

**Submission
No 218**

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

Name: Mr Michael Waite

Date Received: 18 June 2021

Thank you for holding this inquiry into what is clearly an unnecessary project that will be destructive to the environment and to local communities. I object to the Beaches Link project on the following grounds.

In regard to the adequacy of the business case, I note that the government has never released this, despite multiple requests from concerned citizens. The only conclusion to be drawn from this is that the business case is weak, suggesting the Beaches Link will end up being a money losing white elephant, and we already have enough of them in NSW!

Re the consideration of alternative options, it is clear that this tunnel mad government has not seriously considered any real alternatives, such as better public transport from the northern beaches. They only considered slightly different alignments of tunnels. The planning seems to have been done on the assumption that a tunnel is the only option and therefore to establish what route it should take. Having lived on the Northern Beaches, I am aware that a large proportion of the people who live there also work in that area, so would rarely use a tunnel. I also note that the government EIS did not consider quite practical alternatives such as more frequent public transport between Frenchs Forest & Chatswood, where commuters could then link to the new metro line.

Re the impact on the environment, this is clearly going to be disastrous in multiple areas, both during construction and ongoing if this Beaches Link tunnel is ever constructed. The plan to have a dive site near the Willoughby Leisure Centre will result in loss of 16 acres of bushland that is home to native species. This immediate area is also a landfill site from a tip dating back to the mid 20th century & the toxicity of what is under the ground is unknown, and this material will be dug up as part of the tunneling process. The area to the immediate east, Flat Rock Gully is a beautiful bush area, quite rare so close to the city, and is at risk of being polluted from the tunneling work.

Similarly there will be environmental damage caused by the laying of the tunnel between Seaforth & Northbridge due to disruption of contaminated sediment as well as destruction of foreshore areas.

In regard to impacts on residents, these will be severe and ongoing. Local traffic will be much slower both during and after construction. The traffic report shows that delays at some local intersections will increase dramatically when the tunnel is complete.

There will be loss of public land where a large area of Cammeray golf course is carved off to build enormous sheds to house tunnel machinery. Why can't these be underground? Although the government claims that lost parkland will be replaced, it is not a like for like replacement - we lose a large area of integrated parkland, and they make up for it by planting trees in disparate areas. There is also going to be a large exhaust chimney next to the Ernest Street overpass that will release all the exhaust fumes from the tunnel where they will then blow around the local area which is dense residential, with a number of schools quite close by.

We live in an era of increasing awareness of pollution and the environment, with most people agreeing that we need to act in favour of a cleaner planet, and yet in this Beaches Link we have a government that is determined to cause ongoing severe environmental degradation simply because they think a tunnel is the answer to every question.

During the construction phase there will be hundreds of large trucks on the road every day as the work goes 24/7. You only have to look at what is happening in Rozelle at the moment to get a

preview of what this would be like around the North Sydney area, where the roads are much narrower & more residential than the City West Link along which most of the Rozelle waste is being transported.

In summary, i object to the Beaches Link tunnel as it is not needed in the first place, it isn't solving any problem, however if constructed it will result in ongoing severe social and environmental negative outcomes.