

Submission
No 284

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

Name: Name suppressed

Date Received: 18 June 2021

Partially
Confidential

I live in between St. Cecilia's Primary School and Balgowlah Boys School with my 3 young children who attend St Cecilia's Primary School.

1. I am extremely concerned about the health risks posed by the traffic pollution that will come from the proposed unfiltered exhaust stack (to be located where Balgowlah Golf Course now resides). My eldest daughter has severe asthma that gets triggered by smoke or particles. She spent days in the northern beaches hospital after smoke inhalation in a critical condition. Why wouldn't the stack be filtered as mandatory? Public health should be a priority over dollars spent (and built into the business case) especially with so many local schools and young families so close by. There is inconsistency in the data used in the air quality modelling that needs to be investigated, houses next to each other situated in a valley have either no or top level emissions impact marked against them. The chart does not make sense and a more accurate investigation of pollution impact needs to be carried out.

2. The impact of the tunnel construction will be significant for 5-7 years with increased traffic flow including trucks through the local streets surrounding the construction site that are using alternative routes. This will put people and especially children in additional danger as they park and cross already busy roads close to the schools. The construction noise will continue 24 hrs 7 days a week for 5-7 years and studies have modelled the impact of the noise reaching as far as stocklands Balgowlah. This is hugely detrimental to the quality of life for a huge portion of the local population and is unacceptable.

3. The impact on the environment is devastating at a time when we need to protect it most, we will lose approx 2500 trees, lose the local golf course, threatened species such as the eastern pygmy possum and grey headed flying foxes that live in the impacted bushland will be displaced or impacted by the pollution during construction. We will lose large areas of bushland across burnt creek deviation, wakehurst parkway as well as impact to manly dam. Disturbance of toxic sludge whilst digging the tunnel and pumped out to waterways and is likely to impact wildlife more broadly across the beaches including Manly /Queenscliff lagoon and Clontarf. Swimming there could be dangerous for years to come. There are other cleaner, greener transport options available (more public transport, buses, covered cycle lane for bikes and electric bikes even). This project will also create over 700k tonnes CO₂e during the construction phase and 40k t CO₂e from additional vehicles using the tunnel each year once it is in use. NSW 2030 emissions reductions target already fall way short of what is required to keep global warming below 1.5 degrees. This is devastating for our future and our children's.

4. Business Case - \$12 billion dollars would be far better invested in public transport, supporting the environment through carbon reduction/renewable energy, schools or healthcare. This tunnel "may" save people a few minutes (5 or 10) on their journey but most likely the traffic will back up as they get close to the city and traffic will continue to worsen as the population rises. Or people may continue to work remotely and the traffic stats for the tunnel may not justify it being built if modelled correctly. Already many buses have been cancelled through Balgowlah Heights and surrounding areas and the remaining ones are crowded. Why reduce public transport when we need more of it? Hopefully this is not being used to increase the traffic stats to justify the tunnel. Overall this \$12 Billion investment for a minimal upside in travel time, leaving catastrophic impact to the environment and health of surrounding locals /schools is insanity.