

**Submission
No 383**

INQUIRY INTO IMPACT OF THE WESTERN HARBOUR TUNNEL AND BEACHES LINK

Name: Alice Klettner

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I am a resident of Fairlight, in the Northern Beaches and strongly object to the proposed Beaches Link Tunnel. I set out my objections under the relevant terms of reference.

- (a) the adequacy of the business case for the project, including the cost benefits ratio,
- (g) the extent to which changes in population growth, work and travel patterns due to the Covid-19 pandemic have impacted on the original cost benefit ratio,

There has been a significant change since the tunnel was proposed - Covid-19 has completely altered working habits which are unlikely to ever return to the way they were – both my husband and I are still working 95% from home. When we do have to travel to the city, traffic along Military Road is much reduced. It seems this project has become even more unnecessary and any benefits are significantly outweighed by the extensive cost and detriment to the local community and environment. The cost benefit assumptions for the Beaches Tunnel (as a stand-alone project) need to be made public so that the impact of recent changes can be properly assessed.

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

It appears there has been no consideration of anything other than a road tunnel which is astounding. I cannot understand why there has been no serious discussion of a train link. Other countries are purposely reducing emissions-heavy transport such as planes, buses and cars in favour of train-travel. If the purpose of the tunnel is to improve long-term transport for Sydney we must consider the option of extending the train network. Pressure to reduce carbon emissions is only going to increase, making road transport unsustainable.

- (f) the consultation methods and effectiveness, both with affected communities and stakeholders,
- (i) whether the project is subject to the appropriate levels of transparency and accountability that would be expected of a project delivered by a public sector body,

I am not aware of any active consultation with local communities. Many people in my area who will be directly affected have no awareness of the likely impact of the tunnel. Indeed, I only came to know about the EIS and this inquiry through my local primary school Facebook page. This is not appropriate for a project delivered by a public sector body. It feels that the project is being quietly ushered in without full community consideration of options, costs or benefits.

- (j) the impact on the environment, including marine ecosystems,
- (k) the adequacy of processes for accessing and responding to noise, vibration and other impacts on residents, during construction and operationally,

A possible slight reduction in commute time for a small proportion of people is not worth the horrific costs of this project and I refer not to the financial costs but to the much more serious, irreversible damage that would be inflicted on the area where I live. Some of these impacts would be temporary, albeit many years of temporariness, such as the noise, vibration and traffic issues around Balgowlah. However, many will be permanent including the loss of over 2500 trees, including habitat for threatened species at Manly Dam and Burnt Bridge creek, the damage to harbour ecosystems from dredging, the significant impact on air quality from the stacks near Balgowlah boys school and consequential health problems for our community.