

REVIEW OF F3 TO M7 CORRIDOR SELECTION

Reference 1

Following a number of detailed meetings with SKM, the RTA and DOTARS, my contention is that they were not,

- No consideration was given to the inevitable requirement for a long term solution i.e. 20 - 25 years. SKM themselves state in their report that the current proposals are short term and that a long term solution including a second bridge over the Hawkesbury will be required.
NOTE The F3 is Australia's only trunk route running N-S parallel to the East Coast. Road and rail routes are constricted to one bridge which is highly vulnerable. Both Road and rail corridors are frequently blocked for considerable periods by break downs, accidents and fire. The old Pacific Highway is **NOT** capable of handling the heavy traffic flow on anything other than an immediate emergency basis.
- The assumptions and data mainly concerned traffic flows in and around Sydney as part of the Metropolitan plan, and gave little consideration to the large and continually expanding area to the N.W. of Sydney or to the heavy freight and passenger car road traffic that has no need or wish to come close in to Sydney before proceeding either North or South. Consequently Option C, the Western Link, was quickly discarded in favour of the so called Purple Option.
- Historically, projects of this nature turn out to be grossly under costed. In this instance, the costings of even the short term assumptions were highly suspect. e.g no cost estimate of any filtration of 8 kms twin tunnels; no estimate of true cost of closing two lanes of Pennant Hills Road plus compensation for businesses, parking accommodation, environmental impact etc; cost of widening the F3 (which is currently being undertaken); cost of having to re-visit the project by 2012-2013 as the inevitable traffic increase would mean that there would be no improvement even with the tunnels, and that the PHR route would be just as, or even more congested than it is in 2007. Certain interested groups with traffic and other experts in the field will no doubt provide detailed forward analysis figures in this regard.

Reference 2

- The most significant change is the opening of the highly successful M7 which has already brought about a proliferation of industry of industry and offices along the route. Business located in this area will increase markedly, and updated traffic studies will be needed. However, it can be said with confidence that an easily available route to the North, which completely avoids coming close to or within the current outskirts of Sydney, would not only be immediately beneficial and would look to the future **at today's costs, taking** account of the inevitable expansion throughout this area of N. Western and Western Sydney.
- A high proportion of traffic, especially heavy vehicles, including the traffic heading N or S does not now originate from Sydney itself (except for the Western Districts), and has no need or wish to come close to Sydney.

As no hazardous material can be carried through the tunnels, a high proportion of heavy vehicles would still be forced to travel through the residential areas along the PHR which includes 5 schools, all of which are located alongside the road.

Reference 3

- All of the original traffic studies and costings are now more than 3 years out of date as they were completed well before the publication of the report or the completion of the M7, and even at that time were considered by many to be very underrated. All of the traffic figures and costings now need to be updated in the light of the latest known growth areas and projected cost escalations.
- If the current Purple Option as it stands is accepted, there is every indication that this **short term solution** will be completely saturated even at its opening, particularly during morning and evening peak hours and at weekends, and that the current congestion and high pollution and accident level of the PHR will be in no way alleviated. A thorough and detailed update of the projections is required.

NOTE: Currently no filtration is included in the tunnel estimates. Two or possibly three exhaust stacks are projected. Concentrated unfiltered exhaust fumes in an area containing 5 schools directly alongside the route is highly undesirable.

Concluding Statement

It is recognized that the above submission is empirical in nature. As a private retired citizen, it is not possible to present detailed tables of figures/projections etc. No doubt this will be done by those who are in a better position to do so.

However, I am a resident of Pennant Hills and travel the PHR every day. As previously stated, I have also had a number of detailed face to face meetings with representatives of SKM, the RTA and DOTARS.

Having lived in many parts of the world, I am very familiar with the traffic congestion problems of large cities such as London/NewYork/Paris/Athens, and the solutions adopted - sometimes necessarily draconian - to enable the city and its environs to operate effectively and to grow as it inevitably must. In every case I am aware of, the planning time frame has been 20 years plus.

The current proposed Purple Option is :-

- **Technically Bad** - Tunnels are extremely expensive to build - very high in maintenance - hazardous (recent Melbourne example, plus many others through out the world). They are generally regarded as the very last alternative when there is no other solution. Once built, tunnels cannot be expanded easily.
- **Strategically Bad** - Tunnels are highly vulnerable to sabotage, accidents and fire. To continue to confine a main, heavily congested trunk life line to one route over one bridge, plus running through 8 kms of 2 lane tunnel (one of the longest tunnels in the world) cannot be regarded as a sensible solution.

- Socially Bad -

The proposed Purple Option must lead to considerable disruption for a long period (4 years) both to the existing traffic flow and to the heavily populated residential areas alongside the PHR.

END OF SUBMISSION