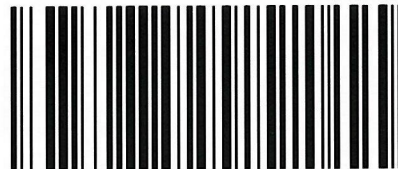
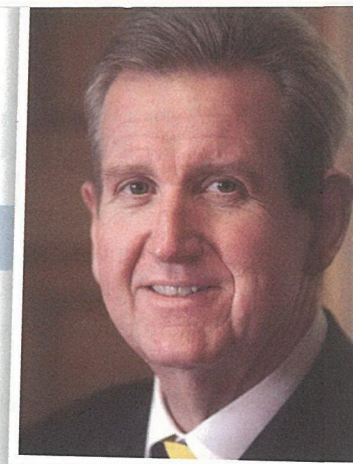


12 September 2014



PCU55802



Director – Infrastructure Projects
Department of Planning
Number SSI 13_6136 NorthConnex Motorway
Major Projects Assessment
GPO Box 39
SYDNEY NSW 2000



Dear Director,

I write to in relation to the Environmental Impact Statement for the proposed NorthConnex Motorway. As you will appreciate, the project is planned to run through my electorate of Ku-ring-gai and affects my local community.

At the outset I want to reiterate my longstanding support for the much sought after link between the M1 Pacific Motorway and the M2 Hills Motorway and to note that, in all my dealings with local residents and groups about the proposed NorthConnex project, all have expressed support for such a link.

Local residents understand the benefits the proposed link will deliver through reduced traffic on both Pennant Hills Road and the Pacific Highway.

However, as highlighted at a number of public forums and meetings—and undoubtedly in submissions to this EIS process—there are a number of issues and concerns held about the current plans for the link:

Air quality

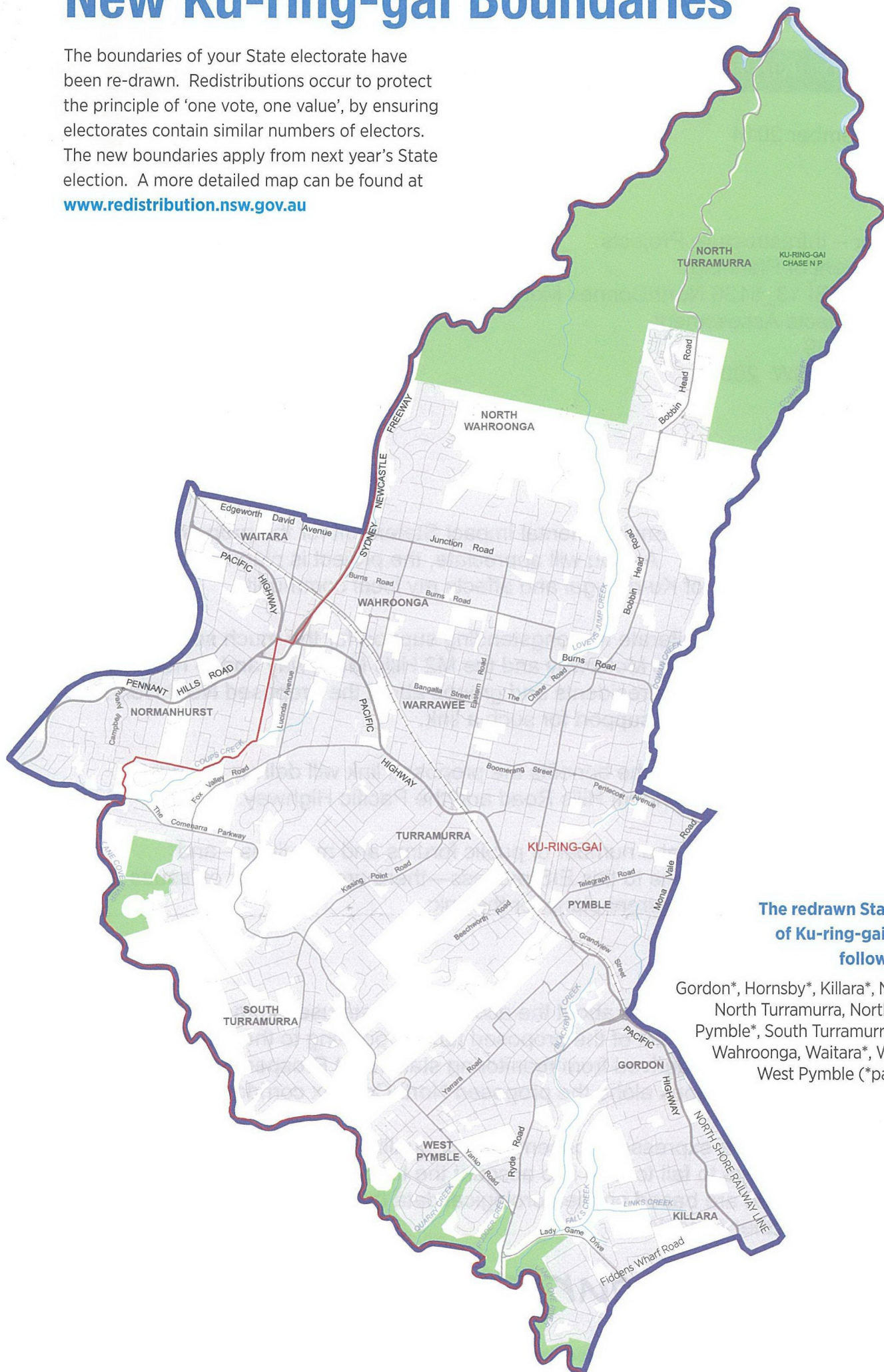
- residents are concerned about the accuracy of data used in modelling the likely air quality impact of the proposed tunnel, pointing to the fact that it is based upon data derived from monitoring stations at Prospect and Lindfield rather than locations along the proposed NorthConnex corridor.
- residents have expressed concern that air quality modelling for the northern outlet appears to fail to take into account the topography of the proposed location and are based on meteorological data that doesn't reflect 'normal' local weather conditions.

