

Western Harbour Tunnel and Beaches Link

State Significant Infrastructure Application



First step in planning process

In NSW, projects of state significance follow the environmental assessment and approvals processes set out under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*.

All state significant projects require preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and approval from the Minister for Planning.

Following initial community and stakeholder engagement for the project, Roads and Maritime has now taken the first step in the

planning process and made a State Significant Infrastructure (SSI) application for the project.

The application has been lodged with Department of Planning and Environment (DP&E), the agency responsible for directing the environmental assessment process.

The Secretary of DP&E will consult with other environmental agencies and councils before issuing Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs).

The SEARs will establish what topics need to be included in the environmental assessment.

An SSI application is accompanied by a scoping report, which provides early details of the project, potential impacts during construction and operation, and details of proposed further environmental studies.

The outcomes of the initial community consultation is a key input into the scoping report.

Project works

The vast majority of the project would be in tunnels deep below ground with no impact on the surface above.

Where feasible and reasonable, construction work above ground would be carried out during standard construction hours.

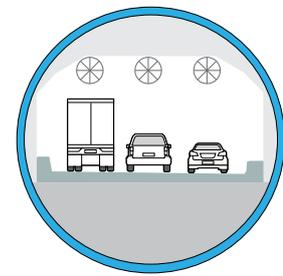
Tunnelling may require works outside standard construction hours – continuous works can reduce construction time by up to two thirds. Tunnelling generates significant amounts of spoil and because of limited space for spoil

storage, spoil transport would likely be 24 hours a day.

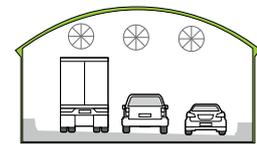
Because of high traffic volumes, works on the Warringah Freeway could be at evenings and night to minimise disruptions.

Tunnelling options being considered include using road header machines or tunnel boring machines, or a combination.

Depending on the depth of the tunnels, an immersed tube tunnel similar to the existing Sydney Harbour Tunnel may be included.



16m
Tunnel boring machine



15.5m
Roadheader

Environmental Impact Statement scope

Based on community feedback and environmental investigations to date, key issues for assessment in the EIS documents will include:

- Traffic and transport, including road safety
- Air quality, including in-tunnel and ambient air quality
- Noise and vibration during construction and operation
- Human health risks
- Australian heritage assessments
- Aquatic and terrestrial biodiversity.

This is not an exhaustive list, and other issues identified during ongoing investigations and through community feedback will also be addressed in each EIS.

As well as these issues, SEARs usually specify that an EIS must include:

- A detailed project description including components, construction activities and potential staging
- A comprehensive assessment of key environmental issues:
 - Description of the existing environment
 - Assessment of potential direct and indirect impacts
 - Assessment of all construction and operation impacts
 - Details of measures and strategies to avoid, minimise, manage, mitigate, offset, and monitor potential impacts
 - Identification and response to submissions made by the community and key Government stakeholders.

The EIS documents that Roads and Maritime will submit in the second half of 2018 will be required to fully address issues presented in the SEARs.

This will include project details, including location of tunnels, portals, ventilation facilities and construction sites. They will include detailed assessment of construction and operations, including cumulative impacts.

DP&E will exhibit the EIS within the required time frame. All stakeholders will be invited to make submissions during exhibition.

The Minister for Planning will only make a decision on the project after considering the EIS information, issues raised in submissions and responses from Roads and Maritime.

You can have your say at any time

To find out more about the project, or to have your say:



www.rms.nsw.gov.au/whtbl



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