

**Submission
No 27**

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

Name: Professor Pamela Bell

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Transport Assessments
9 Moodie St
The Parliamentary Inquiry into
The Western Harbour Tunnel & Beaches link
Cammeray NSW

2062
May 5th 2021

Dear Chairman,

I write to you to express my profound concerns regarding the NSW Government's proposal to build a motorway tunnel extending from Westconnex at Rozelle to Balgowlah via an interchange in North Sydney, also referred to as the Western Harbour Tunnel and Beaches Link (WHT/BL) project. I wish it to be noted that I object most strongly to this proposal.

Given the degree of accountability the public demands in the administration of public monies, a legitimate expectation that the government will achieve with such procurement is value for money. Progressing such a major initiative without consideration of all the options is inconceivable. Nor is it credible that the proposal is consistent with Transport for NSW's Principles and Guidelines for Economic Appraisal of Transport Investment and Initiatives. The money that this motorway will cost is of historically significant proportions, hence all further work on these projects should be suspended until a robust assessment of all possible options, including public transport-based options, has been undertaken and has been the subject of community consultations.

New motorways, which will need 40 or 50 years of tolls to pay for them, are not sustainable. Transport technology is moving so fast we are unlikely to be needing so much road infrastructure in the near future. To lock future generations into paying for outdated and unnecessary road infrastructure would be irresponsible.

I also write to you as a Cammeray resident extremely concerned about the health impact on children and the broader community from unfiltered emissions stacks, especially those within 3km of schools, aged care homes, hospitals etc.. The RMS have stated it is not their policy to provide filtration as it is unnecessary but we have been advised by respiratory & other specialists at Community meetings that road tunnel filtration is routinely used in Europe (Spain, Italy) and Japan particularly in long tunnels and urban areas. The planned tunnels for this project will be 7 kms long with the unfiltered stacks being located at Anzac Park where the Anzac Primary school is located and along the Warringa Freeway North Sydney area where many other schools are also located. This will result in the heaviest concentration of accumulated air pollution in the same area where there is the heaviest concentration of schools. As a Professor of Nursing I am horrified and object strongly to a project which has the capacity to endanger residents and young children's health and their lives now and in future years to come.

Much more community and expert consultation is needed in addition to a credible business case being presented to the public. This project is the result of an election promise being made in haste with no credible costing, to meet the needs of a comparative minority of vocal Northern Beaches residents at the expense of the wider community.

I strenuously urge that the Inquiry determine that tunnel/motorway plans be put on hold while a comprehensive, holistic transport plan for northern Sydney is developed.

It would be a tragedy for the generations to come if we were to adopt 20th century solutions to the problems we face today.

I look forward to receiving your reply.

Yours sincerely

Dr Pamela F Bell

Professor of Nursing (Retired UTS & CSU)