

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



257

NorthConnex Application Number: SSI 13_6136

Please find below my submission in response to the exhibition of the EIS for NorthConnex.
As it does NOT meet the project objectives listed below.

Summary:

My concerns are summarized below.

Firstly Health concerns from the pollutants.

Silica, Asbestos, tyre waste. Carbon Monoxide, etc.

Change of character of area and environment.

Change of economy due to perception of Polluted area.

Devaluation of properties in the immediate area of portals and stacks.

Destruction of life style during a 5 year period of construction.

Noise and smell from Northern ventilation outlet.

Destruction of heritage character of the area.

I also endorse the Submission by the CAPS group. I have viewed this submission.

Department of Planning
Received
5 SEP 2014
Scanning Room

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

As it does NOT meet the project objectives listed below.

- ☐ Provide a high standard access controlled motorway that integrates with the regional transport network.
- ☐ Minimise adverse social and environmental impacts in the local area during construction and operation.
- ☐ Provide opportunities for improved public transport in the area around Pennant Hills Road.
- ☐ Assist in a reduction in traffic congestion, particularly along Pennant Hills Road, and provide shorter travel times for road users.
- ☐ Provide a motorway that is safe and reliable for road users.
- ☐ Contribute towards the achievement of the national objective of connecting Melbourne to Brisbane via a duplicated highway in order to improve the efficient movement of state and national freight, and in doing so, reduce costs for freight operators and carriers.
- ☐ Contribute towards a reduction in the number of heavy vehicles using Pennant Hills Road and as a result improve local air quality and noise amenity along that corridor.
- ☐ Demonstrate excellence in design and environmental sustainability.
- ☐ Be economically justified and affordable to government

In addressing the objectives.

- ☐ Provide a high standard access controlled motorway that integrates with the regional transport network.

1.

The majority of through traffic exiting the M1 at Wahroonga travel along the Pacific Highway, rather than along Pennant Hills Road. Unless Central Coast commuters find employment in locations other than Sydney's CBD and North Shore, logic dictates that congestion on both road and rail networks will increase as the population does, and in line with the natural growth of the labour market in Sydney City.

2.

The outer orbital or route C would be the best option this is actually written in the Eis the Pearlman review 2007. The Orbital is anticipated to meet the demands of the future transport requirements. The project would meet existing transport demands and relieve existing congestion issues on a key section of the National Land Transport Network.

3.

The orbital would prevent the disruption and destruction of a huge area over a five year period. Which is huge chunk out of anyone life.

4.

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.

5.

In general, the construction of new toll roads tended to induce more traffic on to alternative free roads.

6.

Additionally, [a state government website](#) boasts that fifty percent of heavy vehicles and thirty per cent of light vehicles are forecast to use NorthConnex. The economics of building a \$3bn road tunnel for only thirty per cent of cars and fifty per cent of trucks doesn't seem to add up, and that's if motorists opt for NorthConnex at all

7.

However the route that the road should take is crucial. It's clear that NorthConnex is not only short-sighted in this regard (as it will eventually be superseded by the M9), but it will not solve ongoing traffic issues on the Pacific Highway, and will only slightly help the situation on Pennant Hills Road.

8. All in the name of financial reward for a private enterprise.

Solution to the above:

Reassess the whole project in non-hurried manner.(Tony Abbott has just stated the Pink Batts debacle was due to a rushed job.

Put health at the top of the list.

Only then will the community readily accept the proposal.

Minimise adverse social and environmental impacts in the local area during construction and operation.

As a long-time resident I do not see this as achieved in the EIS

1. As they have chosen to locate 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. They propose to tunnel under homes and schools. Great disruption will occur because of this example of this from the EIS

The Early Childhood Intervention Australia site at North Rocks is predicted to experience external noise levels up to 62 dB(A) during the daytime. As a result, internal noise levels may exceed the applicable traffic noise criterion of 40 dB(A)

3. The compulsory acquisition of families' homes.
4. Unmeasurable amounts of spoils will be removed and transported through the neighbour hoods. These spoils will be sandstone which contain silica a substance as carcinogenic as asbestos. It is proposed to wet the spoils.
5. There will be noise from the stack. This has not been address in the EIS.

Solution. This requires independent management of the project to ensure the public's safety.

