

1.5 SUBURBAN RAIL LOOP EAST – ENVIRONMENT EFFECTS STATEMENT SUBMISSION

Responsible Director: Peter Panagakos

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. *Broadly supports the Suburban Rail Loop East project due to the significant benefits of the Project that include:
 - a. *increased transport choices for the community;*
 - b. *rail based services to the Monash National Employment and Innovation Cluster (NEIC) that have previously not been provided; and*
 - c. *opportunities for uplift and improvement in two key activity centres at Clayton and Glen Waverley.**
2. *Notes that several issues in the draft EES and Amendment GC197, have been identified that need to be addressed in order for the EES to provide for an acceptable outcome and in order to minimise the environmental effects of the Project.*
3. *Notes the summary provided on the Council community consultation process undertaken regarding the Suburban Rail Loop East Environment Effects Statement; and*
4. *Endorses Council's Suburban Rail Loop East Environment Effects Statement submission.*

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to update Councillors on the details of the Environment Effects Statement (EES) released by the Victorian Government for the Suburban Rail Loop (SRL) East Project, provide an update on the outcome of the community consultation process undertaken and to consider and endorse the proposed submission in response to the EES (refer Attachment 1).

The Suburban Rail Loop Authority (SRLA) released the EES for SRL East on 5 November 2021. Submissions are required to be submitted by Thursday 16 December 2021.

The Minister for Planning has appointed an independent Inquiry and Advisory Committee (IAC) to consider the EES, a draft Planning Scheme Amendment and public submissions associated with SRL East. A public hearing for the EES will commence on Monday 28 February 2021 and is scheduled to run for approximately eight weeks. Council will be represented and participate in those public hearings.

BACKGROUND

Previous reports to Council have discussed various matters relating to the SRL project including the announcement of proposed station locations, replacement and additional car parking, and possible property acquisition. The last report to Council was on 29 October 2021 where it was resolved:

That Council:

- 1. Notes the introduction of the Suburban Rail Loop Bill 2021 (Bill) which has now passed through both houses of parliament and accordingly, the SRLA has formally been established as a statutory body and amongst other matters grants the SRLA the power to enter on to and to acquire land and provides for the Minister the ability to declare an area of land to be a Suburban Rail Loop planning area.*
- 2. Notes that officers and Council's lawyers are currently reviewing the Bill and that a further report to Council discussing in more detail the effect of the Bill will be provided in due course.*
- 3. Notes the progress made by the SRLA with the completion of the studies for Stage One of the SRL project that form the Environmental Effects Statement (EES) and the dates for community consultation on the outcome of the studies and receipt of submissions.*
- 4. Notes that the exhibited documents of the EES will be on display from 5 November 2021 until 16 December 2021.*
- 5. Direct officers to commence a community consultation process on 5 November 2021 until 30 November 2021 to gather feedback on the outcome of the EES studies referred to in item 3 above.*
- 6. Notes that it will receive a further report at the December Council meeting on the outcome of the community consultation process together with a summary of the responses from the community and details of what Council through its lawyers and appointed experts will present to the EES hearings informed by officer assessment and any relevant applicable community views.*
- 7. Allocates \$500,000 from its 2021-22 budget to cover associated EES expenses including external consultancy, legal and design as part of stage one SRL EES process, ongoing discussions with SRLA regarding outcomes at the three locations and commencement of the Strategic planning for the three station locations that will continue beyond the 21/22 financial year.*
- 8. Notes that officers have completed investigations into alternative sites for car parking in the Glen Waverley Activity Centre and that Council's existing multilevel car park at 1-5 Bogong Avenue, Glen Waverley has been identified as the most appropriate location for provision of some of the additional car spaces.*
- 9. Resolves that Council's existing multi-level car park at 1-5 Bogong Avenue, Glen Waverley is the preferred location for the provision of some of the additional car spaces required to be provided noting as has been previously resolved by Council that the balance of the required car spaces is to be*

resolved with the SRLA as it is considered that there is a shared responsibility to accommodate those required car spaces.

10. Notes that officers have commenced preparation and will release a tender for consultancy services to design an upgrade and extension to the preferred site noted in item 8 with Council to consider the awarding of any tender at a future Council meeting.

11. Notes that Officers have met with South East Volunteers regarding the property at 5 Myrtle Street, Glen Waverley and met with SRLA on the site and that the S223 Committee will be reconvened to further consider the lease matter with the Committee's recommendation being presented to a future Council meeting.

DISCUSSION

This report relates to Items 5 and 6 of the 29 October resolution, specifically that:

- *Officers commence a community consultation process on 5 November 2021 until 30 November 2021 to gather feedback on the outcome of the EES studies referred to in item 3 above; and*
- *It will receive a further report at the December Council meeting on the outcome of the community consultation process together with a summary of the responses from the community and details of what Council through its lawyers and appointed experts will present to the EES hearings informed by officer assessment and any relevant applicable community views.*

A summary of two consultation sessions that Council undertook on 10 and 17 November and submissions received up until 30 November on SRL East EES can be found in the Consultation section of this report and are also found at Appendix 1.

Environment Effects Statement (EES)

The EES for SRL East describes the existing environment, identifies benefits and potential impacts during construction and operation and proposes ways to avoid, minimise, offset or manage any significant effects.

It includes a series of impact assessments of the construction and operation of the project. Environmental Performance Requirements (EPRs) define the environmental outcomes the Project must achieve during design, construction and operation.

