



**Submission to the Department of Planning and Infrastructure  
North West Rail Link – Castle Hill**

**From  
The Owners Corporation  
Northpoint Apartments, 9 Garthowen Cres, Castle Hill NSW**



**North West Rail Link - Major Civil Construction Works**

**North West Rail Link - Staged State Significant Infrastructure Modification**

**Application No: SSI-5100**

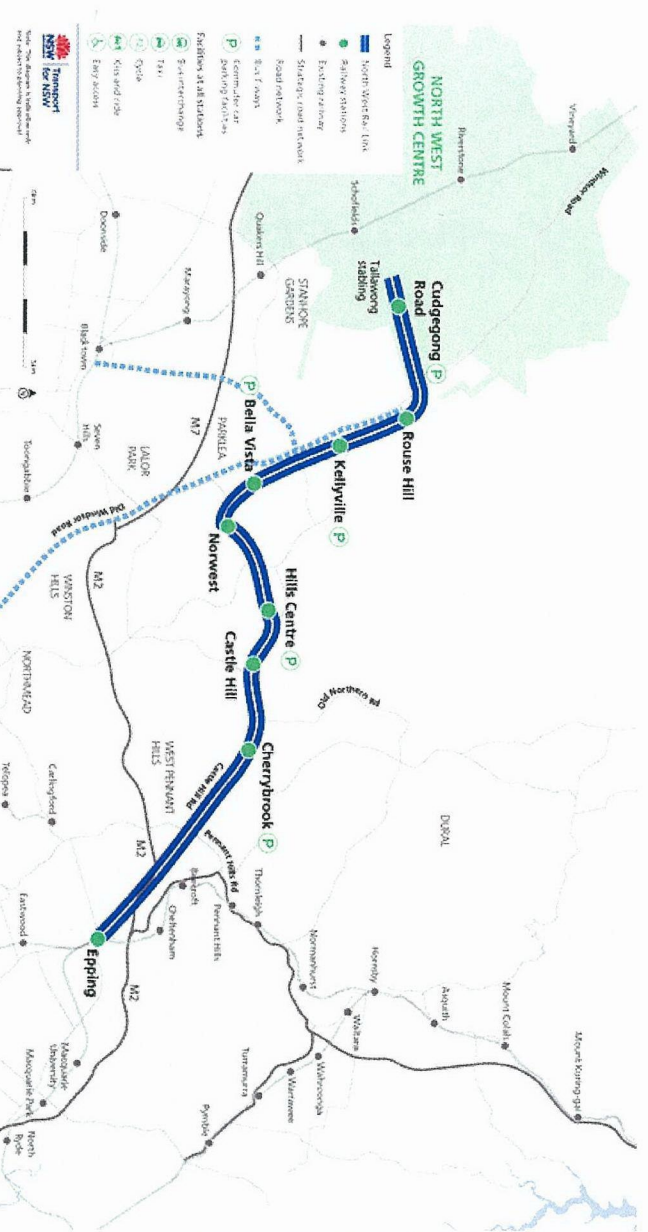
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## Introduction:

**Northpoint Apartments** are an award winning, exclusive apartment complex completed in July 2011. They are presently over 50% occupied by their owners. There are no rental or investment purchasers. They are marketed exclusively for the developer by Wiseberry Matthews & Kauley Real Estate, Baukham Hills.

The Executive Committee of the Northpoint Owners Corporation is preparing this Submission on behalf of all owners, and all owners have had the opportunity for input. As owners, we need to ensure that the relevant authorities understand our position concerning the building of the North West Rail Link, as it affects our lifestyle and living environment here at Castle Hill. This is due to the fact that the main construction / site works takes place approximately one hundred meters from our complex. The tunneling process is actually presently aligned under the north west corner of our complex.



