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Naremburn NSW 2065

To whom it may concern,

**Beaches Link Tunnel Environmental Impact Statement**

The following outlines my **strong objection** to the proposed Beaches Link Tunnel. Whilst I can appreciate the need for improved transport this should not be at the expense of safety and quality of life.

The environmental impact statement has failed to address the significant health and safety concerns raised in response to the original proposals. The design will not provide a long-term solution and has no stand-alone business case outside of providing justification for WestConnex and Western Harbour tunnel. It will, however, have long term damaging affects on the health and safety of lower north shore residents, particularly our children and will cause irreversible damage to green spaces and the environment.

Specifically the reasons for my objection, which are outlined in more detail below, are the following:

- a) Unjustifiable risks to the health and safety of local residents, particularly the young.
- b) Impacts of long-term construction on residents
- c) It will not solve transportation issues in the long term.
- d) Irreversible destruction of environment and green spaces
- e) Impact on conservation and heritage areas
- f) The complete lack of adequate community consultation

**A) Health and safety risks**

The tunnel design incorporates unfiltered smoke stacks, the positioning of which has only been made worse from the initial proposal to final design. Where initially, the two stacks were to be placed at either end of St Leonards park, we are now placing both unfiltered stacks right on top of Anzac Park Primary School. I assume a thin veiled attempt to placate the parents of Private school children.

Particulate Matter in our local area, due to its proximity to the Warringah freeway, is already higher than what is recommended or considered “safe” by your own government organisations. Research has shown that the concentration of pollutants that would be caused by a limited exit points from a 10 lane tunnel increases the risks of asthma, lung cancer and stroke. The Hazelwood fire disaster has collected statistical data on the impact of pollution on children with regards to health and emotional wellbeing yet none of this data has been utilised.

Despite this current unsafe level of exposure, this EIS supports implementing unfiltered smoke stacks within metres of schools, where thousands of young lungs are just trying to receive an education. Your modelling claims that pollution is redistributed as a result of the project but fails to highlight that the position of the stacks in fact creates a key corridor of pollution along Ernest St/Military Road directing affecting 26 local schools. Anzac Park

primary alone, home to over 900 students under 12 years of age will be subjected to the biggest particulate matter increase over the hr and will exceed 2037 for both PM2.5 and PM10 over a 24-hr period if the beaches link is allowed to proceed alongside the Western Harbour tunnel.

The environmental impact study makes a number of other flawed assumptions with regards to the impact of these smoke stacks:

- The impacts have been calculated based on an assumed number of people impacted. This assumption has not provided for the over 900 students attending Anzac Park Public School right next door to the stacks, nor has it factored in other schools and day care populations within the 150 metre radius. Further, it has understated the resident population by not taking into account the large number of unit block residences in the area.
- An assumption is made with regards to the rate of air disbursement which does not take into account the large number of high-rise buildings in the North Sydney area that would inhibit this.

Conclusions contained within the EIS, particularly those made by Transport NSW, are contradicted by other data presented. It is claimed by Transport NSW that air quality will not get worse as surface level traffic will reduce. This is contradicted by data that confirms local residents' earlier objections that note:

- increased intersection delays
- the potential of additional toll avoidance,
- slower bus times and;
- the rat running will be required to access changed access arrangements to the freeway

Yet despite this, no public transport proposal or proposal for filtered stacks has been considered.

The health and safety risks are further compounded by the length of the tunnel. The proposed Beaches link when attached to the Western Harbour Tunnel will be the longest unfiltered tunnel in history. The environmental impact statement has made no adjustments in its calculation on the affect on our community by this increased length and the consolidation of the exhausts through such a small number of smoke stacks that are not spread out.

As a resident of Naremburn, my catchment area school for my two young children, currently 5 years and 2 years respectively, is Anzac Park Primary. Their young developing lungs are going to be directly affected by the implications of these unfiltered stacks. The justification for the placement of the now two stacks beside their primary school being that there is already a ventilation facility from the Harbour tunnel gives me little comfort. It shows me what little regard this government has for our future generations – they already are exposed a little more won't hurt – seems to be the attitude. It is bad enough that Government under investment in schools on the lower north shore means that my children will have to undertake significant travel across major roads to reach school, once they get there, they will be subjected to concentrated pollutants that will have a significant impact on their ongoing health.

The increase in health costs as the community grapples with increased asthma and other respiratory issues have also played no part in the financial analysis for this project.

The health and safety risks are being recognised in tunnel and transport design solutions across the world, including western and developing countries (Hong Kong, the UK and Stockholm) where smoke stacks from tunnels are being filtered or adequate air exchange methods employed. A fact recognised by Prime Minister Berejiklian herself almost 10 years ago in 2008 saying it was “world best practice to filter tunnels”. Why now, a decade later when we should be far more developed are we **taking such a huge backwards step?** The fact that it will not hit the government’s pocket until over 25 years from now with a class action and impact on our public health system is no excuse not to do what’s best by the next generation.

## **B) Impacts of construction**

The building of the tunnels will subject local residents to 5-6 years of traffic chaos with heavy diesel vehicles moving through and idling in local streets. This will not only increase pollutant levels, posing further health risks to locals, but also safety issues.