The impact assessments consider a wide range of areas, including:

- Aboriginal Cultural Heritage
- Air Quality
- Arboriculture
- Business and Retail
- Contaminated Land
- Ecology
- Electromagnetic Interference
- Greenhouse Gases
- Ground Movement
- Groundwater

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- Historical Heritage
 - Landscape and Visual
 - Noise
 - Surface Water
 - Vibration and Ground-borne Noise
 - Human Health
 - Land Use Planning
 - Social and Community
 - Traffic and Transport

The EES does not provide approval for the project nor is it an analysis of the justification or need for the project. The EES provides the Victorian State Government with detailed advice on the environmental impacts of the project as proposed to assist in considering whether to proceed with the project or whether any refinements to the design are required as a result of any unacceptable negative impacts.

As previously noted, the EES is on public exhibition from 5 November to 16 December 2021. During this period members of the public have been invited to and can make written submissions on the EES material for consideration by the IAC.

Council's submission sets out strategic objectives for the SRL project in Monash and identifies any areas of concern with the current proposal as set out in the EES. These overall strategic objectives will also form the basis for further and more detailed discussions with the SRLA and the State government as the project progresses through detailed design, precinct planning and ultimately to construction. Following the public exhibition period, the IAC will convene panel hearings to consider submissions to the EES before generating a report and making a recommendation to the Minister for Planning. The Minister's assessment will inform other Government decision makers on the approvals required for SRL East to proceed.

There are several areas where Monash will be impacted both directly and indirectly by the SRL East Project. The key issues that will be presented in Council's EES submission are outlined below. Council's draft EES submission in full can be found at Appendix 2.

Key Issues

General observations (from EES submission)

Council has found it difficult and in many cases impossible to understand the likely environmental impacts of the Project due to the project being only a Reference Design. The Reference Design is merely a concept and not necessarily what will be constructed. This notion is evident in the Project Incorporated Document which when examined closely in terms of its own content, and that of the EMF and the EPRs, provides flexibility to permit a significantly different project from the Reference Design with vague and inadequate consultation processes.

In addition, the level of detail and material available for review as part of the EES in respect of the Reference Design is in many respects vague and uncertain. This has effectively required Council, as a submitter, to respond to something more akin to a prospect or ambition rather than specific works or a specific identified impact.

The Inquiry into the North East Link Project (**NELP**) identified the dangers and difficulties in using a reference project to conduct an EES rather than an actual proposed project. For instance: (summary page iv)

“Having made the general findings above, the IAC’s strong view is that the Reference Design approach to Project assessment has generated serious challenges for such a large and complex project as this in an established urban area. This method, using a Reference Design, was contemplated in the Scoping Requirements; but importantly was not required.

Some of the concerns with the Reference Design are outlined in Section iii above, in relation to uncertainty. Perhaps the most obvious illustration of this relates to visual impact and urban design. Multiple experts for the Proponent and submitters attempted to have an intellectual discussion about how the Project may look, and what its impact may be. In the absence of an actual project, this is patently a difficult exercise.

Tangible effects of using the Reference Design approach were obvious during the Hearing. The uncertainty in the community amongst businesses, schools, groups and landowners, in the absence of a tangible project design and thus the knowledge of the actually proposed, as opposed to possible, impacts is difficult to overstate. This coupled with limited opportunities to participate when the ultimate design is progressed creates an atmosphere which may unnecessarily cause social concern and social impacts which could be alleviated by providing more detail.

The Proponent submitted that the Reference Design approach is well established in Victoria. The IAC does not agree. While it has been used to evaluate some recent infrastructure projects, it is still a comparatively new approach that has been used only for State-led projects with varying degrees of detail and with varying degrees of success. Moreover, the IAC considers it is an approach to Project assessment that should be used with great caution in future and confined to projects with limited footprints and potential for impact.”

In finalising the Scoping Requirements and the Public Works Declaration, the Minister for Planning (**Minister**) has not given proper consideration to the report of the NELP Inquiry and neither has the SRLA taken that into account in formulating the project (or works) for assessment under the EES. In truth the EES is merely the assessment of a concept rather than an assessment of a proposal or proposed works.

In this regard, the issue is one of timing and the order in which environmental assessment of a project such as this develops. Council maintains that the correct approach would have been to identify the actual project under the Public Works Declaration and then conduct the assessment. As it stands the Public Works Declaration provides for relatively unspecified and generalised references to works which is not consistent with the requirement for there to be a declaration of public works. Analysis that should have been undertaken to assess the extent of

environmental impact on Council and to the public generally is left too long after the completion of the inquiry. This is unsatisfactory.

Council reserves its rights in relation to the efficacy of using the EES process in this way having regard to the requirements of the Environmental Effects Act 1978 being properly applied.

Arboriculture and Ecology

Tree and canopy loss is highly significant within the City of Monash with an estimated loss of 486 trees, equating to 20,569 m² of canopy. There is concern about the magnitude of canopy cover loss, with impacts for decades to come. The loss of trees will cause a significant change in the Clayton and Glen Waverley precincts in particular, and the impacts are exacerbated by relatively low existing canopy cover in these areas. The loss will also compound the urban heat island effect, already a prominent issue in Clayton. The impacts on the environment and community are considerable, and in stark contrast to Council's Garden City Character vision and policies, including the *Street Tree Strategy 2016*, *Monash Urban Landscape and Canopy Vegetation Strategy 2018*, and *Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2016-2026*.

It is recommended that Council advocates for exceptional efforts to avoid the loss of our established green assets and seeks to better understand how these significant impacts can be adequately mitigated. While it is acknowledged that a Tree Replacement Plan will be developed, Council should seek more details in relation to: i.) replanting targets in the short-term (e.g. within 5 years of tree loss, as opposed to the 2050 target), ii.) where and how trees will be established and provided with sufficient water and soil resources to reach maturity, including consideration to the impacts of climate change and densification, iii.) how Water Sensitive Urban Design will be used as standard practice to divert rainwater or stormwater to support tree growth, iv.) how the shorter and long term impacts of urban heat will be mitigated by the revegetation strategy, v.) the degree of compatibility with Council's relevant strategies and policies, and vi) investigate alternative infrastructure options to mitigate the loss of trees and open space and impacts to city wildlife.

