

I have been assessing mainly the impact of the Western Harbour tunnel proposal on the North Sydney CBD.

I consider the tunnel proposal to be a major assault on the already impoverished public amenity in the North Sydney CBD. The North Sydney community will be permanently affected and burdened with an avalanche of through traffic forced onto our streets to access the proposed tunnel.

The New South Wales Government's North District Plan for the Harbour CBD (North Sydney CBD) sets housing targets for North Sydney at 3,000 new dwellings and additional 822,496m² of commercial office space. The job growth is predicted to increase in 2036 adding 21,100 additional people using local services and public spaces in the North Sydney CBD area. The Plan also predicts 196,000 population growth in the North Sydney Municipality with major increase of over 65 years old.

The North Sydney CBD is home to many schools and the Catholic University increasing significantly the demand on public domain and the need for safe and attractive pedestrian connections through the city and to the adjoining suburbs.

The exhibited documentation including the Appendix V discussing the Urban Design, landscape character and visual impact by WSP/Arup consultants refers to two documents that are to drive the urban design outcomes for road and state government projects in general. They are: *'Beyond the Pavement'* by Transport NSW and *'Better Placed'* by NSW Government Architect now part of Planning NSW.

There are many important statements in the *'Beyond the Pavement'* document that this project completely ignores such as;

In the Urban Design Policy Chapter:

'Projects should be sensitive to existing built, natural and community environments in which they are situated. They should contribute to the future character, functioning and convenience of adjacent areas, provide an interesting experience in movement and should be safe for all users and the community. The architectural and landscape quality of road should be visually pleasing'

'Projects must contribute to the quality of urban design, life of communities and contribute to the sense of place'

In Chapter 1.3 on Physical design outcomes the document states that 'road transport infrastructure must fit sensitively with and that roads, bridges, bicycle and pedestrian paths should be designed as part of public domain'

'The infrastructure planning and design must contribute to the accessibility and connectivity of communities and a general permeability of movement through areas by all modes of movement, including walking and cycling'

The whole purpose of this major state government project should be to contribute not only to the improvement in travel times for the road users across Sydney but it should remove heavy traffic flows from local streets and improve the liveability of our cities.

This project should contribute to the transformation of North Sydney from a business centre with challenging pedestrian environment which has been for many years affected by the blight of the Warringah Freeway and Pacific Highway slicing it into isolated islands and assist in transforming it into an attractive centre with high quality public domain, fine streets and squares and safe pedestrian and cyclist connections within the centre and to the adjoining suburbs.

The major shortcomings of the project impacting the North Sydney CBD are as follows:

Traffic Impact

All the westbound traffic flow into the Western Harbour tunnel is directed into North Sydney CBD and onto Berry Street including existing Harbour Bridge traffic flow.

Berry Street will become the third highway cutting through North Sydney making pedestrian environment very compromised in particular around the New Victoria Cross Metro Station.

Majority of traffic intersections in North Sydney CBD will be negatively affected and they will be much more congested and will fail, 7 will fail and 6 will be much worse. This is described in Chapter 9, of the EIS titled Operational Traffic and Transport.

1. Falcon Street and Warringah Freeway

	Do minimum Performance level	Do something cumulative to 2037 Performance level
AM peak	B	D
PM peak	D	F (failed)

2. Falcon Street and Merlin Street

	Do minimum Performance level	Do something cumulative to 2037 Performance level
AM peak	B	D
PM peak	F (failed)	F (failed)

3. Berry Street and Walker Street

	Do minimum Performance level	Do something cumulative to 2037 Performance level
AM peak	C	D
PM peak	D	F (failed)

4. Berry Street and Miller Street

	Do minimum Performance level	Do something cumulative to 2037 Performance level
AM peak	D	E
PM peak	D	E

5. Mount Street and Arthur Street

	Do minimum Performance level	Do something cumulative to 2037 Performance level
AM peak	D	D
PM peak	D	F (failed)

6. Mount Street and Walker Street

	Do minimum Performance level	Do something cumulative to 2037 Performance level
AM peak	C	D
PM peak	C	F (failed)

7. Pacific Highway and Walker/ Blue Streets

	Do minimum Performance level	Do something cumulative to 2037 Performance level
AM peak	C	C
PM peak	D	E

