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# BLUES POINT RESIDENT OBJECTION

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## NSW Government Sydney Metro Project

### Objection to Proposed Blues Point Reserve Temporary TBM Retrieval Point Application Number SS15 7400

I am a resident of McMahon's Point [REDACTED]. I object to the Proposed Blues Point Reserve Temporary Tunnel Boring Machine (TBM) Retrieval Point for the following reasons:

1. In the first instance ***failure to make the case that retrieval of the TBM from Blues Point Reserve is the only feasible solution*** to the need to use 2 different types of TBM. ***NO alternative solutions have been put forth for public consideration.***
2. Objection to the EIS assessment of impact of proposal as “regional”, not “national”
3. Failure to recognise, acknowledge and mitigate the sustained and serious impact of this proposal on local residents, visitors and tourist, local businesses, natural, built and heritage environments, safety, health and amenity, pollution, parking, local traffic and congestion.
4. Failure to account for the true costs of the impact of using trucks and dismissing the use of barge to remove sandstone and spoils. This shifts the costs of the project from the state to local residents and businesses.

### Objections in Detail

1. Failure to make the case that retrieval of the TBM from Blues Point Reserve is the only feasible solution to the need to use 2 different types of TBM. NO alternative solutions have been put forth for public consideration.

***Why is Blues Point Reserve as a “temporary” TBM retrieval “point” the only proposal put forth?*** Were alternative solutions considered? If not, why not? This project will have a profound impact upon the local community and beyond. If alternative solutions were

considered what were these alternatives? And what are the reasons these alternatives have been dismissed and not put forth for public consideration? The apparent glossing over the profound impact that this proposal does not mitigate the impact. If cost is an issue then I challenge this on the grounds that there has not been a true assessment of the costs of retrieval of the TBM from Blues Point Reserve. Costs that may be difficult to quantify are still costs. I would be very surprised if there are no methodologies for putting a figure on the impact of this project on the local community. The marketing of this project either ignores the real impacts of this project. The EIS lacks detail and critical analysis. The treatment of 132 constructions trucks a day is bland, matter of fact and fails to examine how this translates from tables and gant charts onto the terrain. For instance there are no specifications for the construction vehicles. I suspect the reference to semi-trailers is for the transport of some construction materials and the retrieved TBMs. However this is not stated. There are general statements about haulage and construction vehicles and semi-trailers. One could conclude that semi-trailers will transport the excavated sandstone up Blues Point Road. Nonetheless the Lavendar Bay Precinct flyer notes the trucks will be 30 – 40 tonnes. The EIS is silent on the reality of 6 fully laden construction vehicles travelling up the steep narrow Blues Point Rd an hour, 11 hours a day, and 6 empty construction vehicles travelling down the steep narrow Blues Point Rd. And how can we judge this without even basic specification of the trucks. .

The Chatswood to Sydenham EIS explains that tunnelling will occur in the south-east direction from Chatswood and north-east from Sydenham. Due to decision the harbour crossing decision to tunnel through sediment under Sydney Harbour for the harbour crossing, alternative TBM equipment is required for the Blues Point to Barangaroo section of the tunnel. The tunnelling plan includes retrieval of TBM equipment from a temporary shaft at Blues Point Reserve. **While the need for alternative TBM equipment is explained, the need to retrieve the TBM equipment is not, nor is there an explanation as to why retrieval can only occur the swap over point.** In all the documentation provided for the Sydney Metro project, no alternatives to TBM retrieval at Blues Point Reserve are considered. **WHY NOT?** I ask is this necessary? Is there no other solution to this problem? Collective efforts have put humans on the moon and mapped the genome. Surely someone can come up with a smarter solution – a solution that uses sites such as Victoria Cross and Barangaroo, which are integral to the metro construction and for which there is no alternative, to retrieve the TBMs. Is creating another site really necessary??? Or is it just sort of convenient, or a job creation scheme? Without an explanation to the community what are we to conclude about process, transparency and respect for residents and businesses?

