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Att: Director – Infrastructure Projects
Dept. of Planning and Environment
Application Number SSI 13_6136
Major Projects Assessment
GPO Box 39
Sydney NSW 2001

Re: North Connex M1 to M2 Project Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

Dear Sir/Madam

We are the owners of the residential property at 20 Loch Maree Avenue, Thornleigh. We currently sublet this property to tenants while residing in London, United Kingdom.

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission to raise concerns over the proposed tunnel linking the M1 motorway to the M2 motorway, and the associated tunnelling and construction activities. We are especially expressing concerns relating to the Trelawney Street Compound used during construction. Our concerns are explained below.

Before we share our concerns, we would like to express our understanding for the need to construct the North Connex tunnel and relieve Pennant Hills Road of its heavy traffic. We look forward to the time when the tunnel is finally open.

Heavy vehicle movements at Trelawney Street Compound

Expressing this as a concern of ours is an understatement. **We are in fact shocked and have serious concerns with the planned heavy vehicle movements to and from this compound within a residential area during construction.** In particular, we have serious concerns about the road capacity and safety within this residential area regarding:

- Using Loch Maree Avenue – The number of heavy vehicles proposed to enter the compound each hour from Loch Maree Avenue, noting that this is a small residential road with limited capacity and with children and elderly people as frequent users. We are concerned that the amount of heavy vehicles will create bottlenecks on this road, which is an important access road for the residents in the area. In addition, we are concerned about what appears to be unnecessary and unacceptable safety risks with this frequency of heavy vehicles in such a residential setting. We particularly note that Loch Maree Avenue only has one lane for traffic turning onto it from Pennant Hills Road. It is inconceivable to us that such a frequency of heavy construction vehicles are going to be able to safely turn onto Loch Maree Avenue from either direction. We do not think that this local road is wide enough to cope with the requirements of such large vehicles with the proposed frequency. We are very concerned that the safety and flow of local traffic will be severely and unacceptably compromised.
- Turning into Loch Maree Avenue – The number of heavy vehicles arriving from the South to turn right to enter Loch Maree Avenue. This additional right-turning traffic will likely create a serious bottleneck at this junction, which is already at times heavily congested. Add to this that left turning traffic from the North are also likely to compound any bottlenecks at this junction.
- Turning vehicles North using local roads – The proposed turning of North bound heavy vehicles leaving the site by crossing three lanes of traffic at Pennant Hills Road to turn right unto the local Phyllis Avenue and do a 180 degree turn using a local road-sized roundabout on Phyllis Avenue and then back up the avenue to turn left onto Pennant Hills Road northbound (!). This

seems to be made up in fantasy land and not at all considering the local traffic conditions – for most of the day, Phyllis Avenue and the roundabout is already heavily congested, due to current traffic demands with Bunnings, McDonald's (including their HQ), IBIS Hotel and local bus route traffic – with the current traffic conditions on Pennant Hills Road creating a bottleneck for traffic leaving Phyllis Avenue. Adding this heavy vehicle traffic seems virtually impossible – even without considering the size of the local road and roundabout in question (which likely makes it virtually impossible even without the existing congestion).

We note that it appears that the detailed traffic management plan for the Trelawney Street Compound has not been worked through. As such, we believe that this may be the reason for the ill-conceived proposed plans for heavy vehicle movements to and from this compound. **Before going ahead with approving this site, we strongly suggest that the detailed traffic management plan is finalised, considering in particular the potential bottleneck and safety concerns raised.** If it is not already known to the planners, we would like to draw attention to the fact that the intersection encompassing Pennant Hills Road, Loch Maree Avenue and Phyllis Avenue is already deemed by the Roads and Maritime Service as a failing intersection.

However, **overall we believe the plan to locate such a compound in a residential area with use of local roads is seriously flawed** – in particular as it would seem that there are other more appropriate locations to use. For example, the other side of Pennant Hills Road is not residential, and locating such a compound on that side of the road would therefore likely significantly reduce some of the serious flaws with the proposed compound (including the concerns noted below).

Should the compound go ahead, other options that we believe should be considered include **avoiding any use of local roads for any construction vehicles – in particular heavy vehicles.**

Entry and exit points should be to main roads only, e.g. Pennant Hills Road. **Heavy vehicles should not use local roads** (and particularly not local residential roads) for entering or exiting such compounds – or for turning to go the other direction on Pennant Hills Road. If this means heavy vehicles can only head in one direction on Pennant Hills Road (i.e. South bound), then so be it – it must be possible to logistically plan this better to enable this to occur.

In addition, **removal of this amount of spoils through such a compound in a residential area seems unnecessary**. Either the compound is moved, or the need to remove spoils with heavy vehicles from it using local residential roads is eliminated or reduced – **e.g. by removing the spoils at either end of the tunnel, where there should be direct access to motorways** – rather than removing it using heavy vehicles in a residential area. If the compound is not moved, we urge that heavy vehicles use no local roads, and that entry and exit is via Pennant Hills Road only.

24/7 construction and noise levels relating to Trelawley Street Compound

We have **concerns over the levels of noise that will be generated within a residential area during the period of construction** in connection with the activities relating to the Trelawley Street Compound – with construction activities occurring 24/7, thus increasing the likelihood for noise being a factor that can have a negatively disruptive impact on the residential area. We note that **the EIS indicates that there will be highly noise affected levels** at the Trelawley Street compound. Noise is estimated to increase relative 15.9 dB(A) at this compound, more than double the impact of the next highest noise increase at any other construction affected areas. Compounding this is that the residential area of our property is in a valley and noise travels down the valley and can vary in intensity with wind direction.

