

CITY OF HOBSONS BAY

**SUBMISSION TO EAST-WEST LINK
NEEDS ASSESSMENT STUDY
(EDDINGTON INQUIRY)**

MAY 2007

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Hobsons Bay welcomes the opportunity to provide a submission to the East-West Link Needs Assessment Study as it considers that this study is essential in addressing future transport planning particularly in the west. The substantial population growth occurring in the west together with the associated economic growth and traffic growth plus the anticipated growth in freight activity through the Port of Melbourne all combine to provide an interesting challenge for future transportation issues in the west.

The City of Hobsons Bay believes that a whole transport system planning exercise is essential to provide a sustainable system that will be flexible and provide economic and environmental benefits.

Issues that the City of Hobsons Bay believes the Study needs to address are :-

- The need to grow the west, to provide more employment in the west with improved transport links to job opportunities all with the aim to reduce travel demand to the CBD and the east.
- The provision of an alternative to the Monash – City Link – Westgate corridor which provides for the movement of freight traffic and for public transport as well as for the future increase in commuter traffic and for cyclists.
- The development of an overall Freight Strategy for Metropolitan Melbourne which particularly addresses the metropolitan container expected growth and port, airport, inland freight hubs and inland port issues, the source and destinations for freight and inequities in road versus rail transport.
- Public transport improvements on the Werribee rail line plus on the associated Altona loop and Williamstown line together with addressing the constraints at North Melbourne Station and on the City Loop.

1. Introduction

Hobsons Bay City Council sees the East-West Link Needs Assessment Study as the opportunity to address access, mobility and amenity issues in the west and particularly in the City of Hobsons Bay.

The areas of particular concern to the City of Hobsons Bay relate to -

- the substantial traffic growth on the Monash - City Link – Westgate route, a critical road link for this municipality, which causes congestion in the morning and afternoon peaks and also throughout the day, not only on this route but also on major arterial roads linking to it;
- the deficiencies in public transport in the west, particularly in train and bus services;
- the anticipated growth in freight movement generated by the Port of Melbourne, which will place further pressure on our roads.

The population in the west is increasing at an extremely fast rate, particularly in Wyndham and Melton municipalities. Hobsons Bays population in 2004 was 83,200 and is forecast to grow by 12% over the next 25 years, mainly in the over 55 age group.

Hobsons Bay residents are particularly reliant on the Monash-City Link-Westgate route, this being the main road link to the west and east and on public transport particularly trains and buses for travel. The current deficiencies in both of these areas have a major impact on the travel needs of our residents.

2. Key Issues that Need to be Addressed by the Eddington Inquiry

2.1. Land Use Aspects

Because of the huge population growth in the west, more employment is needed in the west with improved transport links to job opportunities, that is, there is a need to grow the west. This is needed to reduce travel demand to/from the CBD and the east.

2.2. Road Network

The current plan to upgrade the Monash-City Link-Westgate link will be valuable in the short term. However the Westgate Bridge and tunnel constraints will continue to reduce the traffic carrying capacity of this route. Traffic growth, both commuter and freight related, from the growth areas of the west and the Port of Melbourne, will also continue to place pressure on this link.

It is currently predicted that traffic flow on the Westgate Bridge will increase from 150,000 vehicles per day in April 2003 to nearly 200,000 vehicles per day by the year 2021. Also there will be a very substantial growth in freight in the future with more freight being carried by road based transport.

The arterial roads that feed onto and off this link are also becoming more congested, for example, Melbourne Road which carries nearly 35,000 vehicles/day.

Public transport is not coping in the west. The rail system is at or near capacity in the peaks on the Werribee line, which particularly impacts on the City of Hobsons Bay. This is due to constraints in the system, particularly at North Melbourne Station and the City Loop. Road based public transport is constrained by the congestion on the Westgate Bridge, Westgate and Princes Freeways and other arterial roads.

Any new cross city link needs to cater for the movement of freight traffic and for public transport as well as for the future increase in commuter traffic and for cyclists.

2.3. Freight

The State Government needs to develop a comprehensive freight strategy. The Melbourne Port @ L Strategy Study and movement of freight by rail target are good initiatives, however do not go far enough.

There is a need to improve rail access to the port which could include grade separated rail access and better facilities to handle containers to and from rail.

Currently only about 15% of freight is carried by rail, however the State Government's target is 30% by 2010. International container movements are expected to increase five-fold in the next 30 years from the current 1.4 million /year with most of these (around 80%) having origins in the metropolitan area. For the government to meet its freight target of 30% by rail, there needs to be an increased focus on the metropolitan container freight task. This needs to take into account the role of ports, airports, inland freight hubs and inland ports eg. CRT & SCT, the source and destinations for freight and the inequities in road versus rail transport. Therefore it is essential that any East-West Link caters for the movement of freight traffic and that the study examines how to get a greater percentage of freight onto rail.

It should be noted that even if 30% of the port related freight is transported by rail, 70% will still need to go by road, and this 70% in terms of numbers will grow substantially in the future as the Port of Melbourne continues to development and the number of container movement increases.

