

Submission
No 373

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

Name: Name suppressed

Date Received: 18 June 2021

Partially
Confidential

Dear Members of the Public Works Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit to an inquiry regarding these concerning projects. I strongly object to the Western Harbour Tunnel (including the Warringah Freeway Upgrade) and Beaches Link (including the Gore Hill extension) projects and urge you to recommend that the NSW Government abandon these plans immediately.

First, a little about me. I am a long term resident of Willoughby who has grown up in the area and greatly benefitted from the sporting grounds and parks. As a person who enjoys the outdoors and has long term health issues including respiratory disease I feel as if I will be negatively impacted by the Northern Beaches Tunnel. I frequently use flat rock during my weekends and breaks as I enjoy getting away from my offices and getting in some much needed fresh air and exercise. It concerns me that this project poses a significant risk to this environment as well as the health of the community that lives by it. I am also deeply alarmed about the lack of future public transport planning and the significant environment impacts that will occur as a result of your governments neglect. I would like to see Sydney become a more efficient and cleaner city that rivals other cities globally. I feel much of the charm of the city will be lost to narrow minded forms of planning. I also believe that billions of dollars are being spent on a wasteful project with little benefits, when the funds could go to the much needed improvement to rural areas access to affordable and efficient technology. I encourage you to reconsider the project and invest in more sustainable or much needed projects within the State of NSW.

I have previously submitted a submission as to why I object to these projects. Please find attached this submission:

1. The profound impact it will have on the community and the lack of communication during Covid-19:

This project impacts a large number of schools and passes through highly residential areas. Families, community groups and schools have been under a huge amount of strain throughout the exhibition stage. School P&C's did not have the opportunity to review the documents and parents were caring for children on school holidays. The initial 12,000+ paged documents are very difficult to read on screen and the Library was not allowing borrowing. The project should be re-exhibited well after the COVID-19 crisis has passed and when normal life returns and when we understand the permanent changes that it has made. Communities have become heavily reliant on their natural and sporting spaces. Our community will be giving up our spaces for a project with do not benefit from. The disruption to day to day life will be apparent with traffic congestion and noise pollution.

2. The impact on the environment and health of residents:

I object to the project due to the contamination risks it presents to the environment and to human health and the negative impact on our precious waterways and green spaces. I believe the government has not made enough considerations about the use of the Flat rock site. The EIS does state that the landfill site may contain industrial as well as household and building waste however when risk assessing the Flat Rock Reserve the assumption is that it is only building and household waste. This assumption is contradicted by the high levels of chemicals in the area and the history of the site which is well documented in the EIS. The Flat Rock Reserve site needs to be re-risk assessed and fully tested in order to avoid negatively impacting the health of the community and the local eco system. Contaminants such as heavy metals and PFAS have been

detected in Middle Harbour and are considered dangerous to human health. A plan has been outlined to flush treated waste water from the site through the local water ways into the harbour, however, there has been a failure to acknowledge the risk of spillage of untreated water and there is no remediation plan or budget for compensating for spills or accidents. I strongly recommend that further testing is required on the area before proceeding with any plans. Furthermore, the plans have not outlined the impact to the various community groups and business that rely on the use of the harbour. Contamination at an unsafe level has the potential to inhibit the ability of groups and business to access the harbor for recreational and business purposes, negatively impacting upon health and the local economy. I recommend that further testing be conducted and a full risk assessment be done prior to the sign off outline the health risks to the community including worst case scenarios taking into account accidental spills. The planning should also include real time alert systems and monitoring systems so in the case of a spill communities are prepared

I encourage you to reconsider the approval of the project in favour of the community that supports you and the environment we live in.