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The Hon Robert Stokes
Minister for Planning Industry and Environment
4 Parramatta Square, 12 Darcy Street, Parramatta NSW 2150

Attention: Ms Belinda Scott

1 March 2021

Objection to State Significant Infrastructure Application No. SSI-8862

Beaches Link and Gore Hill Freeway Connection

As a local for over almost 40 years, I am writing to voice my strong objections to these projects for many reasons. I have a young family and am well rooted in the local area. Picking up and moving as so many have already done is simply not an option for me or my family.

Extension for Submissions

Firstly to have this so called "consultation" over the Christmas period while we all still coping with the new world of Covid is unbelievable. It has made the chances to attend consultations and have questions answered limited and incredibly difficult to impossible for some. It has already been an incredibly stressful year and trying to navigate this enormous EIS document that has taken a professional team months on months to prepare over this Christmas period has been near on impossible for many. The least that could be given to the public who have had no time to navigate, comprehend or digest the enormity of this EIS is an extension.

Public Transport

The lack of alternative options explored such as public transport is greatly concerning. In this day and age, while our city grows to actively ignore public transport options beggars belief. There is no room to retrofit these tunnels to take metro or other such modes. At \$16 billion minimum I'd like to understand why even a metro from Dee Why to Chatswood via the new hospital at Frenchs Forest hasn't been optioned. The cost would be minimal and would connect the beaches to Chatswood CBD, Macquarie CBD and various others. Public transport on the North Shore is up and numbers will only increase if a reliable public transport system is available. I believe not exploring public transport options is just one an example of failure to meet the requirements of SEARS (Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements). Not to mention the fact that the EIS is littered with numerous mistakes and inaccuracies in various technical reports.

Business Case

With no business case released to justify the huge costs. In the impending expectation of a recession I find it hard to believe many would have the funds to travel on these never ending web of toll roads. Sydney is the most tolled city in the world.

Loss of Green Space

With a constant push for higher density living I find any loss of green space completely unacceptable. We are talking about the lungs of our area while we are given in return more pollution to breathe. With a permanent loss of 28,896m² of land in Cammeray Park alone. A Park that was ear marked to become more playing fields something desperately needed in this area. The loss of the dam that residents have paid for that waters our green spaces and helps deal with water from flash storms in a time when water is so valued is plainly wrong.

The chipping away of St Leonards Park (both it & Cammeray Golf Course grounds were gifted to the people of North Sydney). Both these green spaces were already greatly diminished for the Warringah Freeway. It is simply not fair that one portion of the community continue to have it's assets diminished especially in circumstances that will deliver no long term reward to anyone but the Toll owners.

This is not to mention the devastation to Flat Rock. An area that volunteer bush carers have been nurturing and restoring for 40years after being a tip for decades. Not only the loss of this area but the wash off of all the toxins in the soil being washed down stream into the valley – an area of vital bushland for wildlife and a refuge for city dwellers so incredibly important for mental health that has never been so evident as it has been since the start of the pandemic.

Environmental impacts

I am greatly concerned with the method of construction of the submerged tunnel across Middle Harbour that requires significant dredging and sediment disturbance of the harbour floor.

It has been proven that the environmental impacts associated with dredging and cofferdam construction in the harbour are significant, this method is unnecessary and will result in adverse impacts on water quality and marine biodiversity.

The proposal will have devastating negative impacts on the environment including:

- disturbance to the Middle Harbour floor and consequential impacts on maritime ecology and heritage;
- water quality in Middle Harbour and throughout the entire catchment along the tunnel corridor, marine biodiversity, foraging habitat as well as known roosting sites of threatened species;
- loss of North Sydney Councils stormwater harvesting and filtration facility in Cammeray Park;
- on-going impacts of “induced demand” only increasing congestion issues, over time.

Heritage

The EIS acknowledges impacts on Aboriginal heritage and heritage items and proposes inadequate management strategies that cannot be relied upon to protect and preserve heritage along the tunnel corridor.

The proposal should be refused as a result of the unacceptable and significant impacts upon, numerous Heritage items of State and Local Significance including a devastating impact on a number of items of Aboriginal heritage and numerous other remnant evidence of first inhabitants as well as items of maritime and convict heritage.

These alone are grounds for refusal of the application.

Traffic & Travel Times

With Warringah Freeway already cutting a scar through our communities, connecting with other local areas can already be a challenge. With the removal/changing of so many access points on the freeway it severely limits local connectivity. RMS staff openly admitted that local traffic around our areas will increase. I'm at a loss to understand how a 5 minute time saving

(if they are lucky) for a northern beaches resident to reach the city should mean that our local streets that are already congested should suffer more traffic and rat running.

No real travel time benefits with questionable evidence that has been provided.

For example in the EIS document it claims that there will be a time saving of 56mins from Dee Why to Sydney Airport, however Google maps currently states the trip time as between 47mins and 1hr 15mins. I'm at a loss to understand how the EIS can suggest the possible travel time (30km) between Dee Why and the Airport could be completed in 19min. This EIS document is littered with such examples of inaccuracies.

Air Quality

I am greatly concerned for the health of my family. With two children under 5 years old that will live and go to school a few hundred metres from stacks billowing unfiltered pollution into the air is completely unacceptable. No other developed country in the world are building tunnels of this length unfiltered. The health implications for thousands of school children, elderly residents and those with compromised health issues makes this project completely unacceptable especially considering that alternative travel options were deliberately ignored.

For all these reasons and many more I implore you to reject this application and go back to the drawing board. Sydney is in great need of congestion solutions but building more tunnels & toll roads at the expense of tax payers and the community is not the solution.

Yours faithfully

Nicole Antonini