

## INQUIRY INTO CROSS CITY TUNNEL

Organisation: Construction Community Liaison Group 1  
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Position: Community Representative  
Telephone:  
Date Received: 25/05/2000

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Theme:

Summary

## JSC CROSS CITY TUNNEL

24 MAY 2006

RECEIVED

The Director  
Joint Select Committee on the Cross City Tunnel  
Parliament House  
Macquarie St,  
Sydney.

Dear Sir/Madam,

I have been a community representative on Construction Community Liaison Group 1 since February 2004. CCLG 1 covers that part of the Lane Cove Tunnel project west of the Lane Cove River and including Penfords site and Mowbray Park compound.

Over the past two years, this has involved a personal time commitment to over 25 meetings (between 2-4hrs in duration), about six site visits and copious amounts of reading material provided by the builder.

My motivation for nominating to the committee was an interest in the protection of public bushland within the Pages Creek catchment, North Ryde - which included some land already in National Parks estate, some planned to be included and some State Government and Council owned bushland. It contains threatened species and an endangered ecological community and the largest reed bed along the Lane Cove River.

I feel my submission addresses section (h) and (j) of the Lane Cove Tunnel enquiry.

**POINT 1:** From the beginning it was clear that the Pages Creek bushland and Bundara Reserve in North Ryde were not to be part of the CCLG process (refer attached page 4 Thiess document Applicant Information Pack - Lane Cove Tunnel project Construction Community Liaison Groups.)

It had been apparent during the EIS and supplementary papers that most of this section of works was not included in the environmental assessment submitted by the RTA (refer EIS Working Paper on Biodiversity - assessment covered only 200m west of Lane Cove River). Consequently no specific conditions of approval were attached to this section by the Planning Department in December 2002.

I presume this meant that which ever road builder was contracted by the State Government for the project there were no specific obligations for protection of this section of the project just general requirements for environmental protection. This was unlike other sections of the project, eg there is a requirement to protect Lane Cove's azalea beds but Pages Creek is not mentioned in the approval conditions.

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Persistent lobbying by community representatives once the CCLG process commenced was required before a follow up environmental assessment occurred (presumably paid for by the builder rather than the RTA) to identify Powerful Owl (a threatened species) habitat in Pages Creek and ensure its protection during construction (refer minutes meeting 9 when follow up Report was presented by Steve Ambrose to CCLG1.)

I have not seen a full and proper assessment of the impact of the project on North Ryde bushland which contains Sydney Turpentine Ironbark Forest in Bundara Reserve and possibly south of Bundara Reserve. STIF is protected under State legislation to protect threatened species.

**POINT 2:** Condition 94 of the Minister's approval identifies the need for local native seed collection for propagation and use in landscaping. Thus as discussed in Point 1 (ie no specific conditions attached to protect North Ryde's natural environment) this condition represents "best practice" in the landscape approach to major projects which affect bushland such as the cycleway and Epping Rd widening in North Ryde and was a very sensible inclusion by the Minister and his staff.

Despite requests by myself and other community representatives on how this was to occur there has never been a satisfactory reply. It would appear that Thiess landscapers have failed to identify local species lists for Pages Creek (which were available) and engage a local seed collector company to propagate appropriate species for landscaping. The project's landscapers have relied on cultivars and landscape species without attention to structural diversity and the integrity of local bushland in Pages Creek.

This is unfortunate in a bushland corridor where ironically "neglect" has resulted in a bushland core which has largely retained its genetic integrity. It is unknown what future impacts cultivars and non local native species will have when introduced into the corridor as part of the landscaping of this project - nor would it appear Thiess landscape staff care. (Though they did recently letterbox North Ryde residents claiming they had propagated locally collected seeds for planting!)

Additional to this has been the delay in undertaking the remediation of the Agility pipeline which ran through Pages Creek bushland but which was relocated under the river and Magdala Rd. Agility had previously maintained this pipe line regularly and prevented weed invasion but Thiess has still not yet engaged bush regenerators to commence the three year remediation project which is required.

