In the matter of the
NORTH EAST LINK PROJECT
INQUIRY AND ADVISORY COMMITTEE

SUBMISSIONS ON BEHALF OF LA TROBE UNIVERSITY

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THE PROJECT

1. The Project begins on the Eastern Freeway at Springvale Road before connecting via a new roadway to the M80 Ring Road at Greensborough.

2. The main roadway will extend approximately 11 kilometres from the eastern end of the M80 to the Eastern Freeway at Bulleen and will be tolled.

3. The northern section of the new link will run at surface before descending into a cutting near Watsonia Road and into tunnels at Lower Plenty Road, and then transitioning to a viaduct structure just north of Koonung Creek to connect to the Eastern Freeway.

4. Connections will be provided between the freeway and Greensborough Bypass, Grimshaw Street, Lower Plenty Road and Manningham Road.

5. The business case for the Project identified the North East Link as forming part of a suite of multi-modal transport initiatives, including:
   a) the Hurstbridge railway line upgrade;
   b) the removal of level crossings;
   c) the Mernda railway line extension;
d) the M80 Ring Road upgrade;
e) the widening of Chandler Highway and Plenty Road; and
f) the Yan Yean Road upgrades.

6. The Environment Effects Statement (EES) identifies the need to provide reliable travel options and choices for Melburnians, including for cross-city travel:

Melbourne’s unprecedented population growth is increasing the demand for travel around the city. To remain a liveable, productive and competitive city – where residents have good access to jobs and services and business have good access to customers, suppliers and workers – Melbourne’s transport network must provide reliable travel options and choices. This includes strong connectivity for cross-city travel, not just travel to and from the CBD.¹

7. Despite this acknowledgement of the need to provide transport options and choices, the EES largely characterises the problem as the absence of a freeway-standard connection in the north-east of Melbourne:

At present, the lack of a freeway-standard connection in the north-east – often referred to as the ‘missing link’ in the city’s freeway network – is constraining the performance of Melbourne’s wider transport network and reducing connectivity and accessibility for households and businesses across the city.²

FRAMEWORK FOR THE INQUIRY

The IAC’s Terms of Reference

8. The North East Link Project (Project) Inquiry and Advisory Committee (IAC) has been appointed to inquire into and report on the Project in accordance with its Terms of Reference.

9. Specifically, the IAC is tasked with inquiring into and reporting on the environmental effects of the Project. This task includes:

a) reviewing and considering the EES and public submissions received in relation to the Project’s environmental effects;

b) considering and reporting on the potential environmental effects of the project, having regard to the evaluation objectives in the EES Scoping Requirements; and

c) identifying measures it considers necessary to avoid, mitigate or manage the environmental effects of the project:

1. The IAC is appointed by the Minister for Planning under section 9(1) of the EE Act to hold an inquiry into the environmental effects of the Project. The IAC is to:

a. review and consider the environment effects statement (EES) and public submissions received in relation to the environmental effects of the project;
b. consider and report on the potential environmental effects of the project, having to the evaluation objectives in the EES scoping requirements;
c. identify any measures it considers necessary to avoid, mitigate or manage the environmental effects of the project…

10. The procedures and requirements for the Project pursuant to section 3(3) of the Environment Effects Act 1978 include investigating potential environmental effects of the Public Works, including:

a) the feasibility of design alternatives;
b) relevant environmental mitigation and management measures—

for potential temporary and permanent effects on transport network and services, for residents and businesses in the vicinity of the proposed and related works and for the broader community:

(i) The EES is to document investigations of potential environmental effects of the Public Works, including the feasibility of design alternatives and relevant environmental mitigation and management measures, in particular for: …

f. potential temporary and permanent effects on transport network and services, both for residents and businesses located in the vicinity of the proposed and related works and for the broader community;

11. The matters to be investigated and documented in the EES will be set out more fully in scoping requirements:

(ii) The matters to be investigated and documented in the EES will be set out more fully in scoping requirements. Draft scoping requirements will be exhibited for at least 15 business days for public comment, before final scoping requirements are endorsed by the Minister for Planning.

