

North East Link Project Environment Effects Statement

Submission No. 709

Presentation to Inquiry and Advisory Committee Hearing

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9 September 2019



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Incorporated*

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<http://www.tcpa.org.au/>

Town & Country Planning Association Inc. (TCPA)



- Established in 1914 as the Victorian Town Planning and Parks Association
 - *To give the town a bit of the country, and the country a bit of the town, to secure better housing, to protect existing parks, to safeguard native animals and plants and to erect memorials to explorers*
- TCPA advocates integrated planning of land use and transport for ecological sustainability and a healthy living environment
 - Processes that respond to the needs and views of the community and that provide for public participation and on-going scrutiny at all stages.
- Awards the Sir James Barrett Memorial Medal to recognise the best contribution each year to town planning



TCPA activities



- TCPA submissions on urban planning matters include
 - House of Representatives Standing Committee on Infrastructure, Transport and Cities *Inquiry into the Australian Government's role in the development of cities*, July 2017
 - City of Melbourne, *Draft Transport Strategy 2030*, June 2019
- TCPA advocacy has evolved and grown since 1960s
 - 1960s: Preservation of the Yarra Valley
 - 1970s: More pro-public transport and anti-roads
 - 1980s: Actively promoting bicycle paths
 - 1990s: Sustainability; Need for integrated land use and transport planning across the state
 - 2000s: Walking and cycling to maintain health → older age cohort
- TCPA support for research on transport and health
 - Engineering students at The University of Melbourne researching the impacts on human health in urban environments particularly with regard to green/blue spaces and transport corridors
 - International Conference on Transport and Health 2019 – Melbourne, November 2019

TCPA and the North East Link Project (NELP)



- TCPA acknowledges:
 - Long history to resolve the “missing link” involving several alignments
 - The concerns of existing communities experiencing adverse amenity due to traffic impacts
 - The concerns of the community regarding impacts on urban “green space” and riverine environments
- TCPA does not rule out a road solution, but, as with any solution, its strategic justification and processes need to be comprehensive and on-going

EES Scoping Requirements



- TCPA members and supporters have had experience and roles in numerous EES processes
 - Important to be able to demonstrate the response to the EES Scoping Requirements
- TCPA found navigating these matters through the EES documents complex
 - Spread and cross-referenced across multiple sections in various chapters
 - Our submission suggested a table outlining which chapters and sections responded to each requirement of sections 3 and 4 of the Scoping Requirements would assist readers.
- NELP EES submissions and evidence to IAC recognise this in their various introductions and cross referencing

North East Link – City-shaping infrastructure of state and national significance



- EES paints the link as a sub-regional road of little interest outside its study area despite it being acknowledged as the “missing link” in Melbourne’s and Victoria’s road network.
- Submissions and evidence to the IAC provide more discussion on the freight benefits and significance of the project, but do so inconsistently, omitting mention of:
 - The role of NELP in a future Victorian Principal Freight Network (PFN) or the National Land Freight Network
 - *Plan Melbourne 2017-2050 Implementation – Action 50: Incorporation of the Principal Freight Network following stakeholder engagement in planning schemes*
 - *Engage with stakeholders to confirm the Principal Freight Network and prepare guidelines to be incorporated into planning schemes by December 2017*
 - To date, while Freight Victoria has been established within the Department of Transport, no progress on the PFN is evident and this matter was not addressed in the Department’s own submissions

Need for a new Victorian Transport Plan



- NELP does not have the benefit of a Victorian transport plan as required by the *Transport Integration Act 2010*
 - *Plan Melbourne 2017-2050* and the Regional Growth Plans are a good start – no state-wide strategy
 - Last effective overall Victorian transport plan, *The Victorian Transport Plan*, was produced in 2008,
 - It was initially specifically referenced in the Act, but the reference was later removed
 - Moot point as to whether it remains a transport plan under the Act
Regardless, it is over 10 years old and only reflected a 2030 timeframe
- TCPA believes that:
 - A new Victorian transport plan is urgently required to give structure and context to the delivery of transport infrastructure and services between today and 2050 (and beyond)
 - 10 years between plans is too long

Victorian Cycling Strategy 2018-28: Increasing cycling for transport



- EES needs to address how the proposal addresses the Strategy's goals and associated strategic approaches
 - Goal 1: Invest in a safer, lower-stress, better-connected network
 - Goal 2: Make cycling a more inclusive experience
- EES had little discussion or data on bicycle and pedestrian usage, routes and movements
- If the Strategy seeks to increase cycling for transport, the TCPA believes it will be important to obtain better data and analyses on active transport when considering major transport projects, including Bicycle Network projects

