

28<sup>th</sup> February 2021

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to completely object to the proposed Beaches Link Tunnel. It is a fundamentally flawed development project built on flimsy, outdated data and a total lack of innovation.

Please respond to me in detail on the following points.

### **Justification for the Tunnel**

#### **CONCERNS:**

- We are investing in Public Transport infrastructure outside of the motor car all over the State of NSW.
- Why does the Northern Beaches of Sydney, already a working example of non-motor car innovation (the Manly Ferry Service) have to be subjected to a project almost exclusively **dedicated** to a mode of transport that is increasingly seen as environmentally catastrophic and moot.
- The EIS says that the impact of traffic on Military Rd will be minimal. How is this Project justified?
- The traffic on both end of the tunnel needs to be accommodated – both in the City (where the City recently closed George St to traffic to great success) and in Seaforth / North Balgowlah – 2 suburbs that are not prepared for an influx in traffic. Kids play in our streets. How is this justified?
- What will Residents have to pay to fund this folly? It's so short-sighted. Are our grandchildren going to look at another tunnel and thank us as their antecedents? Or will they wonder why we didn't invest in a train service just like most other parts of the city?
- The new Bus timetable in North Balgowlah forces school-children and their parents back into their cars. A cynical view is that this is softening up residents so that the tunnel feels like an "answer".

The Tunnel is outdated before it's even begun construction. Please just accept that it's the least innovative and environmentally responsible project in NSW.

#### **REQUESTS:**

- Further modelling is required in the post COVID work. Every other industry and sector is taking stock in this period – why should we continue to barrel forward with this initiative in a time when we have an opportunity to pause and think.
- Dismissing other modes of public transport seems to be the standard response at the advisory sessions. Why? Because it's hard and we have money to spend so we should just go ahead and spend it?

### **The Impacts of Construction**

#### **CONCERNS:**

- The construction phase of the project will undoubtedly impact North Balgowlah residents with dust, noise, vibration, and heavy vehicle traffic in the area. North Balgowlah will have construction surrounding most of the suburb and the EIS indicates that during construction there will be.
  - Over 3,000 vehicles per day across all sites.

- 1,690 vehicles per day at the Balgowlah Golf Course site alone.
- 1.5 heavy vehicles every minute or 4.5 vehicles (total) every minute.
- Over 4,000 homes subjected to excessive noise
- Construction work to proceed 24/7 for up to 7 years.

I object to the imposte on the people of North Balgowlah who will bear the brunt of this Project for 10 years or more. On our health, our wellbeing - the cost is just not worth it.

#### REQUEST

- As a given, there should be measures in place should this venture go forward. But let's assume we see sense. At the very least, the Government should be cognisant of asking its citizens to take on an unfair burden when the outcome is, at best, questionable.

#### **Environmental Impacts: Land and Water**

#### CONCERNS:

- We lose trees, we lose creeks, we lose wildlife refuges. It's hard to fathom that we're find this in any way acceptable. Burnt Bridge Creek will just dry up? The history of our region should make this concept utterly untenable.
- The EIS details 23 threatened species that will be negatively impacted, potentially eradicated from our area. Hundreds of other species will also lose their habitat, be cut off from bushland, or be driven away. The proposed project counteracts the principles of Ecologically Sustainable Development in the Protection of the Environment Administration Act 1991 (NSW) which declares that the conservation of biological diversity and ecological integrity should be of fundamental consideration (PEAA Act Part 3(2)(c)).
- Where's the shining example of a successful wildlife or public space that's been completed as part of a Project of this nature? It's been promised. But point to one that is the exemplar.
- There are multiple implications on the water quality that will be generated as part of this Project. Middle harbour toxic sludge? Tick. Toxins in swimming water? Tick. Wastewater dispersal into an area populated by children and animals (Queenscliff Lagoon!)? Tick. It's

I completely object to the callous destruction of the natural environment of the Northern Beaches.

#### REQUEST:

- I request a full assessment of biodiversity in and around the areas to be destroyed be conducted and guarantees to local residents that any 'offsets' are implemented within a reasonable timeframe.
- I request for testing to be completed and published for all contaminated sites.
- I request a health risk assessment on the impacts of recreational use of the harbour and waterways on individuals. Will the harbour, lagoons and beaches become unsafe for swimmers, sailors and divers?
- I request more extensive measures to contain contamination disturbed in construction.
- I request modelling on the impacts of sediment disturbance on marine life in the harbour
- I request contaminated sediment not to be barged out of Middle Harbour past Clontarf, Balmoral and other beaches due to the risk of spills and further pollution to highly utilised recreational swimming locations. If this is impossible, I request a detailed remediation plan on how to deal with spills/accidents and how this will be budgeted for.
- I request silt dispersion modelling to cover the 37 week dredging timeline and also the use of silt curtains that reach the sea floor and are not permeable.

- I request another crossing option be investigated given the known contaminants in the harbour and the significant risk of disturbance and pollution.
- I request the EIS assess the risk to bushwalkers, sporting groups, sailing clubs etc of coming into contact with contaminants as a result of run-off.

### **Health: Ventilation Stacks**

I completely and fundamentally reject the premise of using unfiltered ventilation stacks. It subjects citizens to risk that are yet to be fully understood.

#### **REQUEST**

- I request stacks be equipped with full filtration to minimize these impacts. At the very least the air pollution is kept at the current levels.

Finally, I ride the Manly Dam Mountain Bike track most weekends. It's truly a beautiful adventure – a place to truly enjoy being outside in a City. The thought of it being cut off or removed is just the most upsetting thing.

We need to be better than this. As a Government, as Planners and as People.