

Submission  
No 498

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

**Name:** Name suppressed

**Date Received:** 18 June 2021

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Partially  
Confidential

Mr Mookhey, Mr Banasiak, Ms Boyd,  
Mr Farraway, Mr Kahn, Mr Mallard and Ms Moriarty,  
Committee Members

Inquiry into the Western Harbour Tunnel and Beaches Link Project

Public Works Committee

Legislative Council

NSW Parliament

Macquarie Street

SYDNEY NSW 2000

18 June 2021

Dear Mr Mookhey, Mr Banasiak, Ms Boyd,

Mr Farraway, Mr Kahn, Mr Mallard and Ms Moriarty,

RE: SUBMISSION TO THE INQUIRY INTO THE WESTERN HARBOUR TUNNEL & BEACHES LINK PROJECT

Thank you for conducting this important inquiry, a much needed requirement to gain greater transparency and better outcomes for those affected.

We are glad to see a diverse membership of the committee and hope this inquiry is a truly collaborative exercise.

We are concerned parents of a child/children attending Anzac Park Public School, a Government created state of the art educational institution where there are rooms with large always open windows and fans creating passive environmentally friendly heating/cooling but leaving the School extremely sensitive to external air and noise pollution. There is also a 5-storey unroofed atrium within the School building which adds to the exposure to external elements.

Up until now these Projects have been potential future adverse events with many of us objecting at all possible times through official channels, our members of parliament and the media. They are now very real with the early works presently causing adverse impacts on before and after school for us parents and 24/7 for the local community.

Whilst we object to these Projects and ideally they do not progress with the Government proceeding with better options, we are realistic and realise the Government is moving ahead so it is now critical to get the best outcomes and reduce adverse impacts. Being parents not in occupations that would mean we would be able to provide a lot of technical responses to the Terms of Reference, our responses outline our concerns and issues with these Projects.

We believe the express goal was originally to substantially improve the flow of traffic across the Harbour. We would suggest that tied into that goal were additional goals to improve local traffic in North Sydney, Inner West and Northern Beaches local areas and not adversely affect those areas (with air and noise pollution) when implementing those Projects.

The Projects now indicate 'minutes' improvements only with no accounting for expected return of congestion after a short period of operational use (as has been the case in every other major road infrastructure project in metropolitan Sydney).

The implementation of the Projects will cause massive congestion to local traffic in all the areas we list and create numerous rabbit runs further adversely affecting the flow of local traffic.

During construction and in operation the Projects in their current form adversely affect the communities in the local areas with substantial health risks for both noise and air quality.

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 The COVID pandemic has created a shift in the way the community conducts their lives, particularly where we work with many people now working from home.

Also the pandemic has reduced immigration and travel to this country to nil, which will take years to recover to pre-pandemic levels if it ever does.

We assume (noting the Government has not provided the cost benefit ratio to the public) the cost benefit ratio is based on pre-pandemic work, immigration and travel arrangements which would have involved far greater levels of travel by the community, which in turn would have added to the positive side of the ratio (the time saved by all those people in travelling through the new tunnels) adding to a total which justified the Projects.

As things have changed dramatically and we would argue permanently the Government needs to redo the cost benefit ratio calculations taking these changes into account and we then see if it is still a positive go forward scenario.

With respect to construction aside from sensitive stakeholders, like Anzac Park School, where there has been some concessions in early works for the freeway upgrade in relation to safety issues, the processes have largely been on the basis, this is what Transport for NSW are doing, its going to make noise and vibrations potentially at all times of the day and night, so get used to it. We understand there has been some attempts to reduce impacts eg double glazing and alternate accommodation, but the strict manner in which that has been processed has meant people miss out.

These issues are arising at the initial stages so it does not bode well for the adversely affected public going forward with the construction process. The School has been seeking EPA approved air quality monitors be installed now in the School grounds to have base line information ahead of the major air quality issues coming with the works across the freeway at the Cammeray Golf Course site so it can be properly assessed whether the School is adversely affected by pollution from that site. Discussion has been deferred which is unhelpful plus it would appear Transport for NSW will want to monitor near the Golf Course site not the School which is contrary to what the School needs to get a real figure for the adverse health impact on the School population.

Operationally the major issue for processes to deal with impacts on residents (including our school children here) is the failure to have the pollution stacks situated about 250 metres from the School filtered to reduce the release of emissions and other toxins coming from vehicles using the tunnels. The Government is relying on old, out of date reports which are also qualified and based on certain events occurring which are not guaranteed as well as comparing a 15 km 6 lane triple one mid location tunnel servicing up to 4.3 million cross harbour trips a week and a population of 5 million with a city 1/5 that size, with 75% of new car sales being electric vehicles and pollution stacks every less than 5 km. This process is therefore totally inadequate and needs to be revisited prior to any final decision is made on the installation of filtration systems to the pollution stacks.

Given the way the School at Anzac Park has been built processes should include consideration for that building, which ultimately if the risk of pollution impacts are not removed may require the retro fit of air conditioning and filters at the top of the atrium along with any other relevant action to reduce the impact of pollution on the children both during construction and in operation.

Thank you for reading our comments and we look forward to hearing your deliberations and decisions on the Projects.

We do not wish our personal details to be disclosed in the course of your inquiry.

Kind regards,