

7 September 2014

Director - Infrastructure Projects
Department of Planning and Environment
Number: SSI 13_6136
Major Projects Assessment
GPO Box 39
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Via online form:

http://majorprojects.planning.nsw.gov.au/index.pl?action=view_job&job_id=6136

NorthConnex Application Number: SSI 13_6136

Dear Director

Please find below our submission in response to the exhibition of the EIS for NorthConnex.

We would like to state we object to the placement & design of the Northern Ventilations stack as described in the EIS. We have a high level of concern and request that this be reviewed by NorthConnex and the Department of Planning.

This has taken a lot of energy and anxiety to research the impact of this proposed development. I live less than 400 metres from the proposed stake, regularly walking to the station, running to keep fit and dog walking. I see lots of people doing similar things and naturally have been shocked by the potential pollutants from this stack, and the concentrations of small damaging particles that can cause long & short-term health issues. Having an Asthmatic son, I can note the triggers for his illness and the air quality is always a key one.

In further reading the placement of the northern ventilation stack is in a residential area populated by 22 schools within a 2kms radius. Approximately 9,300 school children will be exposed, as well as multiple aged care facilities, hospitals, businesses and homes.

It's an area that has been listed by Hornsby Government as heritage.

The placement of the northern ventilation stack in a low aspect of Wahroonga where there are often low wind speeds, which will result in poor dispersion and potentially greater exposure to community of high levels of tunnel emission.

I am highly concerned about the multiple large scale research studies that suggest the impacts of air pollutants on health are serious. These include increased death from heart disease, increased risks of lung cancer, stroke, poor lung growth in children, increased asthma, and recent research suggesting low birth weight for pregnant women, increased autism, and congenital heart defects. These studies confirm air pollutants have prothrombotic and inflammatory effects on humans which cause the above health problems.

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I am also concerned that NorthConnex's claim that there will no portal emissions from current proposal cannot be verified.

I am concerned about the large amount of diesel emissions which will be emitted from the NorthConnex tunnel, as it is being designed for heavy freight to bypass Pennant Hills Rd. Diesel emissions have been classified as carcinogenic by the World Health Organisation.

I am concerned about the air quality within the tunnel which is shown in the EIS to have exceedences above standards for pollutants such as NO₂, and haze from particulate matter at the ends of the tunnel.

Reading further, I am concerned about the multiple flaws in the air quality modelling of the northern stack in the EIS. These include:

- a) extrapolation of meteorological data from other weather stations which do not reflect the local meteorology, local topography, and the valley location.
- b) The use of a coarse topographical model
- c) The failure to consider polluted intake air from the Pennant Hills/M2 interchange as part of the project contribution to air quality at Wahroonga
- d) the background air quality being based on air quality at Lindfield and Prospect and the lack of any actual data on PM_{2.5}

It's fairly clear to most people that something strategic needs to be done to address the congestion and in particular the heavy transportation of freight. The tunnel is an expensive option, but given the terrain and heavy residential area, probably the only feasible one...

The key issue we have is we are not looking at alternative sites. Just placing the stack 1km north of here, would remove most of the serious impact issues above.

Like many others to help address our concerns I request that the following actions are undertaken:

1. The air quality and human health impact assessment need to be revised to address the issues raised above.
2. An independent options assessment process should be undertaken to assess alternative locations for the ventilation stack and portals.
3. To undertake a Life Cycle Analysis and assessment for the provision of filtration
4. A long term health study on children and residents in areas impacted by stack discharges be included as part of the conditions of approval.
5. A comprehensive air quality monitoring program is developed and implemented.
6. An independent review of the ventilation system is undertaken to ensure that NorthConnex's claim of no portal emissions is justified.
7. Portal emissions from NorthConnex in the future are banned.

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8. The Submissions Report/Preferred Project be exhibited to allow the community to respond to the revised information contained in the report.
9. The Department does not approve the project in its current form as it clearly does not meet the principles of Ecologically Sustainable Development as required by the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act.

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