

Supplementary  
Submission  
No 301a

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

**Name:** Mrs Charlotte Hunter

**Date Received:** 18 June 2021

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Dear Public Works Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit to an inquiry regarding these projects that I am very concerned about and oppose vehemently. 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.

I have lived in Northbridge for about forty years, am married and have four children. My children go to school at three different local public schools – all of which will be impacted in different ways if these projects are allowed to go ahead. My family and I live overlooking Flat Rock Gully, along with my parents, and we use the recreational facilities weekly. We walk the dog regularly along the paths into the bush and one of my daughters plays netball twice a week on the courts. I work locally so drive along the major road arteries every day. In the warmer weather we enjoy the swimming and nature at Northbridge Baths – my father until a year ago swimming all year round every day. It's a very special place for us. All these activities will be adversely affected by these projects particularly due to environmental impacts, health impacts and traffic impacts. My children catch public transport to school, and I'm concerned to hear from their friends that transport services have been altered in a nonsensical fashion, encouraging people to rely on cars. We need to have clear, sensible links so that people rely less on cars. I am still surprised that no service goes up Flat Rock Drive from Northbridge to Naremburn! We should be setting up more mass transport options rather than devastating the environment and communities with expensive, privatised road tunnels that may provide short term traffic impacts but that will do nothing in the long term. The impact of the construction process and the closing of exits going into the city will cause massive backlogs on local roads – the Alpha Road -Flat Rock Drive – Sailors Bay Road – Willoughby Road – Eastern Valley Way – Strathallen Avenue/Miller Street complex will be at a stand still if the Flat Rock Gully site is used as the major dive site with 70 heavy vehicle movements per hour all week. It will also be a dangerous situation as these streets have lots of pedestrians and bike riders – a lot of which are school children heading to the area in Australia with the highest proportion of children (the area where the unfiltered smokestacks will be spewing concentrated road tunnel fumes.) This is a health, environmental and safety issue.

I have previously made submissions to the Department of Planning with more detail which I attach for your reference (EIS Submission) and I have sent this before to you (but had not mentioned the terms of reference hence me sending it again).

My submission particularly addresses your terms regarding:

- a) The adequacy of the business case for the project – there has not been a clear presentation of this and all figures do not take into the changing work habits of people post-COVID. The figures are not current. The cost far outweighs the short term benefits that are even seen in the government's own data! The government consistency ignores independent advice from local and international specialists.
- (b) the adequacy of the consideration of alternative options,  
The mention of a metro tunnel to connect the beaches communities would be a much healthier and more efficient way to move a lot of people. The beaches people do not choose to drive – they just have no fast options that get them where they want to go.
- g) Extent to which COVID-19 impacted (see comment to a) above).
- (j) the impact on the environment, including marine ecosystems,

I have provided a lot of detail on my attached submission.

Additionally, subsequent to the EIS process I have become aware that PFAS and other contaminants have been detected in Middle Harbour very close to where Northbridge Baths are. Dredging the Harbour at this location is not acceptable. (Let alone the seal, whale, shark and sea dragon sightings that show how well this environment is recovering after years of abuse.) I have attached a Powerful Owl and baby turtle photo taken in the valley area. We need to protect these wildlife corridors. We have seen echidnas, wallabies and heard microbats and frogs. It's a place to be celebrated and protected (it is listed as an Environmental Protection Area on signage). I don't think trees should be being removed before the project even starts like in Cammeray and North Sydney. 3000 trees being removed for these projects is a travesty – we need these to cool urban areas in these times of strange weather.

k) Processes responding to noise, vibrations and other impacts on residents, during construction and operationally.

I attended a Northbridge Progress Association meetings and was shocked when the tunnel planning people said that in Flat Rock Gully there could be soil sitting out while waiting for trucks, that most noise would be inside the shed but not all and they'd follow best practice. The stories from people in the Inner West tell a different story and contractors can do things their way. It shows a lack of empathy and understanding of what a massive 'mine-site' in a valley on contaminated soil will be like for locals. Heavy vehicle noise will echo throughout the valley, wind blows down the valley and despite dust protection will result in particles flying around or getting taken out of the site by the trucks, the vibrations will be very noticeable as they bore through rock, and we worry about house impacts and movement. Having noise impacts and sleep disturbances is one of the WHO major contributors to ill health as well as clean air – something else at risk in the valley and that is not getting taken seriously! Fine sandstone dust and the risk of foreign particles is massive!

I am happy to have my name published.

Yours Sincerely,  
Charlotte Hunter

Attached: Copy of my Western Harbour/Beaches Link EIS Submission, photos of powerful owl and turtle from Flat Rock Gully.