

**Submission on the Environmental Impact Statement
for the Beaches Link and Gore Hill Freeway Connection
Project Application Number: SSI-8862**

Pollution in Middle Harbour

Objection:

I object to the fact that contaminated sediments in Middle Harbour, at the proposed crossing site of the Beaches Link tunnel, will be disturbed during construction.

“Contaminated sediments have been identified within Middle Harbour and offshore at Spit West Reserve. These contaminated sediments would need to be managed where disturbed during construction activities to reduce the exposure risk to workers and environmental receivers “

Source: Appendix M page vii

I am very concerned that this Middle Harbour sediment contains the following dangerous contaminants above guideline criteria:

- Polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs)
- Total recoverable hydrocarbons (TRHs)
- Organochlorine pesticides (OCPs)
- Tributyltin (TBT)
- Heavy metals
- Mercury
- Lead
- Silver
- Zinc.

Source: Beaches Link EIS Appendix Q page 51

Disturbing the sediment at the bottom of Middle Harbour has the potential to cause great environmental damage to the waterway as well as surrounding bushland and residential areas.

I understand that a closed environmental clam shell style of bucket may “avoid the spread of material into the water as it is being removed”

However, the use of such equipment does not stop the toxic sludge from being disturbed as the buckets are dropped or lifted from the dredge/barge.

The EIS claims that less than two percent of the sediment will escape into the water.

Source: Appendix P: Hydrodynamics and dredge plume modelling Section 7.2.2

This may not sound very much but, if the total amount of contaminated sludge is comparable to the expected amount to be removed from Sydney Harbour for the WHT, which is estimated to be about 140,000 cubic metres, then an escape of 2% still represents about 3000 cubic metres of contaminated material being returned to the harbour to float freely after being disturbed from where it lay in the sediment on the harbour floor.

Middle Harbour is not only an area for recreational boating, it also has swimming areas such as the Northbridge Baths. The health risks, for example to swimmers, are disturbing.

It is stated that the sludge removed from the harbour floor will be taken by barge for treatment. I cannot find in the EIS any explanation or consideration of the methods that will be used for the treatment of these toxins.

I find this unacceptable.

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