

Submission
No 397

INQUIRY INTO IMPACT OF THE WESTERN HARBOUR TUNNEL AND BEACHES LINK

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The Hon. Daniel Mookhey MLC
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<https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/committees/inquiries/Pages/inquiry-details.aspx?pk=2767#tab-submissions>

Submission to the Inquiry into the Impact of the Western Harbour Tunnel and Beaches Link

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 have lived in the Manly area since 1996. I am a big user of the area – bushwalking, paddling, ocean swimmer and cyclist. I worked in the city during most of this time and am a big user of public transport. My husband and I have been lucky to raise our family here. I believe that the project (as it currently stands) needs revision in the areas of public transport and the impact on the local native flora and fauna. My reasons are further outlined in relation to the Committee's Terms of Reference.

I have previously submitted a submission as to why I object to these projects. Please find attached this submission and cross reference to your terms below:

(j) the impact on the environment, including marine ecosystems,
Not enough work has been done to cater for the native flora and fauna. There are many plants and animals that will be severely impacted by the construction process and the final works. Better, clearer, more scientifically solutions need to be worked out for these animals to survive before the project is started.

(m) any other related matter.

I object on the basis that a public transport system does not have a chance if it is not defined and implemented from the start. Not enough work has been done to address our public transport needs, and try to get new users on-board.

Currently the plan is to develop public transport post implementation based on how people will use the new roads. Many people will probably start driving their cars to work, which is exactly what should be avoided. We need to provide those people with a good public transport option from the start. This will ensure that the public transport system is embraced by people who have previously driven. Isn't the aim to get cars off the road and replace them with public transport vehicles because then the transport volumes are easier to manage!

I am happy to have my name published.

Yours Sincerely,

Paloma Llamazares

Objection: Beaches Link and Gore Hill Freeway Connection

I write to express my **objection** to the Beaches Link. I have done my best to read and understand the extensive EIS documents. I have significant concerns about the justification for this project particularly with respect to PUBLIC TRANSPORT which I believe should be a priority, and I will expand upon here. I have referred to sections of the EIS document; I hope this makes it easier to follow my logic.

Chapter 9 Operational Traffic and Transport

Page 9-4 **9.1.3 Sydney's Bus Future**

I object on the basis that a public transport system does not have a chance if it is not defined and implemented from the start. Currently there is not enough detail, nor are there enough plans to give public transport a chance. This section talks about things that might happen in the future. It outlines things that might be implemented as a **response** after the link is open for a while. It does not outline public services that should be available when the NB Link **opens on Day 1**.

So what will happen? The link will open. People will see new roads that are bigger and better than the old Spit Bridge. This will encourage people to use their cars, including people who may not have previously done so, and there are many. The NB Link will quickly become congested. By then people will be used to driving and will not want to get on public transport. We are back to the same problem we have now.

We need to have a fantastic public transport system from day 1 to entice people out of their cars and onto public transport. Then the roads have a chance at not becoming congested.

As I mentioned above, the chapter does not detail extra public transport services. It's all 'wait and see', and then decide. It has been shown all over the world that when more roads are built, people use them, and they quickly become 'full'. I reiterate, we need to provide a good public bus network at the beginning, so people see this as a better option and do not consider driving their private vehicles.

As such, phrases as:

- 'a more attractive transport **option**'
- 'allow new public transport routes **to be developed in response ...**'
- '**opportunity** to supplement the existing services', etc

are not good enough because they might never happen.

Page 9-4 **9.1.4 & 9.1.5 Walking and Cycle Paths**

I object on the basis that not enough information is provided to ensure these paths are safe and useable.

The report refers to 'shared user paths' but these are not defined. I assume this will be a two-lane path with cyclists and pedestrian sharing a lane (this is the current situation at Burnt Bridge Deviation). How will these lanes separate pedestrians from cyclists? Currently pedestrians share a lane with cyclists. Despite bell warnings from cyclists, pedestrians often don't move because they don't hear the warnings (because of headphones, ...) and it creates a dangerous situation for both parties. The new shared path should fix this problem.

Page 9-5 **9.2 Assessment methodology of operational traffic and transport impacts**

I object on the basis that the methodology does not focus enough on public transport. Public transport is important if we want people to use it and therefore deserves more analysis.

The intro states four core components were considered, these being:

- Road traffic
- Public transport
- Pedestrian and cyclists, and

- Maritime traffic.

There is minimal information about public transport in the remainder in the report. The volume of the report goes to analysing road traffic; in other words predominantly private cars and freight.

Page 9-10 9.4 Assessment of potential impacts

Page 9-34-38 9.4.5 Balgowlah and surrounds

Again, I object on the basis that the assessment does not focus enough on public transport. Public transport is important if we want people to use it and therefore deserves more analysis.

If I look at the public transport assessment for the geographic area that impacts me most directly on page 9-37 I see a quarter of a page (shown here in the screen shot below). (The remaining 5 pages of this section cover road network performance, traffic travel times, intersection performance, road network changes and access arrangements, and impacts on active transport.) This reflects the importance on private transport over public. As a result, public transport does not have a chance.

Impacts on public transport

'Do something' scenario

In the 'Do something' scenario, bus travel times would be maintained or improved as a result of the project, as existing bus priority in the area would be maintained and traffic congestion reduced in the Balgowlah and surrounds area.

'Do something cumulative' scenario

In the 'Do something cumulative' scenario bus travel times may increase marginally along Frenchs Forest Road during the PM peak as a result of the increased traffic travelling through the Sydney Road/Frenchs Forest Road roundabout, when compared to the 'Do something' scenario.

All other bus routes would be generally unaffected by the changes in traffic as a result of the 'Do something cumulative' scenario when compared to the 'Do something' scenario.

General Comment

It is unfair to expect laypeople to comment reasonably on a lengthy, technical report full of jargon and euphemisms.

This project is a missed opportunity to transform Sydney into a world class, healthy and sustainable city with **a strong public transport system**. I would ask that an alternative public transport feasibility study be published before any further planning occurs so that impacts and outcomes can be fairly compared.

Kind regards

Paloma Llamazares