The EES Scoping Requirements

12. These EES Scoping Requirements are comprehensive and cover the matters of concern to the University. For instance:

a) Section 4.2 “Transport capacity, connectivity and traffic management” fairly raises the key issues of concern to the University:
   - Disruption to pedestrian movements, bicycle connectivity, public transport, motor vehicle and freight traffic during construction.
   - Contribution to an integrated and sustainable transport system, including active transport.
   - Transport connectivity and capacity across the northeast of Melbourne, including network resilience and redundancy.
- Changes to local and arterial traffic distribution in the northeast of Melbourne …
- Connectivity of pedestrian and cycling networks across the northeast of Melbourne and opportunities for future linkages.
- Predicting future travel behaviour and transport trends over time

b) Design and mitigation measures have an appropriate focus on managing transport network conditions during the Project’s construction:

**Design and mitigation measures**
- Describe the proposed approach to managing transport network conditions during the project’s construction such as any staging proposed to maintain transport system function and the proposed nature and duration of diversions including for pedestrian and cycle links, …
- Describe any potential public transport priority treatments, such as signal priority and tram/bus lanes, to enhance public transport access and uptake and minimise any adverse impacts on traffic and other public transport users’ journeys including travel to stops and stations during construction.

c) The need to optimize and integrate the Project with the pedestrian and bicycle network is fairly acknowledged:
- Describe the proposed transport network design features and approach to optimise and integrate the project with the existing pedestrian and bicycle network, including any proposed solutions to enhance pedestrian and bicycle access in the vicinity of the project.
- Describe traffic calming or other management tools that could be used to modify travel behaviour on the project and local roads such as managed motorway systems, intelligent transport systems, tolls, clearways, truck curfews and bans.

d) The assessment of likely effects is also sufficient to address the University’s concerns:

**Assessment of likely effects**
- Characterise the extent, duration and types of disruptions during the construction phase.
- Undertake predictive modelling of regional, local and project transport network traffic flows following implementation of the project.
- Assess the project’s positive and negative effects on the existing transport network during construction… and operation including in relation to:
  - predicted travel time and vehicle movement outcomes, including performance at the project’s interchanges and key intersections adjacent to the proposed alignment;
  - effects of traffic management measures on local and arterial roads;
  - traffic safety, given the predicted transport network traffic flows following implementation of the project;
local access of the community to residential areas, schools, retail centres, activity centres, community facilities and open spaces;

- effects on tram, bus and train movements and access to stops and stations;

- accessibility and safety for pedestrians at road junctions and community facilities;

- connectivity, accessibility, function, experience and safety for cyclists and pedestrians including use of existing and new shared use paths, bridges and on-road bike paths;

- the overall geographic distribution and magnitude of changes to travel times and accessibility for road users;

- consistency with transport and urban plans (e.g. VicRoads Movement and Place Framework, Victorian Cycling Strategy (2018-2028), Plan Melbourne (2017-2050));

The IAC’s report

13. In fulfilling its role, the Terms of Reference [at 31] suggests the IAC must produce a report setting out its findings having regard to relevant legislation, policy and best practice.

14. In this report, the IAC makes recommendations:

a) to the design of the Project; and/or

b) specific measures that it considers necessary and appropriate to prevent, mitigate or offset adverse environmental effects:

   a. findings with respect to the environmental effects of the Project;
   
   b. findings as to capacity for the Project to achieve acceptable environmental outcomes having regard to legislation, policy, best practice, and the principles and objectives of ecologically sustainable development;
   
   c. recommendations as to any feasible modifications to the alignment or design of the Project that would offer beneficial outcomes;
   
   d. recommendations and/or specific measures that it considers necessary and appropriate to prevent, mitigate or offset adverse environmental effects having regard to legislation, policy, best practice, and the principles and objectives of ecologically sustainable development;

15. Its remit is therefore sufficiently broad to not only take into account the University’s concerns, but also to make the recommendations the University is seeking.

