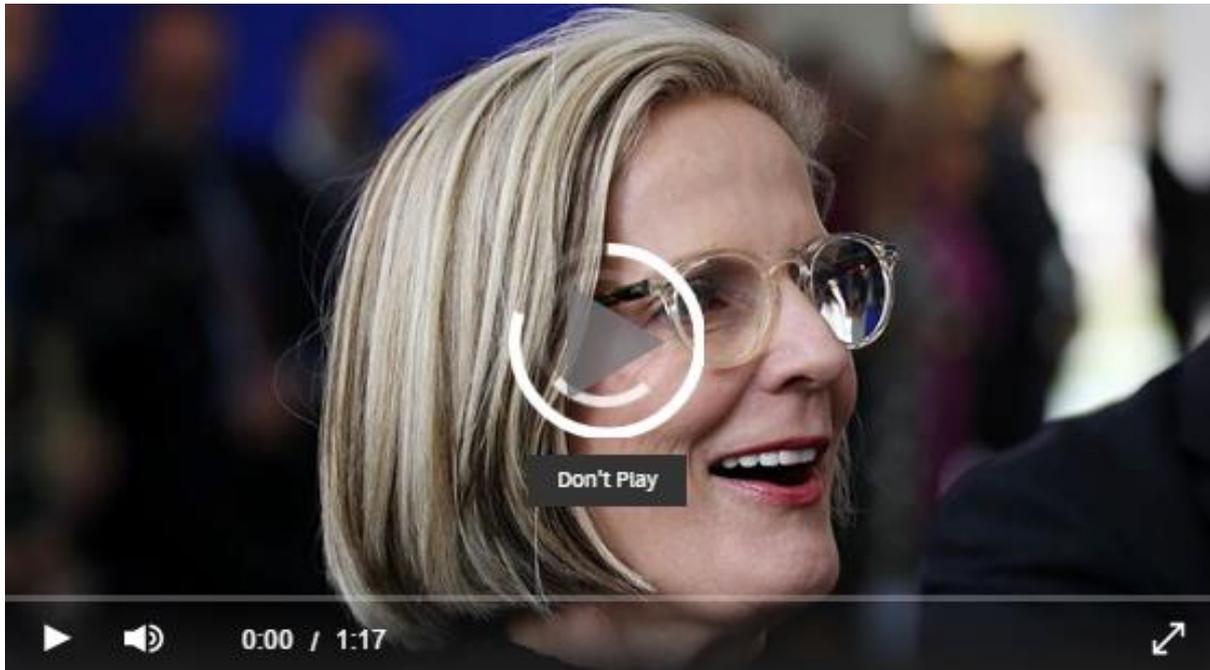


Lucy Turnbull 'not aware' of destruction of heritage Haberfield homes for WestConnex

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Jacob Saulwick



Lucy Turnbull unaware of heritage destruction

Greater Sydney Commission chair Lucy Turnbull tells ABC 702 radio she is 'not aware' of the demolition of heritage Haberfield homes for the WestConnex motorway.

The chief commissioner of the Greater Sydney Commission, responsible for drawing up plans to shape the city, was unaware of the large-scale destruction of houses for the WestConnex motorway in the heritage suburb of Haberfield.

Lucy Turnbull, whose job involves co-ordinating district plans for the city's neighbourhoods, has come under fire after telling ABC Radio she did not know homes were acquired for the motorway through Haberfield.

More than 50 properties have been acquired for the motorway in the suburb, which is designated a heritage conservation area, and construction is well underway.

Asked in an interview on Tuesday if she was concerned about the destruction of heritage in Haberfield, Ms Turnbull replied: "Around Haberfield?"

"I'm not aware that there are houses going to be demolished at Haberfield," Ms Turnbull told Wendy Harmer. "I'm not aware of the loss of heritage at Haberfield, I have to tell you."

Pressed, Ms Turnbull said: "I will have to investigate that but I will, in the meantime ... it is being built. When you drive out west to Parramatta and Penrith ... you can hear the ... machines drilling away. It is happening."

The comments drew a strong reaction from the NSW Opposition, which has not otherwise directed significant criticism to Ms Turnbull, the chair of the Greater Sydney Commission since late January.

"It beggars belief that the chair of the Greater Sydney Commission has no idea about what is happening in Haberfield," said Summer Hill MP Jo Haylen.



The last Federation heritage house to be pulled down on Wattle Street, Haberfield to make way for WestConnex on August 10, 2016. Photo: Jessica Hromas

"The National Trust described the destruction of homes in Haberfield as the worst hit to heritage in Australian history, but the chair of the Greater Sydney Commission had no clue about what is happening."

Speaking to Fairfax Media later in the day, Ms Turnbull said her organisation had not existed when the first two sections of WestConnex - including the one affecting Haberfield - were designed and planned.

"In terms of where the M4 section of WestConnex goes, that was long ago decided," she said. "I'm not an expert on everything that's happened in Sydney before the Greater Sydney Commission was developed."

Ms Turnbull said she knew there was "unhappiness" in parts of the inner city about the project, but "the particular houses in Haberfield I was unaware of".

Her organisation, she said, had since become involved in planning for the third section of WestConnex, a tunnel from St Peters to Ashfield via Rozelle.



Lucy Turnbull, speaking in her capacity as Chair of the Greater Sydney Commission in June. Photo: Jessica Hromas

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The destruction of properties in Haberfield has been controversial partly due to the history of the suburb. Developed in the first two decades of the 20th century, Haberfield was built along the lines of the "Garden Estate" movement.

The suburb, all of which sits under a Heritage Conservation policy, includes 700 homes designed by the one architect, John Spencer-Stansfield.

According to the WestConnex Environmental Impact Statement, 53 properties within the Haberfield Conservation Area will be demolished for the project.

Greens planning spokesman David Shoebridge said Ms Turnbull's comments confirmed "how out of touch and undemocratic the Greater Sydney Commission is".

"It is deeply troubling that the entire future of Sydney's planning is in the hands of an appointed elite who have no idea what is going on in communities," Mr Shoebridge said.

Ms Turnbull's organisation is charged with drawing up draft "district plans" for the city by November. These plans, once finalised, will form the basis for local government planning decisions.

Ms Turnbull, the wife of Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull, is a former lord mayor of Sydney. She published a book - *Sydney: Biography of a City* - in 1999.



Protesters at the intersection of Dobroyd Parade and Waratah Street, Haberfield on July 30, 2016. Photo: Christopher Pearce

A local resident and community activist, Sharon Laura, said she was "gobsmacked, horrified and appalled" Ms Turnbull was unaware of the destruction of properties in Haberfield.

"I am really saddened at the ignorance and really shocked by it," said Ms Laura, who added that her property on Bland Street sat in the middle of three construction zones.



[Anthony Albanese](#)

On [@702sydney](#) it is beyond belief that Lucy Turnbull in charge of Sydney planning is "unaware" of any Haberfield homes being demolished
[9:06 AM - 16 Aug 2016](#)

<http://www.smh.com.au/nsw/lucy-turnbull-not-aware-of-destruction-of-heritage-haberfield-homes-for-westconnex-20160816-gqtnrg.html>