

Submission  
No 510

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

**Name:** Name suppressed

**Date Received:** 17 June 2021

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Partially  
Confidential

## Submission Against Beaches Link Tunnel

I have lived in the Northern Beaches area since 1978 and belong to Save Manly Dam Catchment Committee to fight for environmental issues in the Manly/Seaforth area, and particularly for issues relating to Manly Dam.

I oppose this project as I think it is too damaging for the environment, too expensive and not the appropriate solution to relieve the travel issues for people travelling from Northern Beaches via Seaforth towards the city. My reasons in relation to particular terms of reference are listed below:

The adequacy of the business case for the project, including the cost benefits ratio

A

I wonder why the Government's business case and cost-benefit analysis for the Beaches Link is not yet available to justify this project to residents. I fear that data relating to future traffic demands is unreliable due to the changed usage of technology and work patterns from Covid-19, as well as the world-wide attention on innovation to address global warming with a focus to reduce carbon outputs.

B

The adequacy of the consideration of alternative options

Innovation enables alternative and forward-thinking options such as:

- Modes of transport, public light rail, tram, bus (eg B-Line), and private e-bikes/skate boards etc.
- Decentralised working practices, with up-to-date projections on (peak-hour) travel destinations to justify the project
- Government incentives to businesses to adopt more flexible work practices, to councils to build safe bike pathways and central bike parking bays to allow link-up with public transport, to NSW Govt itself to invest in public schools to equalise learning opportunities so that transportation of children to out-of-area schools is reduced.

C

The cost of the project, including the reasons for overruns

The engineering requirements of the Beaches Tunnel Link are very complex and risky making this tunnel the most expensive per kilometre in NSW. Cost and time overruns have been synonymous with previous projects and unforeseen complications (such as with the Sydney light rail) and have cost the NSW taxpayers dearly, not only in monetary terms but also in mental health. I have no doubt that unforeseen environmental impacts for this project, as with many other projects, will occur and will be devastating and costly.

J

The impact on the environment, including marine ecosystems

The impact on the local environment will be transforming.

- Dredging Middle Harbour will stir up the sediment and impact our marine environment, including a penguin colony, and the very popular Clontarf beach and picnic park.
- The vibration and noise from dredging and truck transportation over the period of construction will impact on many families and their homes.
- Truck movements to remove sludge will clog our roads for 6 to 10 years as they take up parking and move along our major and minor roads to transport their loads away to other parts of the state.

- The Balgowlah Golf Course at the top of Spit Hill, and across the road from Balgowlah Boys High School, will be changed to a construction storage area and eventually will be part of a multi-lane road. This will mean a loss of green space and trees eventually to be turned into a concrete, heat-collecting thoroughfare. It also will impact negatively on the high school.
- Burnt Bridge Creek will be impacted by changed water flows with the dying off of trees and plants, wildlife unable to survive and the loss of a beautiful walk and bike path.
- Wakehurst Parkway will be widened (with the removal of natural bushland containing aboriginal carvings) and built up with banked sides allowing polluted run-off during construction and impacting on the Manly Dam Memorial Park... a unique fresh-water swimming dam/ picnic area with natural bushland and home to native animals and birds.

Personally as a regular walker in Manly Dam , I will be devastated to witness the environmental impact of our beautiful manly dam reserve such as

- The loss of so many trees and green area to accommodate the traffic from the tunnel, once again chipping away at our remaining diminishing green belt
- The widening of Wakehurst Parkway will no doubt see a huge increase in road kill as animals from Manly Dam wander out from the bushland onto the multi-laned road.
- The impact on our recreational parks in Clontarf, North Balgowlah and Burnt Bridge Creek will be diminished as special places .

The effects of this project will be irreversible, environmental impacts throughout the area and total inconsistency with the NSW greenhouse gas emissions reduction policy.

I feel that the government should focus on public transport, particularly light rail from East to West which seems a far viable project.