## The Owners involved are:

- |               |   |                               |
|---------------|---|-------------------------------|
| • Apartment 1 | - | Tony & Cindy Licastro         |
| • Apartment 2 | - | Wendy Leysen                  |
| • Apartment 5 | - | Tony & Margaret Edwards       |
| • Apartment 6 | - | Alejandro and Caroline Araujo |
| • Apartment 8 | - | Bob & Lorraine Redmond        |



- Apartment 9 - Helen Scott
- Apartment 10 - Brian & Lynette Baines
- Apartment 12 - Ralph & Sandra Cadman
- Apartment 16 - Josef & Brigitte Haslinger
- Apartment 18 - Murray & Jan Baldwin
- Apartment 22 - Denis & Benita Woods
- Apartment 23 - John & Dorothy Planner
- Apartment 24 - John & Lynette Boyes
- Apartment 25 - Kamal & Nina Dastyari
- Apartment 27 - Phil & Lindy Crocker
- Apartment 28 - Owner not identified
- Apartment 29 - Barry & Barbara Halpin
- Apartments 3 / 4 / 7 / 11 / 13 / 14 - Peter & Helen McNamee
- Apartments 15 / 17 / 19 / 20 / 21 / 26 - Peter & Helen McNamee

### **Rationale:**

We as owners living at Northpoint Apartments do not oppose the construction of the North West Rail Link and associated works. We understand that when completed and operational the North West Rail Link will add value to our complex by the proximity of another form of available public transport. The train line will further supplement the excellent bus service already established in the Castle Hill area.

The majority of us are owners who have made a fundamental choice to alter our life style by selling our substantial larger houses / properties to embrace apartment living with the normal upkeep and chores undertaken by third parties. The bulk of owners have retired from full time employment but remain in the workforce by casual / contract work commitments as the opportunities arise.

Our relocation to the Northpoint Apartments entailed a significant cost to ensure that our new premises were of an excellent design and prestigious fit-out; the entire complex and gardens were visually attractive and presented to the highest standard. There is close access to transport and shopping centres and the building itself catered for flat paths and stair-less access. All these attributes were found at Northpoint Apartments incorporating the image and prestige that we desired.

There is no doubt that if we as purchasers had realised the early commencement date of this project, and the scoped alignment of the rail line tunnel, that perhaps a number of us may have had serious considerations as to the purchase of our Apartment until such works had been completed.

The Northpoint Owners appreciate receipt of the information provided by Katherine Martin and other members of the North West Rail Link Team, and the response to our request for provision of an electronic copy of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Stage 1 – Major Civil Construction Works.

This additional information has been very useful, particularly in respect to the geological data and the location and tunnel depth in the vicinity of Northpoint, plus some preliminary acoustic data.

It is noted that one rail tunnel will be located partly under the north-west corner of Northpoint Building B, and the other tunnel under the southern side of Building A. It is also noted that the south-eastern corner of the Crossover Cavern will be located under the north-west corner of Northpoint Building B.

Our Owners are therefore concerned about the impact on the buildings and lifestyle amenity not only during the construction phase, but also during ongoing operation of the railway system.

### **Objective:**

To ensure that we as owner-residents at Northpoint Apartments are able to live in a comfortable, safe and problem free environment during the construction and operation of the North West Rail Link at Castle Hill.

It is also important that the sustainability of the construction phase undertake to rectify recurring problems that would unreasonably impact upon the wellbeing, comfort and lifestyle of our owners. We understand that the twenty four hour continuance of the site works is necessary to achieve the desired political outcome, but that achievement should not be to the detriment of residents living in close proximity to the site works.

Many of the owners here at Northpoint Apartments have been in significant positions of professional authority during their long working lives. Accordingly, we well understand the compliance regime associated with undertaking such massive construction works in accordance with many Australian Standards, Building Codes, Council Regulations as well as Legislated Acts / Regulations concerning noise and Work, Health & Safety.

It would be disappointing if our concerns and enquiries during the tenure of these works were not dealt with expediently and professionally and with the care we felt they deserve.



### **Construction Phase:**

Concerns relating to the construction phase are highlighted in part by our close proximity to the major work involved in construction of the Castle Hill Railway Station. The EIS has documented measures to minimise the impacts of noise and dust during daytime and night time operations. We trust that the proposed measures will be successfully implemented.

Construction of the Crossover Cavern is of greater concern, as the south-eastern corner of the Cavern is proposed to be located under the north-west corner of Northpoint Building B. The roof of the Cavern structure appears to be just 20 metres below the level of the Northpoint basement parking area. We request a guarantee that there will be no structural or other damage to our building as a result of construction activities, and that regular monitoring will be conducted.

It is noted that the Tunnel Boring Machine (TBM) typically travels at 20 metres per day. However as the machine approaches the Crossover Cavern it is possible that progress may occur at a slower speed, resulting in an extended time period in our vicinity. As with the Crossover Cavern, we request a guarantee that there will be no structural or other damage to our building as a result of tunnel boring and other construction activities, and that regular monitoring will be conducted.

