

To be updated shortly with the change to the new Metro proposal

Interested parties:

Residents above proposed tunnels in Transport Infrastructure Development Corporation's (TIDC) *Preferred Route*.

Area affected:

This *Preferred Route* would run in tunnel from existing stub tunnels at the northern end of underground platforms at Epping Railway Station, under Devlin's Creek, the M2 motorway then under Chilworth Reserve. It would then proceed under a number of homes at depth, below Fearnley Park, under the Cardinal / Chapman Avenues area, then notably deeper towards West Pennant Hills shops, then below Castle Hill Road to Castle Hill & Schofields.

Background:

In November 2006, the NSW Government exhibited a proposed quadruplication of the rail line from Epping to Cheltenham and just south of Beecroft railway station, then two new lines tunnelling under the Beecroft Village Green and Beecroft Public School (at shallow depth) then under predominantly residential areas of Beecroft towards the West Pennant Hills shops and then below Castle Hill Road and westwards.

The Beecroft Cheltenham Civic Trust provided shopping centre displays at Beecroft in December 2006 and January 2007 during the exhibition period. The Trust alerted many residents to the quadruplication and shallow tunnelling. Some 1200 resident objections were lodged with the NSW Government. The amended TIDC *Preferred Route* was exhibited mid 2007 with much less community concern.

Key points:

- The TIDC *preferred route* is a notable improvement on the original quadruplication proposal by the NSW Government
- There is still much resident concern about quadruplication of the rail lines through Beecroft and Cheltenham to allow augmented rail freight services.
- Whilst the Trust agrees that rail freight can be more effective than road haulage, a more strategic option would be 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
- Whilst not favoured by the RTA, a recent NSW Planning Enquiry by Marla Pearlman pointed to the need for a strategic second crossing of the Hawkesbury River
- Baulkham Hills Shire Council has recently indicated that 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:

- Reflecting most residents, the Trust believes the NWRL project is very worthwhile, as each train could allow thousands of people to be quickly and efficiently transported from the developing North West Sector to Epping, Chatswood Macquarie Park & CBD
- This would reduce the future dependence on inefficient, oil-based cars
- The Trust will maintain a watching brief on this *Preferred Route* proposal
- Proposal details are accessible at www.tidc.nsw.gov.au under *North west Rail Link*
- Currently, the Trust understands that it may take many years for the NSW Government to commit funding towards construction, due to other State priorities.
- In the meantime, the Trust recognises the concerns of residents – especially those who may one day have a tunnel near or below their homes.
- Whilst no detailed specifications for noise abatement have been made in NWRL proposals, the above web-site shows specifications for the Chatswood to Epping rail link – using *Delkor Eggs* and other current good-practice technology
- Reflecting resident concerns, the Trust expects that when the proposal finally proceeds in the years ahead, effective noise abatement technology must be included.

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