Surface Water and Groundwater

The Surface Water Impact Assessment only outlined basic Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) elements, primarily limited to rainwater tanks, to mitigate the impact of excess stormwater runoff from the Station boxes. The management of runoff from the broader precincts was not within the scope, which means much remains unknown about the WSUD design response. The multiple benefits of WSUD and Integrated Water Management (IWM) are acknowledged in the Urban Design Strategy and the EPRs call for an Integrated Water Management Strategy to be developed. However, no detail has yet been provided and there is concern the IWM Strategy may not be developed in time to embed opportunities for WSUD and IWM throughout the project.

The proposed WSUD solutions to date are extremely limited. Additional WSUD elements for the precinct are required in order to achieve the best practice approach outlined in *Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Publication 1739.1 Urban Stormwater management guidance (2021)*, and Council's own policies relating to IWM (*Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2016-2026* and the *Water Saving Feasibility Study (2019)*). For a large-scale, signature project that will set the scene for the Activity Centre precincts of Clayton and Glen Waverley, and the Monash University precinct, for the next century, the very highest standard and leadership in WSUD and IWM is warranted.

It is recommended that Council advocates for use of a wide suite of innovative and best practice WSUD and IWM approaches. It is noted that these solutions are central to achieving many of the project objectives and should be embedded across all aspects of design at the early stage to address water retention, urban cooling, greening and amenity objectives, as well as minor flood management. More information is sought regarding how stormwater runoff and sediment from the broad precinct (beyond the station boxes) will be managed, with consideration to the protracted period of construction and sites that may be vacant for long periods. Finally, it is also recommended that Council advocates for the naturalisation of Gardiners Creek between Warrigal and Highbury Roads, as an extension of the naturalisation of the creek planned alongside Burwood Station.

Greenhouse Gases

Currently, much of the detail regarding how the project will achieve net zero and minimise emissions is yet to be determined with the setting of greenhouse gas emissions targets, a Feasibility Market Analysis and development of a Sustainability Management Plan.

It is recommended that Council seeks to be consulted on the plans and the meeting of targets, and advocates for approaches consistent with our *Net Zero Carbon Action Plan 2020-2025*. This should include consideration of greenhouse gas emissions associated with construction, initial works and preparation, incorporating tree removal and planting, waste, building materials and waste soils. Key considerations include sourcing renewable energy, use of electric vehicles, sustainable procurement, recycled materials and landfill diversion (Circular Economy principles), Environmentally Sustainable Design WSUD to enhance building and precinct cooling and reduce potable water demand, and creation of an Urban Carbon Forest to mitigate tree loss and the urban heat island effect. Efforts towards carbon positive are encouraged as are minimal use of offsets to achieve zero net carbon outcome.

Land Use Planning

The *Land Use Planning Impact Assessment* in the EES finds that the Project can meet the evaluation objective set by the Minister for Planning to: '*Achieve integration with adjoining land uses, minimise displacement of land use activities and key infrastructure and resolve inconsistencies with strategic land use plans*'. However, it is considered that the impacts of the Project are significant and threaten the realisation of the Glen Waverley Activity Centre Structure Plan 2016, Council's

adopted vision for the staged, revitalisation of the Glen Waverley Activity Centre (GWAC) and its community of traders and visitors.

The realisation of the GWAC Structure Plan vision is dependent upon the staged upgrade and intensification of four inter-related land uses:

- public transport;
- retail and entertainment;
- mixed use development; and
- activity centre road network.

The key objectives being:

1. deliver a centrally located and integrated public transport hub;
2. upgrade the core retail and entertainment spine;
3. intensify business and residential uses at key development sites; and
4. redirect through traffic away from the retail and entertainment spine.

The SRL Glen Waverley station proposal presents several land use planning challenges for Council:

- no delivery of an integrated and revitalised transport hub for the activity centre but rather a new station with no integration with the existing metro station and bus interchange;
- no integration with Council's proposed upgrade to the Kingsway spine;
- no delivery of an integrated transport hub and associated air rights development; and
- no release of land for the activity centre ring road which is required to direct traffic to perimeter parking and to deliver a safe, walkable and cycle friendly centre (as outlined in the *Glen Waverley Station 'Go Below'* plan (Appendix 1 in Draft EES submission)).

The Glen Waverley Station precinct is unique in being flanked by large footprint development sites which are in public ownership.

The SRL project presents a key opportunity for government authorities to deliver a flagship, transport-oriented development project in keeping with international standards.

Urban Design Strategy

The *SRL East Urban Design Strategy (UDS)* is a transport focused document which is of particular concern in relation to Glen Waverley where Council's Structure Plan is predicated upon the delivery of an integrated transport hub which supports and services a high density, commercial and residential activity centre and 24/7 economy.

Over the past 20 years, Glen Waverley has been transformed from a suburban retail centre to become a high density, commercial and residential hub servicing the adjacent Monash National Employment and Innovation Cluster (NEIC).

During the next 20 years, this process of urbanisation and densification will increase whereby Glen Waverley will become a decentralised, 24/7 urban hub with associated levels of activity and activation.

