

Submission
No 438

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

Name: Name suppressed

Date Received: 18 June 2021

Partially
Confidential

Date: 18-Jun-2021

To: Members of Public Works Committee Inquiry into the Western Harbour Tunnel and Beaches Link Project (whtbl).

There are many items in the Terms of Reference I would like to address. Our community has so many unanswered questions, and heard so many misleading statements, and conflicting answers to the questions the community did manage to ask at the Information meetings for this project. However, time constraints will dictate that I address just one (1) critically important item of the Terms of Reference:

Item (1): Whether the project is subject to the appropriate levels of transparency and accountability that would be expected of a project delivered by a public section body

In my opinion the answer to the above question is a resounding NO. The citizens of this North Sydney Council community and the wider state of NSW, have the right to expect that the myriad sub-contractors to the contractors and multi-national consulting firms (who are these nameless and unaccountable entities?) engaged in delivering this 15++ billion dollar tax payer funded project for Transport for NSW/ NSW Government, will provide the transparency mandatory to enable public scrutiny of this project, and be accountable to the citizens of this community and the state of NSW.

One of the major concerns for the people of this North Sydney Council community is the blatant and obscene grab for our remaining and scarce public green space – specifically, the Cammeray Golf Course. The land on which the Cammeray Golf Course sits was originally twice the size that it is now. This land was originally reserved for the community by Mr William Tunks for sport and recreation purposes. Half of this precious land was taken (I say stolen) to build the first version of the Warringah Freeway. Subsequent widening of the Warringah Freeway over the years has taken more and more of this precious land to the extent that the Warringah Freeway at the footbridge that crosses the freeway near Military Rd now has **21 traffic lanes**, plus a bus parking lane and other service type lanes – all delivering poisonous emissions into the lungs of our young children attending the 11 local schools in our area.

Not satisfied with this extensive ‘theft’ of our scarce green space, Transport for NSW/ NSW Government now wants to take (steal) half of the remaining public land on which the dwindling golf course sits to widen and extend the freeway to accommodate the whtbl project. This was certainly not the intention of the community minded and farsighted Mr William Tunks!

In the Instrument of Approval – SSI-8863 document, Condition E101 states:

The design and establishment of an altered Cammeray Golf COURSE must provide an equivalent standard golf course or the provision of works to offset the loss in standards. This must be undertaken in consultation with and at no cost to Cammeray Golf CLUB.

The land in question does not belong to the Golf CLUB. The land is under the care and control of North Sydney Council (NSC) for the community - council acts as the overseer of the land on behalf of this community. The Golf Club leases the land from NSC.

Condition E101 above neglects to consider North Sydney Council’s RIGHTS and RESPONSIBILITIES, therefore the rights of this community. The Approval fails to consider the imminent expiry of the lease of the Golf COURSE in 2026. Therefore, how can the State government contemplate Condition E101?

My questions are:

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- (i) What are these plans the Golf CLUB has for the future form of the Cammeray Golf COURSE? What input, if any, has North Sydney Council (hence the community) had to these plans put forward by the Golf CLUB for a reconfigured golf course?
- (ii) What are the environmental impacts of a reconfigured golf course – including the precious tree loss – trees which act as the lungs of the community in terms of soaking up poisonous car emissions?
- (iii) Given the Golf CLUB only leases the community's land from North Sydney Council, and the expiry of this lease is imminent – it expires in 2026 – exactly what right does the Golf CLUB have to be negotiating with the NSW Government in relation to the future of this land – land it doesn't own?
- (iv) The State government representative for this community is Premier Gladys Berejiklian, and our Federal government representative is Trent Zimmerman - both are patrons of the Golf CLUB. Has the Golf CLUB been given any favourable treatment due to their patronage?

North Sydney Council has advised the community that the '*... NSW Government is annexing 80,000m² of this communities' precious parkland for infrastructure projects. And, it wants to keep a large proportion of that permanently for the motorway facilities...*'

Enough IS Enough!

There has been an egregious lack of transparency and lack of community consultation in relation to the acquisition (read theft) of this community's irreplaceable parkland.

I look forward to the outcome of this inquiry and thank all members of the committee for their efforts to ensure transparency and accountability into this flawed project for the many communities detrimentally impacted by this whtbl project.

Sincerely,