EVIDENCE

16. The University relies on the evidence of two witnesses:
a) Natalie MacDonald, the University’s Vice President (Strategy and Development) whose evidence is that:

1) Kingsbury Drive should be upgraded before the Project commences;
2) public transport to and from the University and in and around the Project should be improved; and
3) bike rider and pedestrian networks should be improved, including:
   a) an improved cycle-priority link between the University and Macleod Train Station and to the east of the NEL;
   b) a new link between the University and Watsonia town centre and Greensborough; and
   c) improved links south of Plenty Road to the Main Yarra Trail.

b) Knowles Tivendale, independent transport planner, whose evidence is that:

1) the public transport in, and to, Melbourne’s north-east is inadequate, which is causing severe congestion in the La Trobe National Employment and Innovation Cluster (La Trobe NEIC);
2) this poor public transport service will be exacerbated during the Project’s construction;
3) short and long term bus network improvements should be implemented to relieve impacts of construction and overall congestion issues in Melbourne’s north east;
4) bus lanes on various roads are of critical importance to the University—even those bus lanes that are far away, because the University community is spread across the broader Melbourne area;
5) Kingsbury Drive plays a significant strategic role in relieving congestion on the local road network;
6) the EES and supporting documents are deficient in discussing improvements to the bicycle and pedestrian trail networks; and
7) improved trail networks to La Trobe University should be implemented, ideally prior to the commencement of the Project.
LA TROBE UNIVERSITY IS A SIGNIFICANT ASSET TO THE REGION

The University is one of the north’s largest employers

17. Since its establishment in 1967, La Trobe’s Melbourne campus has played a crucial role in shaping the city’s north. This role has been recognised in successive Metropolitan Strategies, including:
   a) Plan Melbourne;
   b) Melbourne 2030; and

18. La Trobe has long been recognised as a key regional focus for the education and research sectors.

19. In Plan Melbourne 2014, the University was identified as a key part of the La Trobe NEIC. The La Trobe NEIC is one of Melbourne’s seven recognised NEICs.

20. As Natalie MacDonald explains, the La Trobe NEIC contains over 28,000 jobs (with the University as the Cluster’s largest employer) and includes major areas such as the Heidelberg Activity Centre and the Austin and Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital:
   8. The La Trobe NEIC contains over 28,000 jobs (with over 7,000 of these at La Trobe University) and includes Heidelberg Activity Centre, the Austin and Heidelberg Repat Hospital, the Northland Urban Renewal Precinct and the West Heidelberg Industrial Precinct.

The University has significant plans to become the University City of the Future

21. The University’s August 2014 Master Plan details La Trobe’s vision for future development. This vision is focused on creating a ‘University City of the Future’, which will serve as a focal point of the La Trobe NEIC and Melbourne’s north more broadly:
   10. Our vision is to create a University City of the Future at our 235-hectare campus where study, research, development and sharing of ideas to solve real-world regional and global challenges.
   11. The central academic precinct, where purely academic activities have taken place, will be a thing of the past - there will be no boundaries to either location or activity.
   12. We will create a world-class setting by becoming a ‘living laboratory’: a co-location and collaboration with industry and partners who will develop, test and adopt new technologies.
   13. Our University City of the Future will have people at its core: a place where relationships are forged between young entrepreneurs, mentors, supporters, and funders. It will serve as a focal point for the University and the local community to connect with each other and the wider world.

22. Improvements to transport services and infrastructure are essential to realise this vision, which requires La Trobe’s University City of the Future to be properly connected with Victoria and the nation.
23. As Ms MacDonald explains, transport is the number one issue that could stymie the realisation of this vision, with improved universal access fundamental to the University’s ongoing viability:

16. Our position close to the M80 Northern Ring Freeway and this project, the planned North-East Link Project, means we can easily access Victoria’s regional transport and distribution network. Our vision is to integrate with both the existing and new transport infrastructure, connecting the precinct to the state and the nation.

17. It is clear to us that the number one issue for our University City of the Future is transport – in particular, improved universal access for all our stakeholders.

18. Enabling our students, staff, commercial partners and community genuine universal access to our University City of the Future is critical and is fundamental to our ongoing viability.

