

Submission
No 562

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

Name: Name suppressed

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Partially
Confidential

18 June, 2021

The Hon. Daniel Mookhey MLC
Chair
Public Works Committee
NSW Legislative Council
Parliament House
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Submission to the Inquiry into the Impact of the Western Harbour Tunnel and Beaches Link

Dear Members of the Public Works Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit to an inquiry regarding these concerning projects. 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.

First, a little about me. I live in Dawson Street, Naremburn, a street which is full of families with young children. We look on Flat Rock Gully and are surrounded by the bush and surrounds. The walkways lead down to Tunks Park and up to Willoughby Leisure Centre and through the area earmarked for construction. We, along with thousands of others of enjoy the flora and fauna of the area and the bush settings, that have taken years to resurrect, and use the bike and walking tracks on a regular basis. Up the road are the Willoughby netball courts, Bicentennial Oval, the baseball field as well as Willoughby Leisure Centre, which cater to numerous sporting groups.

All of these activities will be adversely affected by these projects particularly as most of these occur in and around Flat Rock Gully, the Warringah Freeway and Middle Harbour. I am concerned about the degradation of public transport services with a 30% drop-in services on the North Shore to add to the cuts on the Northern Beaches and I do not see how these projects support the transition to a cleaner and more functional city. School and commuter routes are currently regularly blocked by traffic seeking to access the Warringah Freeway – limiting the on and off ramp access to this corridor will further exacerbate this problem – the project appears to do nothing for local traffic or local pollution, in fact the priority is through traffic and our densifying local communities will be very much disadvantaged. I am concerned about my children's health and safety and want to see better planning for their future. I also want to see Sydney transition to a cleaner, more efficient transport system and away from our growing and unsustainable car reliance. I strongly object to these projects and the billions of dollars that will be wasted on them.

My reasons are further outlined in relation to the Committee's Terms of Reference. I have previously submitted a detailed submission as to why I object to these projects.

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

There has been absolutely no business case has released to the public. Reported cost at the time of printing is \$14-\$15 Billion for both projects and these costs estimated in the EIS see to far outweigh the benefits. This money should go towards public transport solutions that will actually ease traffic congestion on the Northern Beaches. The EIS also fails to fully scope may aspects such as utilities and contamination which pose a risk to the project.

The adequacy of the consideration of alternative options,

Alternative options have not been comprehensively scoped or compared to a toll road tunnel option. The option to address congestion via a dedicated mass transit solution ie) light rail, metro or rail has not been adequately considered.

The cost of the project, including the reasons for overruns,

The project admits that further testing and risk assessment is required to fully assess multiple levels of risk including serious contamination found in the Harbour and at Middle Harbour dredge sites and dive sites such as Flat Rock Gully (ex-landfill). Cost blow outs and delays associated with other projects have occurred due to unexpected or unmitigated contamination eg West Gate Tunnel, Victoria.

The impact on the environment, including marine ecosystems,

The environmental impact is huge and will impact areas such as Sydney Harbour, Balls Head/ Berry's Bay and the Coal Loader, Cammeray Green Spaces, Middle Harbour, Flat Rock Gully, Balgowlah Golf Course, Wakehurst Parkway and Manly Dam. In my local area of Flat Rock Gully 390 trees alone will be removed for the dive site and there is no guarantee that they bushland will be reinstated even though it is home to over 100 species of animals and is a major wildlife corridor. Our urban bushland is fast disappearing all over Sydney and we cannot afford to put construction sites for these projects, with all their impacts, in biodiversity rich areas.

I am happy to have my name published.

Yours Sincerely,
Belinda Kent