

10 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

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

Firstly I would like to state that I **object** to the project as described in the EIS.

I am a Financial Controller and I live less than 1km from the proposed ventilation stack to be located in Wahroonga. I have lived in Wahroonga on and off for 38 years. I don't want the beautiful leafy clean suburb to be destroyed by a ventilation shaft that will reduce the quality of life for all those in the area, that will cause numerous health problems and that will harm the elderly, the children and newborns. Not only will this shaft, that could be moved to an industrial area harm our health, it will destroy the cleanliness of the suburb. The stack is proposed to be located in a very still valley, not allowing the pollution to clear without harming those in the area. Ten of my nieces and nephews are located in the area, along with my parents who are elderly.

I am extremely concerned about the issues that I have outlined below and respectfully request that the NSW Department of Planning and NorthConnex respond with evidentiary data to my concerns:

1. The ventilation stack that is proposed to be positioned in Wahroonga ('the Wahroonga stack') is in a location where numerous child education facilities are located, where students are situated for between 6 – 10 hours per weekday and in some cases weekends, for example at sporting events. There are approximately 9,500 students in this area. This figure doesn't include the employees of the schools. If there is any risk whatsoever to the health of these children and school employees, the shaft should be moved to a location that poses minimal risk.
2. The Wahroonga stack is also surrounded by several aged care facilities. The elderly are fragile and should not be exposed to avoidable health risks as they enjoy their senior years.
3. The Wahroonga stack is also near Hornsby Hospital and the Sydney Adventist Hospital. The emissions will no doubt harm the sick and it is the government's

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job to protect the sick. I am deeply troubled by the lack of regard to the sick in this EIS.

4. The cost of healthcare will rise substantially due to the problems caused by the positioning of the Wahroonga stack. This concerns me greatly, especially when hospitals are struggling to survive financially.
5. In the meeting held at Hornsby RSL during the last 2 months, which was attended by Barry O'Farrell and staff-members of NorthConnex, Barry O'Farrell can be seen on video (on the NorthConnex website) refuting the claim that the NorthConnex tunnel has been approved. If it hasn't been approved then why would NorthConnex waste taxpayers money buying up real estate in the area where the tunnel is proposed to be located? This requires a strong & detailed investigation by an independent body.
6. The Wahroonga stack is proposed to have no filtration! This concerns me greatly as filtration would surely help reduce the impact on the health of those mentioned in points 1 – 3 above.
7. An alternative location for the Wahroonga stack that is much safer for the health of all concerned has been issued to NorthConnex by a local architect and hasn't received a response. This indicates a distinct lack of community-mindedness by NorthConnex.
8. The analysis in the EIS of the wind speeds has not been completed with regard to the topography of Wahroonga. The stack is proposed to be located in a valley where the pollution will be captured and not dispersed in a safe and efficient manner. This is a crazy solution and shows a lack of concern by NorthConnex. Further, I am shocked that the Wahroonga stack is planned to be 50 metres high which is far lower than many stacks and too low to protect those in the area from emission dispersion.
9. 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.
10. The NSW Government's Chief Scientist & Engineer's Advisory Committee on Tunnel Air Quality issued its Initial Report on Tunnel Air Quality in July 2014. This report states that
 - 'a fresh approach is required for Sydney's newest road tunnel projects to address:*
 - *Community concern as to whether air quality criteria properly address vehicle emissions*
 - *Changes to vehicle technologies that, while reducing the magnitude of vehicle emissions, have also altered the composition of those emissions*

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- *Experience from the Lane Cove and Cross City tunnels that has shown that the ventilation systems are over-designed and that the approval conditions have resulted in inefficient operating regimes.* (page i).

Therefore, I am extremely worried that the NSW Government's Department of Planning is even contemplating the construction of another tunnel, especially a tunnel of such magnitude, whilst the NSW Government's Advisory Committee is still reviewing its findings.

I respectfully request the following are completed by the NSW Department of Planning and NorthConnex:

1. The construction of the tunnel be delayed until the NSW Government's Advisory Committee on Tunnel Air Quality completes its work.
2. The work completed by the abovenamed Advisory Committee be reviewed by an independent body, as the Advisory Committee and the NSW Department of Planning are both NSW government bodies, they are not independent of each other and they do not include representatives of the community. An organization such as the World Health Organisation, could be consulted for advice.
3. The alternative proposed by architect Peter Georgiades (regarding the positioning of the stack) be reviewed and responded to by the NSW Department of Planning and NorthConnex.
4. The health impacts of those in areas where the same ventilation stacks as those proposed in the EIS and stacks of the same size be studied.
5. The claim by Barry O'Farrell that this tunnel hasn't been approved at the same time as NorthConnex purchased housing in the area the tunnel is planned to be located be investigated by an independent government body.
6. The height of the Wahroonga stack and the reasons for its insufficient height in comparison to other stacks be reviewed and responded to.
7. A study of the wind in Wahroonga be completed and analysed in terms of the proposed efficiency of the Wahroonga stack.

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