Walking and Cycling Community Technical Discussion Group (Walking & Cycling CTDG)



- TPCA understands the Walking & Cycling CTDG considered changes to the project reference design that would meet the goals of the Victorian Cycling Strategy and provide low stress, high quality routes that are:
 - Safe and comfortable for riders and walkers regardless of age and ability – including opportunities for separation of bicycle and pedestrians
 - Convenient — connecting to schools, shops, public transport hubs and jobs
- *EES Attachment IV: Stakeholder consultation report*
 - Notes only the concern at steep grades up to Belford Road in Kew and a proposed new 500-metre bicycle path on the north side of the Eastern Freeway and under the Belford Road bridge in the reference project
 - “The group has further input to provide and NELA would work with them to develop a report outlining their priorities for walking and cycling” (p25)
- TPCA remains concerned that EES has no discussion on the scope and outcomes of the Walking & Cycling CTDG’s deliberations and final report

Yarra Valley valued as green space for walkers and cyclists



- TCPA advocacy for the Yarra Valley includes the Main Yarra Trail
 - TCPA concern that the project will create two disconnected linear park/trails through one of Melbourne's most significant active transport corridors.
 - Walking & Cycling CTDG considered improvements to both the Main Yarra and Heidelberg Artists' trails
- The health and fitness benefits of walking and cycling in the Yarra Valley are not just for Melburnians, but for tourists as well.
- TCPA supports previous submissions and presentations made to this IAC, including
 - Yarra Valley Parkland Walkers (Submission 661)
 - Ms Glennys Jones (Submission 338)

Question from IAC: Walking and cycling infrastructure



- *Would the cost of providing the extra works that walkers and cyclists are asking for be better spent providing new road facilities in the outer suburbs where the need is greater?*
- TCPA believes that
 - Improvements to infrastructure providing better and more attractive access for walkers and cyclists provide value added opportunities which can offset construction costs
 - Commercial uses can generate income for the public land manager and the Public Purse in general (road authority, Parks Victoria, Melbourne Water, local council)
 - Transport corridors are multi-purpose and multi-modal
 - Transport projects should address the safety and access needs of all modes and users regardless of location
 - Addressing only the motor vehicle needs/costs ignores a significant segment of users and would not be consistent with the *Transport Integration Act 2010*

Emerging issues since EES



- Referral to Heritage Victoria for a section of the Eastern Freeway
 - *EES Technical report K – Historical heritage assessment* includes some discussion on the attributes of Stage 1 of the Eastern Freeway
 - TCPA looks forward in due course to reading the recommendations to the Heritage Council from the Executive Director, Heritage Victoria
- Bulleen Industrial Zone business relocation
 - TCPA understands that the proposal is to shift the businesses from Bulleen to a Council-owned site **outside the UGB** and adjacent to some high tension power lines
 - *Planning for Melbourne's Green Wedges and Agricultural Land*
TCPA notes that the Victorian Government is currently seeking public opinions on the manner in which Victoria's strategic agricultural land within the green wedges and peri-urban land within 100 kilometres of Melbourne can be maintained.
 - TCPA is concerned that compromising the green wedge by allowing urban commercial/industrial uses being established outside the UGB prior to the finalisation of that review in 2020 would be premature and set a highly undesirable precedent.
- *Draft Transport Strategy 2030*, City of Melbourne, 2019
- Suburban Rail Loop



