

Submission  
No 319

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

**Name:** Name suppressed

**Date Received:** 18 June 2021

---

Partially  
Confidential

I submit my comments on the proposed Beach Link Tunnel.

**1. The Northern Beaches NEEDS a WHOLE OF PENINSULA transport solution.**

The issues:

1. Congestion during peak am hours heading south (to city and Western Suburbs)
2. Congestion during peak hours heading north (going home)
3. Congestion on Saturdays heading north and south of the Peninsular (sports and shopping)
4. Congestion on Saturdays and Sundays heading north during summer and warm winter days (heading to a beach)

The Tunnel addresses just one of the issues above – the first point. The Tunnel will attract more vehicles on the road, and so it will actually exacerbate issues 2., 3. and 4.

In relation to PM peak traffic – the Tunnel will attract more car users (the EIS sets out significant increases). But what about the trip home? No plans are proposed for traffic management for traffic heading north of Balgowlah. Whatever savings in time in the AM will be eaten away in the PM.

In relation to points 3. And 4. Above, more traffic into Northern Beaches from western and northern suburbs means that it will take even longer to get to our major shopping centres, and our children's sports games (it currently takes an hour to travel between Balgowlah and Warriewood on a Saturday afternoon!).

Further, I walk in bushland adjoining Burnt Bridge Deviation. At 10 am on weekdays there is hardly any traffic along this road. The Tunnel is a fixed cost project catering for just AM peak hours on weekdays. This seems incredibly inefficient use of resources. Better public transport can be more responsive to user demand.

We need more efficient public transport and linking of areas distant from main routes to main transport hubs. We need cars off the roads.

**2. Local street rat runs and delays**

I live in Woodland St. The EIS states that traffic trying to reach the tunnel will be distributed via local streets, in particular Woodland and Condamine Streets. Condamine St is already at capacity AM and PM peaks hours, and all day Saturday. Woodland St will be open to the whole of the Northern Beaches as people try to find faster paths to the tunnel. Other local roads will be similarly affected. This will increase traffic, increase air and noise pollution in local streets. It will make our streets more dangerous – Woodland and Griffiths St are major routes from children getting to Manly West Public School and to Balgowlah Boys High School. What is the point of the Tunnel, if thousands of vehicles will be zigzagging their way through Manly Vale and Balgowlah to try to “beat the crowd”?

### 3. Significant impact - Balgowlah Boys High School

1. The construction period is expected to be 7 years, and an additional 3 years is predicted. At least 3 years will see thousands of heavy vehicles transporting soil in the vicinity of Balgowlah Boys. For many years the boys will be exposed to the unrelenting noise, dirt and vibration associated with demolition, coring, and construction. The EIS fails to include any measurements for the school in relation to the noise.

In relation to school infrastructure, the school has largely been neglected over the decades, and it is very ill prepared to stifle external noise. Cosmetic works have been carried out in the last couple of years, but the school has asbestos in ceiling tiles, in floor tiles and in walls. I am very concerned that vibration will upset the asbestos and release dangerous fibres around the boys. I am also concerned about the actual structure will be compromised being so neglected, and so close to the work site. The EIS makes no mention of mitigation of these issues.

It is incredibly unfair to the boys to have to study under such conditions, and will be detrimental not only to their education but to their mental and physical health.

2. Unfiltered exhaust stack. Once the tunnel is completed, the school, which is less than 300m away, will be exposed to the worst of the toxic fumes from the stack (as will Seaforth Public School and St Cecelia's Primary School). Why has Balgowlah Boys School not been give Community Receiver sensitivity status when it's the closest school to the Tunnel exhaust stack and construction site? The stack will be shorter than usual so that it does not stand out in the distance as much ... however this means that exhaust will also be expelled at lower height. Numerous studies have shown that the fumes from exhaust stack affect the health if its recipients. Children's bodies and immune systems are still developing and it is appalling that the Government has little regard of the impact.
3. The school has very little recreation area, and so Balgowlah Oval is an important open space for the boys. We are told that it will remain open during construction, but with the dirt, vibration and noise will have a detrimental effect on the boys' health and use of the space.
4. Traffic around the School. I am very fearful for the safety of my child crossing roads around the school during construction. Streets are narrow, there is competition for parking, bus passage, private vehicle passage. During works, we will have 1000 construction staff driving around the school seeking parking. It is difficult enough to get across to the school now. What measures will be taken to keep construction staff away from the school vicinity? All contractor parking should be on-site and away from our local roads.
5. Vegetation around the school. Mature trees are targeted for removal during construction. These trees offer shade for outdoor activity, and buffer noise from Sydney Road. The removal of these trees will leave the little open space the boys have intolerable in the summer and the school exposed to more noise.

#### **4. Environmental Damage**

In 2017, Planning NSW stated on its website “The NSW Government will create a greener Sydney and State to improve the health, economy, environment, infrastructure and biodiversity for all its families and people as part of NSW’s statewide green infrastructure policy, Greener Places”. In June last year a Green guide was released.

How does removing natural bushland meet the guidelines?

Issues –

- Several years ago, the then Manly Council introduced a levy to carry out works to improve the functioning of Burnt Bridge Creek. It was money well spent as the area flourished.. The EIS states that Burnt Bridge Creek is “a vital ecological corridor of regenerated habitat that provides a range of important habitats for a diversity of local flora and fauna”. But the Tunnel works will lead to a reduction of natural water flow of the creek by 79% and the creek will die. This will lead to devastation of animals and plants who rely on this water, particularly the flying fox colony.
- 425,000 litres of waste water will be washed into Manly Lagoon at Queenscliff every day during the tunnel construction.
- At Middle Harbour, toxic chemicals in the harbour sediment will be disturbed during dredging, posing a major threat to the marine environment and the amenity of Clontarf and Sandy Bay.
- Balgowlah Golf Course site will be completely cleared of vegetation and native habitats during construction to allow for parking for some of the 3000 workers daily, enormous road headers, a concrete batch plant, rock crushers and acoustic sheds.
- Nearly 2,000 mature trees will be removed Garigal National Park / Bantry Bay and Manly Dam Reserve. This will have a huge impact on animals in the area. The EIS states that mobile animals will relocate, but it does not take into account territories and available resources. The less mobile will be left to die. Is this not environmental terrorism?

#### **5. Why do we need this Tunnel anyway?**

I believe that the numbers for EIS were gauged 2 or 3 years ago.

On the Traffic Volume Viewer [website page](#) , which the site says numbers are current, it appears that traffic has remained more or less static over several years along Spit Rd,

Warringah Road, Condamine and Burnt Bridge Creek Deviation. Unfortunately some markers were removed for 2020 and 2021 (why? One asks).

The Australian Government recently announced a job creation hub around Badgery's Creek – the aim of which is to create 1000 jobs. The Australian Government is also pushing bringing manufacturing back to Australia. The Northern Beaches will not be a place for such activities. People will move to where there is work.

Many Northern Beach residents have moved to the Central Coast, chasing more affordable housing and a less hectic lifestyle.

Covid 19 saw many companies adopt a “work from home” initiative. This is increasingly becoming a new lifestyle for many.

The Northern Beaches Council is seeking to reduce traffic by 30% by 2038 in its Move - Northern Beaches Transport Strategy 2038'

The Tunnel is not the transport answer to the Northern Beaches. It will cost, it will exacerbate, it will destroy. For what purpose? To save a few minutes leaving the area. We need better public transport for all of the people.