The Ventilation stacks

1. Two stacks will concentrate the pollution from the tunnels into 2 residential areas.
2. The clean air to be put into the tunnel will actually come from the very polluted air of Pennant hills road.
3. The stack is not of good design it is only 15 meters high.
4. Existing vegetation will be removed exposing the structures of the Northern ventilation stack. This stack by no way fits into the local area.
5. The stacks will spew unfiltered pollution up into the atmosphere.
6. Monitoring of tunnel exhaust is proposed. But The World Health Organisation states that no amount of particulate matter is safe, and those living in close proximity to these stacks will be the most effected.
7. The Nsw Health dept. has carried out surveys on health in areas where stacks are located

Reference.

http://whqlibdoc.who.int/hq/2006/WHO_SDE_PHE_OEH_06.02_eng.pdf

6.10.1 Limitations of residential exposure information

In order to assess the potential health effects on communities living around road tunnels, accurate estimates of any increased exposure to air pollutants due to the road tunnel are required.

As detailed in earlier chapters, the available information suggests that, with **the exception of homes near tunnel portals where there are significant emissions**, any exposure to tunnel air pollutants is unlikely to be significantly above background levels.

Ref: http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/_files_nhmrc/publications/attachments/eh42.pdf

With regards to predicted air quality, the EIS reports that "...the low levels of predicted pollutant concentrations do not indicate that further mitigation would be required for the operation of the tunnel." (EIS, Appendix G, p.169) However, in applying the precautionary principle, sufficient research and continued monitoring should be included to avoid exceedances in air quality and potential health impacts on the local community.

8. Monitoring of tunnel exhausts are carried out on the M5 tunnel only to be found they illegally used the portal to exhaust the tunnel.

9. Northconnex failed to put monitoring stations in the location where the stacks will be located. Taking their air quality stats from as far away as 20klms. From areas that do not have a similar microclimate of Wahroonga.

10. Whether perceived or factually informed the community do not believe there will negligible air pollution.

This can be seen by simply looking at the amount of homes that have been put on the market and in my small street.

11. Public/stakeholder consultation process has been criticised in the past, but it seems was improved recently in the lead up to the EIS and after its release. However, it has failed to translate many of the concerns that were raised during earlier consultation stages. This includes three out of five of the main issues highlighted by stakeholders in the 2004 report – ventilation outlets (predominantly issues around number and location of outlets), general concerns about air quality, and health impacts (NorthConnex EIS, p.219). Although it has been stated that such feedback was considered as part of the recent design development, the EIS fails to sufficiently address and respond effectively to the public health concerns of local residents.

12. The Public notification process was abysmal. With me having to go and get the local MP'S Office to order more copies so I could distribute. They would not implement anything to give the public a greater understanding of stacks. Extract from a letter to me.
Dear Mrs O'Neill

At this stage, the project team has not further considered facilitating a visit to existing ventilation outlets in Sydney as the focus currently on the finalisation of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The design of the ventilation system, including the outlets themselves are unique to this project proposal and the existing sites do not relate to the current project's assessment.

13. The noise from the stack has not been addressed adequately or explained at any of the meetings. I have been to the Turrella stack the noise from it can be heard over the industrial noises in the industrial area it is located in. They have not addressed any low frequency noise that will endanger health.

14. Residents flee Woonona Ave.

15. Homes in Woonona Ave have sold since the proposal became known they are.

Street numbers are.

54,56,58,60,62,66,68,82,86 104,45a,25,29,42.

Other streets in our little residential pocket are also experiencing the same.

This a well above average numbers. I know for a fact both neighbours on either side of me sold because of health fears.

Solution all of the above can be address by moving the stack North of Wahroonga to an industrial area. Like the Lane Cove stack is and the Turrella stack are.

There has been no attempt to make the look stack fit in with the surrounding homes. Most homes are brick. The stack should also be built of brick similar to that of the stack at Turella. One of the most prominent schools in the area Knox grammer have always been very careful with the schools extensions and are built of brick and sandstone in keeping the general ambiance of Wahroonga and exception should not be allow for this proposal.I attach a photo to draw this to your attention.

Heritage Listing Area Gazetted by State Government.

