

Attention: Director, Transport Assessments  
Planning & Assessment, Department of Planning  
Industry and Environment  
Locked Bag 5022  
Parramatta NSW 2124

Note: Please delete my personal details before publication

February 19, 2021

**Objection: Beaches Link and Gore Hill Freeway Upgrade – SSI\_8862**

I write to express my objection to the Beaches Link and Gore Hill Freeway Project. With its zero public transport options, this is a project that made very little sense for a sustainable, modern and forward-thinking city in pre-COVID times (there was no valid business case then), and now, in a post-COVID world has even less relevance or efficacy (certainly still no business case now that COVID has changed in a very fundamental way, the operations of Sydney in terms of working, commuting and living).

I have done my best to read the extensive EIS documents at this very difficult time. I have significant concerns about the justification for this project particularly given that there is no published business case, it is not high on Infrastructure Australia's priority list, the EIS demonstrates a significant risk to health and safety and the project and an alternative public transport option has not been fully scoped and compared. Particularly as any measurements relating to the project was established pre-COVID and has no relevance now.

I object to the project for the following reasons:

1. The timing of release of this project at the end of what has been a very challenging year. This project impacts a large number of schools such as the one attended by my son and daughter – Cammeraygal High School - and passes through highly residential areas. Families, community groups and schools have been under a huge amount of strain throughout the exhibition stage. School P&Cs did not have the opportunity to review the documents and parents were caring for children on school holidays. The 12,000+ paged documents are very difficult to read on screen and the Library was not allowing borrowing. The project should be re-exhibited well after the COVID-19 crisis has passed and when normal life returns and when we understand the permanent changes that it has made.
2. I object to the project due to the contamination risks it presents to the environment and to human health and the negative impact on our precious waterways and green spaces.
  - I object to the project because the breeding pairs of Powerful Owls who live in Tunks Park and its surrounds can't object to the damage the groundworks and construction day and night will do to their territories. And ditto for the Lyre Birds, echidnas, wallabies, dolphins and bandicoots. I object on their behalf.
3. I object to the project due to the scale, extent and risk of groundworks in sensitive residential areas and foreshore environments for example,
  - I object to the project on the basis that I live in an area of Northbridge which is the entry point for a number of bushwalking tracks lovingly maintained by Willoughby Council. During COVID lockdown, I would estimate the human traffic making use of our walks tripled. Many walkers told us they had travelled some way to use the space. This illustrates how important and valuable green and open spaces are for the local and wider community now, more than ever before. Any reduction in these amenities will definitely have a negative impact on the community's mental health and well-being.

4. I object to the project due to the unreasonable level of impact on the Quality of Life of residents during the tunnel construction and operation because

- You only have to look at the devastation wrought on the people, landscape and community of Haberfield and its surrounds to get any indication of the scale of the impact on Northbridge, Cammeray and its surrounds. This project will cause great suffering and disturbance to our community and yet it is not based on any sound business case or metrics. Please please re-measure and get it absolutely right before you subject us to what the Haberfield community went through.

5. I object to the project as it is a tolled road and there is little evidence that it will alleviate current congestion.

We don't mind going through the disruption and suffering that a construction project on such a scale would mean if the reasoning and metrics behind the project are sound and incorporate future-proof solutions such as environmentally sustainable public transport. They weren't pre-COVID and now the change that the pandemic wrought on how Sydney works and commutes means that you need to go back to the drawing board and really provide us with good evidence that this car-only tunnel is the right solution in a post-COVID world.

6. I object to the project as there has been no publicly published business case and the costs demonstrated in the EIS seem to far outweigh the benefits. The EIS also fails to fully scope many aspects such as utilities and contamination which poses a risk to the project.

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8. I object to the project in its current incarnation, however I would support a tunnel which offered public transport solutions but there is no rail component and now we learn there is even no dedicated bus lane. Seriously?

9. I object to the project because the B-Line buses have been successful in reducing congestion and no public transport alternative study has been done with which to compare this project.

I object to the Northern Beaches tunnel project because in between the first community consultation and today, there has been a pandemic which has fundamentally changed the way Sydney-siders live, commute and work. Is the tunnel solution the right one for a post-COVID Sydney?

This project is a missed opportunity to transform Sydney into a world class, healthy and sustainable city with a strong public transport system. The EIS demonstrates that this toll road will be extremely expensive to build and high risk with little benefit. I would ask that an alternative public transport feasibility study be published before any further planning occurs so that impacts and outcomes can be fairly compared.

Yours sincerely,

Kate van den Broek

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Declaration of any reportable political donations made in the previous 2 years	I have not made any political donations in the past two years
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