

Submission
No 442

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

Name: Name suppressed

Date Received: 17 June 2021

Partially
Confidential

17 June 2021

Seaforth NSW 2092

Public Works Committee

Submission Environmental Impact Statement

The Beaches Link Tunnel

Following my review of the Environmental Impact Statement in addition to additional research, I **OBJECT** to the Beaches Link Tunnel project.

My objection is based on numerous concerns that I do not believe have been fully considered. I note my key concerns in the points below:

1. The lack of economic rigour to justify a \$12 billion project. The level of the expected toll of \$7-\$8 each way will deter many users. The EIS states that only a 10% reduction in traffic will be achieved by 2037, hardly a significant change for a \$12 billion project. The EIS does not estimate what the value of the project will be on completion should the government intend to sell it as it has done with over roads and tunnels
2. No alternatives have been proposed. It is concerning that with rapid changes in technology across so many sectors including transport, logistics, and work behaviour, this plan adopts ideas from the 19th and 20th century. During discussions with Transport for NSW, staff indicated that the policy for public servants was one of working from home. This in itself should recognise the changing work behaviours and preferences of the modern work force. The Government should in fact be encouraging the use of technology to increase productivity instead of encouraging people to spend needless time commuting;
3. It is inevitable that there will be cost overruns. The limited access to the site, congestion on roads as well as the cost to the community during seven years of construction has not been considered. There are costs such as the physical and mental health of local residents, the cost of delays and congestion as well as the cost of damage to surrounding dwellings and environment. None of these have been considered or reflected in the plan. There has been no economic assessment of the impact on the local community during the seven years of construction. This will be especially felt in Balgowlah/Seaforth precincts due to not only road works but the

addition of trucks and equipment being hauled throughout the day. Addition traffic, congestion, health and safety issues have not been considered over these 7 years as a cost to the community;

4. The use of unfiltered stacks is not acceptable. It should be a priority that government adopts absolute best practice when it comes to ensuring the health of its citizens. The amount of unfiltered exhaust in suburban areas including numerous schools in such close proximity within 1 kilometre radius of the exhaust stacks is unacceptable. The impact on air quality and the broader environment has been totally disregarded;
5. The potential for structural damage to homes from vibration is distressing. This has been well documented and acknowledged based on the experience with WestConnex where severe cracking and structural damage was caused to nearby dwellings. The level of vibration, which has been acknowledged by Transport for NSW, will be above the recommended levels for human comfort yet the response has been one of total indifference;
6. The frequency of heavy truck and construction equipment traffic near areas of high pedestrian traffic including school crossings and aged care facilities is of great concern. There is no acknowledgement of the additional risks to those more vulnerable;
7. The project has not captured the change in how people work or study (universities continue to educate online for instance). Increasing work from home policies are being adopted by employers including ironically by Transport NSW;
8. The lack of a public transport plan. There has been conflicting information from as to how the tunnel and public transport integrate. The tunnel does not encourage public transport that will reduce traffic, be environmentally friendly and service the needs on an increasingly elder population;
9. The impact of noise and pollution for nearby residents will be overwhelming. The project will run for at least 7 years. Children who start school will contend with the disruption, noise and the damaging health impact for their whole school life;
10. The environmental impact on Middle Harbour from disturbance to sediment, leaks and spills. The widening of roads in Seaforth and near Manly Dam that is home to protected wildlife which is already under threat. The project will destroy the flora and fauna habitat of the Burnt Bridge Creek which is a flourishing natural eco-system;;

11. The further congestion of surrounding quiet suburban streets that will be used for parking of workers. These streets are already narrow and struggle to service existing tenants. The project will create dangerous and unliveable conditions for nearby residents already impacted by noise, dust, vibration increased traffic.