8. Pacific Highway and Miller Street

	Do minimum Performance level	Do something cumulative to 2037 Performance level
AM peak	C	E
PM peak	c	E

9. Pacific Highway and Miller/ Berry Street

	Do minimum Performance level	Do something cumulative to 2037 Performance level
AM peak	C	C
PM peak	C	E

10. Pacific Highway and Berry Street

	Do minimum Performance level	Do something cumulative to 2037 Performance level
AM peak	E	E
PM peak	B	F (failed)

11. Pacific Highway and Bay Road

	Do minimum Performance level	Do something cumulative to 2037 Performance level
AM peak	E	E
PM peak	B	F (failed)

12. Miller Street and McLaren Street

	Do minimum Performance level	Do something cumulative to 2037 Performance level
AM peak	B	E
PM peak	B	D

13. Miller Street and Ridge Street

	Do minimum Performance level	Do something cumulative to 2037 Performance level
AM peak	C	E
PM peak	C	C

The project should find another solution to the Berry Street tunnel access to allow for the urban revitalisation of the city centre planned by the North Sydney Council.

Pedestrian Amenity and Connectivity

Many existing pedestrian crossings in the CBD are at fail level, they are at Pacific Highway which will carry additional traffic onto the Warringah Freeway and have not been improved for pedestrians in this proposal. Miller Street, Walker Street and Berry Street intersections with Pacific Highway all require significant improvements.

North Sydney Council is trying to make Miller Street between Berry and Pacific Highway a pedestrian plaza. This needs to be factored in in considering the excessive additional flow of through traffic into the North Sydney CBD including additional bus services.

North Sydney CBD needs to be the winner from the outcomes of this not welcomed major state government project. It needs improved connectivity over the dreaded Warringah Freeway which slices the municipality into two, creates an impenetrable barrier for pedestrians and cyclists and it is a major scar on the urban landscape of this city for over 50 years.

This project offers very few pedestrian connections across the Warringah Freeway to North Sydney CBD from Neutral Bay and from Kirribilli.

It replicates what is currently existing without analysing what may be needed in the future and how to encourage people to walk and cycle more, through safe and attractive shared bridges and safe road crossings across confusing multi directional road lanes.

The current EIS drawings show only a very limited improvements of pedestrian links, they look very rushed and developed as an afterthought, with no safe pedestrian crossings to these bridges and connections across major intersections to the local streets on either side of the freeway. There is a hideously long ramp proposed at Ridge Street with no stairs allowing able people to make a quicker access.

The High Street pedestrian connection is in particular unsafe and it does not improve the current situation at all. The additional negative impact from the B LINE buses accessing Blue Street at this intersection will contribute further to the chaos and conflict.

The EIS shows rushed design decisions which mainly focused on road geometry to benefit efficient vehicular traffic flow to the detriment of pedestrians and other road users.

This project needs to provide more well designed and landscaped shared bridges across the Freeway, and stitch together the city after 50 years of neglect. The edges of the new construction along the freeway need to be fully integrated with local streets and well landscaped.

The possibility of a major park over the freeway along the edge of the CBD should be investigated and included in this project to soften the impact of the additional traffic and to cater for future recreation needs of large additional population in the short term and for future generations.

The EIS, Chapter 9 in 9.1.1 is stating that **North Sydney Integrated Transport Program** is established working with North Sydney Council on promoting walking, cycling and public transport.

There is currently no evidence of this collaboration in the exhibited documents. If this is an afterthought what good will come of this?

The most disappointing statement in the EIS is that the tunnel works are considered to be most equitable outcomes from the perspective of maintaining a balanced and integrated transport network through North Sydney.

However, the alternatives to this proposal would result in further impacts on other customers.

Clearly we will become a collateral damage in this ambitious, rushed and poorly conceived state government project.

We should not accept this proposal and it's horrendous negative impact on the North Sydney CBD and should require Transport for NSW to make major design changes and improvements to this project and collaborate fully with the North Sydney Council to achieve much better public domain outcomes for North Sydney.

Which are:

- No tunnel access from Berry Street
- New Public Square in Miller Street
- Improved pedestrian environment in Pacific Highway and all city streets
- Better pedestrian connectivity across Warringah Freeway
- Major city park over Warringah Freeway

Margaret Petrykowski FRAIA
Architect, Urban, Designer Planner