

## Tracy Bellamy - SUBMISSION Epping to Thornleigh Third Track Environmental Impact Statement

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**From:** Louise Rhodes <louise.rhodes@gmail.com>  
**To:** <plan\_comment@planning.nsw.gov.au>  
**Date:** 3/11/2012 12:36 PM  
**Subject:** SUBMISSION Epping to Thornleigh Third Track Environmental Impact Statement  
**CC:** <rail@2119.org.au>

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I hereby register protest & request the scrapping of the proposed Epping to Thornleigh Third Track on the following grounds and with the following areas requiring urgent & complete addressing:

### Selection of the ETTT As the Preferred Option

- Lack of independent & transparent identification, consideration, long term planning & costing of other options than the ETTT to service freight rail needs.
- The steep curve between Beecroft and Pennant Hills, known as the Beecroft Bank, is not suitable for the long freight wagons. The proposed track cannot address the noise problems and flange squeal associated with this. The possibility of derailment is a safety issue. Diesel locomotives are energy consuming and inefficient especially on this old 19<sup>th</sup> Century track alignment. There will be considerable disruption with retrofitting a new line into the existing heavily used rail corridor.
  - **The Western Option is the only solution. A combined road/rail link between the M7 in Western Sydney and the F3 north of the Hawkesbury River is needed.**
    - **It is a more direct route from sea ports to western Sydney and further north**
    - **It can be engineered with less steep grades and fewer curves which will reduce energy use and carbon output and improve economic efficiency.**
    - **It interfaces more directly with road freight network**
    - **It gets road and rail freight out of residential areas and will reduce road freight on Pennant Hills Road**
    - **It provides another bridge over the Hawkesbury River for rail and road which is needed for national security and in case of bushfires, accidents and other emergencies.**
- There is a fait-acomplis nature of the public consultation given that there is no way for the community to prevent the procedure of the project with the government already having decided to proceed regardless of / influencing the findings of the EIS and narrowing it's scope to only one option failing to adequately explore others. For example, printed on the invitation to comment on the extremely long & detailed EIS is the construction complaints line. That certainly does not inspire confidence of a transparent process where the community's concerns and desire not to have the project will be adequately addressed.
- A complete lack of public consultation at earlier stages of option considerations including from truly independent experts and across departments

### Integrated Planning

- The project has had an inadequately fast time frame without coordinated long term town planning; resulting in me being allowed to build in 2009 within 60m of the existing train line with no notification at any stage that a freight line was planned on my side of the existing train line that when finished will be less than 50m from my front door, spew cancer inducing coal dust & diesel particulate pollution, destroy visual and audible amenity, destroy property value, affect structural integrity of my property, destroy the endangered ecological community of the Wongala Cres Bushland, affect local wildlife, destroy cultural heritage in the Cheltenham Beecroft Heritage Conservation Area.

- This project was not taken by politicians to the local or state elections. There was no opportunity for the public to vote for or against the project. I did not vote for this. I do not want this. I do not believe it is needed. It is not value for the taxpayer dollar. It harms the community and benefits large (and declining) business. It does not support a renewable economy which NSW must transition to and rather perpetuates the declining but politically powerful mining industry.
- \* the project has not been properly discussed or planned in public discourse. It is being rushed through planning approvals. No one knows about this project. Even people living alongside the train line do not know or understand the implications. We certainly weren't advised when purchasing or developing our properties.
  - **There must be liaison with Valuer General to ensure revision of property values within 500m off new track fully costed and planned for**

**Noise and Pollution.** Freight train movements will increase from 29 to 44 per day. Noise levels from freight trains are already unacceptable and will be more prevalent. It will be impossible to insulate against such noise and noise barriers in this terrain would be ineffective and attract graffiti. Our community will suffer:

