

11 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**

This feedback is my strenuous **OBJECTION** and response to the current exhibition of the EIS for NorthConnex.

My name is [REDACTED] and I have lived in the Wahroonga area since the age of 11 (35 years ago), my wife grew up in Pymble and went to school in Normanhurst and both my 7 year old son and 13 year old daughter have spent their entire lives living and going to school in Wahroonga and Normanhurst.

We bought a heritage listed property [REDACTED] in 2006 at great expense.

We had previously owned 2 separate heritage façade properties [REDACTED] and felt that the Wahroonga community and Hornsby Council (responsible for all 3 properties) were genuine supporters of the young and old communities that exist within and the investment that young families were putting into these heritage homes to protect the cultural richness of the community and the historical significance that makes the area what it is today.

This area is NOT appropriate for a major tunnel portal and its associated stack.

Part of the reason that the residential property market is in such high demand in this area, is its direct relationship to the very large proportion of high quality schools in the area catering for over 9,000 school students.

Large volumes of school students are NOT appropriate “bio filters” for unfiltered pollutions stacks and tunnel PORTALS.

In 2006 when we bought our current house (less than 150 meters from the currently proposed northern interchange which includes an unfiltered portal and unfiltered stack), being previous property owners in [REDACTED] we were fully aware of the proposed Purple, blue, yellow and red options ALL of which stopped at corner and intersection of Pacific Highway and Pennant Hills Road, with the interchange flagged as being in this position and tie in works north of Edgeworth David Ave Overpass by up to 1 km. It was with this knowledge at the time that we believed our new property in Churchill Ave would happily be the house that we intended to stay in "until the kids left home".

Today we find ourselves in a position where NorthConnex have now suddenly (in March '14), with no notice, no monitoring and no planning have change the proposed interchanges (flagged for 8 years) at the last minute and now decided to plonk a portal and smoke stack in our back yard. I do not understand how they can legally or more importantly ethically do this, let alone through appropriate planning permission processes? Please explain this process to me.

As a result of NorthConnex never actually planning to put the portal or the stack where it was suddenly proposed to be in March'14, none of NorthConnex previous communication was ever targeted in this residential area, neither was any of its preliminary monitoring. How was this allowed to happen? Please explain.

So, enough about myself and my family, the following will expand more specifically on some explicit issues as they relate to myself, my young family, our financial security and most importantly, our combined priceless health, all of which NorthConnex appears to be planning to devastate simply to save a few dollars today on the length of their tunnel versus our financial security and health that ultimately the public purse will need to manage.

I have a high level of concern regarding the following issues that I believe NorthConnex and the Department of Planning should address:

1. The notification process to the effected residents of the Northern portal and stack was non-existent. The original plan NEVER intended the Northern portal and stack to be located where they are currently proposed. Given the appropriate notification process has not been undertaken for the current submission, a new submission should be tendered by NorthConnex with the appropriate community engagement following accordingly.
2. Given the lack of accurate information ie lack of accurate interchange information in the original submission for the purple, blue, yellow or red options, this process should be undertaken again with accurate information provided to the appropriately affected areas of the community accordingly.
3. I am concerned that the placement of the Northern stack is unnecessarily in the middle of a residential area with over 9,000 school children in close proximity. The stack should be relocated back to the originally proposed intersection of the Pacific Highway and Pennant Hills Road or moved at least 1km north of the Edgeworth David Overpass as originally proposed. The latter option is the preferred option as this also puts this industrial like infrastructure into a pre-existing industrial like environment where it belongs.
4. I am also concerned that there are also a number of aged care facilities and hospitals within the same immediate proximity. These residents are understandably even more susceptible to the pollutants NorthConnex are planning to expose the community to and should be equally be protected from same. The stack should be relocated back to the originally proposed intersection

of the Pacific Highway and Pennant Hills Road or moved at least 1km north of the Edgeworth David Overpass as originally proposed. The latter option is the preferred option as this also puts this industrial like infrastructure into a pre-existing industrial like environment where it belongs.