Kingsbury Drive is of significance to the University and the region

24. Kingsbury Drive runs from the north west of the University at its intersection with Plenty Road, through to Waiora Road to the south east of the University:

25. It is presently developed with a single lane in each direction, but it is understood to be sufficient width to accommodate a dual carriage way in each direction:
26. Kingsbury Drive is a significant regional asset and will become even more important following completion of the world-class La Trobe Sports Park, and as the University transitions into a University City of the Future:

35. Kingsbury Drive is a significant regional road asset under the ownership of VicRoads. It runs from Plenty Road at the north western end of our campus through to Waiora Road to the east.

36. Currently Kingsbury Drive bisects the campus leaving the La Trobe Sports Park to the west disconnected from the main part of our campus to the east.

27. This can be seen in the following zoning/cadastral plan in which the Public Use Zone (Schedule 2--Education) is bisected by Kingsbury Drive:

28. Kingsbury Drive is a Road Zone Category 1:
29. Kingsbury Drive is not only a vital transport corridor to access the University, but a potential barrier between the learning hub to the east and the sporting facilities to the west:

30. Kingsbury Drive has also been identified by the Victorian Planning Authority and State Government as playing a crucial role in connecting the Project and the La Trobe NEIC:

43. At present, traffic bound for the NEIC from the north will typically use Plenty Road, Kingsbury Drive and Waterdale Road. This contributes to congestion along Plenty Road, increasing journey times for through traffic from the north to destinations south of the precinct.

44. However, Kingsbury Drive plays a critical role in the connecting NEL to the Cluster, a fact that has been identified by the Victorian Planning Authority and the State Government.
31. The importance of Kingsbury Drive as a key corridor for movement to and from the University is also recognised by Knowles Tivendale, who notes policy 4.1.3 of *Plan Melbourne* focuses on strengthening Melbourne’s key boulevards, like Kingsbury Drive:

6.4. Within *Plan Melbourne*, Policy 4.1.3 refers to strengthening the city’s boulevards (such as Plenty Road and Kingsbury Drive). Within the La Trobe NEIC, Kingsbury Drive has long been considered a key corridor for movement to and from La Trobe University that also provides for some limited through movement functions.

32. As Natalie MacDonald describes, there is consensus within the University’s Master Plan and the *Victoria Planning Authority’s Draft Framework Plan* for the La Trobe NEIC (March 2017) that planning and design with respect to Kingsbury Drive should focus on designing a link between the NEL and the La Trobe NEIC that has a slower speed environment and fulfils a place-based function:

45. The existing La Trobe University Campus Master Plan (2014) and the Victorian Planning Authority’s Draft Framework Plan for the La Trobe NEIC both identify the importance of planning and designing such a link to have a slower speed environment that fulfils a place-based function.

33. The successful realisation of La Trobe’s Master Plan (and therefore the continued viability and success of a key player in the La Trobe NEIC) is contingent upon a decreasing reliance on cars to travel to and from the University:

46. The 2014 University Master Plan centres on La Trobe’s transition from a campus to a vibrant and dynamic University City of the Future, created from a network of integrated University neighbourhoods.

47. The Master Plan is predicated on decreasing reliance on cars and more trips being made to and from the University on public and active transport.

48. Kingsbury Drive will be lined with buildings, health and hospital facilities, research facilities as well as the Sports Park. It will be alive with activity from early morning until late in the evening, seven days a week.

49. According to the La Trobe University Master Plan Kingsbury Drive corridor should have:

   a) a focus on creating a slower speed boulevard;
   b) an increase foot traffic necessitating a slowing of traffic;
   c) an increase in signalised crossing points;
   d) an upgraded pedestrian footpaths;
   e) on-road cycle lanes; and
   f) enough space for operating buses.

34. These plans for Kingsbury Drive are consistent with Melbourne’s strategic planning ‘Plan Melbourne 2017 – 2050’:

   a) Policy 3.1.3 ‘Improve arterial road connections across Melbourne for all road users of *Plan Melbourne 2017 – 2050*’; and
Policy 4.1.3 ‘Strengthening the city’s boulevards’.

