

Submission
No 196

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

Name: Name suppressed

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Partially
Confidential

My husband and I moved to Naremburn 3 years ago to provide a better lifestyle for our two children now aged 5 and 6.5 years by being close to the bush, water, good schools as well as easier public transport access to the city. We live 50m from Brook Street in Naremburn. I can see little benefit of this tunnel for us in Naremburn. I think investing in our public transport system would be a far better use of these funds, a better way forward for future generations and would mean that our bushlands, waterways, air quality, flora and fauna and our children are not impacted and are allowed to thrive rather than be thwarted. I have many concerns about this project's impacts on my family's lifestyle and on our environment should be it be approved. Below are my main issues:

1. Air quality – If this project goes ahead, our community needs proper filtered ventilation stacks in line with world standards. Our health and our children's health is paramount. In line with this, diesel trucks that are known to have harmful emissions on local children in particular should not be permitted to operate. The RMS Air Quality team have already confirmed that one of the biggest risks, causing potential cancer and fatality in children, is the diesel emissions from the high levels of trucks. Surely using hydrogen-fuelled trucks instead is a better option.
2. Noise and traffic - Thousands of heavy vehicle trucks will be added to roads. I've read that for Brooke Street there could be more than 1 truck a minute causing significant noise, vibrations, potential dust, diesel fumes that even the RMS have identified as highly toxic and dangerous. This traffic will continue for over 8 years. It seems the council hasn't put any defined limit on when some trucks will be driving in and out. Trucks containing 'fill' might be limited, but other trucks could travel 24 hrs a day. The safety and traffic issues on a road already with enough safety concerns could easily lead to injuries and fatalities. Proper street-side noise abatement walls (not just timber) should be installed for those around the site as well as those who are subject to significantly increased traffic noises due to truck movements, both during and outside of work hours ie along Flat Rock Drive and Brook Street and the south facing streets of Northbridge.
3. Road safety for school kids and other pedestrians– If this project goes ahead, we need safety crossings for children and residents offering residents the same safety measures that workers and truck drivers are being offered and need. The intersection between Rosalind Street and Miller Street, where significant numbers of primary children from Anzac Park Public School in an already dangerous area, with 6 directions of traffic and the threat of heavy vehicles, known to significantly increase the risk of accident and death; Sailors Bay Road toward the dive site; and on Brook Street where the road does not currently take the extent of heavy vehicles and has significant safety issues. The Cammeray Public and Anzac Park Catchment areas cross Brook Street and many children walk to school and are in danger. It seems this issue was ignored at the RMS community meeting. I'd like to see the speed limit reduced to 50 km/h, traffic lights installed at key intersections and proper protocols in place (eg the installation of speeding cameras on Brook St) so that accidents and fatalities don't occur. Even before this project proposal and the associated traffic concerns were raised, I phoned and wrote to Willoughby Council on several occasions requesting traffic lights be installed across Slade Street after having to help motorists that had been involved in serious accidents when attempting to right from Slade onto Brook Street. Traffic lights will help to protect residents and school children who live in the area and/or cross over Flat Rock in order to get to school.
4. Waterways - Dredging around Northbridge will be highly toxic and potentially stop my children using the waterway (eg sailing, kayaking, fishing, swimming at Northbridge Baths which we do weekly in summer) for the duration of the project and well beyond. I've read that Tunks Park river ecosystem is a 'drainage' line but is so much more than that – it is an established creek

(or river when it's flooding) which we often walk along to get to from our home to Tunks Park. Thousands of locals (and their dogs) use this area for daily exercise and to escape into the tranquility of the bush.

5. Bushland – If this Project is approved in its current state, a large portion of Flat Rock gully will be destroyed yet there are no plans for rehabilitation or redevelopment (not that I've seen). My family use this bushland almost every day – we walk, cycle, run through it, admiring how things are growing, how the creek is flowing, how the moss and ferns at the bottom are thriving. We've seen so much wildlife there – all sorts of birds, wallabies, echidnas, snakes, goannas, skinks etc. We, along with our neighbors, would be devastated if such a peaceful patch of bushland is taken away from us and all those animals that reside in the flora there were also destroyed. All this growth has happened despite Flat Rock Gully being established on an old tip site (which my parents still remember when they grew up in Northbridge over 50 years ago). The Gully is known to contain asbestos that will be dug up if this project goes ahead. Current plans indicate it will be kept on site – if so, what are the containment measures? While being dug up how will we be protected? How are the asbestos fill ends being measured? If anything is trucked out, how will dust be contained and how will the toxicity (dust and air) be measured? What is the risk of these to locals? What independent testing is being undertaken and who will the results be released to? How are you ensuring this risk doesn't transfer to the southern slopes of Northbridge where homes are incredibly close to the dive site, to Basketball, Netball courts and other community areas? There are so many unanswered questions!

6. Aboriginal sites - And what is become of the known Aboriginal sites in this region? How will they be preserved and protected? I've not seen or heard anything substantial on this front. Our Aboriginal heritage is so important to our country, our children and to those who value our forbearers, which my family certainly does. To simply ignore these traditional sites and artworks, as well as their beliefs throughout this project is so disappointing.

In summary, I oppose this project due to the impacts it will bring - contamination, destruction of biodiversity, traffic, health and safety of our residents and school kids. We love our home and our community and don't want it to be destroyed by removing our bushland and it's fauna and flora, by polluting our air with dust, toxins and noise, polluting our waterways and preventing us to fish, swim, sail, canoe etc, by damaging our children's health and the health of future generations. We want to preserve this rare ecosystem we have so close to an international city for our future generations to enjoy as much as we already have. Improved public transport is the way to achieve this, not the tunnel system and all it encompasses.