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BUSINESS
CHAMBER**

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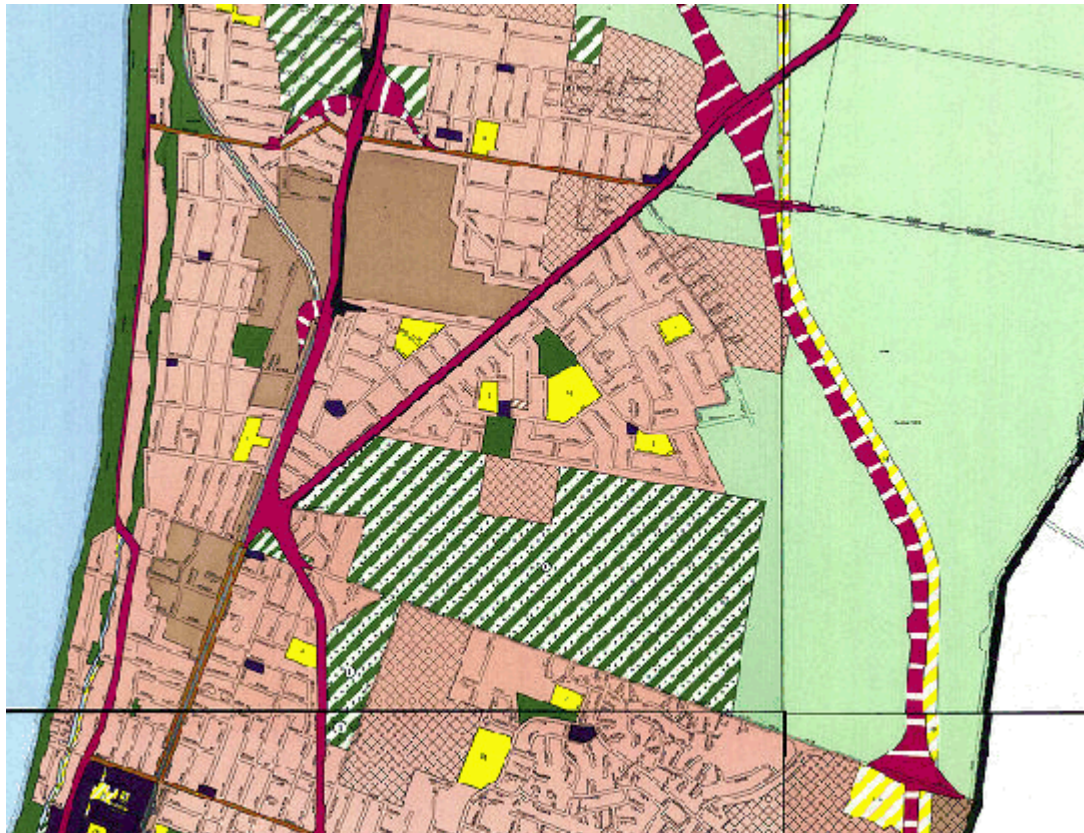
Submission

by the

Frankston Business Chamber

on the

Proposed Frankston Bypass



(Modification 3 to the 1961 Interim Development Order, gazetted on the 15 July 1964)

23rd June 2008

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Frankston Business Chamber **Submission on the proposed Frankston Bypass**

1.0 The Framework

Business in Frankston and the region depends on the efficient and orderly flow of traffic. The region is not economically strong, the population is in a lower socio economic category and local business and residents are at greater risk from crises such as increased fuel, mortgage and living costs. Due to these factors the reliance on local employment and maintaining a strong regional socio economic climate will become increasingly important over the next decade.

Contrary to popular belief, manufacturing in Australia and in Victoria is growing and this is the key to the service industry and business in the Frankston region. Any downturn in the ability to supply services and employment from this region and any increases in the cost of transport and labour movements will damage the economic and social well being of our community.

At present public transport between the Peninsula and Frankston, and between Frankston and employment sources in the South and South-Eastern corridors of Melbourne is largely ineffective. This means there will be continued reliance on private car transport, a pattern which will grow with the regions population and employment. It should be noted that Victoria's population growth is higher now than at any time in the past 40 years.

It is also worth remembering that Melbourne's boundary has been set in concrete and moved many times over the past 100 years. The Chamber believes that there is no planning certainty in the outer metropolitan boundary.