They are similarly consistent with the Victoria Planning Authority’s (VPA) Draft Framework Plan for the La Trobe NEIC (La Trobe NEIC Framework Plan), which proposes, amongst other things, a widening of Kingsbury Drive in transforming the transport network in Melbourne’s north-east to support the economic growth of the cluster:3

La Trobe wants the IAC to make recommendations for the improvement of Kingsbury Drive that accord with these planning objectives and adequately reflect the significance of this boulevard as a regional asset.

THE UNIVERSITY SUPPORTS THE PROJECT

While the University broadly supports the Project, it has a number of significant concerns and suggestions for improvements. If left unaddressed, these may have consequences for the University, the La Trobe NEIC and the region more broadly.

The University believes that to fix the transport problems of the region more than just a toll road is required. Rather, a multi-faceted solution involving improving public transport services and infrastructure, cycling and pedestrian pathways, as well as upgrading existing roads is essential.

Some of these improvements cannot wait until the Project is delivered. As Ms MacDonald explains:

22. The State has identified a transport problem and proposed a project costing around $16B to fix it. However, we believe that to fix the problem requires more than a toll road.

23. It requires an integrated transport solution involving bus services and priority infrastructure improvements, cycling and pedestrian pathways as well as upgrades to existing roads.

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24. Considered together, an integrated transport solution provides the way to manage and mitigate the environmental effects of the project.

25. However, a truly integrated transport response can’t wait until the NEL project is delivered – it needs to be implemented now, during construction, as well as for when the NEL project is up and running.

THE PROJECT’S TREATMENT OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT SHOULD BE IMPROVED

40. More particularly, the University wants the Project to include improvements to:

a) public transport services to and from the University and the NEIC to Box Hill and Swinburne University (Glenferrie Train Station);

b) public transport infrastructure around the NEL alignment giving priority to public transport; and

c) improvement to the operation of bus routes in the region including bus-queue jump infrastructure at traffic lights and bus priority lanes along key major roads, including Bell Street, Manningham Road and Bulleen Road.

Planning policy promotes integrated transport

41. In addition to obtaining statutory approvals and Works Approval in accordance with the provisions of the Environment Protection Act 1970, the Project requires planning approval.

42. As the Terms of Reference provide, the required planning approval is in the form of a draft Planning Scheme Amendment (PSA). The draft PSA proposes planning controls and provisions that will allow for, and facilitate, the use and development of the Project in accordance with an incorporated document to be included in the relevant planning schemes:

Planning approval process

14. The IAC is to consider and provide advice on the draft [Planning Scheme Amendment]. The draft PSA proposes planning controls and provisions that will allow for, and facilitate, the use and development of the Project in accordance with an incorporated document which is proposed to be included in the Banyule, Boroondara, Manningham, Nillumbik, Whitehorse, Whittlesea and Yarra planning schemes.

43. Any form of planning approval requires the decision maker to engage with the Planning Policy Framework of the relevant Planning Scheme.
Clause 71.02-3 of the Planning Scheme “Operation Of The Planning Policy Framework” requires planning authorities to integrate decision making and balance conflicting objectives in favour of net community benefit:

71.02-3 Integrated decision making

Society has various needs and expectations such as land for settlement, protection of the environment, economic wellbeing, various social needs, proper management of resources and infrastructure. Planning aims to meet these needs and expectations by addressing aspects of economic, environmental and social wellbeing affected by land use and development.

Planning and responsible authorities should endeavour to integrate the range of planning policies relevant to the issues to be determined and balance conflicting objectives in favour of net community benefit and sustainable development for the benefit of present and future generations. However, in bushfire affected areas, planning and responsible authorities must prioritise the protection of human life over all other policy considerations.

