

Submission  
No 374

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

**Name:** Name suppressed

**Date Received:** 18 June 2021

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Partially  
Confidential

As a resident of North Balgowlah I truly believe that our community is set to be the sacrificial lamb of the Northern Beaches tunnel. I feel that the planners have absolutely not given due thought and consideration to both the short and long term impacts that will be felt by our residents. Your plan will have a massive detrimental on the physical and mental wellbeing of our residents and I would urge the planners to consider how they would feel if this project were planned for the area in which they live?

My concerns cover the community and environmental impacts and can be summarised as follows:

#### Community Impact

1. Exposure to significant levels of noise, vibrations and dust which will be caused by 24 / 7 tunnelling, which is likely to have significant adverse impacts on the physical, emotional and mental health of neighbouring residents;
2. Significant traffic congestion surrounding the suburb, which may result in any increase in accidents, as well as an increase in noise and car emissions;
3. Rat run traffic through the suburb and past our school as commuters try to avoid the congestion around the construction sites, which we consider is highly likely to result in an increase in accidents involving children;
4. Increased on street parking from the workers of particularly the Kirkwood Street site where there is no facilitation of parking for the large number of workers visiting the site daily, this in turn will add to both the rat run risk and the safety concerns for children in our area;
5. Pollution from the unfiltered smokestacks that will be either side of our suburb and envelope the suburb.
6. Risk of movement and damage from digging such as when the Lane Cove tunnel was built and an apartment building collapsed due to vibrations. Balcony collapses into tunnel hole - ABC News

#### Environmental Impact

We are fortunate to live in an area that incorporates some spectacular bush land, reserves and beaches and would urge that further consideration is given to the major environmental impacts, including but not limited to:

1. Movement of contaminated sediment to Clontarf and Middle Harbour (The Spit) potentially causing pollution of the neighbouring beaches;
2. Potential destruction of Burnt Bridge Creek and surrounds (e.g. bushland, wildlife etc) due to a possible 96% reduction in water flow;
3. Discharge of 428,000 L per day of wastewater into Queenscliff Lagoon & Beach, resulting in health hazards for people and animals who swim in the waterways; and
4. Pollution of Manly Dam reserve, resulting in the potential extinction of rare flora and fauna and the last remaining areas of Duffys Forest, and meaning that one of the only swimmable dams in NSW is no longer safe for public use.

#### Revisiting the tunnel justification

I feel that many of the assumptions for traffic used as justification of the build in the EIS have not factored in changes to travel habits and working from home due to COVID-19 and into the future, treating COVID-19 as having only a "temporary" impact". There are many new data points to factor in given the impact of COVID-19 on lifestyles long term and I stand with Viable Transport solutions in asking the government to halt the development process to allow for a suitable review, and to publicly release the results of the review. The figures put forward in the EIS indicate only a minimal reduction in the traffic flowing through Mosman for a significant and disproportionate use of public funds. I am also concerned that whilst conditions may be

attached to the development approvals to mitigate some of the impacts, similar conditions have been shown to have been breached in nearby infrastructure projects with minimal penalty or recourse.

Ultimately I would love to see the tunnel plan stopped entirely however, should that not be possible then I would I request that you:

- Halt the process and amend the current plans and design to properly and sympathetically address community concerns and minimise the negative impacts on the local community and environment, rather than rush the process in order to get everything through before the next election; and

- Revisit the assumptions for tunnel justification based on living in a post COVID-19 world.