

I object to the development proposal for the following reasons:

- (1) The projected freight train traffic will increase concentrated diesel exhaust emissions around my neighbourhood, regardless of the changes in truck traffic. The smell of the exhaust is unpleasant; and its fumes are toxic.
- (2) Because the passing loop ends at Thornleigh, there will be a significant increase in the number of diesel locomotives idling for lengthy periods directly opposite my house. This means the air around my house will be permeated by concentrated diesel exhaust fumes for lengthy periods. I have observed this phenomenon with the existing loop, but fortunately it is seldom used.
- (3) Diesel locomotives do not have clean burn diesel exhaust systems. It is well established that raw diesel exhaust increases the risk of lung cancer and respiratory illnesses. Any increase in exhaust levels is completely unacceptable.
- (4) Noise and vibration will increase, not only from passing freight trains but also from trains idling opposite my house. Even at idle the noise and vibrations from a diesel freight locomotive are noticeable. Any increases over current levels are unacceptable.

It is likely the exhaust fume effects will be worse:

- (a) in the warmer months when easterly winds are more frequent. I have observed that exhaust fumes become 'trapped' on the lee side of my house; and
- (b) during autumn when anticyclones prevail fumes will take a long time to dissipate (clear weather, no wind)

It is unacceptable in this modern age, for a supposedly 1st world country, to permit noisy and air polluting activities to be conducted anywhere nearly populated areas. Another alternative has to be adopted. It is unacceptable to dismiss other options as too costly, when the option chosen will merely transfer a bottleneck from one location to another while degrading the amenity for people living nearby and for passengers using the rail system having to endure the noise and pollution of passing freight trains.

A broader approach is needed, integrating road, rail and sea transport to a maximise efficiency, while minimising adverse social and environmental impacts. To begin, it needs to be understood why it is necessary to transport so many goods from Sydney to other regions by road or rail, when they could be sourced locally, or transported by sea to a closer port. A broader approach is especially appropriate given the ever increasing population due to immigration (which is a separate but more serious concern in its degradation of quality of life and increasing competition for fixed resources), and that the infrastructure needs are never considered until it is too late. The model is flawed because the existing population pays for the infrastructure needs of new entrants, but the delivered infrastructure always falls short of the need. Crowded trains and gridlocked roads are a testimony to this fact.

It is very unlikely the proposed third track will reduce road traffic by any discernable amount. It is very likely the removal of one bottle neck will create another. The benefits will be:

- a one off to organisations involved in the construction;
- an ongoing benefit to the rail freight transporters.

The costs will be:

- poorer air quality and increased noise for residents living near the railway
- poorer air quality and increased noise for visitors to Beecroft and Pennant Hills shopping areas, pedestrians and children at pre-schools and parks
- loss of revenue for road transporters

The proposal should be rejected because the social and environmental costs are far greater than the purported benefits.