

**Submission  
No 195**

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

**Name:** Ms Catherine Turner

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I wish to comment on inadequacies in the planning and community consultation of the Western Harbour Tunnel and Northern Beaches link.

- Consideration of transport options other than road tunnels has been inadequate. I asked a consultant at one of the meetings why a rail link to the Northern Beaches was not considered and he told me that the population of the Northern Beaches was insufficient to justify one. If this is so, I cannot understand that it is viable to spend billions on road tunnels without publishing a business case to justify it.

I have not seen any consideration of the impact on population growth and work and travel patterns due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Evidence suggests slower population growth and the likelihood that people will commute less often for work.

- I am particularly concerned at the impact of the proposed tunnels on the environment. I object to the construction of double unfiltered stacks at Ernest Street located in a residential area and close to schools.

Non-exhaust emissions are of most concern. Assumptions made about the mix of vehicles using the tunnels do not take into account the numbers of older vehicles and diesel trucks using the freeway and the tunnels. Australia has not adopted the highest international standards of vehicle emissions and fuel cleanliness, so comparison with overseas practice in tunnel construction is of dubious value. In any case, particulate matter is not reduced with future use of electric vehicles. The health hazard posed by the concentration of particulate matter from brake linings and car tyres is recognised by NSW Health.

I was not reassured about the air quality for residents and students when I was shown graphs of modelled average emissions from stacks as a proportion of all other emissions. Small average increases are not acceptable if total emissions are too high in any locality. Average measures are statistically misleading as they vary from time to time and location. Monitoring air quality in the worst performing areas adjoining the WHT should be indefinite and the tunnels closed if the air quality outside is poor. During 2019 there have been many days during bushfires when the air quality has been dangerous. Adding more pollutants to the atmosphere is irresponsible.

- As a resident of the area for 77 years, I have seen the previous devastation caused by the Warringah Expressway, which cut our community in half, reduced green space and truncated Chandos Street.

This proposal requires an additional loss of 2.8 hectares of public open space in Cammeray Park. Residents have been unable to find the precise area to be resumed by the project and the position and scale occupied by motorway sheds and exhaust pumping station.

- Local Traffic will become more congested as there are fewer ways to access the Warringah Expressway network. It will take longer to travel in any direction, and local streets will have increased heavy traffic. Bus journeys will be longer.

Delays at the Ben Boyd Rd Neutral Bay Military Rd Intersection will increase by 327% by 2027. Motorists will look to rat runs to avoid the intersection which is one of the few routes leading to the Harbour Bridge.

Traffic surveys which are part of the EIS were made in 2016 before Anzac Park Primary School increased beyond year 7 and before North Sydney Council 's Future Directions Plan. Delays at Miller Street and Ernest Street will become worse than projected.

There is no assessment of the likely increase of traffic in residential streets such as Grafton St and Cammeray Rd.

In all, Residents have reasonable concerns that they will sacrifice a great deal to provide a questionable solution to traffic problems and encourage the further use of private cars from the Northern Beaches in the absence of any solutions involving public transport.