Working for our community



New Ku-ring-gai Boundaries

The boundaries of your State electorate have been re-drawn. Redistributions occur to protect the principle of 'one vote, one value', by ensuring electorates contain similar numbers of electors. The new boundaries apply from next year's State election. A more detailed map can be found at www.redistribution.nsw.gov.au



The redrawn State electorate of Ku-ring-gai includes the following suburbs:

Gordon*, Hornsby*, Killara*, Normanhurst*, North Turramurra, North Wahroonga, Pymble*, South Turramurra, Turramurra, Wahroonga, Waitara*, Warrawee, and West Pymble (*part of suburb).

- residents have also raised questions about whether pollution emissions from heavy vehicles have been underestimated and raised similar concerns about estimates made about likely emissions from diesel vehicles.

Northern ventilation outlet

- residents are strongly concerned about the plan to locate the northern outlet close to homes and in the vicinity of a number of schools. This is a concern I share and, as with the Lane Cove Tunnel, my preferred option is to locate the outlet within the Hornsby industrial estate.

Filtration

- the strongest concern raised by residents has related to potential harm caused by the ventilation outlet and the demand to include filters in the northern and southern outlets. I understand the retro fitting of filters on the M5 Motorway had a negligible impact on air quality. But given the increasing use of road tunnels to overcome congestion caused by under investment in road and public transport by previous governments, a case can be made for the inclusion of filters in the NorthConnex project to determine their effectiveness. Obviously such a decision would have to consider any impact upon the project's financial viability.

Northern portal

- residents have expressed a view that the portal should be located two kilometres further north of the currently proposed location. Understanding that this would have an impact upon the cost of the project—and presumably the level of the tolls—I have previously asked the Minister for Roads on whether such a change could be made without threatening the financial viability of the proposed link.
- residents are also concerned that, while current plans rule out portal emissions, the issue of such emissions in the future is not addressed. Even though I understand that, was such a change to be proposed in future it would require an EIS to be undertaken, it would seem prudent to ensure the current project was designed to avoid this possibility.

Groundwater

- residents have raised questions about whether the EIS adequately address the impact of the proposed tunnel upon groundwater, whether along the tunnel route or adjacent to the portals where the impact could adversely affect homes.

Traffic

- besides concerns about traffic management during the construction of the proposed links, residents have also worried about possible adverse impact on Pennant Hills Road of northbound traffic trying to leave Sydney if current plans for a single northbound lane on the M1 at Wahroonga remain unchanged.
- the chief benefit advanced for the NorthConnex project is the removal of heavy vehicles from Pennant Hills Road. In my view, this outcome—and additional the benefit of removing similar vehicles from the Pacific Highway and Ryde Road—can only be guaranteed if eligible heavy vehicles are required to use the proposed tunnel.

M1/Pacific Highway interchange

- I am also aware that, as part of this EIS process, one resident has submitted a proposal to eliminate the need for traffic lights at the Pacific Highway/M1 overpass at Wahroonga. Removal of these lights would improve local traffic flow after Northconnex was completed. (A diagram of the proposal is attached.)

I trust that these and other concerns raised by residents will be dealt with in the EIS process. NorthConnex offers, not only a solution to a decades old traffic problem, but the opportunity to build such a project in a way that enhances the liveability of affected parts of our city for current and future residents.

Yours sincerely



Barry O'Farrell