5. Given the original plans NEVER intended for a stack to be located in this area, I am significantly concerned that the appropriate level of noise and pollution monitoring in the appropriate locations for the appropriate durations have not been undertaken. The Department of Planning should insist that this monitoring (appropriate location and duration) be undertaken prior to, during and after by either NorthConnex or preferably by an independent consultant hired by the Department of Planning and paid for by NorthConnex.
6. I am concerned that there is no provision or adequate penalties for NorthConnex not meeting the air pollution or noise constraints. There needs to be strict conditions, monitoring (fully paid for by NorthConnex) and penalties, to ensure compliance to all of these standards.
7. If and when local residents suffer from air pollution and noise pollution related issues, what are NorthConnex and the Department of Planning going to do about it? Both need to be liable for the cancer treatments, lung diseases, heart failures, stress and depression issues resulting from the direct impact of this infrastructure.
8. I cannot understand why the portal has been moved from its originally intended locations, especially since it now results in a significant exit incline. This exit incline will cause all traffic to work harder with excessive engine noise and pollutants being expelled directly before exiting the tunnel, spewing raw pollutants (noise and air) into the immediate vicinity. The tunnel should be extended into the local industrial area, allowing a flat exit from the tunnel and for portal and stack emissions to be disbursed within an existing industrial zone.
9. I am concerned that the noise pollution monitoring was not performed in the appropriate areas and as such have created an artificial and incorrect baseline for the EIS. It is the residence that will be impacted by noise and as such the monitoring stations should have been located with the residential areas that will be impacted . . . in particular by the trumpeted effect of 9km of noise through the portal! As such, placing a single noise monitor next to the existing freeway as the only noise monitor point for the portal is RIDICULOUS and completely inappropriate as an adequate baseline.
10. Wahroonga, for all of its beauty and benefits, does suffer from semi regular flight path noise directly above the recently identified Northern exit portal and stack. As such any noise recording done to create baseline data, should have had the aircraft noise excluded from the maximum noise levels in the area as these are infrequent and specific to the flight path. There is extensive information available from a local northern aircraft noise monitoring group that check for aircraft noise tolerance in the area against acceptable policy. NorthConnex need to undertake appropriate monitoring for a full year throughout the proposed impacted residential area to form an appropriate baseline that excludes air traffic.
11. Like the complete lack of appropriate noise level monitoring in the residential areas directly impacted by the portal and the stack, there has been a complete lack of appropriate air pollution monitoring performed in the recently targeted residential area proposed for the portal and the stack. NorthConnex need to locate a significant number of air pollution monitors within the recently identified impacted residential area (NOT the original areas that they thought they were going to impact) and monitor for an extended period of time (minimum 1 year) to gain an appropriate level of information about local weather conditions given the intent to dump 9km of diesel exhaust from 80,000 trucks into the local residential environment.

12. The current EIS does not accurately reflect all of the heritage properties of significance within the proposed impact area. 27 Churchill Ave certainly has been flagged by Hornsby Council as a property of Heritage Significance as they not only required extensive historical reports to this effect, they also contributed financially to ensuring its ongoing significance, yet the NorthConnex EIS fails to acknowledge its existence. The Department of Planning need to undertake an independent assessment of the local properties to gain an “accurate” assessment of the heritage significance of the local area that NorthConnex is intending to corrupt with this industrial infrastructure.
13. I am no greenie, but I do enjoy the various wildlife that frequents the area and in particular my house. My family and I often have meals and entertain on our back deck (as most Aussies like to do) and we in particular like to enjoy the tranquillity of our environment and the local birdlife that is attracted to same. This includes all number of parrots, honey eaters and your more generic birdlife as well as frogs. We do not have a pond in or near our backyard that I am aware of, however, we enjoy the sound of the local frogs singing out to each other. Here is a photo of a frog that visited the other day:



- As I say, I’m no greenie, so I can’t tell you what sort of frog it is, I don’t need to know, I just like to know they are around. However, I suspect that NorthConnex and the Department of Planning does not know what sort of frog this is either or how many of them are around, because the proposed location for the portal and the stack has only recently been changed. These frogs and all of the native flora and fauna in the area need to be accurately recorded and monitored over the course of a year to create an accurate baseline. I suggest this due to what little I do know about frogs, is that they are very sensitive environmental barometers and as such are good early indicators of a problem in the environment.
14. Another interesting phenonemen that occurs from time in the local area is the complete and total white wash fogs that roll in and sit in the local area. I have included a photo from my back deck just the other morning of this effect, where you can barely see the house directly behind us due to the thick dense fog that was sitting in the local area:



This is obviously a great example of the complete lack of natural air flow that frequents the local area and as such would be completely ineffective at dealing with vast volumes of pollutants attempting to be dispersed into the local residential area from a 9km long tunnel full of 80,000 diesel trucks. NorthConnex, the Department of Planning and / or an independent need to perform a detailed, accurate and at least full year study of the specific local weather patterns to understand why this residential area is NOT the appropriate place to position a piece of industrial infrastructure such as a tunnel portal and stack.