**Noise and vibration during the construction phase** - During construction of the Crossover Cavern, we request that night time construction noise experienced in any Northpoint Apartment is limited to 30dbA. Compliance may be assisted by having night time work occur in locations of the worksite further removed from the eastern end.

It has been observed that for the period in which the TBM is operating in some locations, noise levels inside adjacent buildings may reach levels of 40 – 45 dbA for a period of several days. We trust that this will not occur when the TBM is operating under Northpoint Buildings A and B. However we note the suggestion that if this high noise level is expected, short term alternative accommodation may be provided.

### **Rail Link Timetable Operations Post-Completion:**

**Noise and vibration during rail operation** - It is noted that operational noise levels are currently being assessed. The information provided by the Acoustic Consultant, Conrad Webber, is much appreciated. We have also conducted a preliminary review of the recently released “Interim guidelines: assessment of noise from rail infrastructure projects”, and look forward to further discussion with Conrad Webber.

However at this early stage we have noted that operational sound levels from the Crossover Cavern may be of concern, and that a high standard of sound attenuation may be necessary to achieve an acceptable noise level in all Northpoint Apartments. We also require specific information on sound transmission through the depth of Ashfield Shale which lies between the railway tunnels and the basement structure of the Northpoint Apartment buildings. Both Block A & Block B of Northpoint Apartments are linked by a large, common, underground basement garage level.



## **Outcomes:**

The owners of Northpoint Apartments have compiled the below concerns that will have a direct and influential bearing upon our lifestyle and general wellbeing over the next six years.



**Construction** work noise in early morning and late at night.

**Dust** for hundreds of trucks accessing McMullen Ave to remove soil from construction site.

**Parking** of workers' vehicles in Garthowen Cres to the detriment of residents and their visitors – this aspect will also be canvassed with The Hills Shire Council.

**Relocation** of the present Bus Interchange from Old Northern Rd – it needs to be close and accessible by flat and well maintained footpaths.

**Vibration** from the tunneling process causing building damage – wall / roof cracks – to our Apartments, landscape garden walls and paths.

**Operational** train noise through tunnels following post-construction

**Difficulty** in accessing our current medical practices via foot if the McMullen Ave and Old Northern Rd footpaths are continually damaged by heavy machinery and truck movements.

It is envisaged that Transport NSW will provide a dedicated person / contact number with the appropriate influence to act decisively upon any reasonable concerns raised in good faith. It may be that this person is Katherine Martin, but it would be a pointless exercise if Katherine did not have the necessary authority to deal expeditiously with concerns raised.

## **Project Evaluation:**

We are fortunate to have two of our owners with significant engineering prowess in both civil and geo-technical disciplines. To this end the cooperation of the staff and professional people at Transport NSW / North West Rail Link Project involved with the North West Rail Link, has been outstanding.

The supply of documents and verbal conversations with our specialist, John Planner BE, M Blg Sc, FIE Aust., has been provided with no time limits or reservations. This is greatly appreciated and a rather new experience for Government funded infrastructure projects.

The considerations resulting from this support and cooperation, has been carefully assessed and outlined fully in the above headings.

### **Conclusion:**

The information contained in the relevant North West Rail Link handouts and documentation, along with the Community Meetings has provided a very detailed overview of the upcoming work. However, the concern expressed by all our owners is the alacrity that our concerns are dealt with.

For instance, if there are small / large vibration cracks in either common property or individual Apartments resulting from either the tunneling or cavern excavation, we do not expect to wait until the full work has been completed. We would presume that immediately following the finalisation of work around Northpoint Apartments, that such rectification work would be attended to immediately by skilled professionals.

A further noteworthy issue is the process for assuming responsibility and for the rectification works required if Apartments are damaged from the construction / tunneling works. As stated above, when we purchased here in 2011 there was no tunneling under our complex, so these are significant concerns to us, both as individual owners and as an Owners Corporation concerned with the amenity, prestige and ongoing validity of our beautiful building.

**Tony Edwards** JP CRMT MRMIA MRIMS(USA)  
Chairman, Owners Corporation SP85544 Executive Committee  
Northpoint Apartments  
16<sup>th</sup> May 2012





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