

29 November, 2018

Western Harbour Tunnel & Beaches Link Project Team

Roads & Maritime Services

Via email: whtbl@rms.nsw.gov.au

Western Harbour Tunnel & Beached Link

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed Western Harbour Tunnel and Beaches Link projects. Bicycle NSW has been the peak bicycle advocacy group now in NSW for over forty years, and has over 30 affiliated local Bicycle User Groups, including the very active Bike North group.

In looking at Active Transport (ie walking and cycling) it is worthwhile considering some facts from RMS and TfNSW publications:

- About 70% of people in NSW either ride regularly or would like to ride more, and say they would if bike riding was made safer for them.
- There has been a 50% increase in riding to work in metropolitan Sydney since 2006. This would be indicative across the State.
- Bicycle sales exceeded 1.4 million in 2012-13 and have outstripped car sales for over a decade. This trend continues.
- The NSW Government has an aim of reducing cycling fatalities and injuries by at least 30% by 2021. Cycling infrastructure is a proven method of reducing cycling fatalities and injuries.
- The NSW Government also had an objective of **doubling** the mode share of active transport to 5%.
- A primary method of achieving this aim is to consider cycling safety in **every infrastructure project**. This strategy is included in the RMS's own Bicycle Guidelines policy (p5).

*"To improve the bike network by making comprehensive provision for bicycles on **all new major** road infrastructure projects with a strong preference for off-road cycling."*

These projects provide a unique opportunity to provide high quality, connected Active Transport (AT) infrastructure in this area. We wish to **strongly support** the detailed submission made by Bike North. We wish to stress the importance of providing connectivity of AT infrastructure. These upgrades should look at enhancing connectivity and safety.

Bicycle NSW and Bike North should be directly included in further community consultations.

In particular, the following points made by Bike North need to be addressed:

- The option of providing a public transport option to the Northern Beaches needs to be considered. It is our opinion that adding to the existing road network will only relocate an existing traffic issue from one location to another. Without a significant shift to different modes of transport (predominately public transport), we are destined to repeat expensive "fixes" which are only effective for relatively short periods.

In less than 30 years after the opening of the Sydney Harbour Tunnel, we are looking at new harbour crossings for vehicles.

- The projects do not include full end to end Active Transport (AT) facilities. While some AT improvements are proposed around the tunnel portal areas, no benefit is provided to help complete Sydney's much needed Principle Bicycle Network. The proposed AT facilities are not "comprehensive" and do not meet the RMS Guidelines. In the past, projects such as the M7 and Lane Cove Tunnel, included full end to end AT facilities. While we of course recognise that the Western Harbour Tunnel and Beaches Link are predominately tunnel projects, the opportunity of providing a surface AT link must be utilised.
- The North Shore Link Cycleway must be completed as part of these works.
- Sections of the existing road network, should be dedicated to providing high quality bicycle links. The Pacific Highway between Milsons Point and Longueville Road should have a lane dedicated to bicycle use. This will solve many compromise issues faced in the North Shore Link Cycleway.
- The detailed local AT design issues outlined in the Bike North submission should be addressed.
- During the construction phase, all existing AT facilities must be maintained – both in safety and amenity. Detours should not significantly increase travel time, and width/surface should be maintained.

Yours faithfully,



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