Several clauses within the State Planning Policy Framework require a holistic approach to planning transport network and major transport projects:

a) Clause 18.01-1S “Land use and transport planning” includes strategies to:

- Develop integrated and accessible transport networks to connect people to jobs and services and goods to market.
- Plan urban development to make jobs and services more accessible by:
  - Ensuring equitable access is provided to developments in accordance with forecast demand, taking advantage of all available modes of transport and to minimise adverse impacts on existing transport networks and the amenity of surrounding areas.
  - Coordinating improvements to public transport, walking and cycling networks with the ongoing development and redevelopment of urban areas.
  - Requiring integrated transport plans to be prepared for all new major residential, commercial and industrial developments.
- Integrate public transport services and infrastructure into new development.
- Improve transport links that strengthen the connections to Melbourne and adjoining regions.

b) Clause 18.01-2S “Transport system” includes strategies to:

- Incorporate the provision of public transport, cycling and walking infrastructure in all major new state and local government road projects.
- Locate transport routes to achieve the greatest overall benefit to the community to making the best use of existing social, cultural and economic infrastructure, minimising impacts on the environment and optimising accessibility, safety, emergency access, service and amenity.
Facilitate infrastructure that connects and improves train services between key regional cities and townships and Melbourne.

Ensure that pedestrian and cyclist access to public transport is facilitated and safeguarded.

Ensure the design, construction and management of all transport modes reduces environmental impacts.

Consider all modes of travel, including walking, cycling, public transport, taxis and private vehicles (passenger and freight) in providing for access to new developments.

c) **Clause 18.02-2S** “Public Transport” has the objective of facilitating greater use of public transport:

**Objective**

To facilitate greater use of public transport and promote increased development close to high-quality public transport routes.

d) Relevant strategies to achieve this objective include to:

Maintain and strengthen passenger transport networks.

Connect activity centres, job rich areas and outer suburban areas through high-quality public transport.

Improve access to the public transport network by:

- Ensuring integration with walking and cycling networks.
- Providing end-of-trip facilities for pedestrians and cyclists at public transport interchanges.

Plan for bus services to meet the need for local travel.

Ensure development supports the delivery and operation of public transport services.

Provide for bus routes and stops and public transport interchanges in new development areas.

e) **Clause 18.02-2R** “Principal Public Transport Network” includes strategies to:

Facilitate high-quality public transport access to job-rich areas.

Maximise the use of existing infrastructure and increase the diversity and density of development along the Principal Public Transport Network, particularly at interchanges, activity centres and where principal public transport routes intersect.

Identify and plan for new Principal Public Transport Network routes.

Support the Principal Public Transport Network with a comprehensive network of local public transport.

Plan for local bus services to provide for connections to the Principal Public Transport Network.

Improve the operation of the Principal Public Transport Network by providing for:

- A metro-style rail system.
• Extended tram lines and the establishment of a light rail system.
• Road space management measures including transit lanes, clearways, stops and interchanges.

f) **Clause 18.02-3S** “Road System” has the objective of managing the road system to achieve integration, choice and balance:

**Objective**
To manage the road system to achieve integration, choice and balance by developing an efficient and safe network and making the most of existing infrastructure.

g) Relevant strategies to achieve this objective include:
Make better use of roads for all road users through the provision of wider footpaths, bicycle lanes, transit lanes (for buses and taxis) and specific freight routes.

Selectively expand and upgrade the road network to provide for:
• Higher standards of on-road public transport.

Improved key cross-town arterial links in the outer suburbs including circumferential and radial movement.

Ensure access to jobs and services in growth areas and outer suburban areas by improving roads for all road users.

*Plan Melbourne*

46. “Plan Melbourne 2017 – 2050” (*Plan Melbourne*) sets out the State Government’s strategic planning guide for the next 30 years.

47. Outcome Three in Plan Melbourne focuses on integrated transport systems connecting people to jobs and services, and goods to market:

Outcome 3 Melbourne has an integrated transport system that connects people to jobs and services and goods to market

48. Melbourne’s transport system needs the capacity to cope with an additional 10.4 million trips a day by 2050. To achieve this, the State Government recognises the policy imperative of increasing the share of trips by public transport, walking and cycling so that people become less reliant on private vehicles:

Melbourne’s transport system needs the capacity to cope with an additional 10.4 million trips a day by 2050—up from the current figure of 12.5 million trips a day.