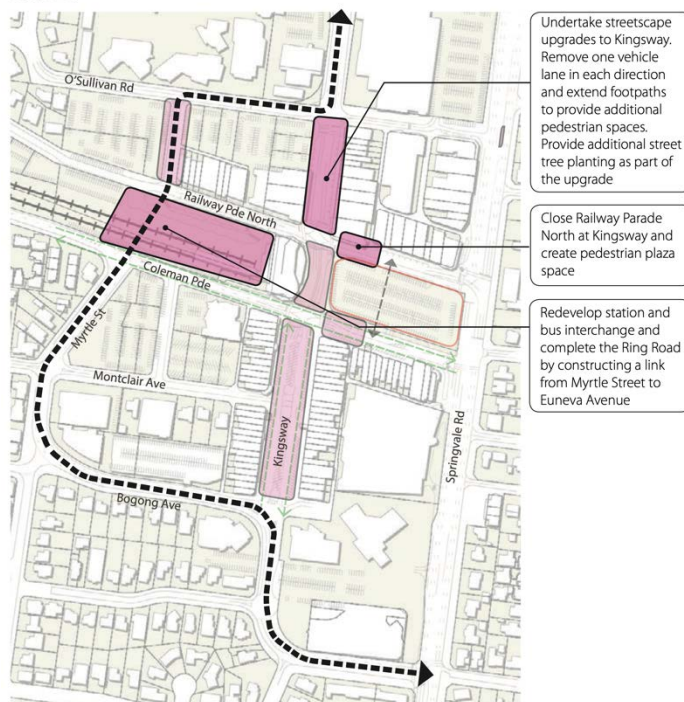
The Structure Plan vision for a regional urban hub at Glen Waverley is reliant upon:

- creation of a user-friendly and integrated transport hub;
- strategic investments in key development sites and associated public realm;
- adequate provision for parking at the centre perimeter; and
- redirection of through traffic away from the Kingsway retail & entertainment spine.

Two key, transport related infrastructure elements - which are essential requirements to support the sustainable development of the Glen Waverley urban hub are missing from the SRL East proposal:

- a user-friendly and integrated transport hub; and
- construction of the Myrtle Street/Euneva Avenue ring road (shown in Figure 1).

STAGE 4



Source: Glen Waverley Activity Centre Structure Plan (2016)

Figure 1: Proposed ring road around Glen Waverley Activity Centre

An integrated transport hub will:

- future-proof the urban form of the station precinct;
- provide a user-friendly public transport experience;
- unlock VicTrack owned land for mixed use development; and
- facilitate a future underground rail extension to the East.

The Myrtle Street/Euneva Avenue ring road is required to:

- direct through traffic away from the Kingsway retail & entertainment core;
- support the development of Kingsway as the central pedestrian spine;

- direct visitors to the perimeter carparks (at Bogong, Montclair, Railway Parade North & Euneva); and
- provide a through route for buses linked to the (Railway Pde North) integrated transport hub.

In summary, the proposed SRL project scope at Glen Waverley falls short of its own (SRL) program objectives and is inconsistent with the adopted Structure Plan for the centre.

Critical aspects of the activity centre urban structure are not being addressed. In relation to the station precinct and its associated *VicTrack* owned development sites, unanswered questions include:

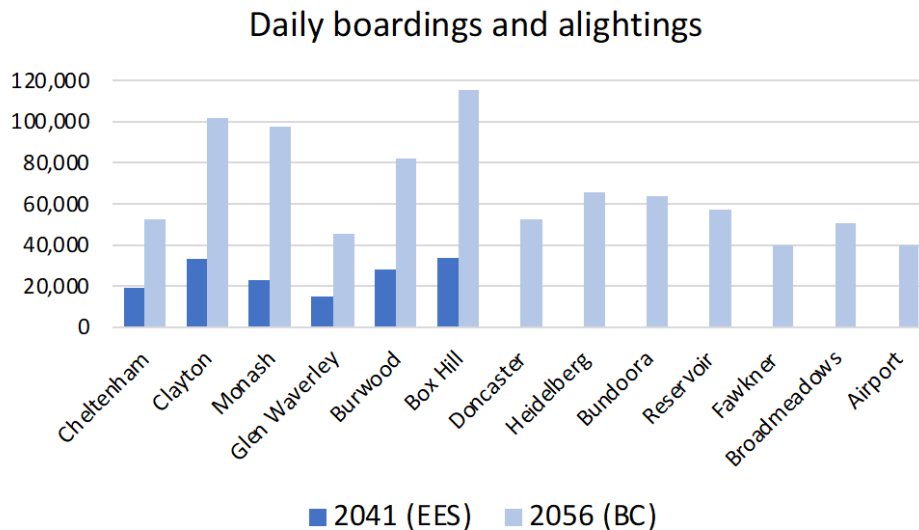
- How will these sites be integrated with the existing urban form and character?
- How will the precinct be designed to maximise sustainability benefits?
- How will the precinct encourage a diversity of business types and promote a 24/7 economy?
- How will the design of these sites activate the adjacent street frontages?
- How will 'wind tunnel' effects (at street and podium levels) be avoided?
- How will these sites address public safety and CPTED?
- How will the precinct be designed to enhance the pedestrian network?
- What will be the new street hierarchy?
- Where will public spaces be located and what will be their purpose?
- How will undue overshadowing of key public spaces be avoided?
- Where is the provision for affordable housing?
- Where will key services be located, e.g. preschools, medical services, childcare facilities

Traffic and Transport

EES scope limitation

The EES covers SRL East, from Cheltenham to Box Hill. It assesses impacts of the works during construction (2022-2036) and operation (in the year 2041, which is only 5 years after opening and before later SRL stages are opened).

The SRL Business Case documents the projected effects of subsequent stages of SRL, and they are very large. By 2056, SRL East stations will be handling 3-4 times the 2041 patronage used for the EES (see Figure 2).



Source: SRL East EES (2021)

Figure 2: Daily boardings and alightings by SRL station

It is important that SRL East is designed and engineered to accommodate the growth indicated for 2056 (and beyond), especially the parts that will not be easy to alter at a later point in time (such as tunnels, underground station boxes, passenger access to and from the surface, access/egress provisions).