The Melbourne 2030 attempt to control urban expansion will fail spectacularly as housing non-affordability once again causes future governments to review policy and move the goal posts. Land banking developers have already learnt this, and it is popular knowledge that they have strategically purchased land on the peninsula and in Frankston for future development, which unfortunately does nothing to improve housing availability or affordability in the long term.

Council's own modeling through the FTCTMS has indicated that there will be severe traffic congestion issues at the end of EastLink and through Frankston Central if a Bypass is not provided.

In summary, as Council is well aware, the number of cars from the Peninsula and Melbourne using our roads will continue to grow and the effect on residents and business will be substantial.



2.0 What are our options?

Option 1 - Do nothing

If nothing is done, the cost in terms of congestion, delays and pollution will haunt Frankston residents and business for the next 50 years.

Problems associated with traffic congestion include; stress, increased accident risk, respiratory illness, noise and vibration pollution, time wasted due to delays and associated economic and social costs and greater potential for additional delays.

There will be significant present and future traffic congestion, pollution and increased carbon production with the opening of EastLink and the development of the Bulky Goods Development Site at the end of the Freeway will exacerbate these problems.

In other metropolitan areas Councils have required developers to construct underpasses, widen roadways and fund infrastructure works on major development sites to prevent traffic congestion. Unfortunately this Council has completely missed this opportunity with the developers of the Bulky Goods site in Frankston, and the development will have a major affect on local and through traffic for many years.

Option 2 - Upgrade existing arterial roads

This will require lane widening, compulsory acquisition of enormous tracts of land, planning scheme amendments, public exhibitions, an EES, Economic and Engineering feasibilities and enormous long range political will, commitment and financing.

Existing residents and businesses will be detrimentally affected by the new planning strategies, property values will be affected and political pressure will be massive. We estimate that this process could take five to ten years and it will not address traffic problems in the interim.

Option 3 - Build the bypass

Option 3 (a) Utilise the existing reservation

It is important that Council recognises that the planning history of the existing bypass reservation is considerate.

For more than 40 years Council and the community has planned for this bypass. There has been certainty regarding the alignment and affect on adjoining property.

For more than 40 years adjacent property owners and new purchasers have known that one day a bypass would be constructed in the reservation. Purchasers of land adjacent to the proposed bypass have paid reduced land prices and respectively reduced rates over the past 40 years, in recognition of the bypass proposal and future affect on amenity and land value.

If the bypass reservation is ultimately abandoned these owners will make windfall profits at the expense of the broader community.

Based on an examination of old Melbourne Metropolitan Board of Works town planning documents retained by the Department of Planning in Melbourne, the Chamber believes that there was no Frankston Council or community opposition to the introduction of the planning corridor for the bypass originally introduced in Modification 3 to the 1961 Interim Development Order, gazetted on the 15 July 1964. This was part of the implementation of the Melbourne Metropolitan Planning Scheme by the then Board of Works which commenced in 1954 and was finally approved as a Planning Scheme in 1968. There were public hearings held relating to the MMPS, however there are no records of these hearings at the Department of Planning.

Council's own Town Planning Officers and Engineers have worked with various Government Departments over the past 44 years planning for the construction of the Bypass.

It is a fact that there has been a significant amount of planning certainty regarding the proposed route of the bypass for a significant period of time.

It was interesting that a Pines resident stated that the bypass would increase CO² levels. The reality is that the bypass will reduce CO² production in the long term by reducing congestion on the existing road network. Not building the bypass will in fact add many thousands of tons of green house gases to our municipality (source SEITA).

Regarding the route of the bypass reservation through the Pines Reserve it is relevant that much of the Pines Reserve is not virgin bush land as many claim, with clearing, quarry activity and substantial and regular fires over a long period. The Council has conducted a number of surveys of this area in the 1980's involving the Planning, Engineering and By Laws Departments region, which identified the significant problem of stolen cars frequently dumped in the reserve and set alight, causing brush and bush fires. Early aerial photo's confirm the extensive clearing which was undertaken in the area and the areas of extensive fire damage. Much of the existing bush is re-growth over the past 50+ years.

It is claimed that the reserve contains the Southern Brown Bandicoot, however very recent studies have failed to find any trace of the animal. It is also claimed that the reserve is a habitat for the endangered New Holland Mouse, however this has also not been confirmed by recent studies.

Notwithstanding these factors it is doubtless that the environmental significance of any area of remnant vegetation is important and warrants thorough investigation.

The EES process currently being completed will provide a safety net for this process. Clearly not everyone can be satisfied when a large road is constructed, however the planning process which has been underway for more than 40 years needs to satisfy the wider needs of the wider community, not just those adjacent residents and environmentalists with specific local concerns.

