

## **Submission in objection to the Beaches Tunnel**

I write to strongly oppose construction of the Northern Beaches Link and Tunnel. Whilst I have a multitude of points in opposition to this project, I will concentrate on just two:

1. **No Public Transport Option considered:** No consideration has been given to any possible alternatives to congestion on roads in the Peninsula. It is my recall that the previous LNP Premier Mike Baird stated that no consideration should be given to any public transport option. As well as being incredulous, this is totally and clearly an undemocratic dictate. Meanwhile the current NSW Government under Gladys Berejiklian has proceeded with, and in fact extending the Metro which is indeed an exceptionally fine and laudable example of World Class Public Transport. A public transport option, possibly in line with other measures can take cars off the roads rather than the tunnel which would only bring more cars onto roads, increasing road usage and within 3-5 years we will be back to the same levels of congestion. Dee Why is already a substantial population hub and it makes perfect sense to extend the Metro from Chatswood to Dee Why as is currently planned with links from Chatswood to other centres. Furthermore, the enormous expenditure of approximately \$15 billion (before cost blow outs and time extensions) could be far better used to support Public Transport which is a cleaner and more environmentally sound option of moving people around and possibly even less expensive. The unsound expenditure on a tunnel/toll road will bring more people into the Peninsula on weekends and on public holidays that will further clog all roads around beaches and parks in the area. Witness the road chaos during the recent Australia Day weekend when we locals were hemmed in and unable to move for hours. Reference Clontarf, Manly, Freshwater to name just a few. The further spread of toll ways just adds to Sydney having become the most expensive toll road use city in the world. The tolls do nothing to limit road travel, just make it inordinately more expensive when there are no options. Clearly not a world class option or even world class thinking! Finally, the lack of taking a Public Transport option particularly hurts those who will suffer the 5-10 years of construction for a tunnel link and with virtually no long-term benefit. Dust, noise, tyre and road surface residue, toxic stir up on waterways and tunnelling, excessive demands for worker parking, increased rat runs are just some of the pain and suffering that we will experience for the construction period which I believe could extend to 10 years if past projects are taken into account. Witness the Light Rail! Most importantly we are to be gifted two unfiltered smokestacks that will stay with us into the long-term. But more of that later. The Beaches Link is quite clearly designed to please and benefit the people of Mosman, Cremorne and Neutral Bay plus of course those residing on the far northern beaches where no suffering will take place during construction. I wonder if those people are fully aware of the next stage where government will drive further population growth on the Peninsula. Then

they may just wake up. But too late! The Metro suggestion that I have already referenced would benefit everyone, north and south.

Why has the option of a World Class Public Transport initiative such as the Metro not been reconsidered, put back on the table and openly discussed with the community as happens in any democracy?

2. **The Environment:** In a world that is potentially tumbling towards an environmental catastrophe the tunnel in no way whatever addresses this urgent need. Pollution is a very major concern regardless of claims included in the EIS which seems to use so much outdated, confusing and incorrect data. To have tunnels, particularly of the planned length – 15 kilometres – with unfiltered smokestacks is absurd, almost criminal, and **is in no way World Class** which the project is claimed to be. So many major cities around the world now mandate that all smokestacks be filtered and yet the EIS still claims the any polluting effect will be ‘minimal’. Blatantly false as many local as well as international studies have shown. In order to construct the planned tunnel/link we lose our green space (replaced by dirt, buildings and a link road and only have an idle promise that the space will be returned to us!) In the immediate area to which I and my family live we lose dozens of mature trees that suck out from the air the many pollutants that the construction will bring with no respite beyond construction stage. Any newly planted trees will take decades to absorb the same level of pollution. We do not have that time!

Clearly the loss of habitat including the large number of mature trees and subsequent threat to native animals and birds will be most felt along Burnt Bridge Creek. The flow of water in the Creek is will reduce by 79% whilst there will be a reduction of 96% to surface water during the construction. What may we ask will be the impact on bird life and the Flying Fox population? No need to guess at that because they will be gone, and gone for decades if not forever.

The chart in the EIS indicates that prevailing winds do not flow over Balgowlah Boys High, Audrey Street, Violet Street and Upper Beach Street, but does flow over St Cecilia’s Primary School where it is certainly not welcomed or acceptable. Therefore, no potential for pollution over these previously mentioned streets! This is **utterly false** and anyone who lives here knows and experiences winds very often that come directly from where the planned Smokestack sits. (The Smokestack by the way is shown in the EIS as something that replicates a two-story home) **Another total falsehood** as the planned size is up to 8 stories high and unfiltered! The EIS makes light of the pollutant fallout and describes any impact as insignificant and minimal. That is still NOT World class practice as claimed. The health of anyone, elderly or young should never be subjected by such appalling practice.

We will be impacted by pollutants, regardless of what the distorted, outdated and misleading figures show in the EIS and this is confirmed by independent researchers. Within the EIS there are so many inconsistencies in the air quality modelling for RWR receptors. Why should we trust anything at all in the EIS therefore? The non-

filtration of smokestacks in 2021 is totally unacceptable and represent 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> Century thinking.

Why is the Government, the TfNSW and the previous RMS allowing the lives and health of people and the flora and fauna of the area to be jeopardised in this manner?

In summary I totally reject the proposed Northern Beaches Link on the grounds that it is:

- The incorrect and extremely expensive, inefficient way of moving people when we have an option to extend the Metro from Chatswood, or find another equally good World Class Public Transport alternative. Those most negatively impacted – those in Seaforth, Balgowlah, Balgowlah Heights and Manly Vale primarily, have been sidelined, our objections left unanswered, with no, and I mean NO, voice, genuine consultation, representation or option but just to 'suck it up' and all for the benefit only of others. We miss out altogether. Instead, we have been bombarded by very slick and expensive marketing campaigns that confirm to us all that the decision to plough on regardless has already been made and is immovable.

I trust that I am mistaken and that TfNSW and the NSW State Government reconsider this entire project. Is that being too optimistic?