15. NorthConnex have said that the “portal” is excluded from the EIS as it is not expected (by them) to generate any increased noise or air pollution. The Department of Planning should insist that this is simply unacceptable for a tunnel of this length and a proposal of this nature and all components of the project should operate under the same level of scrutiny, compliance and punishment.
16. There are various statistics about the number of accidents on Pennant Hills Road each year, generally the assumption would seem to be about 200 per year. Even if we assume 10% of this number due to lack of traffic lights within the tunnel, that number then becomes 20 per year. What happens in the tunnel and more importantly for the Northern Interchange, the portal and stack during these incidents? Specifically, what are the local residents around the proposed portals going to be exposed to during these events? Are we going to be expected to have to leave our homes up to 20 times per year due to excessive levels of pollutants? Are we going to have to leave our residential homes once per year due to excessive levels of pollutants? When we do have to leave, who is going to pay for us to stay somewhere else? NorthConnex or the Department of Planning? When we have to throw out our Linen Covered couches because the smell and toxins cannot be removed, who is going to pay to replace them? NorthConnex or the Department of Planning? How will these claims be processed, administered and handled? It will happen, NorthConnex has said as much in its forums, as such the processes should be put in place now, or preferably, the portal and stack not placed in a residential area and therefore the problem avoided completely.
17. Our household has been in a state of turmoil since the NorthConnex announcement in March’14 where completely out of the blue, unaligned with any communication by anyone about this

proposed project to date, the portal and stack were flagged to be installed just 150m from our back door. I want to know what NorthConnex and the Department of Planning are going to do about the current and ongoing mental anguish this has and is causing. Not just the token 1 – 3 hrs of counselling NorthConnex has offered, but appropriate programs to deal with the angst that this commercial venture is having on myself, my wife and my children?

18. We have considered moving house early last year (2013). . . however, as late as July'13 we assessed the market and decided to perform extensive renovations on our current family home as opposed to moving due to the costs associated with moving and the overall positive experience of living in the area that we did. We assessed the Purple, Blue, Yellow and Red proposals at this time and secure in the mis-belief that these all only extended as far as the intersection of the Pacific Highway and Pennant Hills road and as such happily proceeded with our 20+ year renovation. Having just finished these renovations in Dec'13 we thought we were set to see in our retirement. You cannot begin to understand the angst, stress and frustration caused by the deliberate and evasive miscommunication associated with the last minute Mar'14 decision to move the portal and stack into our back yard. A complete lack of ethics and due process appears to be the root cause, I would like a full explanation as to how and why this was allowed to happen the way it did.
19. As a father and a husband, I have always strived to provide for and protect my family. This NorthConnex proposal has ruined both of these simple pursuits. My house, something that we have poured all of our love, time, energy and finance into in the vain attempt of creating our single biggest asset has been decimated by this abhorrent industrial infrastructure. My ability to protect my family, the reason I didn't buy a cheaper property in an industrial area in the first place and the reason I work the long hours that I do, has been completely compromised by the ill thought and commercially driven project at mine and my family's expense. With my basic purposes in life being potentially compromised by NorthConnex, the degree of hate, spite, helplessness and depression are firmly placed at the Department of Planning's feet. I hope that community, humanity and common sense (extend the tunnel on a flat trajectory into an industrial area) are upheld above short term greed.

In summary, I understand that a tunnel between the freeway and the M2 will benefit NorthConnex and their future proposed roads projects around the M2.

I also understand that the Pennant Hills community will benefit from reduced road traffic.

However, I do not believe that this needs to be at the expense of the Wahroonga Conservation Area. The proposal to have the tie in at least 1km north of the Edgeworth David overpass and therefore provide a level tunnel exit into the Hornsby industrial area is a far more appropriate solution to this problem and the cumulative communities impacted by this development. Any short term financial pain to NorthConnex to execute this proposal in an entirely ethical and professional manner will far outweigh the ongoing financial burden that the local, state and federal governments will experience as they attempt to look after an increasing level of health related issues as a result of prolonged exposure to pollutants from unfiltered portals and stacks by local residents including my family.

This feedback has been provided on the assumption that all the questions raised within this feedback that **VIOLENTLY AND SEVERLY OBJECTS** to the NorthConnex project will be responded to and addressed individually. All of my contact details have been included in the spirit of this

theoretical two way transparency and as such, I await NorthConnex and the Department of Planning's feedback on each and every question raised.

Yours faithfully

A solid black horizontal bar used to redact a signature.