

12 September 2014

Director - Infrastructure Projects
Department of Planning and Environment
Number: SSI 13_6136
Major Projects Assessment
GPO Box 39
Sydney NSW 2001

NorthConnex Application Number: SSI 13_6136

Please find below my submission in response to the exhibition of the EIS for the NorthConnex Project.

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

The main reasons that I object to the project in its current state are briefly outlined below and I request that these reasons be considered and addressed by North Connex and the Department of Planning.

1. I currently have young two children who attend a pre-school and a primary school that are located 468 metres and 777 metres respectively, from the proposed placement of the northern ventilation stack. That the proposed stack will be **unfiltered** raises many issues that I believe have not been thoroughly researched or addressed in the planning stages of the project and the subsequent EIS.
2. I am gravely concerned for the short term and long term health impacts for my children, and all the other children (born and unborn) who live and/or attend school and many other activities within the proposed area. That they will be living, studying and playing in such close proximity to the **unfiltered** stack will expose them to levels of pollution generated from the high traffic volume on a day to day basis. I am also concerned about the health impacts for the wider community especially the elderly and those who have existing health conditions or are more susceptible to illness due to environmental influences e.g. asthmatics or other lung conditions.
3. I am not confident that the potential health impacts on children and the wider community have been sufficiently researched for the specific area in which the northern **unfiltered** ventilation stack will be located. What these health impacts could potentially be range from asthma, lung disease, heart disease, stroke, lung cancer, chronic diseases, birth defects and premature death to name a few. Where is the assurance and research that convinces me that there will be no damage to the growth and development of my children's lungs and brains? Scientific evidence shows that there is no safe limits of exposure to air pollution substances so why is the project not proposing **filtered** stacks that could at least decrease exposure and minimise some of the health risks? Japan has done it with their tunnels, so it is achievable.
4. Whilst I understand that there has been research and modelling conducted regarding the air quality in the proposed tunnel and the resulting emissions from the tunnel stack, the questions I wish to have addressed are:
 - a. What assumptions underpin the research/modelling?
 - b. What is the predicted mix of pollution in terms of particle size, chemical composition, toxicity level, quantities etc that our children and community will be exposed to in a

24 hour period, weekly, monthly, yearly, over ours and their lifetimes and subsequent generations?

- c. Has the inevitable increase in traffic flow, congestion, accidents, hold ups been factored into the modelling? What impact will these periods have on pollution levels both within and outside of the tunnel? How much are the health risks and impacts increased by these increased periods of pollution?
- d. What happens if the assumptions made to date are incorrect? Where to then?
- e. Why have placing **filter's** on the two stacks not been considered? Does the cost of filtering outweigh the cost of public health and safety?
- f. How do we teach our children about environmental issues such as sustainability and other environmental concerns when we are not leading by example and placing **filters** on the stacks to at least compensate for some of the pollution that is released into the environment? Combatting traffic congestion on Pennant Hills Road is extremely important but how we do it is of critical importance.
- g. Can we not look at world best practice and make an investment in pollution removal for now and the future?
- h. Have alternative sites for the **unfiltered** stack been considered that are not in a residential zone? if so where are the alternative sites and have the alternatives been researched and analysed? If not, why not?

To address my concerns I request that the following actions be undertaken:

- 1. Due to the many potential health concerns that have not been adequately researched or addressed in the current project plan, I respectfully request that the Department of Planning does not improve the project as it is currently presented.
- 2. Due to the many concerns and unanswered questions that have been raised I respectfully request the Department of Planning in conjunction with the contractor and community to conduct more specific research, modelling and collection of data specific to the Wahroonga, Pennant Hills and surrounding areas in relation to potential health impacts, pollution dispersion in relation to the specific topography and geography, quantities of pollutants emitted over varying periods and length of time, local and seasonal meteorological conditions and atmospheric chemical reactions. This data should then be used to test assumptions and models to ensure that the end plan is a true representation of the complex interplay of all the factors involved in improving the transport options in these areas.
- 3. That the Department of Planning, the contractor and the community take the time to look at all alternatives properly and transparently, and demonstrate due diligence with the intention of developing and implementing a proper plan that will seek to achieve the Best Outcome for all parties and one that has Public Health as the No.1 Priority.

Thank you for your time and consideration in reviewing my submission.

Margot McGibbon