

From: Stuart Pittendrigh 3b Mason Avenue Cheltenham NSW 2119

Date: 3 November 2012

To: plan_comment@planning.nsw.gov.au

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Subject: SUBMISSION Epping to Thornleigh Third Track Environmental Impact Statement

I hereby register my objection to the inadequacies in the EIS prepared for 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 19th Century track alignment. There will be considerable disruption with retrofitting a new line into the existing heavily used rail corridor.
- There is a fait-accompli 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. The presentation and answering of residents questions at the community consultation session was appalling, often with little or no detailed knowledge of the project.

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 front door of some dwellings, emitting cancer inducing coal dust & diesel particulate pollution, destroy visual and audible amenity, destroy property value, destroy the endangered ecological community of the Wongala Cres remnant BGHF bushland, affect local wildlife, adversely impact on the 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. The project has not been discussed with the Beecroft Cheltenham Civic Trust or planned in public discourse. It is being fast tracked through planning approvals.

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.
- More frequent flange squeal from freight trains on tight curves.
- Resulting sleep deprivation (an increase from 1 to 4 sleep disturbances each night), stress and adverse health consequences.
- Pollution from emissions and brake dust.
- Use of rock blasting and possible damage of homes (unstable soils), affect on amenity, affect on wildlife, damage to endangered ecological community.
- 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)

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 and a registered Aboriginal Archaeology site
- There is no plan to upgrade Beecroft Station.
- 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

In conclusion I urge those persons responsible for this short sighted decision to think again and consider building the Western Option that could consist of a combined road/rail link between the M7 in Western Sydney and the F3 north of the Hawkesbury River.

It can be done, look back to what Dr Bradfield achieved, borrow the funds build the Western Option from a rail/road freight user tax so that this nation can move forward.

Sincerely,

Stuart Pittendrigh