

Submission  
No 360

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

**Name:** Name suppressed

**Date Received:** 16 June 2021

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Partially  
Confidential

As a resident in North Balgowlah I put forward this submission to the enquiry into the Western Harbour Tunnel and Beaches Link project. Specifically I refer to the Beaches Link Project as it has a direct impact on my family's lifestyle and future in this area.

In its current form I oppose the project as there has not been enough clarity on essential elements of the project. I have outlined below my concerns.

Experts in our community have worked through a cost-benefit analysis of the Beaches Link, and it showed a BCR of around 0.80 (using a discount rate of 7%). This is significantly less than the minimum of 1.20 that is needed to justify infrastructure projects. If the BCR is adjusted to take into account the impacts of COVID-19 and working from home (where 40% of current drivers work from home 3 days a week), the BCR falls to 0.60.

(a) the adequacy of the business case for the project, including the cost benefits ratio,

The timing savings that are predicted do not appear to be accurate and with the cost for travelling in the tunnel the estimated time savings do not create benefit for commuters.

I am concerned that the assumptions to increase the population on the Northern Beaches are to the detriment of the community. This is a peninsular and we do not wish to have the area over developed or filled with multi-storey dwellings. Visibility of the plans for population growth in the area need to be made available to the public.

(b) the adequacy of the consideration of alternative options,

I see that businesses could be encouraged to have more flexible working arrangements and office hours to assist in congestion of traffic in peak times. What alternative options to the tunnel have been proposed to the community? None I am aware of.

(j) the impact on the environment, including marine ecosystems,

The impact on the local environment will be huge to our community with rare open green space permanently removed including over 2500 established trees without local biodiversity offsets. I am against this destruction of what is valuable green space in our locality.

The EIS has stated tunnel construction in North Balgowlah and Seaforth will cause the water table in Seaforth and North Balgowlah to fall, and natural groundwater flows into Burnt Bridge Creek will fall by 96%. This is not acceptable to ruin this lovely party of our environment.

There is more to be investigated in terms of environmental impacts. What will the loss of water flows do to large trees and wildlife near the creek? What will the fall in the water table and loss of groundwater do to all the large trees in the suburb, in residents gardens?

The widening of Wakehurst Parkway from Seaforth to Warringah Road (on the ridge between Bantry Bay and the Manly Dam War Memorial Park) will create polluted run-off water from even moderate rain events during construction. The EIS states due to topographical constraints these cannot be controlled – an admission that I find unacceptable. Manly Dam is the only remaining fresh water dam suitable for swimming in Sydney.

Our family also swim at Clontarf beach but I am concerned that disrupted sediment during construction will pollute the water. The little penguins that inhabit this area will be under threat.

(k) the adequacy of processes for accessing and responding to noise, vibration and other impacts on residents, during construction and operationally,

I understand that during construction, it is up to residents to report if contractors are working outside of restrictions provided by the government (i.e. out-of-hours work, exceeding noise levels etc). Residents have no input into these "agreed" restrictions, but are expected to understand them and be the watchdog to protect themselves. Instead, we ask that a fully independent advocate or arbitrator be appointed to work on behalf of residents and the community to negotiate with contractors

(l) the impact of the project on nearby public sites, including Yurulbin Point and Dawn Fraser Baths, and

More investigation on the impact on indigenous sites near Wakehurst Parkway, or at Clive Park need to be provided as well as impacts to Manly Dam.

Thank you for taking these points into consideration.