To achieve that, Melbourne needs a huge, well planned investment that enables the city to grow whilst meeting the transport challenges.⁴

49. It says that the share of trips by public transport, as well as active transport modes such as walking and cycling, must increase:

For Melbourne to continue to be a globally connected and competitive city with strong and healthy communities and higher social and economic participation, the share of trips by public transport, as well as active transport modes such as walking and cycling, must increase.

Melbourne needs one reliable, connected transport network where services are regular and easy to use, timetables are integrated, and major interchanges work better.

50. Plan Melbourne recognises that the simplicity of the public transport network and the quality of connections between public transport modes can make a major difference to people’s willingness to use public transport:

The efficiency, simplicity of the network and the quality of connections between public transport modes can make a major difference to people’s willingness to use public transport and expand the range of jobs and services they access.5

51. Further, Plan Melbourne recognises that:

a) the best performing services are typically those where buses connect as part of an integrated public transport network; and

b) where improvements to bus networks have already been delivered, there have been substantial increases in patronage:

In many parts of the city, buses provide a high-quality transport service and are likely to play a greater role in the future. The best performing services are typically those where buses connect as part of an integrated public transport network. Where improvements to bus networks have already been delivered, there have been substantial increases in patronage. This approach will continue as the city develops and demand grows.6

52. Specific mention is made to the need to:

a) improve the public transport system by improving connections to national employment and innovation clusters; by

b) progressively upgrading the bus network, with a focus on:

1) increased frequency;

2) increased priority and right-of-ways;

3) reliability;

4) improved travel times; and

5) connectivity:7

5 Ibid, page 66.
6 Ibid, page 66.
7 Policy 3.1.2 ‘Provide high-quality public transport access to job-rich areas’
Priorities to improve the public transport system include modernising and strengthening the tram and bus network by:

- improving connections to the national employment and innovation clusters and urban renewal precincts—particularly those in the expanded central city and other job-rich areas—will increase business and employee work-choice location and improve business-to-business and business-to-consumer transactions …

- progressively upgrading the bus network, with a focus on increased frequency, increased priority and right-of-ways and reliability, and improved travel times and connectivity.8

53. Plan Melbourne calls for strategic cycling corridors across metropolitan Melbourne:

   Strategic cycling corridors have been identified and are progressively being developed as the key, direct cycling links across metropolitan Melbourne.9

54. It is self-evident that safer, more bicycle friendly environments will encourage cycling as a mode of transport:

   Creating safer, bicycle-friendly environments will encourage groups currently under-represented—including women, families and school-age children—to consider cycling.

*The Victorian Infrastructure Plan*

55. In October 2017, the ‘Victorian Infrastructure Plan’ was published by the Secretary to the Department of Premier and Cabinet (Infrastructure Plan). The Infrastructure Plan provides a strategic perspective to the State’s infrastructure program. It identifies nine key sectors to organise these priorities, one of which is transport.

56. The Infrastructure Plan highlights the need to establish an integrated and multi-modal transport system:

   Establishing an integrated and multi-modal transport system. Investing in future transport technologies to meet the needs of Victorian commuters.10

57. More particularly, the Infrastructure Plan seeks to connect regional Victoria by consulting communities to identify future bus service needs, including planning for new routes and addressing links with other public transport modes.11

*The VPA’s Draft Framework Plan for the La Trobe NEIC*

58. In March 2017, the VPA released its Draft Framework Plan for the La Trobe NEIC (La Trobe NEIC Framework Plan) following consultation with stakeholders, including La Trobe University.

59. At this stage, the Framework Plan has not been finalised.

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8 Policy 3.1.2 ‘Provide high-quality public transport access to job-rich areas’.
9 Policy 3.1.6 ‘Support cycling for commuting’
60. It is an important step in the implementation of Plan Melbourne and incorporates a shared vision and plan of action for the La Trobe NEIC:

The La Trobe Cluster will transform from a place with a number of separate important institutions and places to an integrated, hyper-productive city focusing on boosting jobs in education and research, health and advanced manufacturing. Strategic investment in transport improvements, amenity and sustainable initiatives will accelerate growth and prosperity in the region.