3 (b) Modified alignment

Any deviation of the bypass reservation will require substantial compulsory acquisition, planning scheme amendments, public exhibitions, a possible EES, Economic and Engineering feasibilities and enormous long range political will, commitment and financing.

Unlike the existing reservation, there will be no planning certainty, property owners will be caught by surprise and there will be substantial economic and social costs.

Clearly it would be sensible to relocate the bypass away from areas of remnant native vegetation and residents if suitable land is available.

However, in this case the Chamber does not believe that a suitable alternative exists.

3.0 Toll Road

The Business Chamber has strongly opposed the creation of both EastLink and the Bypass as toll roads for many years. The cost of providing goods, services and employment from the Frankston Region will be higher than from northern and western regions of Melbourne, which do not have toll roads like the Monash and EastLink Freeways. Frankston failed to secure a toll free bypass or on/off ramps at Rutherford Road – unlike the 7 km of toll free bypasses and multiple free interchanges provided along the 39km EastLink route.

Why is it that Frankston residents and businesses have to pay for parking in Frankston Shopping Centre and pay for fast road access to the Melbourne CBD along the Monash Freeway and Eastern suburbs via EastLink? In this context the creation of another toll road would be a further economic burden and an impediment for growth and prosperity in this region.

4.0 Other Matters

Council's submission to the Inquiry into Managing Transport Congestion to the Victorian Competition and Efficiency Commission recognised that the proposed EastLink alignments do not provide for access



from the Seaford/Carrum Downs Industrial areas at Rutherford Road to the toll-free Frankston Freeway or provide on and off-ramps to the south.

This would particularly benefit freight traffic and improve safety in the adjoining Seaford residential precinct along Brunel Road.

The Chamber agrees with Council that upgrading of Rutherford Rd/Latham Rd/Hall Road is critical as EastLink linkages and recent industrial development will put considerable additional pressure on this connection.

The failure to secure a north bound and south bound on ramp to the Frankston Freeway from Rutherford Road in conjunction with the opening of EastLink is a significant oversight. Currently traffic from the Seaford/Carrum Downs Industrial areas heading North or South along the Frankston Freeway winds through the industrial estate, along a single lane residential distributor, past schools, a church and parks.

A section of this road has been identified as having high pedestrian risk and a 40km per hour speed limit during morning and afternoon peak periods has been introduced. Heavy industrial traffic along this road is completely unsuitable and the opportunity to eliminate it completely was overlooked. My observation is that the majority of industrial traffic and a large proportion of passenger vehicles completely ignore the 40km limit.

The opportunity to have these essential linkages and traffic congestion points addressed with construction of the bypass should not be overlooked. Implementation of the Freeway linkages at a later time will probably not happen and any road infrastructure improvements required after opening of EastLink will have to be funded by the Frankston community.

5.0 Summary

It is a fact that the reservation of land for the bypass 40 years ago resulted in protection and re-growth of bush that is now, not surprisingly, considered rare in our urban environment. The Government in their wisdom made provision for a future traffic corridor, however this very fact has protected the land from development, creating the very values that adjoining residents and environmentalists now want to protect.

This is not uncommon when planning major infrastructure projects 50 years in advance. Regulators are often damned if they try to plan for future road facilities and then later damned if they try to build the roadway in the resulting green corridors.

At the Chamber's recent Annual general meeting the following resolution was unanimously passed;



1. The Frankston Business Chamber strongly supports the construction of the Frankston Bypass based on the SEITA Option One as close as possible to the existing zoned road reservation through the Pines Flora and Fauna Reserve maintaining a minimum distance of 100 metres from the boundary of the Centenary Park Golf Course.
2. That the Bypass is urgently required and that utilisation of the existing Moorooduc Highway is totally inadequate given the EastLink and Bulky Goods developments.
3. The Frankston Business Chamber strongly opposes the introduction of tolls for this roadway which would be a significant economic burden for Frankston and Peninsula residents.
4. That the construction of the Bypass should make provision for;
 - a). A North and South on ramp to the Frankston Freeway at the EastLink/ Rutherford Road intersection.
 - b). Appropriate on and off ramps at strategic intersections such as Frankston-Dandenong Road, Cranbourne Road and Golf Links Roads for example to assist reducing local traffic congestion.
 - c). Upgrading of the Rutherford/Lathams/Halls Road linkage to EastLink.

Major Projects Committee –Frankston Business Chamber