

Tolls and Traffic Objection

I am writing to formally object to the Northern Beaches Tunnel plans and intent. My reasons for objecting are outlined below.

I object for the future of this city (why build road tunnels when we should be building public transport infrastructure? Why remove much needed and rapidly diminishing green space), however most importantly I object for the future of our children. What legacy are we leaving them?

1. I am objecting to:

During Construction

- a. The burden placed on residents, school children and motorists in Northbridge, Willoughby, Artarmon, Crows Nest, Cammeray, Naremburn, the lower north shore during the estimated 5 years of the construction of the Beaches Link with the cumulative impact of the Western Harbour Tunnel and Warringah Freeway Upgrade extending construction time across the area for upwards of 8 years.
- b. A large number of additional construction vehicle movements will be required across the project servicing multiple construction sites. These sites are in and around schools, sporting fields and school transport corridors which increases the safety risk. Heavy/ Light Construction Movements during the project are as follows:

From Table 5-3 Summary of activities proposed at Beaches Link and Gore Hill Freeway Connection construction support sites Daily vehicle movements

BL1 Cammeray Golf Course, Cammeray 305/ 275 = 580

BL2 Flat Rock Drive, Naremburn 355/545 = 900

BL3 Punch Street, Artarmon 580/370 = 900

BL4 Dickson Avenue, Artarmon 500/90 = 590

BL5 Barton Rd, Artarmon 120/35 = 155

BL6 Gore Hill Freeway median 100/10 = 110

Total Artarmon = 1755

BL7 Middle Harbour south cofferdam 60/4

BL8 Middle Harbour north cofferdam combined with above

BL9 Spit West Reserve 200/220 = 420 and vessels 8/16

BL10 Balgowlah Golf Course 1195/ 495= 1290

Total Additional Vehicle Movements Daily = 4950

Total Addition Vessel Movements Daily on Middle Harbour = 88

Note the Western Harbour and Warringah Freeway project which overlaps with this project between 2023 and 2026 requires another 6343 daily movements between Rozelle and Cammeray.

- c. 900 Additional vehicle movements will be required on Flat Rock Drive/ Brook St **daily**. This is a narrow local road which services the connection from Northbridge via Naremburn to the city. Dozens of schools on the Lower and Upper North Shore use this route as their school bus route. Brook St is also a significant active transport link from Willoughby to North Shore schools esp Cammeray due to zoning. Keeping kids safe along this corridor will be a challenge. Residents within the many dead end streets along this corridor exiting onto Brook St will also face a higher risk.
- d. There is only vague assertions that the thousands of workers (employment of 15,000 has been quoted to service the Western Harbour Tunnel, Warringah Freeway and Beaches Link)

will use public transport to access sites. Insufficient parking is provided onsite and not all sites are easily accessible by public transport. The Balgowlah site is a major launching platform for staff who will work at the sites and be bused down to the Spit via Spit Rd. Whilst buses are used from Balgowlah the thousands of workers need to get there and may need to use Military Rd to do so.

- e. Marshalling areas will be needed for trucks across all sites but particularly at the Flat Rock site. Marshalling should not be permitted on local streets and particularly not in the Naremburn Conservation Area due to the increased vibration risk. Trucks should not be allowed to idle while marshalling and every load should be tested and inspected to ensure contaminants are fully contained.
- f. Trucks accelerating up a steep hill from zero is likely to create a substantial amount of diesel pollution - the health impacts of this have not been fully assessed. An alert style monitor should be placed at bicentennial reserve to alert the community to high levels of pollutants.
- g. The noise assessment claimed that the trucks on Flat Rock Drive would not create more noise however the assessment does not appear to account for braking on a very steep hill - the noise assessment should be redone.
- h. Spoil will be taken out from the Cammeray site across the bridge to an unknown location. On return the trucks will need to turn around at an undisclosed point - this may add more trucks to roads around Willoughby than currently documented in the EIS.
- i. Active transport routes across the route will be fragmented by the project and travel times will increase at Flat Rock, Cammeray and Artarmon.