I am dismayed by the failure of NSW Government's to seriously consider alternatives and appeal to the ingenuity of the Architects and Engineers to come up with a better solution. The Blues Point Reserve Temporary TBM Retrieval site is not a requirement for the Chatswood to Sydenham Sydney Metro. It is a proposed solution to a construction problem. I do not accept that this is the only possible viable solution. **For example, numerous tunnel boring projects worldwide have assessed the cost and impact of TBM retrieval as greater than simply burying the equipment after use. Does the value of 4 used TBMs exceed the cost, profound impact and risks to human life of constructing the Blues Point Reserve retrieval shaft.**

### *Option A. Do not retrieve TBMs*

How about this?

- Turn the south-east TBM equipment into a siding under Blues Point Reserve and seal with concrete
- Tunnel the north-east TBM equipment from Barangaroo through to a similar siding under Blues Point Reserve and seal with concrete
- Complete any finishing or gaps manually or with a different construction solution if necessary

### *Option B: Alternative methods of TBM retrieval*

If the TBMs must be retrieved then further consideration must be made to alternative approaches to TBM retrieval site at Blues Point Reserve. Alternatives could include;

- Dismantle the TBM equipment underground (from within the tunnel) and retrieve via the tunnel back to Victoria Cross and Barangaroo ie;
  - o Tunnel southeast to the vicinity of Blues Point Reserve and stop
  - o Excavate around the TBM equipment and dismantle it in place
  - o Retrieve the dismantled equipment back to Victoria Cross
  - o Tunnel north under the harbour from Barangaroo to the previously excavated dismantling point
  - o Dismantle and retrieve back to Barangaroo or
- Retrieve from Victoria Cross and Barangaroo only, ie;
  - o Tunnel southeast to Victoria Cross and retrieve TBM equipment there
  - o Tunnel northeast to Barangaroo and retrieve TBM equipment there
  - o Insert specialised TBM equipment at Barangaroo for the Harbour Crossing
  - o Tunnel to Victoria Cross and retrieve TBM equipment

### *Option C: Use a barge instead of trucks*

If there is no other feasible – even if more dollar costly – alternative to using Blues Point Reserve as a “temporary” TBM retrieval point, then the impact of this project must be mitigated by using barge and not 6 x 2 30-40 tonne trucks per hour up and down Blues Point Road. I do not accept the understatement of the impact of this project, and the sacrifice of the locale in the decision to use trucks instead of a barge. The impact on the people who live here has been dismissed by people who don’t live here.

## 2. Objection to the EIS assessment of impact caused by this proposal as “regional”, not “national”

The unique foreshore perspective afforded by Blues Point Reserve of the iconic Sydney Opera House framed by iconic Sydney Harbour Bridge is enjoyed by tens of thousands of international, national, regional and local visitors each year. The EIS rates the impact of the view from the Opera House as of “national” importance and the view of the Opera House framed by the Harbour Bridge as of “regional” importance. Blues Point Reserve is a public park on the foreshore of Sydney Harbour, a short walk from the ferry wharf serving the tourist ferry circuit from Circular Quay to Darling Harbour. This accessible public space has unobstructed world class views of the Sydney Harbour Bridge, Sydney Opera House, Luna Park, Lavendar Bay, the Rocks, the skyline of Sydney city, the harbour, and Fort Denison. It is a popular destination on the weekends, and come New Year people camp for days to secure a place to watch the fireworks.

If this proposal to use Blues Point Reserve at the location for the TBM retrieval goes ahead the reserve will be closed to the public for 2 years if the project runs on time, longer if the project is delayed. Few projects of this scale are completed on time.

A vista as unique as the one from Blues Point Reserve is surely of “national” importance. What methodology has been used to rate this view as of regional but not national importance? As a local resident and on behalf of the tens of thousands of visitors who have not been given the opportunity to object, I hereby object to the impact assessment as only “regional” in scope as this **significantly downplays** the importance of disruption to this site.

3. Failure to recognise, acknowledge and mitigate the sustained and serious impact of this proposal on local residents, visitors and tourist, local businesses, natural, built and heritage environments, safety, health and amenity, parking, local traffic and congestion.

