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

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

Please find below my submission in response to the exhibition of the EIS for NorthConnex. I have been a resident of Thornleigh for approximately 23 years.

I wish to state firsthand that I object to the project as described in the EIS.

I hold a number of serious concerns about the following issues and request that these be considered by NorthConnex and the Department of Planning.

Firstly, the chosen route of the North Connexion is a short term solution which fails to deliver long term traffic objectives. It appears to primarily support the profit motive of one company, Transurban whilst placing unacceptable environmental, economic, social amenity and increased health risks on residents located across three suburbs: Wahroonga, Thornleigh, Pennant Hills.

The North Connex preferred route fails to achieve its touted 'benefit' to reduce traffic particularly heavy traffic along the Pennant Hills Road. The EIS states the project will not, in the long term reduce the traffic volumes on Pennant Hills Road. Given the high public monetary costs and the high social, environmental and health risk impacts on local residents proceeding with this project seems futile and illogical. If the objective is to achieve long term improved traffic flow superior logic would suggest it is time now to progress the proposed alternative route over the Hawkesbury and to create a road to link further South. This would provide a wider orbital solution which would negate impacts on densely populated residential areas of Wahroonga, Thornleigh, Pennant Hills and would, additionally, provide beneficial solution for Central coast commuters when there are closures of the F3 due to accidents and fires.

Secondly, the route chosen for tunnelling at Thornleigh creates serious impacts on residents

The project decision to prefer a cross country (direct) route rather than following the current Pennant Hills Road involves tunnelling under a river valley and densely populated residential streets of Thornleigh ie 'sensitive' land use. The decision exacerbates impacts on residents relating to tunnelling noise, vibration, possible land subsidence, effects on property prices and possible disruption of water flow/water quality and underpinning ecological systems.

Thirdly, the decision to site the Trelawney Avenue Tunnel support facility in a residential area ie sensitive' land use rather than on commercial /industrial zoned (non residential) - 'Enterprise' zone side of Pennant hills Road.

The decision to site the support facility primarily residential side of Pennant Hills Road will turn a quiet, peaceful, pretty green residential area lined with heritage trees into a construction site for 4

years. In addition to the noise, vibration, land subsidence and possible water flow/ water quality issues from the tunnelling, local residents are further impacted from this decision by the added air pollution and associated health risks created by particulates from fuel emissions generated from the approximate 1,300 daily quoted heavy truck movements and the dust and particulates (silicates) from tunnelling waste into and out of the site.

Fourth a decision to change the original traffic flow from the Trelawney street tunnel support facility from being direct exit and entry from the support facility site via Pennant Hills road.

The change to heavy vehicles exiting right and entering left into the Support facility via Loch Maree traffic lights will create immediate traffic impacts on local residents. The Loch Maree traffic lights form the major egress and exit for residents in immediately adjacent densely populated streets and the Woodlands estate. Additionally there are 3 bus routes exiting and entering via Loch Maree lights : a school bus; SAN bus to Thornleigh Station; Hornsby-Woodlands estate bus. The timing of the lights at Loch Maree is limited, this is a busy intersection and traffic bottlenecks already occur for local residents in peak hours. Sometimes it is not possible to turn left or right from Loch Maree due to the heavy peak volume of traffic on p/hills road blocking the intersection. Traffic flow to the lights can be further restricted by cars parked on the LHS (outside the Chinese Australian Baptist church) forcing residents turning left onto Pennant Hills Road to queue behind drivers turning right. The imposition of continuous heavy vehicle movements via the Loch Maree lights will seriously impact local residents by impeding local traffic flow, and increase the likelihood of road accidents, road rage and pedestrian accidents.

Fifth, the placement of emergency ventilation stacks without filters adjacent to densely (note: 51 town houses near the top of Loch Maree) populated residential areas in Thornleigh and Pennant Hills (Trelawney Street Tunnel support facility and Wilson Street Tunnel support facility) which will discharge toxic air pollutants including diesel fuel particles proven to be carcinogenic and aggravating respiratory conditions.

Sixth, similarly, placement of the northern ventilation stack in a densely populated residential area in Wahroonga with the intention of discharging unfiltered and toxic air pollutants including diesel fuel particles proven to be carcinogenic and aggravating to respiratory problems, over local residents in adjoining streets.

