

**Submission
No 572**

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

Name: Mr Adrian Spragg

Date Received: 18 June 2021

My wife and I have been residents of Castlecrag for 24 years, raising our 4 children here. We have been active members of the community, particularly through our children's sporting and school activities. Their primary schooling was at Glenaeon Rudolf Steiner School in Castlecrag and Middle Cove, and secondary schooling at Killarney Heights High School.

My submission to the Public Works Committee inquiry into the impact of the Western Harbour Tunnel and Beaches Link Project relates particularly to the Beaches Link:

- (a) I believe no business case for the project has been released, and believe this is essential for any large engineering project. I believe the project is to feed motor vehicle traffic into the West Connex projects, which themselves are examples of Mission Creep without proper business cases. Billions of dollars spent on motorways, rather than public transport, will prove long term to be a misallocation of resources
- (b) the adequacy of the consideration of alternative options. I have not seen any proper consideration of public transport options, particularly a Dee Why to Chatswood rail link.
- (c) the recent publicity of the disguise of some \$4 billion in West Connex costs gives no confidence that the true costs of this project will be revealed
- (d) I am not in a position to comment on the governance and structure of the project including the use of a 'development partner' model,
- (e) I believe the original goals of the project of funneling motor vehicle traffic into, out of and around the city are wrong in light of the failure to consider public transport options, so the extent to which the project is meeting the original goals of the project is irrelevant,
- (f) the consultation methods and effectiveness, both with affected communities and stakeholders, is risible. The lack of business case disclosure makes a mockery of consultation even before the adverse environmental impacts (especially on Middle Harbour waterways) is considered.
- (g) while Covid-19 pandemic may have resulted in a short term increase in vehicle traffic due to the discouraged use of public transport, I believe the long term impact of working from home and the movement from city to rural NSW will reduce project traffic and hence impact the original cost benefit ratio. Again, I do not believe any original cost benefit model is defensible without proper consideration of public transport options.
- (h) the NSW Government should publish the base-case financial model and benefit cost ratio for the project in overview and then breaking it into its component parts,
- (i) I do not believe the project is subject to the appropriate levels of transparency and accountability that would be expected of a project delivered by a public sector body,
- (j) the impact on the environment, including marine ecosystems, has not been adequately assessed
- (k) I am concerned the adequacy of processes for accessing and responding to noise, vibration and other impacts on residents, during construction and operationally, will not be as they should
- (l) the impact of the project on nearby public sites, including Clive Park, and Flat Rock Drive bushland, which latter has taken 40+ years to remediate from the old rubbish tips
- (m) Please understand, I believe my community should be prepared to put up with negative project impacts for a greater good. However, in the absence of the Beaches Link Project lodging a business case, and no adequate consideration of a public transport option, especially a Dee Why to Chatswood rail link, I cannot yet see a greater good.