

Submission
No 440

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

Name: Name suppressed

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Partially
Confidential

NO BEACHES LINK TUNNEL (Updated notes 18 June 21)

I object to tunnels and in particular to a northern beaches link tunnel. Consider that some objections to the tunnel are immediate and some are based on the wider ideology surrounding population growth on the peninsula.

Consider;

- How does a beaches link tunnel help crossing Sydney Harbour? If the traffic is jammed at Moore Park, the jam will extend to Seaforth. Why would anyone want to spend a couple hours sitting in a tunnel from Seaforth to Moore Park? I'd rather spend an hour on Military Road than inside a tunnel.
- No increase in the peninsula population. Current infrastructure is inadequate and the proposed tunnel would seem to be for what's coming, not what's here. The Gov't wouldn't spend \$14B on a tunnel for the existing population so expect that if a tunnel were built that a population increase would be imminent.
- Immediate effect on the air quality around any of the ventilation outlets.
- If ventilation stacks are built, they would be an immediate eyesore and blight on area.
- Concentration of exhaust gases around ventilation outlets. No matter what is said, exhaust gases aren't safe in any concentration.
- Greenhouse; A tunnel requires 24/7 mechanical ventilation. For all the daily discussion about environment and greenhouse effect, why construct roads that rely on constant power, especially fossil fuels that will be with us for a long time yet?
- Parts of Seaforth/Balgowlah area have the potential to turn into industrial zones to service the tunnel's ventilation and ancillaries. This is unfair on the people that have invested in this area to make it a family friendly neighbourhood.
- \$14B or thereabouts has been proposed as a cost. Surely that money is better spent on upgrades and more sports facilities and grounds, parking, education, health etc on the Northern Beaches. Currently, the signs of overpopulation are evident everywhere; try parking at Curl Curl during netball season, Manly Swim Centre, the beaches, Keirle park during rugby season, the list goes on. If accessibility to the northern beaches is increased, together with a population that relies heavily on cars, things will only get worse. Realistically, public transport isn't practical for to get around the peninsula. Where are all the visitors going to park?
- The length of the proposed beaches tunnel is horrendous. Ever been stuck inside the M5 with all the idling trucks? If you can smell the diesel fumes you can be assured the ventilation is inadequate.
- Where to start?... I was appalled when the Sydney Harbour tunnel opened and it was only 2 lanes each way, obsolete before it opened! Congestion starts before crossing the harbour, then, both harbour bridge and tunnel are congested, then all along the eastern distributor all the way to the M5 and Campbelltown. Ditto heading back to peninsula where traffic in the evenings and weekends can be at a standstill. The point being, a \$14B harbour tunnel doesn't really improve things, does it? One of the reasons for the congestion are the exit ramps from these major arterial roads which

can be banked up for miles and restrict the flow on the actual freeway. The main point here is that traffic is funnelled into tollways and exits are limited – all to the benefit of a private owner/operator and suffering for the taxpayer.

- M5 ventilation was inadequate the day it opened and had to be revised, no doubt because of cost cutting rather than inefficient design. Ventilation must be overseen by experts in the field and match absolute minimum best practice standards, not subcontracted out to offshore designers. How can such an important part of that tunnel be subject to such cost savings or deductions?
- The current government and public service seem unable to adequately manage major infrastructure projects, e.g. Sydney's light rail. Such examples highlight what to expect for a project more than 10 times the size...Until there is a more professional approach to building such infrastructure, we shouldn't be rushing into \$14B tunnels which have limited community benefit.
- What about the Spit Bridge widening? An unrealistic option if the history of building the bridge was better understood. As I understand, the most recent (10 years ago?) cost estimate started at \$15M, then \$30M, then ended up at \$55M and cost \$5M to find this out? Again, poor management of a process, a huge cost and still no solution. We can only guess how well a proposed beaches tunnel link has been thought out.
- Loss of green space related to tunnel infrastructure, etc. This area is already short of open space and it isn't fair on the community to lose more.
- One could argue the Northern beaches already have adequate access, just poorly supported. For example, roads could be widened, traffic lights removed and overpasses built in key areas which could improve traffic flow overnight at a fraction of the tunnel cost.
- The upper part of the northern beaches (e.g north of Narrabeen) should be the focus of transport corridors if additional infrastructure is to be built, i.e. develop routes along Warringah Road and Mona Vale Road. There is no reason to funnel all traffic from Palm Beach down to Seaforth just to get into a tunnel.
- The northern beaches should remain relatively unpopulated for the benefit of greater Sydney. If the population and congestion levels of Bondi extend from Manly to Palm beach, access to these beaches will become harder for those not lucky enough to live in area.
- Northern Beaches Hospital should have been built one block north. Being located as it now is dictates traffic movement in the area. For example, Hilmer St and Gladys Ave traffic lights are phased so as to allow traffic to move relatively quickly in and out of the hospital, however, this is to the detriment of through traffic movement on Warringah Rd and Frenchs Forest Rd. It's impossible to get past this area without having to stop at lights. If a tunnel is built, the intersection of Wakehurst Pkwy and Warringah Rd will only get worse again because the number of vehicles in needed to pass this area will increase dramatically. This intersection was affected for about 2 years during hospital construction and it is hard to see that if a tunnel is built this intersection will again need some serious reconstruction.

- The Wakehurst Pkwy north of Warringah Rd is flood prone. No tunnel should be built before the road is raised so as to make it flood proof otherwise all we have is congested alternative routes every time it rains.

Consider alternatives;

- Limit population growth on the Northern Beaches.
- Bridges; Can be beautiful. Ever seen a coffee table book of tunnels?
- Bridges do not require mechanical ventilation, they don't concentrate exhaust, are not enclosed spaces in the event of e.g. fires, provide a view while sitting in congestion, etc.
- A series of bridges perhaps from Frenchs Forest across Middle Harbour, duplicating the Roseville Bridge.
- A lot of the northern beaches congestion can be alleviated by removing pinch points and traffic hold-ups e.g. Medusa St Mosman, Fullers Rd Chatswood, etc. These tend to be areas that seriously hold up traffic.
- If heading to the city, traffic north of Brookvale should be directed to Warringah Road and Mona Vale Road, not encouraged to go via Seaforth. We seem to have the roads but not the wherewithal to make these roads useable.

North Balgowlah