**POINT 3:** Bundara Reserve on the corner of Delhi and Epping Rds contains remnant bushland protected under the State Government's Threatened Species Conservation Act. It represents an endangered ecological community of which less than 0.5% remains in Sydney.

At no stage during the assessment and approval of the Lane Cove Tunnel project was the ecological importance of Bundara Reserve recognized (indeed in some documents there appeared to be confusion by paid ecological consultants between the Turpentine vegetation community and the Blue Gum High Forest community also protected under State legislation and found in Ryde around Denistone.)

The endangered ecological community in Bundara Reserve has survived the Lane Cove Tunnel project not because of its protection under State legislation which should protect it but due to the diligence and concern of nearby residents and some sympathetic RTA staff.

#### CONCLUSION:

In conclusion, I have had other areas of concern related to this project:

- protection of Gilda St residents' privacy;
- inadequate assessment of why the cycleway is 4m wide and why it takes a route down Epping Rd (cutting off residents front yards) to busy Wicks Rd where it abruptly ends when it could have crossed at the Delhi and Epping Rd intersection and traveled across State Government land to Waterloo Rd through to Macquarie University and shopping centre;
- protection of pedestrians using the cycleway and
- overall impact on the health of North Ryde residents from a widened Epping rd and tunnel through Lane Cove which vents into North Ryde

However fundamental to my concerns has been the poor initial assessment of this project and how it would impact on both the bushland and residents in North Ryde. It raises equity issues especially when the Lane Cove community which lobbied hard for the tunnel will mainly benefit.

In my opinion, inadequate assessment during the EIS has resulted in limited conditions attached to works within the North Ryde corridor and a contract with the private sector which is not obligated to protect the precious bushland of North Ryde and the amenity of its residents.

Thanking you for an opportunity to comment.

Yours faithfully  
  
Cathy Merchant.

Community members will:

- Attend meetings and participate in accordance with this Charter.
- Represent the views of the local community and provide input on issues that affect local impacts
- Review and provide their comments on project documents as described in the scope of consultation.

### Scope of Consultation

Construction Community Liaison Groups will provide input to the project team regarding issues of importance to their local community for consideration during project decision-making. The scope of issues for discussion at the Construction Liaison Groups will include specific construction related community issues such as construction timing, hours of work, noise and vibration issues, urban design outcomes, tree removal and new plantings, traffic management and environmental management strategies for the construction of the Lane Cove Tunnel Project.

The MCoA also require consultation with the relevant CCLG's in the development of certain measures and plans:

- Construction Method Statements (Condition 21)
- Measures to improve vehicular access to Chatswood by arterial roads (Condition 34)
- Cycleway and Pedestrian Path Plan (Condition 42)
- Construction Noise and Vibration Sub Plan (Condition 57)
- Construction Noise Impact Statements for the major construction sites (Condition 58)
- Design of the footpath near "Azalea Bed" display on Epping Road (Condition 217)
- Urban Design and Landscaping Sub Plan for Epping Road between Mowbray Road West and Pacific Highway (Condition 221)
- Final design of the cycleway through Willoughby Road and Naremburn shops area to avoid potential conflicts with traffic and pedestrians and maximize free flow of traffic (Condition 226)
- Investigate options for location of cycleway away from rear of properties on Olympia Road Naremburn (Condition 233).

Extracts of the relevant MCoA conditions are provided in the information pack for prospective CCLG members. The full text of all Conditions is available on the Website of the Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources (DIPNR), <http://www.dipnr.nsw.gov.au>, archived under 2002 approvals and will be available on the Project Website and in the Project Display Centres when established. A copy of the MCoA Condition will be provided to all members of the CCLGs.

Issues that arise during Construction Community Liaison Groups meetings that fall outside this scope will be referred to other relevant consultation forums (see Table 1).