

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

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 strongly object to the project as described in the EIS. I have lived in Wahroonga for over 14 years, have one child going to Knox and am hugely concerned about the health hazard that such an unfiltered ventilation proposal will undoubtedly create. I spent the first 30+ years of my life living in England and Germany and it would be unthinkable in both those countries (and doubtless most other countries in the western world) to allow unfiltered stacks to emit such dangerous pollutants.

In particular, I have an extremely 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 center of a densely populated residential area in Wahroonga, where over 9,000 school children will be exposed, as well as nursing homes, hospitals, aged care facilities, businesses and private homes. This will have a very detrimental long-term impact on this established suburb.
2. The placement of the northern ventilation stack is in a valley in Wahroonga where the lack of wind ensures a virtual stagnation of the polluted air, which will thus result in its inadequate dispersion and will thus create greater exposure to the community of these high levels of tunnel emission.
3. I am highly concerned about the numerous research studies that suggest the impacts of air pollutants on health are serious. With so many young children living in this area, this could cause major health problems for the next generation.
4. 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.

NorthConnex EIS Submission

5. I am concerned about the air quality within the tunnel which is shown in the EIS to have exceedences above standards for pollutants such as NO₂, and haze from particulate matter at the ends of the tunnel.
6. I am concerned that a full and transparent options assessment process was not undertaken to assess alternative designs for the project. The public was only presented one plan for the stacks' locations, which is hardly a fair go for the residents living in the area. Alternatives to this dangerous proposal should have been outlined in order to give the general public an informed choice.
7. I am concerned that the justification for not providing filtration for the stacks is wholly unconvincing. The emergent pollution from the stacks will have a very detrimental effect on the health and safety of the Wahroonga public and beyond and it is inconceivable that in this day and age, where such a focus is placed on greenhouse emissions, that you would even consider a ventilation solution that does not require proper filtration to safe-guard the local residents – if such filtered systems are good enough for Europe, why is it not good enough here in Australia

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.
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.