

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

Note: Please delete my personal details before publication

Date: 26 February 2021

Objection: Beaches Link and Gore Hill Freeway Connection Upgrade – SSI_8862

I live in Turramurra and I have an interest in this development. Specifically, public money has been and will be used to construct an unnecessary, highly polluting (to land, air and several waterways) and expensive vehicle corridor whose traffic modelling is questionable. I have family in its path, and having worked on the Northern Beaches for 20 years, an appreciation for the area's natural values.

My main focus here is on the environmental damage that will result from the largest ever construction project for the North Shore of Sydney.

The concept of the Beaches Link Tunnel Project leads us in the wrong direction. The Western Harbour and Beaches Link projects are the largest construction projects ever to be planned for the North Shore. The future of this country does not lie in expansion of transport by individual motor vehicle. Australia, like the rest of the world, will sooner or later be moving to zero or negative green-house gas emissions.

Public Transport, Polluting Air and Modelling

The EIS has not dealt coherently with public transport as a solution to increased motor vehicle traffic. Chapter 4 says "...the addition of more buses to the network can contribute to congestion." This is a weird conclusion given the number of passengers a bus can carry.

As people work from home in a post-pandemic society, they will require, and have already begun moving to, homes with vegetation and clean air. This project will spew poisonous air into currently clean areas: the unfiltered ventilation stacks are close to Bally Boys, St Cecílias and Seaforth Public Schools in Balgowlah; and Anzac Park Primary School in Cammeray.

Environmental Damage

Fauna

Fauna assessed in the area include numerous threatened species – the Eastern Pygmy-possum, Powerful Owl, Rosenberg's Goanna, Large-eared Pied Bat, Grey-headed

Flying-fox, Red-crowned Toadlet, and the rare *Galaxias brevipinnis*, a climbing fish that is unchanged by evolution since the Gondwana era 60 million years ago.

The EIS states “Fauna can be sensitive to elevated noise, changing their behaviour and impacting their physiology... Fauna may initially desert the immediate area at the start of excavation activities due to increased noise and vibration levels...

However, due to the extent of adjoining habitat, the initial displacement from the immediate area could become permanent. For less mobile species or breeding individuals, the effects of the high noise levels may be more acute.”

In other words, more mobile species would most likely stay away from the area – but the assumption that there is plenty of surrounding bushland without competition for territory or resources with other animals is ridiculous. It is also an injustice that less mobile and breeding animals unable to move are left to suffer destruction of habitat, noise, vibration, lighting at night, dust and potentially contaminated run-off water.

Burnt Bridge Creek

Groundwater flows into the Burnt Bridge Creek will be reduced by around 80% while the tunnels are being built and up to 96% after completion of the project, pumped out to a depth of 11 metres *in order to stop water dripping into the tunnels*. This means that the creek will become a storm water drain relying only on rainwater. This will damage, if not kill, the vegetation along the creek which supports the grey-headed flying fox colony as the water table falls. Of course night noise of construction will harm the flying foxes - babies left in the colony by night will suffer from the noise and light of construction.

The amount of water flowing into Manly Lagoon and into the ocean at Queenscliff Beach will fall – and during times of reduced rainfall the water will be polluted.

Wakehurst Parkway

More than 12 hectares of high value bushland will be destroyed with the widening of the Wakehurst Parkway from North Seaforth to the intersection of the Parkway with Warringah Road. What confidence have we, when the NSW government promised a part of this site would be returned intact to Manly Warringah War Memorial Park to compensate for the loss of rare bushland and biodiversity as a result of the Manly Vale Public School expansion? What has happened to the Eastern Bent-wing bat not mentioned in this Beaches Link EIS?

The NSW Government is promising to revegetate and return this area back to the park afterwards, but it is not possible to recreate the complexity of endemic flora species or the lost wildlife. Disturbing and removing the original topsoil means opening up the whole area to invasive weed invasion, as has already happened at the Haulage Road site in Cheltenham. Locating an industrial grade work site here will be disastrous for the environment.

The EIS acknowledges that the project cannot control heavy flows of rain water during heavy rain - as happened every month in 2020! - that will enter Manly Dam

and Bantry Bay catchment. This polluted water may well decimate the Gondwanan (c. 60 million years ago) Climbing Galaxias fish in Curl Curl creek, the the only population of Climbing Galaxias in Sydney. They are not “pollution tolerant”.
Construction Pollution to Waterways.

In conclusion, I object to this project because of excessive public cost; unnecessary and extensive harm to the environment; pollution of land, air and water; faulty modelling regarding demand for such a connection; and widespread disruption to homes and local traffic during construction.

Sincerely,
Mrs M, AALIA, GradDipTourismM, M EnvStud
Turramurra, NSW, 2074

