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OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

23 April 2020

The Hon Gladys Berejiklian, MP
NSW Premier
GPO Box 5341
SYDNEY 2001

Dear Premier



Western Harbour Tunnel and Warringah Freeway Upgrade

As you would be aware, there is significant concern that has arisen from the exhibition of the Western Harbour Tunnel/Warringah Freeway Upgrade Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) in the North Sydney community.

Council considered a submission on the EIS along with four Mayoral Minutes dealing with various issues that residents have raised as matters of concern at its Ordinary meeting of 23 March 2020 (recommenced on 6 April 2020). I have attached the Mayoral Minutes for your information.

Arising from consideration of these Mayoral Minutes, Council resolved:

- **MM01 | Western Harbour Tunnel & Warringah Freeway Upgrade Environmental Impact - It's Time to Get Political**

***1. THAT** Council begin a public campaign seeking widespread community support for changes to the Western Harbour Tunnel and Warringah Freeway Upgrade project to ameliorate the impact on the North Sydney LGA.*

***2. THAT** the General Manager report back to Council on an appropriate budget to fund the campaign and an appropriate commencement date.*

***3. THAT** the campaign direct people to contact the NSW Premier, in both her capacity as Premier and Member for Willoughby, seeking an agreement to fund the cost of measures to address and mitigate the impacts that have been identified.*

***4. THAT** Council write to the NSW Premier seeking financial and/or other compensation for the temporary and permanent loss of amenity created by the Western Harbour Tunnel project."*

Council Request

In relation to Part 4, Council is calling for the NSW Government to provide financial and/or other compensation for the temporary and permanent loss of amenity created by the Western Harbour Tunnel project.

- **MM02 | Western Harbour Tunnel & Warringah Freeway Upgrade Environmental Impact - Protecting our CBD**

“1. THAT Council write to the NSW Premier asking her to attend a meeting with the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, General Manager, Georgina Taylor, Paul Walter, Brian Emanuel and Ian Grey to discuss alternative options for the tunnel entrance in North Sydney.

2. THAT Council write to the NSW Premier, Member for North Shore and Minister for Transport, urging them to promptly redesign the access points to the tunnel to ameliorate the identified negative impacts in our North Sydney CBD.”

Council Request

In relation to Part 2, Council requests that the access points to the tunnel are promptly redesigned to ameliorate the identified negative impacts in our North Sydney CBD.

- **MM03 | Western Harbour Tunnel & Warringah Freeway Upgrade Environmental Impact - Protecting our Open Space**

“1. THAT Council write to the NSW Premier asking her to attend a meeting with the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, General Manager, Georgina Taylor, Paul Walter, Brian Emanuel and Ian Grey to discuss how the open space permanently alienated by this project can be replaced.

2. THAT Council write to the NSW Premier asking her to guarantee that there will be no permanent structures on any of the land returned to public space.”

Council Request

In relation to Part 2, Council is seeking a guarantee from the NSW Government that there will be no permanent structures on any of the land returned to public space.

- **MM04 | Western Harbour Tunnel & Warringah Freeway Upgrade Environmental Impact - Air Filtration**

“1. THAT Council write to the NSW Premier asking her to attend a meeting with the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, General Manager, Georgina Taylor, Paul Walter, Brian Emanuel and Ian Grey to discuss the location of the proposed ventilation stacks and the need for appropriate filtration.

2. THAT in the event the NSW Government will not commit to air filtration, the NSW Premier be asked to guarantee that the infrastructure is built in a way that allows it to be easily adapted/retrofitted if a future need is identified.”

Council Request

In relation to Part 2, if air filtration is not included in the final approved design, Council is asking the NSW Government to guarantee that the infrastructure is built in a way that allows it to be easily adapted/retrofitted if a future need is identified.

As you can see from the above requests, Council has major concerns with some parts of the EIS. I would be pleased if your office could nominate a convenient time to discuss the matters with myself, Council's Deputy Mayor, Cr Stephen Barbour and community representatives, Georgina Taylor, Paul Walter, Brian Emanuel and Ian Grey. Council is using various video conferencing platforms, so will be able to accommodate whatever platform you nominate.

I look forward to meeting with you.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jilly Gibson', written over a horizontal line.

**Councillor Jilly Gibson
Mayor of North Sydney**



MINUTE OF THE MAYOR

Dated: 23 March 2020

RE: Western Harbour Tunnel & Warringah Freeway Upgrade Environmental Impact - It's Time to get Political

In recent weeks I have met on several occasions with members of the community who are deeply concerned about the impact of the Western Harbour Tunnel (WHT) project including Georgina Taylor, Paul Walter, Brian Emanuel and Ian Grey. We have discussed the complexity and breadth of concerns about the project and agreed that we need to focus on some key priorities if we are to ameliorate the impact of the proposed work.