- *Objection to the inadequate assessment and mitigation plans in the EIS caused by tip truck activity on Blues Point Road*

Blues Point Road is a steep, winding road, of one lane in each direction, with traffic calming devices narrowing the carriageway, a pedestrian crossing and cars parked parallel on both sides. The road runs through a residential area and Blues Point Village, onto the weekday metropolis of North Sydney and on to the Pacific Highway. The EIS is silent on the impact of these trucks on the Pacific Highway, lined with residential property and renowned for traffic congestion. **Furthermore what are the greenhouse gas implications of all of these trucks?**

- *Increased Safety Risks for all Road Users*

The intersection of Blues Point Road and Henry Lawson Drive, located at the end of a long steep hill, terminates in a car park with a dead end, and has multiple structural hazards for vehicles and pedestrians. The EIS notes that the trucks will turn left into the site and left out of the site but makes no mention that the trucks will turn right from Henry Lawson Drive into Blues Point Road. I invite you to visit this intersection and see how visibility is blocked by the topology of the land and a large retaining wall on the north eastern corner of the intersection. The entrance to car parking of 2 apartment blocks (Blues Point Tower, a 25 story apartment building, and Westbridge an older block of 27 apartments) are confluent and open directly onto the intersection. Footpaths vanish at the intersection and there is no footpath at all on the north side of Henry Lawson Drive. The only footpath on Henry Lawson Drive is along Blues Point Reserve. It is predictable that people will walk along Henry Lawson Drive rather than the proposed redirected footpath along the foreshore to and from the McMahaon's Point ferry terminal or their parked car.

You only need to look at Google Street View to see the danger to pedestrians travelling south on the eastern side of Blues Point Road to Henry Lawson Avenue.



As the clip from Google Street view above shows, this area is already dangerous! The cumulative risk of high volume heavy haulage trucks in the area, errant pedestrians, disrupted access and the ensuing confusion creates another critical risk of injury, accident and fatality.

The EIS also fails to consider the movement of earth, sandstone and various site spoils will undoubtedly cause an increase in loose sand on the road surface. Combined with the inclined road surface on this corner, this again creates a cumulative risk through increased difficulty for heavy moving vehicles to stop in time to avoid collisions.

The EIS is lacking in details about the specifications of the construction vehicles. Information provided by the Lavendar Bay Precinct notes the trucks will be 30-40 tonnes. Will these trucks be operated by a reputable trucking company, or will these trucks be operated by independent contractors? Given the recent serious compliance failures of trucking companies I ask how will compliance with all truck safety operations be monitored and enforced. The royal commission into home insulation program highlights the perils of poor oversight of contractors. Failure of truck brakes on Blues Point Road would be predictably disastrous. There are no run off options. Will truck drivers be drug and alcohol tested? I am

serious. The impost of 12 haulage trucks an hour, 11 hours a day for however long it will take to excavate the site and then refill it, is a serious road safety issue.

I question the safety of 6 x 30-40 tonne trucks fully loaded with sandstone per hour up the hill during excavation and downhill during rehabilitation. In particular I am concerned about the safety of fully laden trucks travelling down hill with no run off options. Not only is a downhill fully loaded truck extremely noisy, it is also extremely difficult to stop. Consider the risk of this in wet weather with road a muddy slide. The cumulative risk profile of high frequency heavy haulage, damage to the road, close proximity and volume of pedestrians including slow moving elderly and unpredictable children creates a critical risk situation which will exist for an unacceptable duration. ***The probability of accident, injury, and fatality is surely too great to allow this to proceed. If someone is killed or seriously injured will the trucking operation be ceased and sandstone and spoils shipped out by barge?***

I laughed out loud when I read that the 60 workers will be encouraged to catch public transport to the site to minimise the impact. I can find no discussion on the mitigation of the impact of conveyor belt of 30-40 tonne trucks, all day, day in day out for 12 months and 6 months. I have to ask has the impact of all these trucks has been taken seriously? Really?