Again, this is an issue that can be avoided or reduced by moving the compound to another non-residential location, e.g. the other side of Pennant Hills Road. However, should the compound stay as proposed, we **would like assurances that adequate mitigation measures will be in place** to ensure that local residents are not unduly affected by construction-related noise pollution.

Other vehicle movements at the Trelawley Street Compound

In addition to the above serious concerns relating to heavy vehicle movements, we have **concerns relating to the impact from other construction related vehicle movements to and from the compound**. In particular, we note that the compound is expected to be used by numerous light vehicles each day, which are intended to park at the compound. Obviously, with far fewer vehicle movements using light vehicles, this is a lesser concern for us. However, the additional vehicle movements will naturally compound the bottleneck and safety concerns regarding heavy vehicles expressed above.

In addition, we are concerned that **light vehicles may use other local roads to enter or exit the compound** – e.g. entering via Nelson Street or Trelawley Street to get access to the entry at Loch Maree Avenue using the lower part of it and thus avoiding the bottleneck at the intersection with Pennant Hills Road – thus adding significant traffic to these local residential roads. Also, we are concerned that some of these vehicles may use the local roads for parking, in cases where the Trelawley Street Compound's carpark is full or unavailable – on a road where parking is already scarce.

We would like guarantees that construction related vehicles of any kind will not be allowed to use the lower half of Loch Maree Avenue, Nelson Street or Trelawley Street for access or

parking in the interest of residential safety – and that this limitation on construction related vehicles of any kind and size will be policed.

Location of ventilation at Trelawley Street Support Facility

Whilst this facility is being proposed as an emergency smoke extraction outlet only, it would be an obvious place to adopt to a full ventilation facility should the need arise in the future – implying a potential significant negative impact on the local residential area within which it is located. The residential location implies a significant potential negative impact to local residents, should a serious incident such as fire in the tunnel result in its use as an emergency outlet.

Again, a location within a residential area seems ill-conceived, when other locations appear possible that would at least reduce the potential negative impacts – e.g. at the other side of Pennant Hills Road, which is non-residential.

Should the location of this outlet remain unchanged, we would request a guarantee that the emergency outlet will never be changed to a regular ventilation shaft.

Summary of key concerns

In summary, our key concerns with the Trelawley Street Compound are:

- Serious concern regarding proposed heavy vehicle movement on local and residential roads –

The proposed use of local and residential roads for heavy vehicle movements appears unworkable, unsafe and will cause significant disruption of local and residential roads that are already experiencing congestion. We note the detailed traffic management plan appears not to have been made, and we suspect it will demonstrate our concerns as valid – and therefore, this

compound should not be approved prior to this detail plan being made and assessed. Essentially, in case the compound goes ahead, we request that the proposed plans for heavy vehicle movements are significantly altered – firstly by reducing the volume of spoils to be removed from the site and instead removing it at either ends of the tunnel with direct access to motorways, and secondly by ensuring no local or residential roads are used by any heavy vehicles. If it implies that heavy vehicle traffic can only go in one direction (i.e. South) on Pennant Hills Road, then this must be logistically possible to plan.

- Significant concern regarding noise levels from 24/7 construction activities – The compound will comprise highly noise affected levels, with the relative noise impact more than double the impact to the next highest noise increase at any other construction affected area – and that for a compound situated in a residential area, with our property down hill in a valley. Should the compound go ahead as planned, we would like assurances that adequate mitigation measures will be in place to ensure that local residents are not unduly affected by construction-related noise pollution.
- Concern regarding other vehicle movements – the light vehicles may use local roads, including Trelawley Street, Nelson Street, and the lower parts of Loch Maree Avenue, to get access to the compound by avoiding the bottleneck at the Pennant Hills Road and Loch Maree Avenue intersection. In addition, they may park on the street, which already has scarce parking. Should this happen, safety will be a concern, as will the disruption and congestion on these residential roads. We would like guarantees that no construction related vehicles of any kind of size will be allowed to use these residential roads for access or parking in the interest of residential safety – and that this limitation will be policed.

Overall we believe the plan to locate the Trelawley Street Compound in a residential area with use of local roads for the proposed frequency of heavy vehicles is seriously flawed – in

particular as it would seem that there are other more appropriate locations to use. For example, the other side of Pennant Hills Road is not residential, and locating such a compound on that side of the road would therefore likely significantly reduce some of the serious flaws with the proposed compound.

Conclusion

We are supportive of the construction of the North Connex aiming to relieve Pennant Hills Road of heavy traffic, and we look forward to the future when the tunnel is open for traffic. We accept that there will be some unavoidable disruption during construction.

During construction, however, **should the Trelawley Street Compound and removal of spoils go ahead as proposed** without significant alterations addressing our serious concerns noted above, **we foresee significant negative impact and disruption to local living conditions that will severely reduce the enjoyment and safety of the local residential area.**

We note that most of these concerns should be possible to address and either eliminate or significantly reduce, in particular by moving the location of the compound, e.g. to the other side of Pennant Hills Road, which is a non-residential area.

As landlords we would consequently expect a significant reduction in the potential rent we can charge from tenants using our property during construction – and **we would expect compensation to duly cover our losses** in this respect.

We hope that the concerns and issues raised will be given proper and due consideration and will be addressed, as it is the quality and safety of the daily lives of local residents that stand to be greatly

affected for an extended period of time. Please feel free to contact us via email if our further input is required.

Kind regards,

Leon & Andrea Olsen
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