

**Submission
No 259**

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

Name: Mr Ben Cooper

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I am particularly concerned about the plans for the Beaches Link Tunnel and how it impacts the Seaforth Public School community and surrounding areas.

Earlier plans for the tunnel – shared with the Seaforth Public school community – indicated that the tunnel entrance would be further from the school. Now the Environmental Impact Statement indicates that the tunnel entrance, including 12 lanes of traffic, smokestack and related construction works, with impacts for air quality, noise and vibration, will be directly parallel with the school. And close proximity to our home.

There is a lack of clarity on which route spoil trucks will take, though there is clarity about their massive volume -- as frequently as once every 1-2 minutes at peak construction. This could be disruptive for learning at Seaforth Public and other nearby schools, such as Balgowlah North Boys.

Most importantly, while modelling indicates air quality may improve slightly for the school area, that is based on expected traffic patterns. Actual traffic patterns will depend on many factors, such as whether good public transport options are created through well-designed and well-used express bus services through the tunnel, which has yet to be determined.

This tunnel project will increase traffic lanes from 6 to 12 near the school, including a traffic light, and add a nearby smoke stack. International studies have shown the dangers to health, particularly in children, of being near many open lanes of traffic. I'm worried about the children's development and my own Asthma with idling vehicles and the double in volume with the 12 lanes.

Earlier plans, noted in the Environment Impact Statement, make clear that alternative arrangements are possible that position the tunnel entrance further North up Burnt Bridge Deviation. Those plans would ensure that all traffic is within the tunnel before it reaches the school, helping to ensure air quality safety no matter what the eventual traffic patterns will be.

It feels to me that we need something halfway. Where the new plans have landed is right on top of the schools and the risks are too high. Not to mention the impact on the residence.

Yours sincerely

Ben Cooper