

12/09/2014

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

Below is my submission in response to the exhibition of the EIS for NorthConnex for consideration by the Department of Planning and NorthConnex.

Please note that I **object** to the project as described in the EIS.

I am a mother of 3 young children and live within 600m of the proposed northern ventilation stack. The proposed location and height of the non-filtered northern ventilation stack has me greatly concerned for the health of my children which was not clearly addressed in the EIS.

The CAPS (Community Against Polluting Stacks) submission has pointed out many of the issues around the current proposal and I support their submission.

My main concern regarding the proposed NorthConnex tunnel project is the proposed placement of the northern ventilation stack. The current proposal has it placed in a highly populated residential area and within metres from schools, a hospital, daycares and aged care residents. This will set precedence for placement of ventilation stacks for long tunnels within the community without adequate supporting evidence that it doesn't pose a health risk to those in the immediate vicinity.

The NorthConnex proposal has not convincingly proved that the pollutants from the northern ventilation stack will be adequately dispersed. The height of the proposed stack does not counter placing it in a valley. The top of the ventilation stack would be too close to the location of the playing fields of Waitara Public School where my 5 and 8 year old boys play. Children running around tend to breathe deeply and their young developing lungs will be more susceptible to adverse effects of pollutants in the air, which makes it extremely important that the pollutants in this area is not even slightly increased.

I have lived in Wahroonga for almost three years and regularly view fog in the mornings in our area. The EIS does not give evidence that this regular occurrence of fog is not a result of an inversion layer which would inhibit the effective dispersal of pollutants coming from the proposed northern ventilation stack.

As a resident of Wahroonga, I have found that this suburb does not experience much wind. This can be very evident with fog in the mornings hanging around for extended times. As the proposed northern ventilation stack is only designed to be 15m high and placed in a valley, the lack of wind in the region leads to serious doubts to the adequacy of the modelling in the EIS that the pollutants will be effectively dispersed.

If the pollutants are not dispersed then this poses a high risk to the health of nearby residents, school children and young children attending childcare centres in the area. The World Health Organisation has reported that air pollution exposure has caused deaths and poses a large environmental health risk.

I have not found any long term research on the effect of pollutants from cars and trucks coming from ventilation stacks on the risk of cancer for nearby residents and the EIS certainly doesn't reference any. This is an unknown risk and in the interest of public safety it is always preferable to remove that risk rather than try to mitigate it through modelling a ventilation stack that doesn't adequately take into account the local terrain and climate.

During the campaign of the Lane Cove Tunnel, it was promoted that the ventilation stacks would not be near any residential areas. Obviously it was seen at that time that the risk to air quality was too great and in alignment to public concern, the ventilation stacks were not be close to residents. The EIS has not shown why this reasoning should not be applied to the NorthConnect proposal.

The proposed monitoring of the pollutants is also a concern due to it not being close to the northern ventilation stack but out at Ku-ring-gai hospital. My residence and Waitara Public School is between the proposed northern ventilation stack and the hospital which means we have no way of knowing how our air quality is being affected.

To address my 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 tunnel design, ventilation stack and portals. This includes the CAPS submission and others.
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, covering both the stack and portal emissions, and not time boxed.
6. An independent review of the ventilation system is undertaken to ensure that NorthConnex's claims of pollutant dispersion with no increased risk to health of local residents is justified.

7. The Submissions Report/Preferred Project be exhibited to allow the community to respond to the revised information contained in the report.
8. 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.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Signature:

[REDACTED]