

Diane Sarkies - Cheltenham intermediate facility for NWRL

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Subject: Cheltenham intermediate facility for NWRL

ATTENTION DIRECTOR, INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

These comments are concerned with the building of a temporary road for construction vehicles between the facility near Cheltenham oval and Kirkham Street, Beecroft.

The original two options in EIS 1 were for using the M2 itself for the access of heavy vehicles during construction of the facility or for the building of a permanent road through the bushland as near to the M2 as possible.

In the second EIS the proposal has been changed with the preferred option seeming to be the building of a temporary road which will be revegetated when work is complete.

This really needs careful consideration to achieve a good outcome as the best route for a temporary road may not be the same as for a permanent one. I was given to understand that the route of the current footpath was to be considered for this temporary road as the grade is fairly level and has less rock formations and large trees than the area close to the M2 which is very steep. The best way to reinstate an area of disturbed bushland is to preserve the top soil when work is commenced and use its seedbank to revegetate the area when rehabilitation is required. In my opinion a much better outcome could be achieved using this method on the route of the current footpath.

Another vital factor is the proposed width of the temporary road. There is currently a single lane working system in place where the new Murray Farm Road bridge is being built over the M2. It seems to work well with considerable car movements in the course of an hour particularly in the morning and evening. I am at a loss to understand why a two lane temporary road is needed for the truck movements projected. Obviously the disturbance of a two lane road is going to be much more than a single lane road with traffic lights.

If the NWRL project is serious about trying to preserve the environment I hope a more sympathetic solution can be agreed to. The prospect is for an evenly graded steep embankment next to the M2 which will never look like the original terrain or support the diversity of the bushland that is there now.

Why the use of the M2 itself seems to have been discarded as an option is a tragedy for our local bushland which many in the area value so highly. We are faced with losing more bushland which was in good condition to be replaced with a highly compromised area and all for a temporary access road. It is a slap in the face to all the volunteers in the area who have worked so hard over the last twenty years to improve the condition of much of the degraded bushland in the area.

I do hope this matter will be reconsidered to find a solution with less impact than what is currently proposed.

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