

Submission
No 292

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

Name: Name suppressed

Date Received: 18 June 2021

Partially
Confidential

I am a local Manly Vale resident who is extremely concerned about the impact the tunnel will have on our environment, to house prices and to our ability to easily travel throughout Sydney. I'm dealing with several chronic diseases and an auto-immune disease aggravated by stress. The constant background construction noise, concern over environmental impacts of the tunnel and worry about the effect of the tunnel on my house prices will only contribute negatively to my health.

The introduction of the B1 bus services made a substantial impact on traffic and the ability to travel throughout Sydney. Public transport was not considered as an alternative to the tunnel, despite claims in the EIS that alternatives were considered.

I fail to see the benefit of the tunnel, particularly given the astronomical cost which will no doubt blow out, the unfiltered stacks directing concentrated pollution directly in my local area and the 7-10 years of disruption to the only direct route out of the beaches into the city. It is essentially crippling an entire peninsula who has been by and large vocally against the tunnel from day one.

The EIS travel time projections predict some intersections will actually be worse off with the tunnel and have longer travel times - with the cost of this investment and the disruption it will bring, it should benefit all residents and not make certain routes take longer than they do now.

Given the impacts of COVID-19 and the number of people who are currently working from home, and will likely continue to do so in some form moving forward, I think we need a reassessment of the need, efficacy and cost / benefit analysis of this project. Many of my friend's employers have offered them the ability to work partly from home indefinitely and I don't think we will ever get back to where we were when the initial figures were calculated. The lockdowns have provided a business case for flexible work and I think this will only increase in the years to come but changes to travel and work patterns post COVID-19 haven't been included in any of the planning or analysis for this project. The assumptions used to produce the traffic modelling used for business case must use the most-up-to date data and be publicly released.

The impact on the local environment will be huge to our community with rare open green space permanently removed, including over 2500 established trees without local biodiversity offsets. The years of construction will only cause an increase in carbon emissions and the impact on our local wildlife could be devastating. In particular, the last mainland population of little penguins that live on the Middle Harbour foreshore, where coffer dams will be used in construction. The EIS acknowledges that the penguins will most probably be forced to leave the area permanently. This would be devastating for an animal that is already under threat.

Of particular concern for our health is the exhaust stacks releasing unfiltered exhaust from vehicles travelling the 7km length of tunnel, and there is no filtration of air either within, or outside the tunnel.

There has been no business case and cost-benefit analysis performed for the Beaches Link as a stand-alone project, nor has anything been released publicly. The Beaches Link Tunnel needs to be considered and justified in its own right.