

**Submission
No 25**

**INQUIRY INTO IMPACT OF THE WESTERN HARBOUR
TUNNEL AND BEACHES LINK**

Name: Mr Christopher Bell

Date Received: 3 May 2021

Dear Chairperson,

INTRODUCTION:

I wish to advise the Parliamentary Inquiry into the Western Harbour Tunnel and Beaches Link that I most strongly object to “The Western Harbour Tunnel and Beaches Link” being constructed.

I object for the reason that no information, none at all, has been provided to the public relating to **the comparative cost benefit analysis** of this project which has the most limited objective of assisting improvement in traffic flow, for a small number of people, in a relatively small section of Sydney.

I should explain, I fully appreciate that the “information / facts” I present here are at best only very approximate and indeed may be incorrect. I ask it be understood that what I am attempting to do **is illustrate**, what I believe, are the reasonable concerns of a NSW resident.

MY REASONING FOR OBJECTING:

The population of the Northern Beaches suburbs area that will most benefit from the construction of the Beaches Link is about 270,000. The cost is estimated at \$14,000,000,000. This means that on a per capita basis to assist in improving the transport of the people that will benefit the most it is proposed to initially spend about \$52,000. Then, assume an annual maintenance cost equal to 3% of the construction cost for the first 30 years of operation and there is an additional cost of \$8,400,000,000. Consequently, with no increase in construction cost, and maintenance cost not exceeding 3% per annum the cost of some improvement of traffic flow for 30 years becomes \$22,400,000,000 which is a cost of almost \$83,000 per resident of the Northern Beaches.

Given the enormity of such expenditure, I think it is not unreasonable for the public to ask, and for the Government to have to answer, two questions:

1. To provide similar benefit to the same people (i.e. assume the same transport benefit) what would be the cost of improved public transport, say, train or light rail?
2. What non transport benefits will the government be unable to provide as a consequence of the expenditure on the Western Harbour Tunnel and Beaches Link?

For example how many schools will it cease to be possible to build and maintain? Or, how many hospital beds with trained nursing staff will it cease to be possible to have and maintain for 30 years or whatever is the expected total life cycle cost of the Tunnel and Beaches Link.

I do respectfully request that as a minimum the Parliamentary Inquiry does establish what it is reasonable to believe will be the **comparative life cycle cost** of constructing the Western Harbour Tunnel and Beaches Link and ensuring this information is made known to the public.

Yours sincerely,

Christopher Bell