Road safety is a major concern, especially for our young children. An additional 900 vehicle movements will be required on Flat Rock Drive/Brook St daily. Due to school zoning, primary school students in Naremburn must cross Brook street to walk to Cammeray or Anzac Park Public Schools. Further, the construction centre (Cammeray Golf Course) for the Project is within 300m of Anzac Park primary. There are currently **no measures within the EIS to protect these students from the construction**, particularly:

- ensuring dust pollution is completely suppressed
- ensuring no heavy vehicles travel anywhere near the School including Ernest Street, Anzac Park Avenue, Rosalind Street, Miller Street and M1 Miller Street off ramp during the hours of 7am and 5pm school days.
- suppressing all construction related noise during school days to ensure teacher and school children including those with autism and other attributes are not adversely affected by noise whilst they are teaching/learning.

Construction will also see the closure of a number of roads which will not re-open post completion. Not only does it disrupt the normal on/off ramps used by locals to make their way to their places of work, but it also forces a lot of traffic into the residential areas.

The above congestion will cause rat running and put the safety of our children at risk. The RMS have publicly indicated that there are no planned measures to ensure our children’s safety on the impacted local streets.

Noise pollution will also be a permanent, 24/7 problem. Trucks, drilling, ground work and preparation activities will mean noise along and around the construction corridor. Noise travels. It will impact residents, students and local businesses. It affects sleep, concentration, stress levels and health. The proposed noise sheds will not eliminate this noise pollution.

Finally, our community will be flooded with a number of construction sites holding dangerous goods. Of particular personal concern, is the usage of Cammeray Golf Course to hold the explosives for tunnel construction which is within a stone's throw of the local primary school.

### **C) Won't solve the problem**

There is no strong business case for this proposal.

The following benefits put forward are completely untrue for residents of the lower north shore:

- The Beaches Link Tunnel will NOT reduce congestion. Our roads and direct routes for our commute are to be shut off and our local streets flooded with up to 2000 vehicles an hr trying to make their way from the 6 lane motorway to their final destination along single lane streets.
- It will NOT reduce our commute to the beach. The limited access on ramps and off ramps to our local community would not only make our journey more difficult but the final tunnel will not even deliver us to the beach, finishing in North Balgowlah. This may provide some temporary relief to the residents utilising Military road, however, not in the long term.
- It does NOT provide a long term solution. All motorways in and around Sydney have had to be extended or modified within years of opening as there is no way to adequately provide for growth and result in significant traffic jams.

Despite this, the Beaches Link tunnel solution outlined in this Environmental Impact statement has **not provided consideration of any public transport options**. In a time of increasing climate change that has been shown worldwide to be directly affected by the level of car usage this is appalling, especially considering the enormous cost and destruction required to complete the project.

### **D) Destruction of green spaces and environmental impacts**

There will be grave environmental impacts from this project and a significant reduction on our local green and sport facilities.

Construction at Flat Rock Gully will:

- Destroy wildlife that has taken 25 years of hard work to rehabilitate and destroy a vibrant green space area highly utilised by the community. Flat Rock Gully is a critical part of the wildlife corridor is recognised for its biodiversity. It is considered one of the last refuges for our fast disappearing small native bird population and provides a habitat for foraging powerful owls, swamp wallabies, lyrebirds and many other native animals.
- Unearth years of buried asbestos, lead and toxic odours as the previously long buried old tip and quarry will be dug up increasing the risk of health impacts.
- Remove Sports and community recreation facilities.
- Walking/cycle paths will be subjected to unsafe levels of construction dust particles and air pollution.
- Northbridge swimming baths will become unusable with the amount of toxins being unearthed through the digging.

Further, the design will make a significant part of Cammeray Golf Club unusable. Cammeray's all-weather football pitch, skate park and tennis courts will be affected by noise and air pollution and may not be safe to use for the duration of construction.

Finally, Harbour dredging will impact water quality and the marine eco system and will most likely result in the local swimming baths at Northbridge being forced to close. Harbour dredging was deemed too dangerous for the building of the metro tunnel because of the large number of toxins that would be released in to the harbour. Why, when we are looking at the smaller expanse of Middle Harbour does it suddenly become safe?

### **E) Conservation and heritage impact**

Conservation and heritage buildings are situated along the proposed construction corridor, including original houses and workers cottages. Properties are at significant risk from tunnelling, blasts and heavy vehicle movements. Tunnelling will be shallow in residential areas through Cammeray, Crow's Nest, Naremburn and Artarmon. In some places it's less than 50 metres! Residents have worked hard and invested heavily to preserve these buildings and environments for the next generation.

### **F) Consultation**

There has been little to no communication from the NSW Government in a form that one would call a 'consultation'. Presenting a slick short ZOOM meeting where part of what is happening and its impact isn't disclosed with legitimate questions either not being answered or deflected, cannot be called 'consultation'. Before any further progress is made with the Project, proper infrastructure related consultation with all stakeholders is required.

### **My ASK**

For the sake of my children's future and the next generation I sincerely ask you to reconsider and work in the best interests of all. If you can't find a way to considering a sustainable public transport option then I beg you to at least do what can be done to protect the children by:

- a) Filtering the smoke stacks in line with world best practice
- b) Moving construction sites away from public schools and implementing strict controls of all forms of pollution (dust, noise etc) from whatever source during the construction of the Tunnel
- c) Taking a more controlled approach for the movement of traffic to reduce the impact of congestion and rat running
- d) Remodelling harbour work to consider the data used by the Sydney Metro construction on the affects of dredging.

Regards,



Annika Broadbent