

Submission  
No 275

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

**Name:** Name suppressed

**Date Received:** 16 June 2021

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Partially  
Confidential

The Hon Daniel Mookhey MLC

Chair

Parliamentary Inquiry into the impact of the Western Harbour Tunnel and Beaches Link

16 June 2021

Dear Honourable Member Mookhey,

We are residents of Louisa Road, Birchgrove, NSW 2041 and this submission puts forward some of our concerns in relation to the proposed Western Harbour Tunnel (WHT) project. We are part of a group, known as the Western Harbour Tunnel Action Group (WHTAG), which consists of approximately 80 local residents in Birchgrove, all of whom will be impacted by the WHT project.

Robert Kelly, Convenor and John Symonds, Secretary of the Western Harbour Tunnel Action Group have made a formal submission to you today which comprehensively covers the concerns of 80 of us residents of Birchgrove listing serious impacts on homes and our environment, including marine ecosystems. We are reinforcing (ad verbatim) those concerns that will potentially impact the lives of our families qualitatively and resubmitting them below so as to reiterate the very personal nature of these concerns:

1. We are very concerned about vibration and potential damage to our home as caused by tunnelling during WestConnex construction. Our home is above the tunnel route and we have serious concerns that ground movement during construction risks permanent damage to our property.

In relation to Term of Reference (f) - the practice in earlier stages of the Westconnex Project has been to define "affected Properties" as those within a maximum distance of 50m from the closest construction. The contention that only properties within a 50m distance from tunnelling will be impacted is not convincing. Media has reported that in Haberfield, homes over 250m away from the closest construction experienced cracking. We would like to see this 50m definition for potentially impacted properties removed.

2. Yurulbin Point will be profoundly affected by becoming a construction site and will not be available to us during the construction phase.

We live 170 meters away from Yurulbin Point which is not only a wonderful recreation area for our grandchildren but is also the site of our closest ferry stop. Not only will the closure of this area for several years affect our travel and recreation options, but the EIS does not adequately address the human health concerns including the impacts of noise, offensive odours, air quality and exposure to contaminated sediments through aerosol spread of transported/stored sediment and decrease in air quality due to use of unfiltered air stacks. It is reported that there are very high levels of toxic chemicals in the sediments, including TBT, mercury, dioxins and arsenic. If these are released during dredging and construction there is a high risk of environmental damage to the harbour, substantial fish kills and risks to our health.

3. Of further personal concern is the impact of construction workforce parking on Louisa Road which is a narrow street that is already subject to heavy parking demands. Assurance is

sought that the limited street parking available on Louisa Road isn't further burdened by WHT workforce vehicular parking.

4. The questions that continues to remain convincingly unanswered is why alternative transport options such as better public transport was not sufficiently considered as an option. Why another set of toll roads? The WHT project by design would result in more cars on the road causing a significant increase in emissions and contribute to climate change. If the NSW Government is serious about the net zero emissions goal, the need for the WHT and associated projects should be reassessed. We need serious action on climate change in a smarter approach than digging tunnels – with better public transport as the key.

Regards,

Louisa Road,  
Birchgrove  
NSW 2041