

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

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

I strongly object to the NorthConnex project. I ask that the design be reviewed in its entirety or abandoned. In absence of this, the ventilation stack must be moved out of the community. The current proposal is dangerous and unacceptable; an alternative must be found.

There are a number of reasons why I object to this proposal:

1. **Unsatisfactory design and planning:** It is unacceptable that a project with such grave consequences for the community should be constructed with insufficient planning, risk assessment or concern for the elderly and young children that live in the area. If this were a commercial or industrial project with such dangerous health effects, there would be absolutely no dissent in the rejection of such a proposal.
2. **Proven health effects:** There will be serious health effects during the construction and operation phases of the project. This will come from the dust generated from construction and transport of materials, as well as the rapidly increasing number of cars to use tunnel once completed. These tunnel pollutants will emerge from the entrance/exit of the tunnel and from the tunnel ventilation stack. There is only flawed data available modelling the emissions from both of these. There are many dangerous pollutants in car exhaust, and the increased concentration of these in the community will certainly exacerbate serious health problems.
3. **Inaccurate weather mapping:** The studies done regarding the weather patterns in Wahroonga and surrounding suburbs do not use data from the suburb and as such cannot satisfactorily predict the weather patterns and therefore distribution of emissions from the stack. As such there can be no guarantee that pollutants will not be deposited on homes, schools, day care centres or aged care developments.
4. **Insufficient community consultation:** There was no community consultation during the design phase of this project. If plans are not abandoned there needs to be ongoing community consultation to ensure impacts are minimised. The project will tear at the fabric of the local community with non-stop construction noise, dust and traffic. Major construction works will irreversibly degrade what has been a safe, healthy environment for everyone from young families to retired couples.

The community will then be constantly plagued by pollution of an unknown quantity and frequency, due to the lack of comprehensive weather pattern surveys and modelling.

5. **Unnecessary and wrongly prioritised government expenditure:** This project is an unsolicited offer from a private company, and is not actually needed in NSW. It is a chance to make road travel more expensive for all drivers and will have very little reduction effect on the cars travelling through this part of Sydney. The NorthConnex proposal focuses on polluting, inefficient private cars and road freight as transport for the future. I ask the NSW Government to consider making safer, cleaner forms of transport a greater priority; the local rail and bus system could be vastly upgraded. As a voter and NSW resident, I ask to focus policy on fighting climate change through emissions reductions, rather than taking measures that will actually facilitate them.

With the number of children attending the many schools in the local area, it is hard to believe that there is no alternative to this project, and particularly to the placement of the ventilation stack in Wahroonga. The respiratory and circulatory systems of these children will be damaged irreparably by the increased toxic emissions from a major tunnel project. The risks will be worsened for those children who both live and go to school in close proximity to the stack. There is emerging research linking these pollutions to genetic mutations. It takes only common sense and a compassionate heart to take the precaution of moving the ventilation stack, a guaranteed source of carcinogenic toxins, away from these young developing bodies.

We trust our elected representatives to resist the temptation of immediate project success and box ticking to ensure the development of a healthy, sustainable state in the future. We ask government to create useful amenities for us, the citizens, whilst minimising negative impacts. This project will increase the demand for healthcare in the future, and will not solve traffic congestion problems. An alternative might be more costly, but will be a better quality product for Sydney residents.

An alternative to this negligent project proposal must be sought; it may cost more, but the savings in the lives and wellbeing of our community will be priceless.

*Name Withheld*

Wahroonga NSW 2076