

## Comments on NorthConnex Project EIS

### Topic – EIS compilation and size

Comment - The document prepared is unnecessarily large requiring the saving and opening of up to 31 separate parts for a section (Appendix I). This is purely due to the use of native GIS graphics rather than saving them as JPG's. Some files are only 2 pages. None of the pdf documents are bookmarked.

It may reasonably be concluded that this is a deliberate attempt by the proponents to make the document as inaccessible as possible for review and comment.

The document should have been rejected and not displayed unless it can be provided in a maximum of 5 parts of less than 20MB each with bookmarking to level 3 headings.

### Topic – Traffic on alternative back route to Pennant Hills Rd

Comment – How will traffic increases out of peak hour on the alternative route from Pacific Hwy to Pennant Hills be mitigated?

There is a single “Rat-Run” to avoid Pennant Hills Rd (PHR) traffic via College Cres/Milson Pde/Sefton Rd/The Esplanade. This is heavily used between 7am -8.30am and 4pm to 6pm when Pennant Hills Rd is particularly busy. Outside these times, Pennant Hills Rd flows fairly freely and quickly at 70kph speed limit.

The changes at the Northern Interchange, and re-sequencing of lights and possible lowering of the PHR speed limit after tunnel installation may mean that the “rat-run” becomes a significantly faster option from Pennant Hills to Hornsby at virtually all times, causing a significant increase in traffic through these back streets.

### Topic – Service station facilities

Comment – The tunnel creates a continuous motorway link from beyond Campbelltown to near Newcastle. There are no service station facilities directly off the Motorway between Pheasants Nest and Ourimbah – a distance of nearly 200km. This will lead to a large number of vehicles using Pennant Hill Rd purely for the purpose of refuelling. Consideration should be given to the overall Motorway service needs to maximise the benefits of the tunnel, with some intermediate service facilities at say Berowra or Liverpool.

### Topic – Southern Interchange Arrangement and provision for future extension

Comment – The Southern interchange is a major impediment to traffic flows from the M2 westbound and from Pennant Hill Rd leading to unnecessary high gradient exit and exit to traffic

lights at Pennant Hills Rd with the consequent fumes and particulates from start-stop traffic. There should be slip lanes onto and off the M2 on the eastern side as well as the western side to avoid this.

The tunnel should extend past the M2 on the southern side with provision for extension to Silverwater Rd at Dundas Valley – An additional 4.1km that provides a link to the major arterial link road to the M4 and southern Suburbs. The slip lanes from pennant Hills Rd should be on the Southern side of the M2 to avoid the major traffic lights and eliminate the noise and fumes of the stop-start intersection.

Refer to the plan at the end of this document.

### **Topic – Spoil Disposal**

Comment – The document has a trivial treatment of the major construction impact – namely spoil disposal. The project will generate over 2 million tonnes of crushed sandstone, requiring 60,000 truck movements. The document doesn't appear to quantify or address the impacts, routes, placement locations at all.

There is an option available that can eliminate this impact almost entirely that has been discussed by Northconnex consultants at previous community meetings. This is to place the spoil at the disused Hornsby Quarry by conveyor belt and 4m diameter spoil tunnel. This can be achieved with a 3km tunnel from a tunnel site at Pioneer Avenue which should be the primary tunnelling site due to the existing land-use and proximity to existing concrete plants.

### **Topic – Tunnel Speed Management**

Comment – The current system of speed management in the Lane Cove Tunnel of an unidentified speed camera location should not be used. The Psychology of drivers and consideration of gradient changes should be considered to smooth the speed changes and consequent exhaust quality and quantity.

Specifically:

- Any fixed speed camera location should be identified, and should not coincide with an increase in gradient due to the fact that many motorists slow down to well below the speed limit at cameras causing unnecessary braking and acceleration.
- This can be supplemented with a travel time system overtly operating at 5km above the general speed limit to limit the overall speed while allowing people to drive smoothly without feeling the need to strictly cap their speed.

### **Topic – Northern Interchange**

Comment: The Northern Interchange as proposed is very disruptive to the traffic around Pearce's Corner causing substantial unnecessary stop-start traffic, noise and fumes, potential for grid-lock,

and an increase in traffic on Milson Parade and via the Eastbourne Ave/Hinemoa Ave Rat-runs. The access and egress should be via slip lanes off Pennant Hill Rd north of Jasmine Rd. A slip lane onto the existing F3 underpass from the Pacific Highway should be installed with a right turn of the Pacific Hwy Southbound to provide a U-turn access to the tunnel from Pennant Hills Rd Northbound.

With the reduced traffic volumes, left turn from the F3 onto Pennant Hills Rd can be made continuous, except for pedestrian lights, with southbound traffic on PHR merging.

### **Topic – Ventilation and Speed and Exhaust emissions**

Comments: Can the RTA/operators investigate the potential for fan boosting to reduce wind resistance and reduce emissions based on optimum engine load. Providing an air-flow of 40-50 kph from electric fans may reduce fuel consumption and emissions substantially – wind resistance being proportional to the square of the velocity. The optimum engine load for emissions may not be at very low load, and the fan boosting may only be preferred for the uphill section. The additional power cost would be offset the reduced fuel consumption and would justify the additional toll required.

The operators should also consider bag filters for particulates which can be dispersed at fan boosters along the tunnel. Filtration does not all have to be done at the outlet, but used to improve air quality and visibility all along the tunnel.

Design provision should be made for future diesel particulate filter chambers along the tunnel and/or near the permanent vents for future improvements. Other fumes will probably diminish over coming years with the take-up of electric and Hybrid cars, but heavy vehicles will continue to be largely diesel.

