

Request to be heard?: no

Full Name: Michael Simper

Organisation: Cilla & Dot

Affected property:

Attachment 1:

Attachment 2:

Attachment 3:

Comments:

• I am a business owner in the Watsonia Shopping Centre. • I am gravely concerned with the North East Link Reference Design proposal. I believe that construction of this magnitude, this close to our shopping centre, for such a long time (4-5 years) is guaranteed to seriously hurt my trade. This will threaten the viability of my business and that of the whole strip. • I strongly believe that the implementation of the NEL Reference design will have a dramatically negative impact on my business turnover and financial viability. It is a poor design, not consistent with wishes of Watsonia Shopping Centre traders. I am also dismayed at the unnecessary environmental destruction of so much public land (11+ hectares alone in Simpson Army Barracks.) • The Reference Design is also missing vital Urban Design principles that are necessary for a project of this size with such a huge impact on the local community amenity and connectivity. NEL is a once in a generation opportunity to create Watsonia as an integrated community focused centre. The Reference Design is isolating the different elements, devoid of any kind of harmony between pedestrian, bicycle, car and public transport use. • I strongly support the Watsonia Traders Association's Business and Traffic EPRs recommendations as detailed in our president's, Jeremy Richards, EES Submission. • Benefits of proposed Community Design featuring an extended tunnel need proper investigation. This hasn't happened so far. A project as big as this needs to be properly investigated to see if there's any chance of improving it. The Community Design is a better use of public land, is significantly less disruptive during most of construction, and is something that IMPROVES on our current situation. • Disadvantages of Reference Design (including trenched road). The Reference Design takes up too much land (forever), will hurt my business to the point of maybe making it and my neighbour's businesses unviable, and further divides my business from a significant part of my community. • Improvements to current Reference Design • Extending the TBM tunnel's northern portal North beyond Elder St. This allows for the existing urban character and connectivity to be retained and even enhanced. • Elimination of the Lower Plenty Road Interchange because of the loss of significant (>10 hectares) environmental area within Borlase Reserve and Simpson Army Barracks. • Allows for much greater connection for local streets onto the "free" Greensborough Road in both directions because of there no longer being a huge sunken ditch that they have to "bridge" over • The "Green Bridges" will not achieve their goal of being useful community spaces. They are simply a kind of expensive band-aid approach to initially poor design decisions. A vast majority of my customers are in full support of an extended tunnel type of solution once the pros and cons of each design have been fully explained to them.