

Submission
No 105

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

Name: Name suppressed

Date Received: 9 June 2021

Partially
Confidential

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission regarding the impact of the Western Harbour Tunnel and Beaches link.

I feel there has not been an adequate business case for the project, nor has there been detailed investigation into alternative options - like better public transport. Will the tunnel just create new bottle necks?

With Covid-19 as our "new normal" and the enormous cost this has created for our health system, surely the tunnel and beaches link should be re-considered. People are now working from home and society has changed. Work and travel patterns have altered and the cost benefit of this project needs to be re-analysed. Has the Government analysed the idea of staggered start /finish times for workers to ease peak hour congestion?

My main concern is the environment around the area where we live.

Clive Park in Northbridge is bushland and also an important Indigenous site. This could be compromised when the tunnel is constructed straight under Clive Park. Middle Harbour is currently a pristine haven for residents and marine life. I have seen seals and a Humpback Whale in Middle Harbour - right at the site where the tunnel is proposed. This needs further transparent, independent scientific evaluation to determine the effect of the dredging and tunnelling on the marine ecosystems.

The residents of Northbridge may also have to endure 24/7 tunnelling vibrations for many years. The maps handed out by NSW State Govt show a narrow route for the proposed tunnel....this map falsely indicates that the tunnel is about as wide as Sailors Bay Rd. I believe the tunnel will be approximately 6 lanes wide. The public have been poorly informed with minimal transparency and accountability. We have not been told the truth, nor given adequate explanation. The proposed project is only partly designed, so once it goes ahead we're at the mercy of whatever construction company the involved parties see fit.

The dive site at Flat Rock Gully (FRG) is of great concern as it will expose an old toxic tip site that has been beautifully regenerated over the decades with bushland. This area is used by countless citizens for sport and recreation. The proposed dive site is used for bush walking and exercise and its use has been so vital and popular during the pandemic. As a family, our daily walks at FRG during the 2020 Covid lockdown was vital for our mental health. We had a child doing the HSC and those few terrible weeks of lockdown and online schooling were made easier by us all being together at Tunks Park and FRG in the afternoons. FRG is also a valued and extremely important wildlife corridor for many birds (including endangered Powerful Owl) and animals. This alone should be reason for re-considering the proposed project. The dust and silica for surrounding residents will be of great concern for their health. The old landfill tip must be left untouched. Will this bushland be restored? - There have been no proposed plans to that effect. I believe the baseball diamond/oval down below Willoughby Leisure Centre should be re-considered again as the dive site. This area is already cleared and will have less impact on the environment.

The exhaust for the tunnel near the Cammeray schools is of extreme concern and completely unacceptable for young children.

In conclusion, I request an ongoing resident review/consultation forum with regular meetings and a real time portal so residents know what is going on. Residents down near Clive park need to be fully aware of what is happening and the depth of the tunnel plus all other homes under the tunnel. Flat Rock Gully dive site needs to be re-considered and any damage needs to be fully remediated back to the current bushland.

Thank you