- ***Impact on residents along Blues Point Road***

Residential properties along Blues Point Road are very close to the road. Noise, dust, diesel emissions, and vibrations from an ongoing stream of trucks up and down Blues Point Road will have a major impact upon the health and amenity of residents. This is not a trivial matter. How is the cost to residents accounted when calculating the costs of tip trucks vs barge? Or is the cost to residents not counted. If not then why not? Looking at one cost - the costs of house cleaning can be calculated. There is the opportunity cost of cleaning house – that is not doing something else. In essence this is a theft of life, and reduction in quality of life. How do you account for the cost of that? Blues Point has been a site of industry in the past – has the site been assessed for ground toxins? If there are ground toxins what are the risks to workers, residents and visitors? And what about noise? Of a fully laden 30-40 tonne truck turning right and hauling up Blues Point Road, or a fully laden 30-40 tonne truck using engine brakes coming down Blues Point Road. How will the timing of trucks coming and going be managed or will there be a congo line of trucks. If these trucks are travelling up and down the Pacific Highway they will not be operating to a neat clock work like timetable. So will trucks queue up with engines running, blocking in parked cars, preventing residents from getting home, or leaving home. Will the engines be running? I can hear the engine of

the bus around the corner in Henry Lawson Drive – so truck engines will be heard within homes, all day.

- *Impact to local businesses*

The proposed route along Blues Point Road passes through Blues Point Village, north from Blues Point Hotel to Lavender Road. There is competition for limited parallel to curb parking, a challenging manoeuvre for many. For 12 months, a constant stream of empty trucks will go down the road and return up the steep gradient fully loaded. Imagine how difficult and potentially dangerous this will be with wide trucks travelling up and down this road, in high frequency. The road is lined with small businesses, predominantly cafes and restaurants with street dining. The noise from a fully loaded truck on a steep gradient in close proximity to street dining will cause significant degradation of enjoyment and will ultimately reduce business revenues. How has this cost been accounted when considering the costs of trucks vs barge. Or is this cost shifted to small business?

- *Structural impact to residences and built environment*

The gradient from Henry Lawson Avenue up Blues Point Road is significant, especially for a fully loaded truck. The vibrations from the thousands of truck movements up and down this street will impact the comfort of residents and because of the relatively close proximity of mostly older brick and concrete constructed properties. There is a high probability of structural damage. Any damage claims by property owners caused by truck movements from the site, for years after the construction will incur a cost to process, assess and repair. This objection is to the absence of a full cost analysis to the alternative of a much lower impact option to use a barge to remove spoils from the construction site.

Will all of these trucks damage the road? Who will be responsible for the maintenance and repair of the road, and who will pay the cost?

- *Traffic Congestion*

Imagine this. A cyclist, or cyclists, with gears at high rate, wobbling up Blues Point Road with a fully laden 30-40 tonne truck behind them. And then someone trying to parallel park, in a tight spot. And someone moving house and the removalist is double parked. So does the laden truck overtake? A road traffic accident involving a truck is highly likely. Should this happen then there is the risk of gridlock on Blues Point Road, including people being blocked from existing parking bays.



- Objection to inadequate mitigations of increased impact during the planned TBM retrieval events

The increased noise, reduced resident and visitor parking and extended hours of operation during the planned TBM retrieval events are unacceptable. For 4 periods of 4 weeks, many residents will be forced to travel further to find parking and for the 4 nights of anticipated overnight activity, will suffer significant disruption to sleep. Mitigation plans must be enhanced to include temporary alternative accommodation for the periods of increased impact. The temporary accommodation provided to all residents in the area must be in close proximity, should be a minimum 4 star quality hotel and include parking. Or perhaps we can house swap.