2.4. Public Transport

Increasing numbers of residents in the west are looking to use public transport for work and leisure related journeys due to a number of factors including the rising cost of fuel and increased parking fees in the CBD. The present public transport system in the west is ill equipped to cope with this increase.

An East-West Link needs to cater for public transport to benefit public transport users in both the west and east. The North Melbourne Station and City Loop constraints and Werribee line plus associated Altona loop and Williamstown line deficiency issues have to be examined together with how to better provide for road based public transport. Provision of more park and ride facilities and bicycle facilities at rail stations are needed to encourage commuters to use public transport. Encouragement of walking and cycling and the use of water based transport need to be considered in the study.

The Statement Government has a target of 20% of people travelling by public transport by 2020. How this target will be met needs to be examined in the study.

3. Conclusion

The City of Hobsons Bay believes that there are a range of initiatives and actions that need to be addressed in the East-West Link Needs Assessment Study.

There is a need to provide flexibility in our transport system by the provision of an alternative to the Monash – City Link – Westgate corridor which provides for the movement of freight, public transport, private passenger vehicles and cyclists.

Development of a Comprehensive Freight Strategy and a commitment to long term public transport system improvements are needed. A whole system transport planning exercise is needed and our transport system has to be sustainable. Other modes of transport, for example walking, cycling and water based need to be encouraged. It is critical to reduce road demand, increase public transport usage and increase the amount of freight to rail. Doing this will have significant environmental benefits as well as providing a better transport system.



Hobsons Bay

CITY COUNCIL

13 June 2007

East-West Links Needs Assessment
Department of Infrastructure
Level 49
80 Collins Street
MELBOURNE VIC 3000

Ask for: Phillip McDonald
Phone: (03) 9932 1190

Dear Sir

SUBMISSION TO EAST-WEST LINK NEEDS ASSESSMENT STUDY

Reference is made to the Hobsons Bay City Council submission to the Eddington Inquiry on the East-West Transport Link Needs Assessment Study forwarded to you on the 23 May 2007.

Since making our submission the issue of providing a link between Hyde Street Spotswood and the Westgate freeway ramps at Williamstown Road to reduce traffic in Francis Street has been raised.

The Council at its meeting on the 12 June 2007 considered a report on this issue and resolved to endorse an addendum to its submission which:-

- a) Reinforces the Council's support for a comprehensive freight Strategy; and
- b) Opposes any project, which has the potential to negatively impact on the amenity of residential and recreational areas in Hobsons Bay.

Accordingly, I attach an addendum to be considered in conjunction with our original submission.

I wish to advise that as part of your consideration of submissions and preparation of your final report, the Council would be prepared to discuss its submission and addendum with members of the study team.

Yours sincerely

Bill Jaboor
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

CITY OF HOBSONS BAY

ADDENDUM TO THE HOBSONS BAY CITY COUNCIL SUBMISSION TO EAST-WEST LINK NEEDS ASSESSMENT STUDY

JUNE 2007

Addendum to the Hobsons Bay City Council Submission to East-West Link Needs Assessment Study

This addendum forms part of the Hobsons Bay City Councils submission that the East - West link needs assessment.

Since making the original submission the Council has been made aware of a previous suggestion to provide an alternative freight link from Hyde Street through the City of Hobsons Bay to the Westgate freeway ramps at Williamstown Road to reduce heavy truck movements on Francis Street has been raised again.

In June 1999 the Council considered a report on this alternative together with 3 other alternatives to assist access in and out of the Spotswood Industrial Estate.

The options assessed were:

- A link from Hyde Street parallel and within the influence of the Westgate Freeway linking to the exit/entry ramps.
- Use of Simcock Avenue - Hall Street linking to the exit/entry ramps.
- Linking Simcock Avenue to The Avenue.
- A link from Hyde Street parallel and within the influence of the Westgate Freeway linking to Thomas Street.

While these options did have some benefits for traffic movement they all raised Council and community concern about loss of amenity in particular the proposed link between Hyde Street and the freeway ramps at Williamstown Road was assessed as having the following adverse impacts.

- The link would impact on the golf course separating the two holes on the south side of the freeway from the north side. The south holes would not be directly impacted, however, fences and general clearances would have the road close to the first green. Traffic passing close to the green would also be a negative impact on players.
- An at-grade railway crossing would create a major problem walking from the south side to the north side of the freeway.
- The ramp link to the exit ramp would encroach into the north-east corner of the reserve affecting the practice wicket area.
- The proposal would create additional merging and weaving on the exit ramp to the Westgate Freeway.

The Council resolved to not support any of the options identified in the study due to their adverse impact on residential and recreational areas of Spotswood.

The Hobsons Bay City Council therefore strongly objects to any solutions which merely shift adverse amenity problems from one area to another. This is seen as a short-term solution to a long-term problem which needs to be addressed in a comprehensive freight transport strategy.

The assessment and implementation of an inland ports strategy will assist in reducing the road freight however there will still be pressure on roads due to growth in port related freight which needs to be addressed sensitively through upgrading existing arterial routes and freeways.

In summary, the Hobsons Bay City Council reinforces its support for the study to address the development of an overall freight strategy for metropolitan Melbourne but will not support any project that has the potential to direct additional freight traffic through new links which will negatively impact on the amenity of residential and recreational areas.