In August 2004 Hornsby Council resolved to progress a study to assess the potential heritage significance of Wahroonga (North) as a heritage conservation area. The study resulted from a petition by local residents which sought protection of the heritage and streetscape qualities of Wahroonga in the area bounded by Myra Street, Alexandria Parade, Edgeworth David Avenue and the F3 Freeway.

1. It should be noted how long it took to get this area listed. It was gazetted by the State Government. Knowing it was now heritage listed people spent money on improvements.
2. If the proposal goes ahead as planned it will be open slather for any developer to come in and destroy the area even further.
3. The artist impression of what we will be looking at is similar to a container terminal in a dock yard.
4. The existing house depicts the eclectic styles of housing from the multi-cultural population who have made Wahroonga the sought after area to reside. Mixed with older heritage homes.
5. Wahroonga has always been known as a village. We have a local park that is more like a village green.
Young mothers gather there with babies for mothers clubs
Early morning exerciser can be seen there at 6am. Other exercisers right through the day.
The rotunda in the park is popular spot for weddings and birthday parties.
Local events are held there i.e Food fare.
A play area has recently been upgrades.

All this within 500 metres of this polluting stack.

Solutions: Take the stack out of the residential area.

1. Maximise consideration to maintain the character of this area.
2. The prefabricated look of the stack does not fit in. It should be constructed of brick.
3. Build the stack from brick or clad in Sandstone. Sandstone is being removed from the tunnel therefore it should be a good medium choice for construction.

The Turrella stack is construction of brick.

There has been no attempt to make the look stack fit in with the surrounding homes. Most homes are brick. The stack should also be built of brick similar to that of the stack at Turella.

One of the most prominent schools in the area Knox grammar have always been very careful with the schools extensions and are built of brick and sandstone in keeping the general ambiance of Wahroonga and exception should not be allow for this proposal.I attach a photo to draw this to your attention

4.Wahroonga is renowned for it's leafy tree lined streets. Therefore more densely planting should be done than what is depicted in the Eis..

Lost will be blue gum high forest. Tree experts need to be hired to address this issue.

From existing to artists impression from this to that. Insane

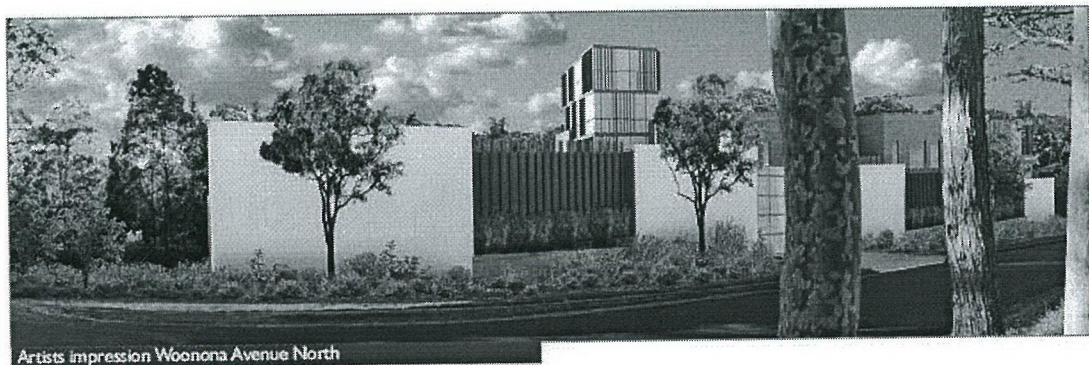
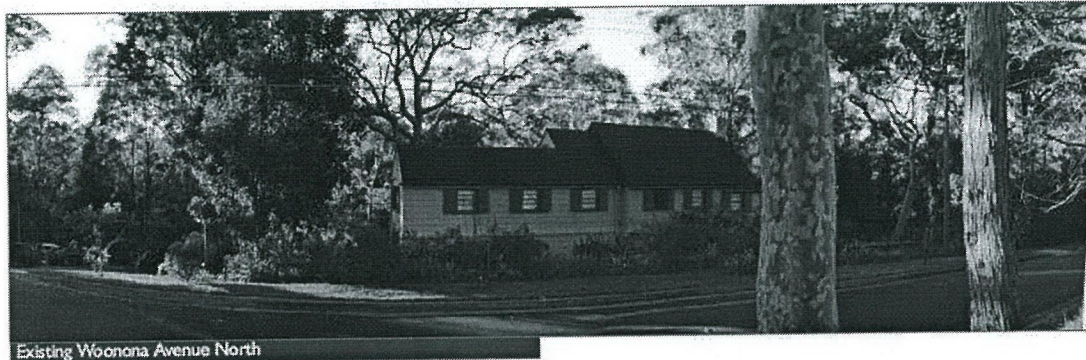


Figure 7-60 Artists impression - Woonona Avenue North





Attached photos taken by me of what Wahroonga actually experiences.
Heavy fogs that don't lift till around 10am.