- More frequent noise from old poorly maintained diesel locomotives
  - **The existing loophole in the noise pollution laws must be addressed so that there are maximum noise limits set & enforced for the freight line**
  - **Must have a maximum age of freight engines & carriages of 20 years**
  - **Noise and visual impact make good must be fully costed and planned for**
- More frequent flange squeal from freight trains on tight curves
  - **Must be gauge face lubricators (GFL) and TORFMA units to lubricate the tracks installed**
- Resulting sleep deprivation, stress and adverse health consequences
  - **Provision of compensation to nearby residents (within 100m) for loss of amenity & sleep during construction & operation must be fully costed and planned for**
- Pollution from emissions and brake dust.
  - **Must have a maximum age of freight engines & carriages of 20 years to avoid asbestos in the brakes being released in a residential area**
  - **Diesel / coal dust particulate pollution maximum acceptable level must be set**
  - **Diesel / coal dust particulate pollution measuring pre and post must be undertaken**
- Use of rock blasting must not be used due to damage of homes (unstable soils), affect on amenity, affect on wildlife, damage to endangered ecological community
  - **Provision of compensation for structural damage and funding of the appropriate pre and post structural integrity measurements for houses within 60m must be fully costed and planned for**

#### **Damage to Nearby Infrastructure During Construction & Operation**

- Significant construction noise & vibration, including from rock blasting, and ongoing vibration is highly likely to affect the structural integrity of nearby infrastructure (like what happened in association with the Lane Cove Tunnel)
  - **Provision of compensation for structural damage and funding of the appropriate pre and post structural integrity measurements for houses within 60m must be fully costed and planned for**
- The placement of the third line on the western side of the **Cheltenham Station** platform will require a free standing overhead bridge with lifts to the platforms. This is unacceptable because of:
  - The visual impact of the proposed overhead bridge with lifts to the platforms.
  - The need for stairs and or ramps in case of lift breakdown and to meet statutory disability requirements
  - the lengthening of the car park on the western side to Lyne Road goes through an area subject to flooding.
- There is no plan to upgrade Beecroft Station. Beecroft will be impacted by:

- The loss of trees of high heritage value, Blue Gum High Forest and wild life corridors which will impact on the last remaining Gang Gang Cockatoo population in Sydney.
  - **Make good or offset must be fully costed and planned for the impact on the Endangered Ecological Community / Wongala Heritage Bushland at Pennant Hills and all along the corridor**
  - **Project should not proceed on environmental grounds**
- The loss of community facilities including the children's playground, scout hall and parkland.
  - **Make good or offset must be fully costed and planned for the impact on the heritage conservation area**

## Ecology

- There will be adverse impact on the endangered ecological community
  - **Make good or offset must be fully costed and planned for the impact on the Endangered Ecological Community / Wongala Heritage Bushland at Pennant Hills and all along the corridor**

## Heritage

- The Beecroft Cheltenham Heritage Conservation Area will be materially affected by loss of character, visual and audible amenity, removal of heritage items such as the ANZAC park at Beecroft and potential structural damage.
  - **Make good or offset must be fully costed and planned for the impact on the heritage conservation area**

## Compensation for Residents & Businesses

- Nowhere in the planning documentation is there adequate provision & planning of compensation for nearby residents & businesses which will be adversely affected by the proposed project
  - **Provision of a buy back scheme for houses within 60m of the proposed track due to loss of liveability, property value, amenity & being unsaleable during construction & operation of the proposed track. Buy back rate must be at today's value of homes as given by local real estate agent valuation & must be fully costed and planned for**
  - **Provision of compensation to nearby residents (within 100m) for loss of amenity & sleep during construction & operation must be fully costed and planned for**
  - **Provision of compensation to nearby residents (within 60m) for loss of property value during construction & operation must be fully costed and planned for**
  - **Provision of compensation for structural damage and funding of the appropriate pre and post structural integrity measurements for houses within 60m must be fully costed and planned for**

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Kind Regards,

Louise Rhodes  
99 Wongala Cres  
Pennant Hills NSW 2120

@louiserhodes  
W 02 9735 8208 M 0413 331 866

[louise.rhodes@gmail.com](mailto:louise.rhodes@gmail.com)