Key Issues

The Technical Appendix R2: Traffic and Transport Impact Assessment (T&TIA) makes it clear that most of the issues raised with SRLA by City of Monash through the TRG process have not been addressed. Key outstanding concerns are as follows:

Demand modelling

Future transport and traffic effects are informed by use of:

- the Victorian Integrated Transport Model (VITM), to predict effects on public transport ridership and car use; and
- a new 'land use transport interaction' (LUTI) model, developed by KPMG, to predict the effects of SRL on land use development in station precincts.

Neither of these models is adequately described, nor peer-reviewed, in the EES, yet all the operational traffic and transport impacts stem from them. The peer review reports in the T&TIA are primarily concerned with subsequent modelling of traffic and pedestrian movements, in the immediate vicinities of the stations, during construction and operation.

Land use uplift

The 'with-project' 2041 modelling includes the effect of additional development in the station precincts, which is generated by the project by 2041:

- Clayton – 1,200 more residents, 6,400 more jobs
- Monash – 500 more residents, 11,200 more jobs

- Glen Waverley – 1,600 more residents, 1,500 more jobs

However, the physical location of this development in the station precincts, and its impacts, are not described. It is unclear how the detailed precinct traffic modelling could have been done, without knowing this.

Access/egress

Access/egress arrangements need to be future proofed for later expansion to allow SRL patronage growth to be realised.

Bikes

Bicycle parking will be between 320 and 750 bikes at each station, totalling 2,960 spaces over the entire project. This is just under 4% of predicted SRL daily boardings in 2041. If this ratio is to be maintained in future, bicycle parking will need to be increased 3 or 4-fold at least, and a lot more if a (desirable) step-change increase in bike access mode share is to be realised. How and where this will happen is not clear.

Buses

Bus access may not need to be increased later to the same degree as bike parking (because development in the station precincts will drive patronage growth, and buses will tend to bring people in from beyond those areas). However future proofing will be needed to allow for general increases in bus route coverage and service frequencies, which will affect the space needed for bus stop bays and layover spaces.

Pick up/drop off

Similarly, the intention is to encourage less car use for access/egress by not providing car parking at SRL stations. However, at both Clayton and Glen Waverley, it is possible that Metro station parking will be used by people accessing SRL.

It is questionable whether the intended improvements to public and active transport, and the lack of SRL station parking, will be enough to produce the mode shifts required. This mode shift has not been explicitly modelled (notably, the VITM model does not model bicycle riding as an access mode).

Station precincts

Clayton

The EES maintains that the road network will function satisfactorily with the closure of the central part of Carinish Road. While Council acknowledges the benefits of this from a public realm perspective at the proposed station, there are concerns about the potential redistribution of traffic and impacts on the outcomes of the Clayton Activity Centre Precinct Plan 2020.

Monash

The effects of SRL East and associated development at Monash will be considerable post-2041 (according to the Business Case). Employment growth is projected to increase significantly from 2041 – 2056, with significant active transport investment required in the station precinct to facilitate this whilst maintaining its place

function. Council will continue to liaise with Monash University over specific issues, including relating to the construction period.

Glen Waverley

Key concerns relate to the impact of the currently proposed SRL East on the need to establish an 'inner ring road' for traffic circulation, the loss of vehicle parking (including the yet to be resolved location for replacement and additional carparking that is required to be provided) where the SRL station will be, and future plans for further pedestrianisation of Kingsway. Council has sought to explore options to address these issues in conjunction with SRLA, but the opportunities for this have been limited.

Lowering existing Glen Waverley Station

The potential lowering of the existing Glen Waverley station below ground has many benefits:

- Frees up ground space for better transport integration and land redevelopment at the core of the activity centre (right where it is needed);
- Brings the Metro and SRL stations closer together vertically, improving ease of interchange;
- Enables an extension of Myrtle Street to Euneva Avenue to complete a ring road around the activity centre, thereby removing through traffic from Kingsway; and
- Future-proofs a potential eastern extension of the Metro line under Springvale Road.

Whilst it may be beyond the scope of the project to deliver this outcome, there should be adequate planning in place as part of this project to not preclude this from occurring in the future. While the considerations can be many and varied, fundamentally, the tunnel and station box should be at a depth that allow flexibility in the future design for the existing Glen Waverley station which in the future could give consideration to an underground station that not only delivers a superior interchange link between the two stations but allows a range of benefits to be delivered to the activity centre as have been identified in the existing structure plan.

Pick Up and Drop Off Parking

Pick up and drop off parking facilities being proposed on Montclair Avenue are not supported due to the increased traffic this would attract to the local streets of Montclair Avenue and Kingsway. These should be appropriately located on the realigned Myrtle Street, as opposed to forcing and funnelling more traffic into the heart of the activity centre.

Car Parking with the Glen Waverley Activity Centre

A key concern is that the EES process does not address the requirement for the replacement of public car parking spaces within the south west area of the Glen Waverley Activity Centre.

Council will note that the site at 31-39 Montclair Avenue, Glen Waverley was the ideal site for Council to provide for its replacement and additional car parking resulting primarily from its proximity to the centre of the traditional core of Kingsway

Following the termination of Council's proposed Montclair Multi-Deck car park project which was due to be located at 31-39 Montclair Avenue and consisted of providing 706 replacement and additional car parking spaces. This project will no longer proceed following the potential acquisition of the land by the SRLA.

Since the announcement that the SRLA will potentially acquire both Council's at-grade car parks at 31-39 Montclair Avenue & 41-47 Montclair Avenue, Council has continued to work with the SRLA as it is considered that there is a joint responsibility (between Council and the SRLA) to find alternative locations for the replacement and additional car spaces that were planned to be provided at the above-mentioned site.