City of Melbourne – *Draft Transport Strategy 2030*



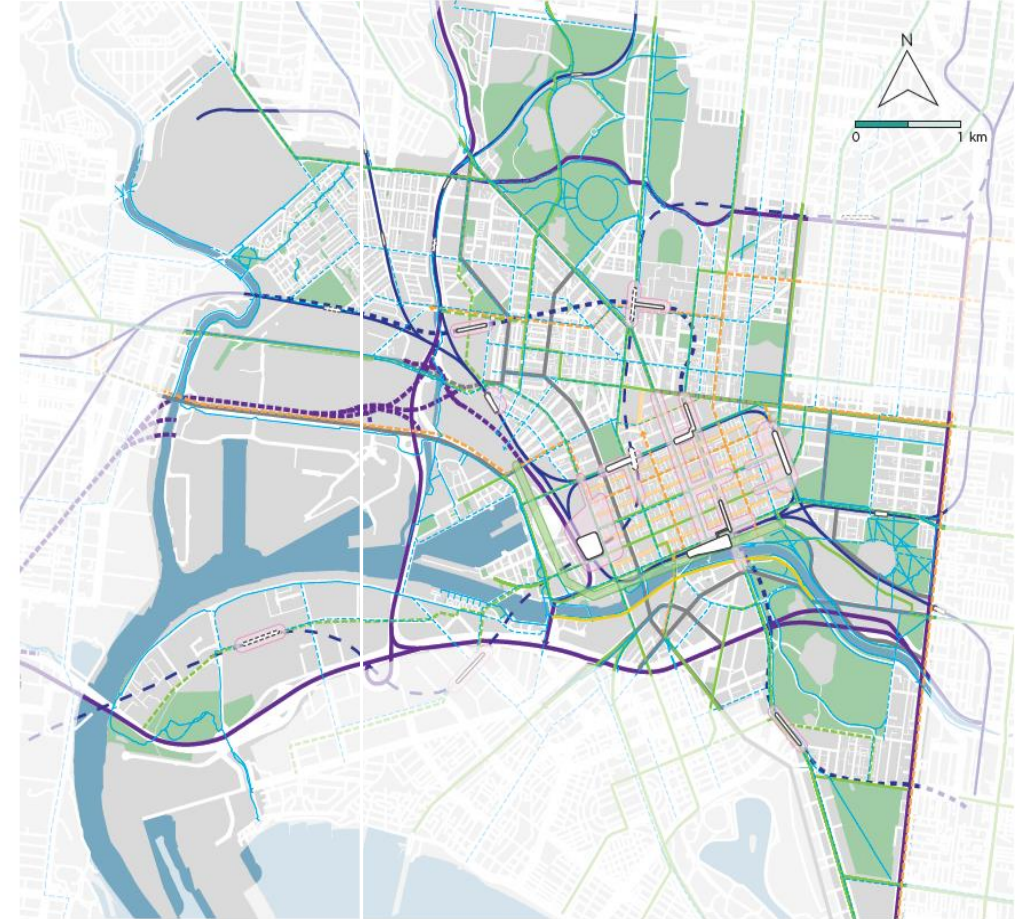
- Melbourne City Council to consider a finalise strategy in early October
- TCPA was concerned that the Draft Strategy principally focussed on the Hoddle Grid without considering developments in the broader area
- NELP EES did not address the Draft Strategy even though their consultation processes overlapped
- As noted by the Yarra City Council Busway for DART services will have “down stream” impacts in the CBD which should have been considered by both the EES and the Draft Transport Strategy
- TCPA notes that the Draft Strategy addresses management and separation of pedestrians and cyclists.
What are the lessons for major transport projects?

