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Submission for NorthConnex M1 to M2 Project

I am a resident of Beecroft and there are two tunnels directly under my house in Penrhyn Avenue and another adjacent to my house. In general I am in favour of the project subject to some changes outlined below. However, this is an unsolicited offer to build the tunnels by a private consortium and the tunnels do not replace the need for a second alternative route from Wyong to Sydney and a future separate crossing of the Hawkesbury River.

I have several objections to the EIS for the proposed NorthConnex Project.

1. **Spoil Removal and Disposal**
   It is impossible to assess the impact of truck movements during the construction phase without knowing where the spoil will be taken. However, I would object to any northern disposal area such as the old Hornsby Quarry for spoil from the southern portal. All trucks should be confined to Pennant Hills Rd and the M2. There should be no trucks on local roads. In addition, it is preferable for trucks from the southern portal to be confined to the M2 during the construction phase. Pennant Hills Rd is already beyond capacity and the area between Pennant Hills Golf Course and Thompsons Corner is a steep hill. Laden trucks going up the hill would be noisy and slow, resulting in noise pollution for many residents. Also, cars using Pennant Hills Rd would lane hop to avoid the slow trucks. Unladen trucks coming down the hill would be noisy due to brakes. There have been many accidents on the downhill section with trucks ending up on the footpath and front yards of the adjacent houses.
   The same comments would apply to spoil removal from areas further north being taken to areas west of the project. Northern spoil should go north and southern spoil should go west so that the impact of trucks laden with spoil is minimised.
   There will also be a significant number of trucks taking construction materials to the tunnel. The same rules should apply, with construction materials for the project sourced from different areas to minimise the additional traffic on Pennant Hills Rd and to shorten the distance that these trucks need to travel along Pennant Hills Rd. In particular, the hill between Thompsons Corner and Pennant Hills Golf Course should be avoided whenever possible.

2. **Air Quality**

Modelling air quality without more local weather results is suspect. There is no good location for the southern ventilation stack. The only solution is to make it taller so that there is plenty of leeway with the calculations. In addition, mass tree planting close to the stack and on Pennant Hills Golf Course may be beneficial.
The EIS does not explain why there could not be several ventilation stacks for each tunnel which would spread the pollution over a wider area. I am sure that a single ventilation stack for each tunnel is the most cost effective solution for ventilation, but no analysis is given for the alternatives.

3. **Geology**

The information provided on the geology is simplistic. I have requested more detailed information without any success. Our house is built on shale and there are two proposed tunnels underneath us at around 30m and 41m depth and another adjacent at 40m depth. The geological units under us have been warped slightly with the boundary between the shale and the underlying Mittagong Formation and Hawkesbury Sandstone rising from west to east. Any area with a distortion in the geological units is likely to have more jointing and fractures. I am well aware that the technology for building tunnels is quite advanced and that it is unlikely that there would be any problems even within a few metres of the tunnels. However, I would like to be reassured that there are no major structural elements in the geology of the area near Penrhyn Ave that could cause any potential problems and in this respect, the EIS is deficient. I cannot even be certain of the depth of the Hawkesbury Sandstone and the Mittagong Formation under my house. I understand that drilling is still being carried out to assess the geotechnical parameters for construction. Perhaps the EIS should not have been released until all the data was available and that this data should be released for public assessment.

4. **Construction Noise and Vibration**

Residents close to the tunnels may be affected by short term noise and vibration during the tunnel construction period. The project overview on page 34 states that *"a respite and relocation protocol would be developed in accordance with the interim Construction Noise Guidelines".* Any residents within a 50m zone of the tunnels should be offered alternative accommodation for the short periods that their residences may be affected, especially for night time disturbance and that this protocol should be clearly defined before the project is approved.

5. **Conclusion**

Overall, my main conclusion is that the EIS has been prepared too early and that it should have been delayed until more information was available about spoil disposal, truck movements, geological parameters and relocation protocols.