Let me be clear at the outset. I am not opposed to the project, per se, and I'm sure many people in the community feel the same way. But why should infrastructure that benefits the whole city be built at the cost of the North Sydney community?

In its current form, this project trashes our open space, undermines our economic and sustainable future and may jeopardise the health of our residents. I don't believe I am going too far when I say that this project will leave a trail of devastation, just as the Warringah Freeway did when it was first built.

The Combined Precincts Committee recently voted to oppose the WHT project. While I understand the sentiment, I believe we need to make this more personal and vote to oppose the project until ALL the major and minor impacts on the North Sydney LGA have been mitigated.

North Sydney residents are generally well-educated & well-informed people. We usually see both sides of the story and tend to be polite. The time for politeness is over. It's time to get political, it's time to get vocal and it's time to act if we are to protect our quality of life.

Of course with the Coronavirus Pandemic local residents are quite rightly focussing on their health, their families, their jobs and how to manage their rapidly changing circumstances. At this point in time I acknowledge it's increasingly difficult to ask our residents to pay attention to the complex Environmental Impact Statement for the WHT. However, as Mayor, I am committing to keeping this discussion alive.

Council staff have prepared a detailed and thoughtful submission which I hope will be considered by the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment as it progresses the project. However, if change is to be achieved, this matter also needs to be escalated to a political level so that the Premier can fully understand the impact her Government is having on the lives of people in her community.

Residents have told me they want Council to be a united voice on this subject. They have also told me what they consider the deal breaker issues are for them. I have therefore prepared four Mayoral Minutes addressing these matters to ensure they receive the focus they need.

I therefore recommend:

- 1. THAT** Council immediately begin a public campaign seeking widespread community support for changes to the Western Harbour Tunnel and Warringah Freeway Upgrade project to ameliorate the impact on the North Sydney LGA;
- 2. THAT** the General Manager identify a budget of \$50,000 to fund the campaign;
- 3. THAT** the campaign direct people to contact the NSW Premier, in both her capacity as Premier and Member for Willoughby, seeking an agreement to fund the cost of measures to address and mitigate the impacts that have been identified; and
- 4. THAT** Council write to the NSW Premier seeking financial and/or other compensation for the temporary and permanent loss of amenity created by the Western Harbour Tunnel project.

**COUNCILLOR JILLY GIBSON
MAYOR**



MINUTE OF THE MAYOR

Dated: 23 March 2020

RE: Western Harbour Tunnel & Warringah Freeway Upgrade Environmental Impact - Protecting our CBD

Seven years ago Council set out to rejuvenate the North Sydney CBD. Recognising its importance as the economic powerhouse of the North Shore, we took a multi-pronged approach addressing everything from land use through to upgrading the public domain and implementing a marketing strategy. We're seeing the results of that hard work, with high profile tenants moving into the centre and a vibrancy and optimism emerging, despite the background hum of jackhammers!

We have been working closely with the NSW Government at every stage, especially in relation to the new Metro station. The Government is well aware of our plans so it is astounding that they would choose to chop the CBD in half by allowing Berry Street to be the access point to the Western Harbour Tunnel (WHT).

The Government is proposing to remove the parking on either side of Berry Street and create a four-lane through-route, effectively making Berry Street an extension of the Pacific Highway. This Council is well aware of the impact that removing parking has on pedestrian amenity. We've seen what happens in places like Parramatta Road, where the lack of foot traffic results in empty, derelict shops and, to a lesser extent, we've seen the impact that the changed traffic arrangements on Military Road has had on our own village centres.

The WHT proposal is in direct opposition to Council's vision to integrate the north and south sections of the CBD. It severely compromises our Ward Street Masterplan, which is designed to bring much-needed open space to the centre. Instead of the connected, pedestrian friendly and sustainable CBD that we have been working towards, this project will turn our CBD into a series of isolated commercial islands bordered by high speed thoroughfares.

This will be a nightmare for vulnerable people and the thousands of students who cross our roads every day. It will make it harder to create a liveable city, where people can walk around at lunch time or after hours and will make it almost impossible to revitalise the night life.

The traffic implications of this project aren't just limited to the CBD - some of our local streets will take increased traffic as people make their way to the tunnel entrances.