Appendix G acknowledges potential circumstances of high background pollutant concentrations supporting the need for mitigation, such as filtration. Whilst the data reviewed shows there is no need for further mitigation to prevent exceedances in the local area, the application of the precautionary principle means that mitigation measures need to be taken to avoid any risks. There is a need to continue to collect real data during and following project development. This should include monitoring at the site of ventilation outlets, which are of significant concern for the local community

5. In the EIS their data for the dangerous particulate matter came from 20km away at Prospect! This is dangerous carcinogenic PM 2.5... That is really tiny particles which enter deep into the lungs, (pm1 even smaller does more damage: coined as asbestos of this century, hasn't been measured anywhere)

6. Lindfield was used to measure Pm10 (no smaller particles measure there) It is with this data and the very wrong assumption in their calculations that the air from Southern end of the tunnel at pennant hills road and m2 intersection is clean air (it is actually one of the busiest and most polluted intersections in Australia) and using meteorological data from nowhere near Wahroonga (ie places with significant breezes and wind) that they conclude that there will be no health impact from the proposed stack.

7. Wahroonga often has almost no breeze most days, and they propose to have the stack in a valley, further increasing the pollution for residents and school kids.

8. The proposed area for the stack is in a heritage listed area they have already purchase residential properties to build their factory like structures.

9. They have not addressed in the EIS how they propose to safe guard the heritage listed homes.

No submission how they will protect them from damage or noise impact.

A heritage listed home has to be sensitively modified.

Solutions to these impacts can be.

A. Tunnel further along the M1 into less residential and educational precincts. Moving the Northern stack into an industrial area. Same as the location of the Lane Cove and Turrella stacks.

There appears to be a case for environmental discrimination if these stacks are placed in residential areas.

B. Cut and cover from the proposed Northern portal to take the traffic further North at a much reduced cost of tunnelling. As the cover can be prefabricated. The stack and portal could be located even further north and into less populated area. Northconnex Northern ventilation facility already incorporates cut and cover engineering into the northern tunnel exit. So it would be just a matter of continuing the cut and cover method for another 2 kms which would take the portal and the ventilation facility away from the residential area. Giving more options on where to place the stack.

C. Filter the tunnel.

D. The outer orbital or route C would be the best option this is actually written in the EIS the Pearlman review 2007. The Orbital is anticipated to meet the demands of the future transport requirements. The project would meet existing transport demands and relieve existing congestion issues on a key section of the National Land Transport Network.

- Provide opportunities for improved public transport in the area around Pennant Hills Road.

This statement presumes that there will be less traffic. Whereas the Eis states vehicles carrying dangerous goods cannot enter the tunnel therefore this leaves Pennant Hills much as it is today.

Northconnex: quote return local streets to local community.

Similar statements used with cross city tunnel make William Street a boulevard well William street is still the dirt street it has always been and does not come close to the appearance of a boulevard.

- Assist in a reduction in traffic congestion, particularly along Pennant Hills Road, and provide shorter travel times for road users.

This equates to 15mins the same thing could be achieved by.

Solutions.

1. Removal of some of the traffic lights there are plenty of alternate back roads for residents to enter Pennant hills road.
2. As most of the schools pavement areas are fenced. The school zone area could be revised.
3. Trucks could be limited to certain hours in the night and flashing amber lights utilized.

- Provide a motorway that is safe and reliable for road users.

