

Submission
No 332

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

Name: Name suppressed

Date Received: 17 June 2021

Partially
Confidential

Submission of

RE: NSW PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

17 June 2021

We live on the southern side of Morden St Cammeray. Our property backs onto Cammeray Golf Course and the Warringah Freeway. Part of the Western Harbour Tunnel and Beaches Link (WHT & BL) and Warringah Freeway Upgrade (WFU) will be constructed directly behind us. The projects will severely and permanently affect our home and lifestyle.

We object to the entire Tunnels and WFU projects because they support inefficient car transport, increase air and noise pollution and alienate local communities.

Business case

The WHT & BL proposal does not provide a simple explanation of the anticipated benefits of the project for the dollars spent. In order to adequately assess the project we require a cost benefit analysis that includes the short and long outcomes, particularly on the environment.

Alternative Options

The WHT & BL EIS did not adequately consider alternative transport options such as heavy and light rail lines. Sydney is a large and growing city. Congestion, pollution, noise and associated health problems are consequences of the emphasis on road infrastructure. If these issues are to be adequately addressed then rail and bus infrastructure must be considered more thoroughly. The benefits of rail and bus transport cannot be ignored. They provide an efficient means of carrying large numbers of people, produce less air and noise pollution than road and contribute to the overall health of citizens.

Consultation Methods

The consultation process has been opaque. As an example, the work behind our property has not been clearly explained. We back on to the Cammeray Golf Course and the proposed overpass from Miller St to the Freeway. The initial proposal did not mention the overpass and it took many phone calls to RMS to confirm the proposed work. Many neighbours are still unaware of what is proposed. Each resident should have been given a drawing and description of the work.

Work and Travel Patterns due to Covid-19

It appears that Covid-19 will permanently alter work patterns. The consequences of possible changes on the viability of the project need to be fully investigated.

Transparency and Accountability

We have not been notified of the various stages of the tender process nor of the firms tendering.

Impact on the Environment

Cammeray, North Sydney and Neutral Bay were carved up for the construction of the Warringah Freeway in the 1960s. Over 500 houses and buildings were demolished, green spaces lost and communities severed by the project. The area cannot bear more Freeway induced impacts.

The following needs to be addressed:

Green space

The WHT & BL and will reduce the size of Cammeray Golf Course. The Golf Course is the largest public green space in the North Sydney area. Green space was compromised in the 1960s by the current Freeway corridor. The construction phase

alone of the current project will destroy and alienate a significant part of this space for the next 7-8 years. Public space, mature trees, shrubs and grassland and the fauna that depends on the flora will be permanently lost with the completed project. Please consider and assess the carbon emissions that will result from the loss of green space and increase in traffic.

Local traffic

It is anticipated that local traffic will suffer from the projects. The volume of traffic on Miller and Amherst Streets is projected to increase as a result of the proposal. Traffic turning into Miler St from Amherst will be restricted at times of the day. Delays at Ben Boyd and Falcon St will increase. Cars are being prioritised over pedestrians. More traffic can only alienate pedestrians

Bike lane

The bike lane, completed in 2011, will be demolished and replaced with a winding path around buildings that does not connect to a proper bike transport system. The project should incorporate an easy bike path to the Harbour Bridge.

Air quality

The new ventilation stacks, near Ernest St, are near many schools and built up areas. The area already suffers from high pollution readings.

We request the following:

- A review of the loss of green space on the Golf Course to 1) include locating the Maintenance Facilities building underground 2) providing a green link to the other side of freeway that more closely resembles Cammeray prior to the construction of the Freeway in the 1960s. An example to consider would be the earth covered Parliament House in Canberra. Here, the green space would be above the Freeway.
- Making the noise walls green walls to absorb pollution.
- Exhaust and fresh air stacks located at 3-4kms intervals and filtered ventilation stacks.
- Redesign of the bike lane to connect to North Sydney and The Bridge.
- A guarantee that Cammeray and adjoining suburbs will not bear more traffic and restrictions as a result of the project.

Impact on residents

Tunnel entry and exits

The WHT & BL project will widen the Warringah Freeway corridor behind our properties by 20 -25%. Portals to the BL tunnels will be located directly behind us.

The changes will have an enormous impact on our neighbourhood in the construction and finished stages. The freeway will be closer to our places, increasing noise and pollution and altering our outlook completely.

More information is required on:

Noise levels

We request an assurance that noise levels from the completed proposal will not result in an increase in noise, and further, that the same noise level criteria applied to residences along new freeways be applied to this Freeway.

Noise walls

The inclusion of 4-6m high noise walls behind our properties, along the golf course and along the overpass and around the portal opening.

Visual Impact

We currently look onto a bushy landscaped slope from our back gardens. The EIS and the interactive videos on the RMS website do not adequately show what will be seen of the Miller St Overpass and the portals by properties on the southern side of

Morden St. We need a photomontage of the area to properly assess the impact on our view and the landscaped area.

Exhaust and fresh air stacks

We live in close proximity to the proposed exhaust stacks located near Ernest St. As residents we need to know the impact of the stacks on our air quality.

Impact on Sydney

The WHT & BL project encourage the use of inefficient transport i.e. the individual car carrying one or two people. The project is designed to increase the use of cars. The consequences are increased noise and pollution in Sydney. Car driving in a large city like Sydney is a stressful and sedentary activity and should be discouraged by looking at alternatives that provide better lifestyle outcomes for the population. Transport projects such as the Metro trains, B-Line buses and light rail are proving to be very successful at moving large numbers of people around Sydney in an environmentally friendly manner.

The EIS does not discuss alternative transport options, particularly the provision of extending a rail or light rail under Military Road to serve the densely populated area from North Sydney to Spit Junction.

We are being urged at every level to reduce greenhouse emissions. The NSW government has committed to net-zero emissions by 2050. Building less freeways and more public transport is the only logical path to support this policy.

Before the WHT & BL projects proceed we request the following:

- A thorough analysis of all transport options.
- A cost benefits analysis of all transport options including impact on the environment and health.
- Most importantly a prediction of the impact of the proposal on our carbon emissions and the NSW government's net-zero emission objective.