To address my/our concerns I request that the following actions are undertaken:

1.A transparent and independent body be appointed to assess and report on the economics of the current project especially reviewing costs from the public purse (as State and Commonwealth funding identified in the EIS at \$405 million) against achieving a short term traffic objectives and creating profit (wealth) for Transurban (corporate sector). Public funding costing includes: costing long term environmental, health costs, construction infrastructure Costs, Government oversight/monitoring costs, cost of staffing and production of the EIS, employment of specialised consultants, lost productivity from impacts on traffic flows, legal costs, costs of compulsorily acquiring homes/business premises, costs to mitigate impacts on residents in three LGAs etc. The outcomes of this economic analysis to be published and made freely and publically available electronically for download and print copies placed on public viewing at designated community facilities.

2. As part of the above review of the current proposal, a review on the economic feasibility of providing the alternative Hawkesbury crossing route be included. This is the preferred orbital route

to achieve long term traffic flow management including heavy vehicle reductions along Pennant Hills Road. It would also minimise/negate environmental, health, social and economic impacts on residents located in Wahroonga, Thornleigh and Pennant Hills local government areas which the current North Connex route creates.

3. The current site selection of the Trelawney Support Facility (and Wilson Street Support facility) be reviewed and investigated. The land use option preferred which needs to be clearly stated in this project is preference to use land zoned non-residential i.e. industrial/ commercial. The current siting of the Trelawney Street Tunnel Support facility is 'sensitive land use' and maximises air pollution , noise, health, social, economic and increased health risks on Thornleigh residents. The choice of this siting is rationalised in the EIS as being because the Trelawney Tunnel Support site provides direct access to the tunnel and direct access to Pennant Hills Road. It fails to mention that the current commercial/ industrial zoned area on the opposite side of the Pennant Hills Road - labelled the 'Enterprise zone' - consisting of the Ibis Hotel, Kennards Storage, BP garage also provides direct tunnel access, and direct Pennant Road access. Siting the Trelawney Street Support facility on the commercial 'Enterprise zone' (non residential) area minimises multiple impacts of this project on local Thornleigh residents.

4. The traffic flow plan and schedule of work times of the proposed Trelawney Support facility need reviewing and revision to reduce noise, pollution, health, traffic and safety impacts on local Thornleigh residents. The decision for approximately 1,300 heavy vehicle movements via Loch Maree Avenue traffic lights is not feasible in practice. The original plan to egress and exit onto Pennant Hills Road directly from the support facility needs to be reinstated to reduce impacts on local residents caused by heavy construction vehicles using and impeding local residential road traffic flow at this important traffic intersection. Impacts on residents are further aggravated as the current proposal identifies a continuous convoy of heavy vehicles containing tunnelling waste moving from standard construction hours, to 24x7 at peak tunnelling times over a long term 4 year period.

5. An independent options assessment process should be undertaken to assess alternative locations for all ventilation stacks currently sited in close to residential areas.

6. All exhaust stacks including 'emergency stacks' to be fitted with filters and scrubbers, and a regular monitoring and maintenance program be established to measure air particulate/ air quality near and within a 2km radius of each stack.

7. Safeguards are required to be written into the existing project approval that clearly state the Trelawney Street and Wilson street support facility stacks legal use is for emergency emissions in the event of tunnel fires only, that is there is no legal provision for their use on a regular and continuing basis.

8. A long term health study on residents including children and seniors in 3 LGA areas impacted by stack discharges be included as part of the conditions of approval. The results of this study to be published and made publically and freely available.

9. A comprehensive air quality monitoring program be developed and implemented and the information published and made publically and freely available.

10. An independent review of the ventilation system be undertaken to ensure that NorthConnex's claim of no portal emissions is justified and the information published and made publically and freely available

11. Portal emissions from NorthConnex in the future are banned.

12. The hydrogeological impacts on water flows to the Lane Cove National Park, aquifers, water catchment, local water supply system be monitored over the period of the project and remedial action taken including stopping construction to address effects on water quality, aquifer stability and water pollution from spoil and increased sedimentation. The monitoring data and any reports produced published relating to the hydrogeological impacts of the NorthConnex tunnel to be made publically and freely available.

13. The Submissions Report/Preferred Project to be publically exhibited and community seminars provided over a period of no less than 3 months to allow the community sufficient time to respond to the revised information contained in the report.

14. 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.

Yours faithfully

Ms Caroline Cotton

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