Operation

- j. The EIS confirms the Beaches Link is a Toll Road but there are no costings as yet. Costing and placement of toll gantries is essential to modelling traffic flows and predicting toll avoidance. Toll avoidance could become an issue as per the Inner West - tolling strategy yet to be confirmed however all other contracts have been 40-50 years with min. annual % increase in tolls.
- k. A very low level of induced demand has been included in the modelling - research demonstrates that a higher level of induced demand is generally used for new expressways (up to 10%) which calls the modelling into question
- l. The only local entry points for the Beaches Link are via Artarmon and Berry St North Sydney – no local time saved: 10mins to get to entry, 10 mins in tunnel, 10 mins to Dee Why or Manly = 30 min journey time.
- m. The EIS makes it clear that this is not a local congestion solution – several local intersections fail or will experience a worse level of service both during and after construction as a result of the project. See the attached review for specific information
- n. Does not achieve goals – only 10% reduction in short term on Military Rd based on FUTURE predicted traffic growth not today's levels. The growth model is not made available in the EIS so the travel time savings and congestion reductions are unable to be verified. Where a road is already at capacity it is self limiting ie) future growth cannot overreach the ceiling capacity of the road and therefore a travel time saving or reduction cannot be claimed on this basis.
- o. Traffic differential modelling in the EIS shows increased traffic flows around the Warringah Freeway and on the Beaches exit roads. The project appears to transfer pinch points to alternate locations rather than solving congestion.
- p. Confirmed as a capacity solution not a congestion solution – the EIS prioritises freight and through traffic as a goal of the project above local congestion
- q. No dedicated bus lane in tunnel so is not a public transport solution – express buses aren't express if they are going at the same speed as cars and don't have their own lane
- r. No ability to be converted to rail – the project team have confirmed that the gradients are too steep along this alignment for the project to be converted to a rail option

- s. Prior to Covid TfNSW data shows that the daily average traffic across the Spit Bridge has been decreasing for the last 4 years, while during the same period the traffic on Mona Vale Road through to Macquarie Park has been increasing. The Beaches Link is addressing an ever decreasing problem as less people are travelling to and from the city from the Northern Beaches.
- t. There has been no assessment of traffic implications when the tunnel is closed for maintenance which occurs roughly monthly?
- u. There has been no assessment of the pollution impact on surrounding neighbourhoods in the event of an emergency involving smoke or gas release (or other toxin). As there is no filtration there is no ability to prevent dispersion over school and residential communities.
- v. Build the tunnels and more people use them, it moves the traffic congestion further down the road. Increasing road reliance as the option given in this project is road.
- w. The premise of these projects as we have seen demonstrated in the Westconnex is to see local roads return to local communities. Road tolling is a user paid system and some will spend money to save time, but in reality the continual use of expensive tolls become unavoidable to the vast majority of drivers, even though the state government offers rebates based on tolls and vehicle registration. That amount in tolls far outweighs the rego costs of a family car. There is likely to be an increase of traffic on our local streets as motorists avoid paying the tolls. This is currently the case in Leichhardt, Haberfield, Lilyfield, Ashfield.

2. The conditions I am asking for:

- 1. Release the business case for the Beaches Link and Gore Hill Freeway connection that has never been made public. This will tell us whether the Beaches Link is the most efficient, cost effective infrastructure to reduce congestion to and from the Northern Beaches
- 2. A full reassessment of the traffic flows to and from the Northern Beaches needs to include data collected after 2016, data also needs to be collected on the number of Northern Beaches residents who work in the area and how many work from home.
- 3. A re-assessment of surface level traffic with all major local roads included in the operational modelling ie) Eastern Valley Way, the full span of Military Rd and Willoughby Rd was not included. The surface road traffic assessment should then inform the pollution impact of the project as the pollution contribution is not only limited to the stacks.
- 4. A reconsideration of a drive site along Flat Rock Drive due to the conflict between children and trucks and risks associated around safety, noise, dust, traffic etc If this is not reassessed ask for an overpass or underpass on Brook St to allow safe passage of children to school. Exclusion of trucks from the road during school bus times and pollution/ noise mitigation devices.
- 5. A comparative public transport options analysis to be published (via a reissuance of the EIS for public consultation) that compares the traffic implications both during and after construction of a mass transit solution.

Kind regards

Willoughby Resident