

8 September 2014

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

**NorthConnex Application Number: SSI 13\_6136**

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

Firstly I/we would like to state we **object** to the project as described in the EIS. We have lived for over 40 years at the corner of Bareena Avenue, very close to the planned outlet stack in Wahroonga. We have **eight young grandchildren who spend extended time in our garden** and we have great concern for the potential **adverse health effects** of this project as proposed.

We have a high level of concern regarding the following issues and request that these be considered by NorthConnex and the Department of Planning. In regards to the NorthConnex tunnel, we are concerned about:

1. **Placement of the northern ventilation stack** in the centre of a **densely populated residential area** in Wahroonga, where 9,300 school children will be exposed, as well as multiple aged care facilities, hospitals, businesses and homes.
2. The **placement of the northern ventilation stack in a valley** in Wahroonga where there are often low wind speeds, which will result in poor dispersion and exposure to community to high levels of tunnel emission.
3. We are 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.
4. We are concerned about the project including future provisions for portal emissions in densely populated areas, which will **result in emissions remaining at ground level**, and hence exposing the local population to pollutants. I am also concerned that NorthConnex's claim that there will no portal emissions from current proposal cannot be verified.
5. We are 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, and also contain a larger number of fine particles which penetrate deep into lung tissue and remain there causing inflammation.

## NorthConnex EIS Submission

6. We are concerned about the **air quality within the tunnel** which is shown in the EIS to have exceedences above standards for pollutants such as NO<sub>2</sub>, and haze from particulate matter at the ends of the tunnel.
7. We are 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<sub>2.5</sub>
8. We are concerned that a full and transparent **options assessment process was not undertaken to assess alternative designs for the project**. Unlike other tunnel projects in Sydney there are alternatives for locating the stack and portals in non-residential areas.
9. We are concerned that the **justification for not providing filtration for the stacks is cursory and unconvincing**.

To address our concerns we 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.
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.

