

Warringah Road Family Medical Centre

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20th, August 2015

RMS EIS Stage2 Feedback Submission

By email: nbhroadwork@rms.nsw.gov.au

Re: Objection to compulsory acquisition of 449 Warringah Road, Frenchs Forest for widening of Warringah Road.

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

We, Dr Lavanya Konduru & Mr Madhu Konduru owners of 449 Warringah Road & 40 - 42 Gantry Bay Road object to carry the stage -2 of the development. We object because it is expensive, aesthetic and very poor solution to control the traffic congestion.

The Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) has issued an acquisition notice for several properties owned by me and my husband, Madhu Konduru. We lease our other properties to businesses that will now close however in addition to owning the premises for the Medical Centre at 449 Warringah Road, we also operate it.

We recently had an access to the *Northern Beaches Hospital Road Connectivity and Network Enhancements – Environmental Impact Statement Roads and Maritime Services*. We object to the proposal for Road widening as we believe it's expensive and un-necessary.

Apart from the document containing, in part, factual inaccuracies and misinformation that for such a major infrastructure project is disgraceful, the Report at best is both biased and amateurish in its presentation. It has also never been made available to us, the owners of several of the Bantry Bay properties and operators of the Medical Centre. It is such a shame that RMS couldn't consider the number of pages in the report and on the other hand it is impractical to read.

Section 10.2.4 Special Uses makes a passing mention of the Warringah Road Medical Centre located at 449 Warringah Road with 3 General Practitioners serving the local community. It fails to note that it has operated for almost 25 years and has 11 support staff for the Doctors and a database of approximately 20,000 patients. Nor does it acknowledge that it serves between 550 and 600 patients in a typical week.

It also fails to mention that we are not just an insignificant Medical Centre with 3 Doctors. We are aligned with providers of allied health, psychology, hearing, sleep study and pharmaceutical services. Not to mention that Medlab operate a blood collection centre from our rooms. The services that we provide and are aligned to have been underestimated or not understood in the desktop study assessment.

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For a patient's Doctor of choice that has often looked after them for many years, it is a very personal and worrying time. Our patients are very distressed about the future of the Medical Centre and are anxious that we may not be in a position to service them in the future.

Section 10.3.1 Business and Economic Impacts notes that at a local level that retailers and food and beverage premises near the project area would attract an increase in trade. It fails to acknowledge that from a practicality premise, there are no premises that are within walking distance from the project site other than the existing Bantry Bay shops that are being compulsorily acquired and prematurely closed and demolished to accommodate the widening of Warringah Road.

This section goes on to note that a desktop assessment would leave you to believe that “*the existing businesses may generate in the order for 40 to 55 full time jobs both directly onsite and offsite*” however, it fails to demonstrate any understanding that the existing businesses are being closed within 90 days of the acquisition date of or about 21 August 2015. In fact the closure of the businesses does not generate jobs, it in fact, decreases them. Any jobs generated are simply replacing the lost jobs and is unlikely to be of any comfort or benefit to the businesses that have been forced to close.

For the desktop assessment to be genuine and in any way reasonable it would need to recommend priority to the existing Bantry Bay businesses for any opportunities to service the hospital construction site.

The Report goes on to note specifically that there are opportunities for relocation within the Forestway Shopping Centre, Skyline Shopping Centre and the Northern Beaches Hospital Complex. The nature of relocation is that it happens immediately after the closure of the business. To that end there is no opportunity for relocation at all. The only opportunity is for the business being forced to close to be replaced by another operator at some time in the future.

It is noteworthy that:

1. We have recently been told that the Forestway Shopping Centre has been sold and will not contain a mixed use retail component in the proposed apartment complex on that site.
2. The Skyline shopping Centre, which is actually a small shopping strip, has no vacant premises for the businesses to relocate to.
3. The Northern Beaches Hospital complex has only recently begun “early works construction”. The availability of premises for the Bantry Bay businesses to relocate to are years away. (Circa 2018)

What the desktop assessment fails to mention is any opportunity for the relocation of the Medical Centre. A check of our database will confirm that our Medical Centre services patients from Belrose, Forestville, Frenchs Forest, Killarney Heights, Terry Hills, St Ives, Allambie, Narrabeena, Beacon Hill, Dee Why, Collaroy, Narrabeen, Mona Vale, Warriewood, Chatswood, Roseville, Castlecrag, Northbridge, Manly, Queenscliff and Manly Vale. It is noteworthy that we have patients who choose to travel past other Medical Centres for care in our Centre.

Despite the fact that we have patients that are able to travel, we also have many elderly local patients who rely on public transport, taxis and friends for transport, the nearest Medical Centres offering equivalent services to ours are in Dee Why, Chatswood, St Ives, Mona Vale and Brookvale. None of these Centres are a convenient commute for many of our elderly patients.

Section 10.3.2 Property Impacts notes “*The acquisition of residential business or community properties for infrastructure work can have significant impact to property owners and/or tenants as well as clients*”

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or user groups. The proposal of all or part of one's property being acquired can be a daunting matter and requires careful management to minimise and associated stress...” It goes on to further reinforce the tone of this comment or observation and even suggests to “*share information and work cooperatively*”.

To date there has been **no consultation whatsoever** with regards to the acquisition of our properties. We have simply been told at a meeting in July 2014 that our properties were at risk of being compulsorily acquired.

We were later told what the predetermined decisions were to be with no opportunity to negotiate at all. When we have tried to discuss the acquisition and seek more information we have continuously and consistently been told that no definitive decisions had been made until we received a letter confirming what we had always suspected, complete with firm and unreasonable dates for our closure. The reason given for the compulsory acquisition of our properties is for the widening of Warringah Road. That said the details in the public domain for the proposed road widening are scant and unconvincing at best.

Despite Government at all levels assuring us that they understand local businesses, their needs and the difficulties they face, we are yet to see any evidence or understanding of small business at all.

That said, the desktop assessment should be redone to reflect the current situation and if possible in consultation with the owners of the properties that the Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) intend to compulsorily acquire.

The RMS believe that they have given adequate time to relocate however, they have grossly underestimated, don't understand, or don't care, that there is a very limited opportunity to find alternate premises in our local area that is convenient for the existing patients. We have been able to secure alternate premises however need more time to fit-out and relocate.

The RMS have also yet to definitively demonstrate that they have a robust signed off plan for the widening of Warringah Road. If there is a firm plan then they are not being honest with us in what the plans are. To date all they have volunteered is that we must close down and move on. That said, to compulsorily acquire a property for the widening of a road that may not eventuate and later sell that property to the highest bidder equates to profiteering. If that is what eventuates we will instruct our Solicitors to claim for compensation.

We look forward for your response.

Yours sincerely

Dr & Mr Konduru