2030 PROPOSED INTEGRATED NETWORK

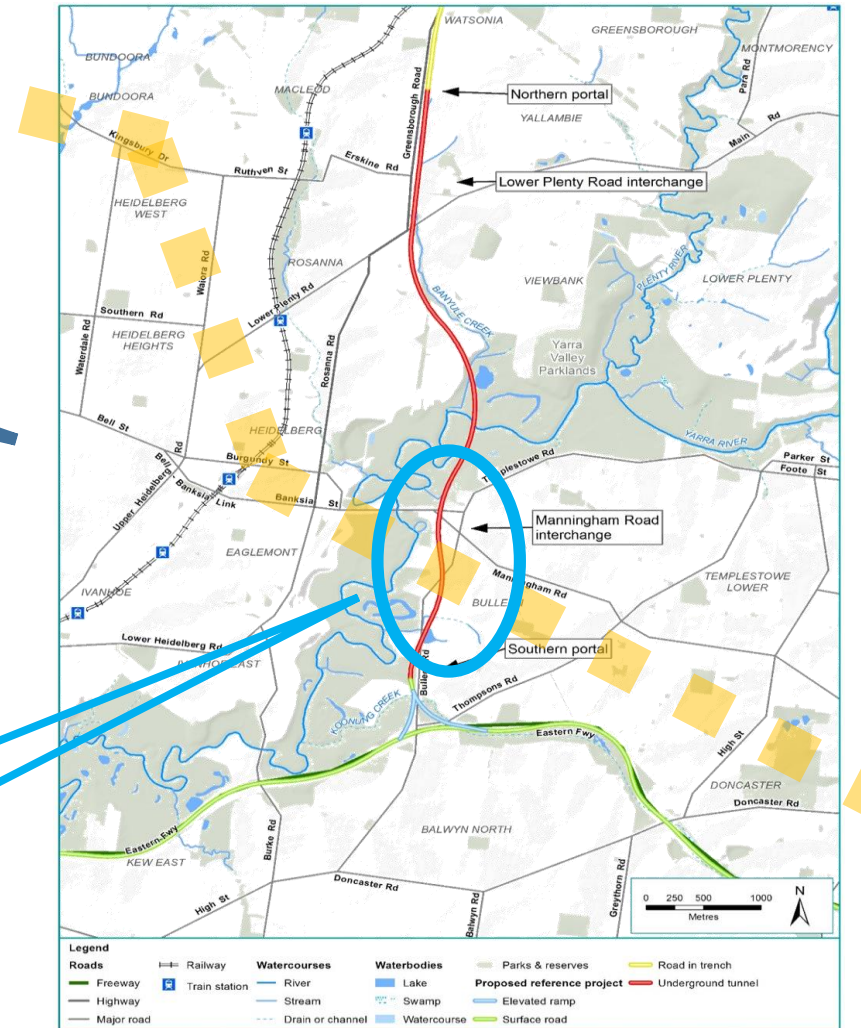
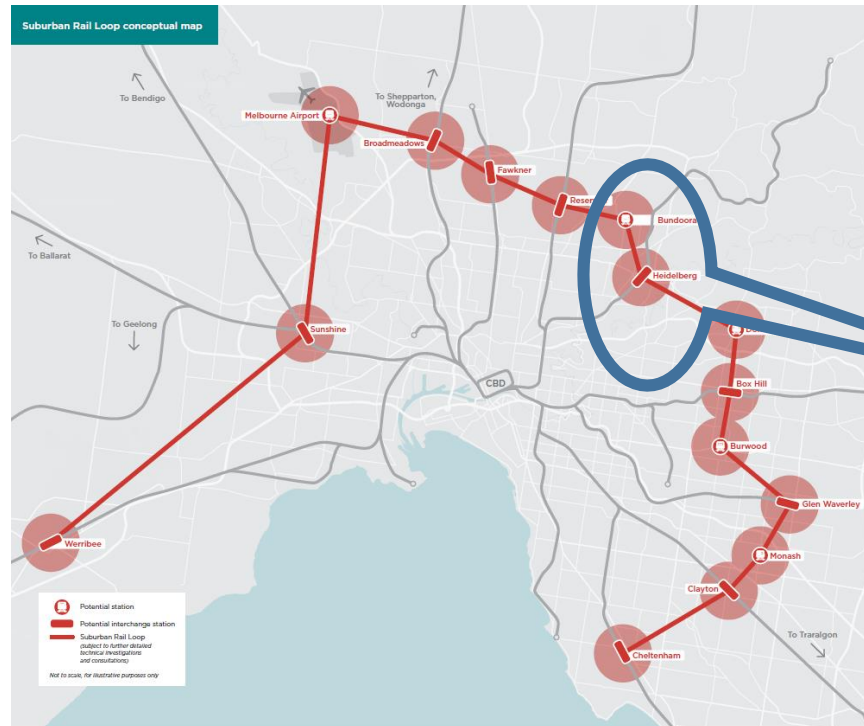
Melbourne's transport network in 2030 as proposed by this Transport Strategy.

Key:	Existing	Proposed/ Investigate
Protected bicycle route		
Slow zone for buses		
Station		
Station precincts		
Greenline		
Tram		
Full-time bus priority		
Rail		
Traffic bypass		

Map 1: Combined map of all proposals.



