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I object to the Beaches Link Tunnel Project that is described and proposed in the EIS for the Beaches Link Tunnel.

As a contributor to the submission of the Balgowlah Residents Group, I support the submission lodged by the Group.

Reasons for Objecting

The Fundamentals of the Beaches Link Tunnel have not been proved.

The EIS for the Beaches Link Tunnel covers issues relating to a particular project – and has nothing to do with the economic benefits of the project, whether these economic benefits can be achieved and if these benefits can be balanced against the potential negative impacts on the environment and delicate ecosystems.

The submission of the Balgowlah Residents Group draws attention to fragility of the case for the project. The DPIE is not tasked with reviewing the economic fundamentals of the project – and the assumptions behind the economic fundamentals of the project.

In reviewing the submissions to the EIS, the DPIE needs to be aware that it is in a position to challenge the claims and assumptions of TfNSW in its description of how the project will be built and its claims on the environmental risks.

From my work in several community and resident groups for many years in Manly, I am aware of the cynicism of many in the community in relation to this project. This starts with the “launch” of the Beaches Link Tunnel project – soon after the by-elections in Manly and North Shore in early 2017. It was obvious to all that the announcement and its timing had everything to do with the by-elections. This was commented in the serious media.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

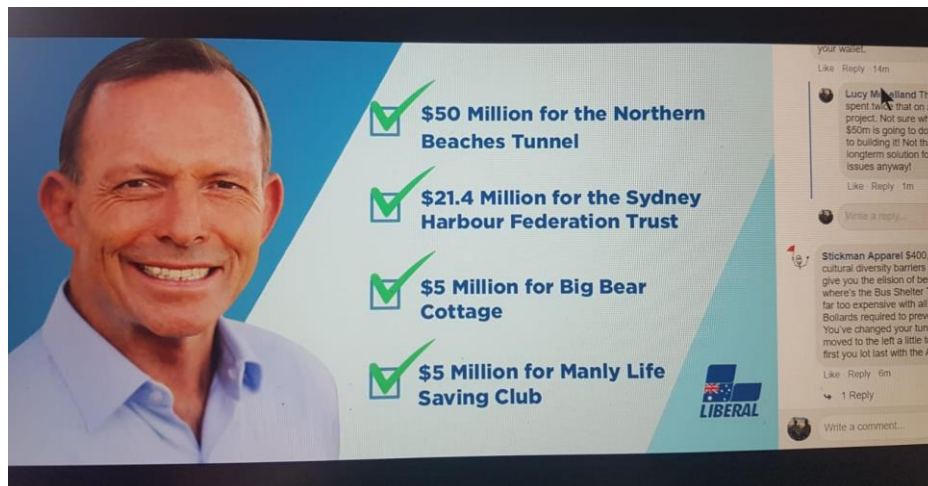
Gladys Berejiklian's promised tunnel to Manly still up in the air

NSW Premier Gladys Berejiklian has all but promised to build a \$3 billion tunnel to beachside Manly to help win a by-election this weekend but the response to a freedom of information request makes it sound like the project is an "evolving initiative" that is "still being considered".

17 April 2017

Even in the Federal Election in 2019, the Liberal Party candidate for the seat of Warringah had the Beaches Link Tunnel his #1 issue in canvassing for votes.






NSW premier under fire for tunnel delays

Tony Abbott is piling the pressure on Gladys Berejiklian

Former Prime Minister and Warringah MP Tony Abbott is leading a growing chorus of local MPs to have the Beaches Link tunnel fast-tracked, with it being branded an “empty promise”.

In the recent NSW budget, \$560 million was pledged for tunnel pre-construction and planning over the next four years but, despite detailed design on the tunnel promised by mid-year, work still hasn’t started and MPs – especially Liberals – are getting twitchy.

If Labor gets in at next year’s election, it has made no secret of its plans to scrap the project and instead divert its focus towards public



Former Prime Minister Tony Abbott, pictured with Manly MP James Griffin, wants the Beaches Link tunnel fast-tracked.

While I accept that the current review of the EIS submissions by the DPIE is part of a process set out in the EP&A Act 1979 and will be done thoroughly and independently, the political drivers for building the tunnel are “alive and well” – and lurking in the background.



In late 2019 Andrew Constance told the Mayors of Mosman, North Sydney and the Northern Beaches:

"I want and will have the contracts for the construction of the Beaches Link Tunnel signed before the next State Election in 2023".

In December 2020, at the launch of the EIS for the Beaches Link Tunnel, Andrew Constance said *"Many said that this tunnel will never be built only a Liberal government can deliver the Beaches Link Tunnel".*

The case for the Beaches Link Tunnel needs to be established on the fundamentals – not on the claims and assertions made by TfNSW (through the consultants contracted by TfNSW) in the EIS.

I have confidence that the DPIE will look at the submissions without political interference – and come to a position based on the need for the fundamentals of the project to be understood and respected by the government.

Finally, the priorities for funding the long term infrastructure needs of NSW are challenging and changing. The Beaches Link Tunnel goes to a dead-end in the northern beaches peninsula. I and many in the community, funding for the Beaches Link Tunnel should not be a priority for a cabinet that is honest about the real needs of the State.

Terry le Roux

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