With regard to the provision of car parking, Council's resolution from its October 2021 meeting: *"that Council's existing multi-level car park at 1-5 Bogong Avenue, Glen Waverley is the preferred location for the provision of some of the additional car spaces required to be provided noting as has been previously resolved by Council that the balance of the required car spaces is to be resolved with the SRLA as it is considered that there is a shared responsibility to accommodate those required car spaces"* remains unchanged.

The expectation in these circumstances is that the SRLA will accommodate the provision of these spaces.

Infrastructure Upgrade Requirements

Irrespective of which site planning scenarios are adopted, upgrades to key adjacent streets and associated civic infrastructure will be necessary in response to the projected increase in travel across all transport modes. Please refer to the Appendices in the EES submission where requirements are outlined:

- Glen Waverley Station Precinct Infrastructure Upgrade Requirements (Appendix 2 in Draft EES submission); and
- Clayton Station Precinct Infrastructure Upgrade Requirements (Appendix 3 in Draft EES submission).

Construction period impacts

Broadly, construction period changes and their impacts are assessed using background traffic levels predicted for about the middle of the construction period. This may mean that localised changes due to other projects, land use developments and other issues may not be adequately accounted for.

There are many detailed changes to account for construction traffic, site compounds, site access, road closures and rail replacement buses. There may not be time to go into them fully in the timeframe for submissions, but general observations, and requests to work through the details collaboratively beyond the EES timeframe, will be important.

It is particularly concerning that construction traffic and rail replacement buses are proposed to be routed along Montclair Avenue and Kingsway in the Glen Waverley Activity Centre.

Business and Retail

The *Business and Retail Impact Assessment* report, relating to Glen Waverley, focuses on the loss of the employment from the removal of the RSL as the main impact - this is a limited to no assessment of the overall potential economic impact during construction on Kingsway businesses.

The removal of the “at grade” Montclair car parks in the order of 300 to 350 convenient high turnover spaces will have a significant impact on the overall customer numbers attending the Kingsway Precinct. This will affect all business in Kingsway yet is not discussed at all in the EES.

The impact from noise, vibration and dust during construction will negatively impact the amenity of Kingsway discouraging customers and directly impacting businesses. This does not appear to have been discussed or factored in the overall impact assessment.

The proposed haulage routes along Coleman Parade, Montclair Avenue and Kingsway will create significant negative amenity and traffic disruption in Kingsway - further reducing the amenity and attractiveness of Kingsway. This does not appear to have been discussed or factored in the overall impact assessment.

All the above issues are likely to result in job losses and potentially business closures in the Kingsway Precinct due to construction related activity. This is not discussed or acknowledged in the document.

In addition, whilst the forecast numbers for entries and exits are quite high, at 2.4 million per annum, this is around 4,700 per day (taking into account weekends) compared to current figures, no evidence has been presented that train transfers generate significant local economic activity, particularly from commuters interchanging between the SRL and Metro line. It is considered that this is a general statement that lacks rigour and evidence to support any real economic benefit to the Kingsway retail area or the broader Glen Waverley Activity centre.

Noise

The *Airborne Noise Impact Assessment* report was prepared in accordance with the scoping requirements for airborne noise. Airborne noise impacts were modelled for the Project’s construction and operation. These impacts were assessed against relevant EPA and Victorian Government guidelines and policies.

The Impact report is comprehensive, well-presented, and readable, making a review relatively straightforward to accomplish. However, it suffers from a lack of traceability, and appears inconsistent, making it difficult to accept and adopt the rather benign impacts that are suggested, which in-turn raises legitimate concerns that the actual construction impacts may be much greater than indicated.

The proposed EPRs are intended to protect the community interests during major infrastructure construction works and satisfy the general environmental duty (GED) of the Environmental Protection Act 2017. However, it is worth noting that EPR NV4 requires the site Contractor to *develop and implement management actions for*

non-residential noise sensitive areas, if construction noise is predicted or measured to exceed the internal and proposed internal and external noise levels (AS/NZS 2107:2016 and the NSW Interim Construction Noise Guideline 2009) and a noise sensitive receptor is expected to be adversely impacted. The verification of the Independent Environmental Auditor (IEA) doesn't appear to be required. Clear justification and the verification of the IEA should be secured for any construction works above the proposed noise limits.

It is envisaged that the main impact will be during the construction phase and associated with low frequency noise and vibration transmitted through the ground that could potentially be audible in bedroom or living room areas, especially in the evening and at night. This is addressed further in the Council's Draft EES submission at Appendix 1.

Air Quality

The *Air Quality Impact Assessment* section discusses existing conditions, potential impacts and example mitigation measures that have informed the EPRs that define the environmental outcomes the Project must achieve.

The likely effects on air quality from the Project were considered for the design, construction and operation phases of the Project. The focus of the assessment was the generation of dust from the demolition, earthworks, excavation and spoil handling activities that would be undertaken at each site during construction and the potential for that dust to cause human health impacts.

The *Air Quality Impact Assessment* notes that *construction activities which can generate nuisance dust occur intermittently at different locations for varying durations within each construction site. There may be occasional days where residents within 50-100 metres of the station construction sites experience dust settling on surfaces or visible dust plumes in the air. Implementation of measures to comply with the EPRs would minimise the extent, duration and frequency of these impacts.*

Air quality relates to the social, human health and business impacts of the project. Council has the following concerns following a review of the Air Quality Impact Assessment:

- Why vehicle emissions and other emissions from site operation were not deemed significant, particularly given increased vehicle/bus movements around the station?
- What about the impacts of tree loss on air quality?
- The risk assessment focused on dust and PM2.5 and PM10. What about other emissions such as gases, volatile compounds or odours?
- Measures to reduce dust included 'increasing hardstand surfacing on site', but this will increase the impervious area and runoff; this needs to be integrated into runoff and sediment management plans.
- How controls at ground level would protect sensitive receptors at height in multi-storey buildings (such as the residential colleges at Monash, the

Monash Childrens Hospital near Clayton, or apartment residents around Glen Waverley).