1. Transurban cannot presume it will be any safer than the route now. As even if dangerous goods not allowed, any vehicle carrying diesel is a danger.
2. Transurban cannot guarantee the mechanical safety of the heavy vehicles in the tunnel. E.G Cootes transport and Cleanaway have had to pull their entire fleet off the road.
3. Also cars travelling in the two lane tunnel alongside heavy vehicles are at risk because these vehicles have blind spots when smaller vehicles are travelling in close vicinity to them.
4. They propose fines on vehicles with dirty exhausts in the tunnel. Why have they not just proposed to have vehicles with dirty exhausts stopped from entering the tunnel in the first place by having cameras on the motorway prior to the entrance of the tunnel?

More people in the world die from the effects of air pollution than from vehicle accidents.

The motorway should be safe for residents also.

The EIS did not do modelling on what would happen in the event of a fire in the tunnel. The project team say they consulted with the fire department. They did not have a disaster plan.

The pollution should not be concentrated and pushed out of 2 stacks. At one point in time it was to be 3 stacks. But because of the lack of community consultation we were never privileged with viewing the other 2 tenders' options. Even though we the tax payer would be paying 1/3 of the tunnels cost.

- Contribute towards the achievement of the national objective of connecting Melbourne to Brisbane via a duplicated highway in order to improve the efficient movement of state and national freight, and in doing so, reduce costs for freight operators and carriers.

More time and planning should be given to their proposal. The ring route from the M1 to the M7 was the best conception. But that did not allow Transurban to collect tolls on the M2. They in fact will be putting more costs on the freight operators and carriers by way of more tolls.

□□Contribute towards a reduction in the number of heavy vehicles using Pennant Hills Road and as a result improve local air quality and noise amenity along that Corridor.

The heavy vehicle number will reduce on Pennant hills road. Air quality will not improve and more cars will take up the space left by the heavy vehicle as the population of Sydney continues to increase.

Local air quality will be greatly impacted by the location of the portals and stacks in the densely populated residential and educational precincts at each end of the tunnels Wahroonga and Pennant Hills.

Many residents in my street fearing the health impacts have already sold. The old and young are the most vulnerable to this kind of pollution. There is no doubt Australian has a huge aging population.

- Demonstrate excellence in design and environmental sustainability.

They have not demonstrated excellence in design nor environmental sustainability.

1..They have not even considered filtration. This is only based on cost. Also the experiment of filtration in the M5 tunnel which was not conducted as it should have been.

2. Transurban have presumed the sound walls are adequate. The existing ones are not. They even in fact have many gaps. Taking down the sound walls will make living nearby unbearable.

3. Quote from newspaper states the premier said the tunnel was pretty ordinary.

- Be economically justified and affordable to government.

1. The tunnel may appear affordable to the government. But at the expense of residents health the health cost in the future will flow on to the Health system in Australia.

2. Spending on cancer has risen at a slightly faster rate than total health spending in recent years, according to a report released today by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW).

3. Other financial cost to residents will be their houses will be devalued.

The value of the homes in close proximity will lose value when the construction commences no one wants to live in a construction zone for the next 5 years.

4. Many residents in my street fearing this have already sold. Some have sold because of the health impacts. The noise impact and dust impacts.

5. The value of the homes will further lose value when the stack start to spew out its cancer causing pollution.

6. Transurban will reap their wealth and we will all suffer the health impacts and financial loss of our homes for many which is their retirement fund.

I know it is mine, many would be self-funded retirees will have to ask for Government pensions.

7. Wahroonga area is renowned for its many schools excellent school. Families come to live in this area because of the schools available.

People research the schools and area before enrolling their children. Having a stack with 9klm of pollution in close proximity to these schools with effect where parents will elect to send their children and their money.

8. Many of these schools have boarding students whom reside most of the year in the area. Whether a perceived or factual health fear it will still effect enrolments. Which will have a flow on effect for the economy of this area.

- Be economically justified and affordable to government.

It appears that this concept for the tunnel is not affordable. Because at every avenue Northconnex say the cost is not justifiable.

1. Costs too much to monitor air quality. (No monitoring station put in at Wahroonga)
2. Cost too much to distribute the information correctly. Many people and still not aware of what proposed for the upper North Shore. (I had to distribute their flyers)
3. Costs too much to extend further.
4. Costs too much to filter.
5. Costs too much in time to give due consideration to the residents who needed an 90 day period for the display period of the Eis.

Transurban will reap Billions from road tolls. They have the funds they just bought Brisbane toll road network for 7 Billion.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]