I therefore recommend:

1. THAT Council write to the NSW Premier asking her to attend a meeting with the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, General Manager, Georgina Taylor, Paul Walter, Brian Emanuel and Ian Grey (or their nominated substitutes) to discuss alternative options for the tunnel entrance in North Sydney; and

2. THAT Council write to the NSW Premier, Member for North Shore and Minister for Transport, urging them to promptly redesign the access points to the tunnel to ameliorate the identified negative impacts in our North Sydney CBD.

**COUNCILLOR JILLY GIBSON
MAYOR**



MINUTE OF THE MAYOR

Dated: 23 March 2020

RE: Western Harbour Tunnel & Warringah Freeway Upgrade Environmental Impact - Protecting our Open Space

The Western Harbour Tunnel and Warringah Freeway Upgrade project will reduce Council's open space temporarily and permanently. This harsh truth needs to be looked at within the context of another equally harsh truth, which is that North Sydney has more people per hectare of open space than any of the other six councils in the Northern Suburbs Regional Organisation of Councils (NSROC).

North Sydney has 557 people per hectare while our NSROC neighbours range from just 85 people per hectare in Ku-ring-gai through to 220 in Willoughby. (This does beg the question: why couldn't the interchange be located in Willoughby?). Incredibly, we even have more residents per hectare than the densely populated City of Sydney across the bridge.

In short, we need our open space and it must not be sacrificed to road infrastructure. The loss in St Leonards Park (equivalent to approx. one soccer field) is temporary, but the loss on the Cammeray Golf Course (equivalent to approx. five soccer fields) will be permanent.

Some of the land that will be returned to open space will have two operational buildings on it. I think we can all be tolerant of temporary structures above ground when we know the area is returning to public use, but permanent structures in the midst of open space is untenable. These structures must be placed underground.

More importantly, the land that is alienated by the project should be replaced. One option is to build a connection bridge between Anzac Park and the Cammeray Golf Course across the Warringah Freeway. This is not a new concept. A few years ago I proposed the same thing further south to link the western and eastern halves of the North Sydney CBD.

This is a once in a lifetime opportunity to redress some of the negative impacts of the Warringah Freeway on the North Sydney community. The price tag for building Cammeray Connection, as I am calling it, won't be cheap, but it is eminently affordable in the context of the tunnel project. More importantly, it is the right and fair thing to do.

I therefore recommend:

- 1. THAT** Council write to the NSW Premier asking her to attend a meeting with the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, General Manager, Georgina Taylor, Paul Walter, Brian Emanuel and Ian Grey (or their nominated substitutes) to discuss how the open space permanently alienated by this project can be replaced; and
- 2. THAT** Council write to the NSW Premier asking her to guarantee that there will be no permanent structures on any of the land returned to public space.

**COUNCILLOR JILLY GIBSON
MAYOR**



MINUTE OF THE MAYOR

Dated: 23 March 2020

RE: Western Harbour Tunnel & Warringah Freeway Upgrade Environmental Impact - Air Filtration

One of the primary concerns of residents about this project has been, and remains, the impact of air pollution on community health. Councillors will recall that we have resolved to undertake our own air quality monitoring to collect base line data on air quality. A monitoring station has been installed in St Leonards Park and the results will be published on Council's website.

The NSW Government has consistently argued that air filtration systems create no real benefit over unfiltered systems. They base this on scientific modelling, which has been included in the Environmental Impact Statement. Like all economic and scientific modelling, the outputs are based on best-guess inputs. Change the input and you get a different result.

The decision to go without an air filtration system feels like a massive experiment in community health which will keep epidemiologists of the future well employed tracking air pollution and disease patterns. Our community is asking a simple question and they have not yet received a satisfactory answer - if air filtration systems are considered to be standard requirements elsewhere in the world, why is the NSW Government so unwilling to compromise?

Residents have told me they would like the NSW Premier to attend a site visit in Cammeray to discuss both the location of the stacks and the impact on air quality on the surrounding residents and schools.

I therefore recommend:

- 1. THAT** Council write to the NSW Premier asking her to attend a meeting with the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, General Manager, Georgina Taylor, Paul Walter, Brian Emanuel and Ian Grey (or their nominated substitutes) to discuss the location of the proposed ventilation stacks and the need for appropriate filtration;
- 2. THAT** in the event the NSW Government will not commit to air filtration, the NSW Premier be asked to guarantee that the infrastructure is built in a way that allows it to be easily adapted/retrofitted if a future need is identified.

**COUNCILLOR JILLY GIBSON
MAYOR**