

Can we rethink the necessity and alternatives of this proposed project?

In the NSW EIS Beaches Link and Gore Hill Freeway Connection Chapter 4 Project development and Alternatives the document cites that *travel demand strategies* as the solution to traffic improvements was dismissed in favour of the tunnel project because:

“ to have a major impact on road traffic, travel demand management measures would require considerable changes in social attitudes, travel behaviour and government policy and can take many years to achieve. Travel demand management changes alone are therefore not a viable strategic alternative to the project “

Post Covid this is no longer the case social attitudes, travel behaviour and government policy have changed drastically and in a very short space of time !!

There has been a paradigm shift! We are now living in an era hallmarked by flexibility of how, when and where we work. A 10 billion dollar project for a limited increase in traffic flow at a time when the demands on peak traffic have been transformed by the flexibility of work from home and WFH hubs doesn't make economic or environmental sense. And at a time when capital cities around the world are phasing out petrol, diesel and conventional car travel for public modes of transport. Clearly the future of our cities is not about enabling private car usage but favouring public transport, for those still required to travel at peak times.

What is at stake and irreplaceable?

We have one of the most beautiful cities in the world renown for our beaches, clean water, and unique fauna and flora. There are few capital cities that can lay claim to green corridors alive with wildlife. For now I live in a community alongside nesting powerful owls, goannas, wallabies, echidnas a colony of flying foxes and a rare walking fish! Bio banking is not a life line to them and doesn't ensure the unique environment needed for their species to survive.

We are at a crucial tipping point our powerful owls, grey headed bats and pygmy possums among others are all endangered. Reducing the Burnt creek flow by up to 96% , clearing 3,500 trees and water contamination overflow into these sensitive areas is supporting threatened species extinction.

Is this really the price we want to pay for modest travel gains that could be reworked by other means?

And to this we must add the untested and unmeasured health impacts on our school children and broader community within the affected radius of unfiltered ventilation stacks as well as the likelihood of leaks of heavy metals and toxins from the dredging of contaminated sediment in middle harbour and the resulting impacts on our health and the marine ecosystem.

I object to this costly project that delivers so little and threatens so much and at a time when science and global experience unequivocally demands that biodiversity, clean air ,water and unpolluted oceans are our most precious resource and indeed our only future.