



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**