

11 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](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 I object to the project as described in the EIS.

**Introduction**

My name is Anne Johnson. Three of my grandchildren live immediately adjacent to the proposed northern stack and portal of the NorthConnex development. Two of them, twins now 2 years old were premature babies. They are therefore at greater risk of suffering lung and breathing problems from pollution. The NorthConnex development therefore poses a greater risk to them than to other children. All children are at greater risk from pollution while their bodies are developing than are adults.

The family will also be exposed to years of construction noise and vibration. Construction will be even more intrusive for hundreds of families living close to areas where trucks will transport rubble through their communities for years. None of these families sought this development. Many are so affected by the proposals that they cannot afford to move, so affected are their property prices. I endorse the submissions made by the CAPS group and by Ku-Ring-Gai Council as they try to limit some of the worst and most dangerous intrusions of this development on the surrounding community, and attempt to make this a better project for the state.

I 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, I am 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. I am highly concerned about the multiple large scale research studies that suggest the impacts of air pollutants on health are serious. These include

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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. I am 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. 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, and also contain a larger number of fine particles which penetrate deep into lung tissue and remain there causing inflammation.
6. I am concerned about the air quality within the tunnel which is shown in the EIS to have at times exceeded standards for pollutants such as NO<sub>2</sub>, and haze from particulate matter at the ends of the tunnel.
7. 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<sub>2.5</sub>
8. I am 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. I am concerned that the justification for not providing filtration for the stacks is cursory and unconvincing.

To address my/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. Stack location in Pennant Hills Golf Course at the southern portal and in Ku-Ring-Gai Chase at the northern end would provide significant and effective unpopulated radiuses around the stacks to limit fallout on residential communities. Relocation of the

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northern portal 1.6Km north past Asquith could allow an almost flat tunnel especially if the tunnel passes above rather than below the railway tunnel.

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.

**Anne Johnson**  
**23 Gipps Street**  
**Drummoyne 2047**