- The lack of specific mitigation measures to protect the sensitive receptors of restaurants and residents near Glen Waverley Station.
- The potential for wind tunnelling and variable gusts, which were identified under existing conditions for Glen Waverley, but it was not clear how it was considered and addressed in the Impact Assessment and controls.
- What are the potential dust impacts and mitigation measures for the period between demolition and work, particularly for sites left vacant for long periods (until Rail Day 2 in some cases)? Will sites be revegetated to control dust and sediment mobilisation?

No changes were made to the Impact Assessment in response to the above comments. The responses received included that site management would be defined by the Construction Contractor, odours and fumes were not expected to be generated at the sites in the City of Monash, dust will be monitored including real-time monitoring, modelling was undertaken for the identified sensitive receptors and will be protected by the mitigation measures.

The EPRs require the development and implementation of an *Environmental Air Pollution and Dust Management Plan* and that air quality is monitored prior to and during construction.

Planning Scheme Amendment (from EES submission)

Council has considered the use of the proposed Specific Controls Overlay (**SCO**) and sets out specific comments in relation to the SCO14 and SCO15 below.

SCO14

Council recognises that the State significance of the Project warrants the use of the SCO14 to streamline the approval process for the Project.

Council notes that the declared Project area follows a defined corridor unrelated to title boundaries and this is reflected in the planning scheme overlay maps. There is the risk of some uncertainty about whether works are located within the Project area or not and considers that the overlay should be extended over title boundaries to avoid confusion.

SCO15

Council acknowledges the constraints of the current overlay provisions available or this project. It is understood that the inclusion of a control to protect the tunnel asset in the future is reasonable and sensible.

However, Council is concerned about the 'hidden' nature of the planning permit triggers that necessarily occurs with the use of an SCO and Incorporated Document. It will not be possible for a landowner to find the permit requirements in the same way as the other parts of the planning scheme.

To improve the transparency of the planning system in relation to protection of the Project infrastructure, Council considers that the Minister should consider introducing a new Infrastructure Protection Overlay or amending the SCO to provide for the planning permit triggers within the overlay itself rather than being contained in a separate incorporated document.

Further, Council notes that the Project Infrastructure Protection Area A contained in the Infrastructure Incorporated Document provides a higher set of requirements for where a permit is sought. Whilst the Incorporated Document maps these areas in a non-cadastral way it is noted that the translation proposes to follow the title boundaries, and this is considered appropriate as it reduces any uncertainty about whether works fall within the relevant protection area.

Finally, it is essential that given planning permit applications may be called up by the proposed SCO 15, given the referral requirements, SRLA should be properly resourced to ensure an ability to provide for timely responses to permit applications.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The SRL project and the social, economic and environmental benefits that will come from the anticipated level of investment are broadly consistent with many Council and State Government Policies. However, the impacts of the project do conflict with some policies, including our vision to protect and enhance our Garden City Character, including our canopy, habitat corridors, biodiversity and green spaces. Council policies also underpin our advocacy for best practice water management, waterway protection, and emissions reduction on the project.

Relevant Council and State Government policies are listed below. As noted earlier the SRL East proposal at Glen Waverley should not preclude the implementation of the *Glen Waverley Activity Centre Structure Plan 2016*.

Monash Council Plan (2017-2021)

The following are relevant strategic objectives and strategies from the Council Plan:

A liveable sustainable city

- Valuing our natural environment and wanting to preserve and enhance the leafy green character of our city
- Strengthening our strategic policy and local planning framework
- Advocacy for enhancement of the National Employment Cluster
- Increasing our community engagement and education about town planning

Inviting open and urban spaces

- Ensuring the walkability of our city
- Improving our green open spaces and linking up our bicycle trails
- Enhancing our activity centres with an increased focus on the moveability and prioritisation of pedestrians
- Preserving & expanding our bushland & passive open spaces

An inclusive community

- Delivering integrated planning and community strengthening

Responsive and efficient services

- Enhancing community consultation and involvement in our decision-making

The Council Plan identified the following relevant priority projects:

- Improve our activity centres and pedestrian movements therein.

The Principles of the Plan, which guide decision making, include ‘Planning and providing for the current and future needs of our community whilst preserving and enhancing our natural environment and garden city character is central to our work’.

Other relevant Plans and Strategies

- Glen Waverley Activity Centre Structure Plan 2016
- Clayton Activity Centre Precinct Plan 2020
- Monash Integrated Transport Strategy 2017
- Monash Economic Development Strategy and action Plan 2018

Monash 2021: A Thriving Community (2010)

This long-term strategy states (as relevant) that our community values convenience (we are in walking distance to all we need); a balance between residential, commercial and industrial development; good connections to bus and train services, and easy access by train/freeway; we have a friendly, community-based atmosphere in shopping strips; and a safe place to live and bring up a family.

Monash Planning Scheme

Clauses from the Monash Planning Scheme that are relevant to Clayton include:

- Clause 11.06 – Metropolitan Melbourne
- Clause 17 – Economic Development
- Clause 21.05 (MSS) – Economic Development
- Clause 21.06 (MSS) – Activity Centres
- Clause 22.03 – Industry and Business Development and Character Policy

Plan Melbourne

There are numerous references and policy directions throughout Plan Melbourne that highlight the importance of the Monash National Employment and Innovation Cluster (NEIC), specifically.

