

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

**Impact of the Beaches Link and Gore Hill Freeway Connection Tunnels
on Induced Traffic**

Objection:

I object to the impact the Beaches Link and Gore Hill Freeway Connection tunnels will have on inducing traffic and increasing congestion in Sydney in the foreseeable future.

I object to the fact that there is no acknowledgement in the EIS of the well-researched and established concept of Induced Traffic or Induced Demand.

There are countless examples of this both in Australia and overseas.

One of the best known, perhaps, is the Katy Freeway in Houston, Texas, USA.

Between 2008 and 2011, the freeway was widened from 8 lanes to 23 lanes (26 at its widest point) to improve traffic flows and cope with congestion on the roads.

Yet in spite of the very large increase in the number of lanes on the freeway, traffic congestion did not improve but became worse than before.

Travel times actually increased 30% in AM peak periods and 55% in PM peak periods between 2011 and 2014.

Source: <https://www.citylab.com/transportation/2018/09/citylab-university-induced-demand/569455/>

In Sydney, there is similar evidence of induced traffic volumes.

Matthew Beck (Senior Lecturer in Infrastructure Management, University of Sydney) and Michiel Bliemer (Professor in Transport and Logistics Network Modelling, University of Sydney) write:

The Sydney Harbour Bridge was carrying a stable traffic volume of around 180,000 vehicles per day from 1986 to 1991. The Sydney Harbour Tunnel opened in 1992, and the total volume of traffic crossing the harbour increased in 1995 to almost 250,000 vehicles per day.

This 38% increase in traffic can be attributed to induced demand and not to population growth (which was around 4% during this period).

Source: "Do more roads really mean less congestion for commuters?"
<https://theconversation.com/do-more-roads-really-mean-less-congestion-for-commuters-39508>

When the M5 opened in 2001, it was touted as improving traffic congestion. Yet, in March 2019, the NRMA declared that "The M5 Has Been Named As The Worst Road For Congestion In NSW".

Source: <https://www.triplem.com.au/story/the-m5-has-been-named-as-the-worst-road-for-congestion-in-nsw-130905>

Todd Litman from the Victoria Transport Policy Institute wrote in March 2019:

Ignoring generated traffic underestimates the magnitude of future traffic congestion problems, overestimates the congestion reduction benefits of increasing roadway capacity, and underestimates the benefits of alternative solutions to transportation problems.

Source: "Generated Traffic: Implications for Transport Planning"
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/279940472_Generated_traffic_Implications_for_transport_planning

A basic question is "Will the Beaches Link tunnel and Western Harbour Tunnel really improve traffic congestion in the long term?"

Currently, the ramp from the Warringah Freeway at Falcon Street is often queued back down the Warringah Freeway because of traffic waiting for the lights to change, and not just in peak hours. Every Sunday there are very long queues here so that 'through traffic' trying to travel straight ahead on the Freeway is stuck behind these queues.

But even after the tunnels are built, this intersection will continue to fail. The EIS clearly shows that the Falcon Street/Warringah Freeway ramp will be one of the many intersections which will still have significant delays, and have been declared to fail (F).

The construction of the tunnels will also cause significant negative impacts on traffic at other intersections in the North Sydney area as well as intersections in Artarmon, Seaforth, Balgowlah and Frenchs Forest

Source: Beaches Link EIS Chapter 9 – pages 9-20, 9-30, 9-36, 9-42

Yet the EIS claims that the tunnels will improve traffic congestion??

As has been wisely said: "Trying to cure traffic congestion by adding more capacity is like trying to cure obesity by loosening your belt."

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