

Interested parties:

Residents whose homes are affected by noise and loss of amenity from Pennant Hills Road.

Area affected:

Residents along and near to Pennant Hills Road have lost notable amenity over recent decades through its extensive widening to six lanes. This has accommodated huge traffic volumes, much overnight heavy freight use, and extensive use of extended “B-Double” articulated transport rigs.

Background:

This road is the main corridor from Western Sydney industrial/business precinct, and from as far south as Melbourne (via M7 and National Route 1), to the rapidly developing areas of the Central Coast, North Coast and Queensland. Southeast Queensland is growing at some 1000 persons/week, requiring huge transporting of goods etc for housing, infrastructure, etc.

Key points:

- Road freight noise is increasing and near-continuous through the night during non-holiday periods.
- Pennant Hills Road – the alignment of which is ridge-located – demonstrates poor retro-geometry after its widening to 6 lanes.
- It is still a winding and often steep-grade road reflective of 19th century engineering & manual construction. It is resultantly unsafe, especially in areas such as Pennant Hills where a number of feeder roads join it.
- Local air pollution is noteworthy, especially from diesel particulate matter. It is the subject of the *Groundstrike* DVD, available for purchase from the Trust.
- In these areas, traffic numbers, larger-rigs, changing gradients and feeder roads slow traffic in peak and shoulder periods; simple breakdowns of one vehicle create extensive sub-gridlock delays
- Road freight noise is possibly more noticeable than some years ago due to tree loss in our suburbs.
- Road planners may see logic in tunnelling under Pennant Hills Road. Residents should be aware that it is likely some trucks and heavy vehicles with dangerous loads may not use the tunnel. Whilst most cars may choose to use it, it would be the longest road tunnel in Australia
- Other RTA road tunnels have had many unanswered questions raised about the exhaust stacks and concentration of fumes in areas above these tunnel vents. The need for good-practice treatment of these fumes and particulates has not been dealt with effectively by the RTA, for other above-tunnel residents in Sydney.
- Recently, MP Greg Smith *sang* in NSW Parliament about the congestion impacts on Epping Road of the new Lane Cove Tunnel
- Although not favoured by the RTA, a 2007 NSW Planning Enquiry by Marla Pearlman pointed to the need for another strategic transport crossing of the Hawkesbury River
- Baulkham Hills Shire Council has recently indicated it would be supportive of this
- Fires, truck break-downs and other incidents have regularly stopped vital transport by road and rail to the north of Sydney, at great economic cost and inconvenience.

Trust response:

- The Trust sees no logic in having the main northern transport / freight corridors for rail and road through some of the steepest, most elevated parts of Sydney.
- The Trust does not support a road tunnel under Pennant Hills Road. It advocates, as a more strategic option, a new Western Sydney transport link, for road and rail, between Western Sydney and Ourimbah areas, avoiding long-haul transport through the steepest parts of Sydney

- That link includes a new road and rail Hawkesbury River crossing upstream of the F3, Pacific Highway & Brooklyn rail bridges.
- Western Sydney is a national business/industrial hub with notable, growing GDP contribution; it has good road/ rail links to the south – but not northwards.
- The Central Coast, North Coast and Queensland are rapidly developing areas demanding much trade/transport with Sydney & from areas south to Melbourne.
- The Trust understands that a good river crossing location was selected by the NSW Government some 20 years ago, & could link the M7 more directly with the F3 north
- Parallel construction of road and rail links could achieve significant savings
- The Trust will be consulting with other Resident Groups – including the Pennant Hills District Civic Trust – to encourage our State & Federal Members of Parliament (MP) to act with vision, *not hindsight*, in achieving this national construction priority
- The Trust recognises the concerns of residents along and near the Pennant Hills Road corridor on issues of noise, air pollution and amenity – and encourages them to let their MPs know directly
- A Pennant Hills Road Tunnel Road lacks strategic vision and is a *no solution* option.

BCCT Contact: Malcolm Powell