“Direction 1.1 Create a city structure that strengthens Melbourne’s competitiveness for jobs and investment”

“Policy 1.1.4 Support the significant employment and servicing role of Health and Education Precincts across Melbourne”

“Policy 1.17 Plan for adequate commercial land across Melbourne”

“Direction 2.2 Deliver more housing closer to jobs and public transport”

“Direction 2.4 Facilitate decision-making processes for housing in the right locations”

“Direction 3.1 Transform Melbourne’s transport system to support a productive city”

“Policy 3.1.2 Provide high quality public transport access to job rich areas”

Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2016-2026

Urban ecology is a priority area of this Strategy. The actions call for planning processes to protect and enhance Monash’s biodiversity and landscape character, and for the enhancement of biodiversity values and habitat connectivity across the municipality. A guiding principle of the Strategy relates to ecological integrity; ‘Actions will maintain biological diversity, essential ecological processes and life-support systems’.

Integrated Water Management is another priority of the Strategy with relevant actions calling for best practice IWM and embedding IWM and WSUD throughout Council’s operations and policies. This is compatible with SRL’s stated principles, but the designs to date have not yet demonstrated best practice.

Street Tree Strategy 2016

The Strategy notes the challenges facing our street tree canopy include significant gaps in the canopy, densification and the loss of trees on private land. The vision is for our street tree canopy to be a source of neighbourhood and city pride, creating a network of engaging and inviting green corridors, encouraging walking, cycling and street activity and delivering tangible benefits to local communities. The Strategy includes precinct-specific analysis, mapping and planning to ensure the most appropriate species are selected and local challenges and opportunities are considered. The SRL Tree Replacement Plan should be consistent with this Strategy.

Monash Urban Landscape and Canopy Vegetation Strategy 2018

This strategy includes description of why our ‘Garden City Character’ is a defining feature for Monash. The multiple benefits of canopy trees are described with reference to the supporting research. The importance of mid and understorey vegetation, biodiversity and habitat value are also described. A key aim of the strategy is to ‘Protect and enhance the green Garden City Character within the contemporary context of climate change and forecast urban growth and change’. The Strategy also aims to increase tree canopy cover on public and private land from 22% to 30% by 2040, thus creating a more liveable, sustainable and resilient

city. The substantial loss of trees for the SRL will move Council further from the 2040 target. Finally, the Strategy seeks to maximise retention of existing health mature large canopy trees on public and private land to support liveability and cultural heritage values. This underlines our advocacy to ensure all efforts are made to minimise tree loss for this project.

Water Saving Feasibility Study (2019)

The study analyses Council's water use and opportunities for alternative water use. Targets are set regarding Council's potable water use on a per capita basis and for the volume of new alternative water provision by 2030. The report also explores WSUD opportunities including stormwater harvesting, passive irrigation and water efficiencies across Council's operations. This demonstrates Council's commitment to Integrated Water Management and Water Sensitive Urban Design, and underpins our advocacy for best practice water management on the SRL project and operations.

Zero Net Carbon Action Plan 2020-2025

In this Strategy a pathway is provided for Monash to become carbon neutral by 2025. Greenhouse gas emission sources are quantified and actions to reduce or avoid emissions are identified. As part of the plan, Monash also commits to creating an urban carbon forest to provide local storage of carbon, improve community amenity and benefit biodiversity.

HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS

There are no apparent human rights implications under the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006.

GENDER IMPACT ASSESSMENT

With regards to the SRL East Project, consideration of a gender impact assessment will be the responsibility of the SRLA.

CONSULTATION

External consultation undertaken by Council on the SRL East EES process has included Community Consultation via a Shape Monash page from 5-30 November and two online information sessions with Council Officers on 10 and 17 December 2021.

This has been promoted by:

- October Monash Bulletin (delivered to 78,000 households);
- 41,474 flyers were distributed to properties within a 1.6km radius of each SRL proposed station;
- Alert to 507 Shape Monash subscribers on 5 November; and
- Project update to 191 project 'followers' on 12 November.

All methods referred to the Shape Monash page as the source of information and registration for community sessions.

The online information sessions on 10 and 17 December 2021 were well attended with 170 and 150 attendees respectively. A total of 110 questions were submitted in advance of the information sessions.

Ten submissions were received via Shape Monash and email.

A summary of questions asked and Officers responses from the online information sessions and of submissions Council received up to 30 November on SRL East EES can be found at Appendix 1. Issues raised have been incorporated in Council's submission where relevant. A report on question and feedback from both Council Information sessions will be made available on the Shape Monash page.

The SRLA held community drop-in information sessions at Clayton on 24 November and Glen Waverley on 25 November 2021. A webinar is also proposed by SRLA regarding navigating the EES on 3 December 2021.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Council has allocated \$500,000 from its 2021-22 budget for SRL East EES expenses including external consultancy, legal and design.

CONCLUSION

Broadly, Council supports the Suburban Rail Loop East project. Significant benefits of the Project include:

- increased transport choices for the community;
- rail based services to the Monash National Employment and Innovation Cluster (NEIC) that have previously not been provided; and
- opportunities for uplift and improvement in two key activity centres at Clayton and Glen Waverley.

However, Council has identified several issues in the draft EES and Amendment GC197, which it considers need to be addressed in order for the EES to provide for an acceptable outcome and in order to minimise the environmental effects of the Project.

This report provides a summary on the Council community consultation process undertaken by Officers regarding the SRL East EES and Council's EES submission for endorsement.

APPENDIX 1 – SRL East EES Council Community Consultation Summary (Shape Monash Submissions and Council Information Sessions, 10 & 17 November 2021)

APPENDIX 2 – SRL East EES Draft Submission Monash City Council