Sydney Connection from Marsh St to St Peters, claiming this will ease congestion on General Holmes Drive, which runs under the East West Airport runway to the M5. This defies all common sense and is not even supported by the RTA's own \$15 million M5 Transport Corridor Study.

## Tempe 2020 Submission

The M5 Transport Corridor Feasibility Study claims that as a result of the Southern Sydney Connection project, there will be a five to ten percent reduction in traffic on key roads surrounding Port Botany and Sydney Airport. Preliminary traffic assessment puts the northbound peak volume on General Holmes Drive at 8,191 vehicles. The Southern Sydney Connection will reduce traffic on General Holmes Drive by 520 northbound vehicles an hour during the AM peak period (a mere 5.5%), with less of a reduction southbound and at other times, at a cost of \$1 billion. Tempe 2020 believes this represents an extremely expensive, short term solution for what will be an ongoing and increasing problem long into the future. The small reduction on General Holmes Drive will be quickly absorbed by new traffic generation from the M5 Expansion.

**The Southern Sydney Connection does little to improve access to Port Botany. Any road from Marsh St should connect directly to Port Botany and the CBD, improving access for the long term trade growth needs of freight and commuter traffic generated by the widening and duplication of the M5.**

### **The M4 East**

Many recent reports and submissions to the NSW Transport Blueprint mention the "missing link" between the oft-proposed M4 East Extension and the M5. Even though the Johnston's Creek corridor has now been abandoned, the location of Campbell Road as an effective end point for the M5 raises many questions for anyone looking at a map of motorways around Sydney.

We know the RTA has stated repeatedly that the M4 East is not an option at this point, due to lack of funding. However, since the NSW Government has repeatedly failed to comprehensively plan for the city's road and transport needs over many years, we are understandably cynical when obvious intentions such as this link are mentioned by organisations such as Sydney Airport Corporation, Infrastructure Australia and consultants Evans and Peck, yet not mentioned by the Government or the RTA. The RTA itself has mentioned the need to be "transparent" in its dealings with the community, and we would ask that it live up to this intention.

### **IKEA Development and Traffic Generation**

The new IKEA Asia-Pacific Headquarters development proposes great congestion challenges for our local community, as it will be a great traffic generator. The travel mode data for IKEA visitors is focused towards motor vehicle travel (92% by car) due to bulky goods purchases.

IKEA expects 700 cars per hour through its gates during the afternoon peak, and each weekday, 81 truck movements per hour to the airport freight facilities. That adds up to some 700 plus truck per day - more than one per minute.

