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Kerry Schott
Managing Director
Sydney Water
PO Box 399
Parramatta NSW 2124

CM038-09

3 August 2009

Re: Northside Storage Tunnel

The Sydney Coastal Councils Group (SCCG) would like to take this opportunity to write to you on a number of matters related to the ongoing management of the Northside Storage Tunnel. The SCCG, its Member Councils and their communities have a long history in advocating strategies and actions that will result in sustainable sewage and stormwater management in Sydney. (Please see attached recent SCCG and Sydney Water correspondence)

At the June SCCG Full Group Meeting of Councillor delegates it was unanimously resolved that the SCCG write to Sydney Water to:

- Express extreme disappointment in the recycling pipeline for the Northside Storage Tunnel not being utilised;
- Seek clarification as to why the recycling pipeline had never been used and was now considered not appropriate to repair and maintain;
- Question the processes and standards for the construction of recycling pipeline within the Northside Storage Tunnel; and
- Seek specific details as to possible "alternative supply approaches" (as noted in the attached correspondence) that are more cost effective and reliable than utilising the recycling pipeline constructed as part of the Northside Storage Tunnel.

Use of the recycling pipeline within the Northside Storage Tunnel

During the community consultation and design phases of the Northside Storage Tunnel the installation and ongoing use of a recycling pipeline was an important factor in the proposal receiving conditional support from a wide range of council and community representatives. The fact that the recycling pipeline has never been utilised is extremely disappointing to all those stakeholders who participated in good faith in the consultation and negotiations associated with the Northside Storage Tunnel.

Further, Sydney Water not utilising the recycling pipeline represents a significant waste of public moneys and a breach of public trust. In light of this, the SCCG requests Sydney Water clarify why the recycling pipeline is not being utilised.

Maintenance of the Northside Storage Tunnel and recycling pipeline

Recent verbal and written correspondence between the SCCG and Sydney Water has indicated that the recycling pipeline is now damaged and apparently unable to provide the intended service. The SCCG requests that Sydney Water articulate the type of integrity guarantees provided by the tunnel and pipeline construction consortium to ensure their long term use. As the storage tunnel and pipeline was constructed less than seven years ago the construction standards and workmanship must be questioned if the

pipeline is unable to be utilised due to damage and fit for purpose as designed and installed.

The SCCG has been informed that the cost of repairing existing damage to the tunnel, to enable use of the recycling pipeline, through the process of laying in-pipe lining is in the order of \$6 million. Considering the overall cost of the pipeline was in excess of \$400 million this seems a relatively small figure to ensure that an activated promise made to the community is maintained.

Additionally, other than the laying of in-pipe lining, alternative and less expensive methods to repair tunnel and pipeline infrastructure exist. To enable an accurate assessment of possible repair methods and costs the SCCG requests Sydney Water provide details of any assessment it has carried out of possible methods to undertake repairs of the tunnel and recycling pipeline, as well as their estimated cost.

Water Recycling Opportunities

The recycling pipeline was to provide councils and residents in northern Sydney with the opportunity to utilise recycled water for a range of activities. As the pipeline is unable to be used as a source of recycled water, the SCCG requests that Sydney Water articulate what 'alternative strategies' (as noted in the correspondence) it has in place to ensure that water recycling opportunities of equivalent and better standard to those offered by the proposed recycling pipeline are implemented on Sydney's North Shore and Northern Beaches.

I trust that the information provided in this letter will receive the appropriate attention. In your response to this correspondence the SCCG specifically requests you:

- Clarify why the recycling pipeline for the Northside Storage Tunnel is not being utilised;
- Articulate the type of integrity guarantees provided by the Northside Storage Tunnel and Recycling Pipeline construction consortium to ensure the long term use of the tunnel and pipeline;
- Provide details of the assessment of possible methods used to repair the Northside Storage Tunnel and Recycling Pipeline as well as their estimated cost; and
- Articulate what alternative strategies Sydney Water has in place to ensure that water recycling opportunities equivalent or better to those offered by the proposed recycling pipeline with in the Northside Storage Tunnel are implemented on Sydney's North Shore and Northern Beaches.

If you wish to clarify any matter in this correspondence or require further information, please contact SCCG Senior Coastal Projects Officer, Craig Morrison on (02) 9246 7702 or craig@sydneycoastalcouncils.com.au.

Yours sincerely,



Clr. Wendy McMurdo
Chairperson

Attachments:

- Sydney Coastal Councils Group correspondence dated 7 April 2009
- Sydney Water correspondence dated 26 May 2009