

**James Fiander**  
Hills Transport Working Group  
PO Box 6099  
ROUSE HILL TOWN CENTRE, NSW 2155

Thursday 24 May 2012

**Attention: Director, Infrastructure Projects**  
Major Projects Assessment  
Department of Planning and Infrastructure  
GPO Box 39  
SYDNEY, NSW 2001

**CC: Mr Rodd Staples, Project Director, North West Rail Link**

To Whom It May Concern:

I write, as Chair, on behalf of the Hills Transport Working Group in response to the *North West Rail Link Environmental Impact Statement No 1 (EIS1) Summary*.

The Hills Transport Working Group was formed in 2010 to create a vehicle for the community to influence positive transport changes in and around the Hills District. Since creation, community membership has grown to over 1,200 members.

The Hills Transport Working Group holds at its core the goal of improving integrated transport solutions for North Western Sydney. A completely integrated transport system incorporating railways, buses, cars, cycling, walking and all other forms of transport to provide the best possible transport outcomes for North Western Sydney residents, commuters and visitors travelling to, from and through our region.

Below, I have included several areas in which Members of the Hills Transport Working Group and the broader community have expressed an interest or concern.

#### **Car Parks**

A total of 4,000 car spaces are contemplated in this EIS. In previous feedback, The Hills Transport Working Group has expressed concern that this number represents a considerable under estimation in the number of car spaces that will be required. The Working Group maintains that there is an inadequate provision of car spaces and inadequate planning for the implementation of those car spaces.

#### **Concrete building plant**

The Hills Transport Working Group notes that no community consultation has been conducted regarding the concrete building plant proposed for Memorial Avenue, Kellyville. The EIS1 Summary also provides no detail regarding the times of operation, the expected longevity of the concrete building plant or the expected impacts on local amenity and environment of establishing an industrial complex in a light residential. The Hills Transport Working Group requests that more information be provided regarding this facility and recommends that considerable additional community consultation be conducted immediately.

#### **Traffic Management and Local Roads**

The EIS1 summary does not address the issue of traffic management along the alignment of the North West Rail Link. Many local roads along the current alignment are narrow and already heavily congested during peak travel times and there does not appear to have been any consideration given to the future demand on these roads nor is any local road widening contemplated.

Traffic management, traffic mitigation and road widening during construction at various sites along the route also does not appear to have been considered. In peak hour during the construction period, it is The Hills Transport Working Group's recommendation that major roads such as Castle Hill Rd, Windsor Rd, Old Northern Rd, Pennant Hills Rd and Old Windsor Rd be off limits to construction traffic.

### **Building removal and property acquisition**

It appears that removal of buildings and land acquisitions for construction, for the footprint of stations, for access to rail infrastructure and the train corridor itself were not considered in the EIS1 Summary. Residents of areas along the proposed alignment have expressed considerable concern regarding compulsory land acquisition. Adequate consultation does not appear to have been conducted. The Hills Transport Working Group recommends that the NWRL Project Team conduct considerable additional consultation in regards to the alignment and impacts to communities. In the circumstance that compulsory land acquisition is required, it is the Hills Transport Working Group's recommendation that fair market value plus an additional premium for inconvenience costs be paid to land holders.

### **Noise levels**

It is understood that construction works are going to generate noise and affect community amenity for several years during construction. EIS1 proposes a series of measures, which may mitigate sound pollution but the effectiveness of these measures is not quantified. The EIS1 Summary provides no defined maximum sound tolerance and no mechanism for continuously monitoring sound pollution.

Despite regular working hours being defined, it is noted that heavy equipment contractors will be permitted to carry out works 24 hours a day, seven days a week in residential areas. Expected noise levels and guidelines around discontinuing work at specific volumes of noise do not appear to have been considered. The Hills Transport Working Group holds considerable concern for the public amenity of Members and residents living within the vicinity of construction sites along the alignment.

Based on publicly available information from equivalent projects around the world, The Hills Transport Working Group recommends noise be limited to 80 dB and that noise levels be actively monitored for proposed working hours (7-6pm). If noise exceeds this then works should stop until sound mitigating measures are put in place. Outside of these hours, noise should be limited to 60dB.

### **Local amenity**

During construction, the cleanliness and local amenity of residential areas surrounding the construction site does not appear to have been considered in the EIS1 Summary. Residents and Hills Transport Working Group Members have expressed concern regarding trucks moving through predominately residential areas. It is our recommendation that trucks be covered at all times and that trucks be hosed down with recycled water before leaving the construction site to keep dust down.

The Hills Transport Working Group also notes that there appears to have been no provision made within the EIS1 Summary for 'make good' of local roads used to travel to and from construction sites. It is our recommendation that it be stipulated in construction contracts that wear and tear on local roads due to additional heavy vehicle use be the responsibility of the contractor to 'make good'. Alleviating the burden on rate payers to repair local roads and gutters due to this project.

### **Emergency Exits**

The Hills Transport Working Group note that some features of the twin tunnels have been detailed, we were however unable to locate any reference to safety features of the tunnels within the Summary document. How will emergencies be handled during the construction period? Will there be emergency exit tunnels returning

passengers to the surface in the case of a fire or other event within the train tunnel? What other safety features will be included in the design? And what affect will this have on the footprint of the North West Rail Link at ground level?

### **Indigenous Plant Survey**

The EIS1 Summary provides for a qualified ecologist to be on site during and after construction, however The Hills Transport Working Group recommends that an indigenous plant and animal survey be completed well before the start of construction to ensure listed and endangered flora and fauna are not put in danger and ensure the construction timetable is not jeopardised.

### **'Sky train'**

Hills Transport Working Group Members and residents have expressed considerable concern regarding impacts on noise, environment and local amenity due to the 'sky train'. The artist's impressions of the 'sky train' used within the EIS1 Summary show no provision for sound or safety barriers and it is the opinion of the Hills Transport Working Group that the 'sky train' is far from the best outcome for residents in North Western Sydney.

It is noted that the 'sky train' is not what was promised, not what was included in the North West Rail Link Overview released in July 2011 and appears to have been chosen without any consultation with the community. The decision appears to have been made solely on a monetary basis with little or no concern for impacts on local residential areas.

It is also noted that, upon our inquiry, the Hills Transport Working Group were advised that comments relating to the 'sky train' are outside of the scope of EIS1 and will be handled as part of the EIS2 process. The Hills Transport Working Group holds grave concerns regarding this process. The government has requested planning approval, seemingly 'locking in' the 'sky train' option as part of the EIS1 process while not consulting the community until well after the decision is made.

The Hills Transport Working Group has requested a briefing regarding noise and vibration impacts to local amenity caused by the 'sky train'. Despite repeated attempts to solicit a meeting, the Project team has declined, directing us to attend generalist information sessions which upon attendance were not staffed by appropriately qualified or informed personnel. Based on the views of Members, Residents and available information at the time of this letter, The Hills Transport Working Group has formed the view that it cannot support the proposed 'Sky Train' option for the North West Rail Link.

### **Support for the North West Rail Link**

The Hills Transport Working Group is broadly supportive of the North West Rail Link project and we look forward to continued engagement with the Project Team over the coming months and years until this project is ultimately realised.

Yours faithfully,

James Fiander - Chair  
*on behalf of the Hills Transport Working Group Steering Committee*