### Objection to the inadequate mitigation of impact on local parking by construction workers

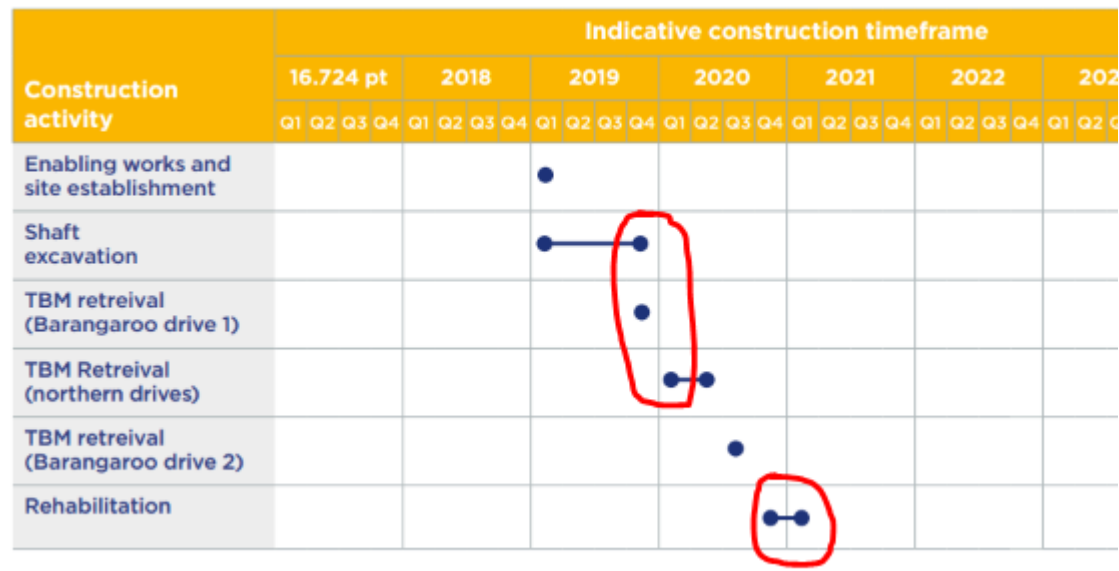
Many residential properties in the proximity of Blues Point Reserve do not include off-street parking. North Sydney Council operate parking permit scheme to manage local parking. The removal of 4 parking places for the full 2 years is significant. Add in the parking of workers – who will need to move their cars due to time limits, driving around in hunt of a parking spot. Throughout the week and especially on weekends, disgruntled visitors who can't find a parking spot to enjoy the view regularly rev-up and speed out of the area and back up Blues Point Road. The reduction of parking spaces will significantly degrade the experience for many visitors as well as increasing congestion and reducing safety as drivers

. Encouragement of workers to use public transport is honourable but how will that be done? There is some all day parking but most parking is time limited. As this area is residential there is no car parking for workers. To be fair to the workers – perhaps a shuttle bus arrangement from an alternate makeshift parking area should be considered.

### Objection to the plan to rehabilitate from Q4 2020 through to Q1 2021 thereby impacting 2 years of NYE

Every New Years Eve, thousands of visitors flock to Blues Point Reserve to watch the fireworks. The reserve is one of the best places in Sydney to watch the iconic event. .

Table 7-11 Blues Point temporary site indicative construction program



As the snip from Page 220 of the EIS shows, Blues Point Reserve will be mostly unusable for NYE celebrations on NYE2020 and NYE2021. If the park is to be used for this project, greater efforts need to be made in the planning to bring forward proposed rehabilitation and limit the impact to NYE to just NYE2020.

## Objection to the inadequate consideration of barge removal of sandstone and spoils instead of tip trucks

The EIS, Page 71, Table 3.2 : Spoil haulage options , states “ ... the establishment of barging facilities at this site is not considered to be a feasible solution. Barge transport of spoil may be feasible at this site subject to further investigations. “

Really? Not feasible but may be feasible subject to further investigations. Please explain to the local community and businesses why barge transport is not considered a feasible solution? The impacts of truck transport have not been honestly appraised and the true costs of truck transport will be shifted on to local residents and businesses.

And why have these further investigations not been conducted and what would these further investigations be? How can the community have any confidence in the proposal and planning with such statements?

This is just not good enough. Why has the removal of spoil haulage by barge been dismissed in favour **132 30-40 tonne trucks a day up** and down a steep, narrow and highly used residential and commercial route over a period of 12 months to remove and a further 6 months to return/refill. The profound impact of this “solution” is denied, minimised, glossed over, the true costs are not accounted for, and the costs are shifted on to residents and small businesses rather than being borne by the state. The metro project is for the overall benefit of Sydney commuters and therefore the costs should not be shifted onto a small community.