North East Link and Suburban Rail Loop



Shared riverine environment

North East Link and Suburban Rail Loop

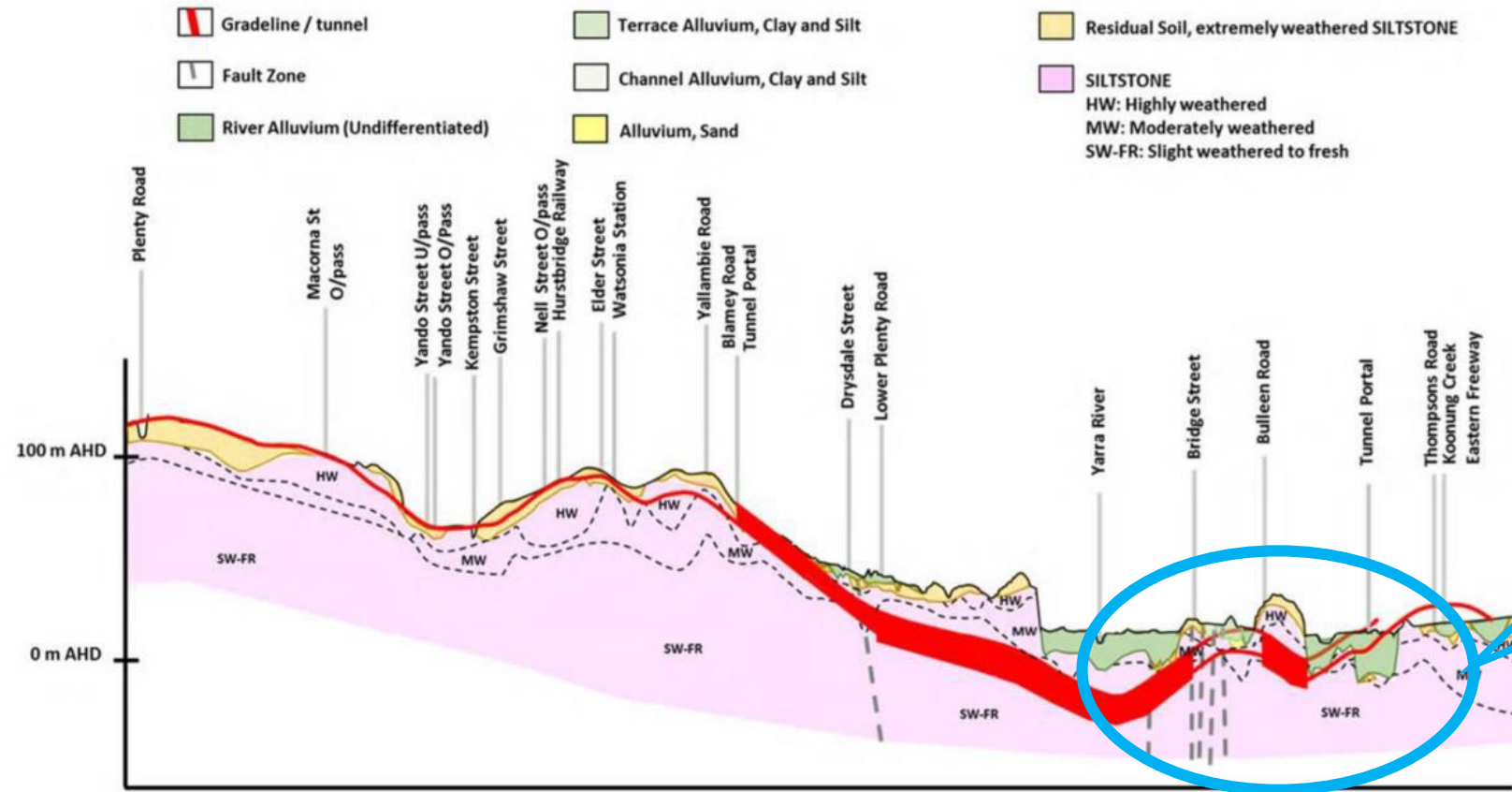


Figure 6-1 Simplified geological long section

Conclusion



- EES should look at alternative ways of meeting and managing future transport demand that will
 - Be less detrimental to sensitive, established urban environments and the Green Wedges
 - Recognise the impacts on and from other transport and land use planning initiatives currently under consideration
 - Provide superior transport choices for Melburnians
 - Ensure community expectations for resolving the “missing link” are sustained well beyond Plan Melbourne’s 2050 timeframe

Thank you

Useful references



- TCPA Website – TCPA Charter (1997); publications and submissions since 2000.
 - <https://tcpa.org.au/publications/>
 - <https://tcpa.org.au/tcpa-submissions/>
- *Cities, Citizens and Environmental Reform: Histories of Australian Town Planning Associations*, Robert Freestone (ed), Sydney University Press, 2009
 - Chapter 3, pp91-119:
May, A. and Reidy, S., *Town Planning Crusaders: urban reform in Melbourne during the progressive era*
 - Chapter 9, pp342-372:
Reidy, S. and May, A.: *Dreams come true? Town planning ideals and realities in postwar Melbourne*
- Richards, M. R., “*Town and Country Planning Association (Victoria) turns 100*”, in *Planning News*, Vol. 44, No. 8, September 2018, pp18-19.