61. Relevantly, a guiding principle in the realisation of this vision is to promote integrated transport networks and active modes of movement to, from, and within the cluster:

P4 Integrated transport networks that support economic growth with a hierarchy of road users supporting sustainable and active modes of movements.

62. The first of six “Strategic Outcomes” to achieve this vision is to transform the transport network to support the cluster’s economic growth. The focus of this transformation is to provide for a substantial shift to walking, cycling and public transport modes:

**Strategic Outcome 1: A transformed transport network that supports the economic growth of the cluster**

Good transport connections to and within the La Trobe Cluster are critical to its success. The precinct will require a substantial shift to increased walking, cycling and public transport modes to alleviate congestion, promote commercial activity and ensure the cluster is a destination for attracting new employment.

With a place-making role and a focus on the 10km radius of connectivity, the transport vision for the La Trobe cluster and other clusters in metropolitan Melbourne will form an overlapping network within the city.

The network of north-south and east-west arterial roads, the South Morang and Hurstbridge rail lines, the Reservoir to La Trobe University shuttle bus and the 903 smart bus route (Altona-Mordialloc) form an excellent foundation on which to overlay more convenient connections and new transport modes. A range of big infrastructure and small interventions will be required to support future economic growth.

63. The proposed actions to achieve this outcome are to:

a) prepare an integrated transport plan that prioritises public transport, walking and cycling:

1.1 Prepare an integrated transport plan that:

- prioritises public transport, walking and cycling
- provides for public transport links between employment precincts and to other activity nodes within a 10 km radius
- provides for improvements to roads which allow for better public transport movements (such as bus lanes) and tree planting
- provides for new and upgraded links across Darebin Creek.

b) determine potential links into the La Trobe NEIC from the NEL:
1.2 Determine potential links into the cluster from the North-East Link following the Victorian Government’s decision on the final route.

64. Further, Strategic Outcome 6 “Structure plans that support future growth of the key education, health, employment precincts and activity centres” supports La Trobe’s vision of becoming the ‘University City of the Future’ by:

   a) supporting La Trobe in preparing a development plan that provides for a university town and integration with its surroundings;

   b) ensuring that planning in surrounding areas has regard to the objectives of La Trobe’s Master Plan; and

   c) investigating public transport options to better serve the La Trobe University Precinct.

   6.4.1 Support La Trobe University in preparing a structure/development plan for its Bundoora Campus to provide for more student housing, a university town and integration with its surroundings to link the residential and business communities.

   6.4.2 Ensure planning for surrounding areas, particularly in the Heidelberg West Industrial Precinct has regards for the objectives of the La Trobe University Master Plan.

   6.4.3 Investigate high-capacity public transport options serving La Trobe University’ residential, health, research, education and sports precincts.

The Project documents and EES do not adequately consider integrated transport

65. Despite the acknowledgement of the need for integrated transport services, the Project reference documents and EES lack adequate consideration of many transport improvement options. In practice, the Project places an overwhelming emphasis on a single modal solution while ignoring alternatives that could help to mitigate the congestion the very same Project is seeking to address:

   1.4. Disproportionate effort has been put into designing detail of one modal solution, without sufficient analysis of other modes in the corridor and how they contribute to the problem or could be applied to reduce the severity of congestion.

   1.5. The actual problem that is causing traffic congestion in the region is a very poorly designed public transport network in Melbourne’s north east and the lack of investment in this network to match population growth over the last 40 years.

66. The University is therefore disappointed by the narrowness of the Project’s focus, and consider the Project and EES to be inadequate in its lack of provision for any real public transport improvements for movement into the northern region of the Project alignment:

   58. The EES document is a major disappointment for the university in relation to public transport – both during the construction period and after the project is delivered.
59. The current NEL design takes for granted that current public transport options are fit for purpose, and there is no provision for any real improvement to public transport services for movement into the northern region of the alignment.

Public transport into the La Trobe NEIC is already poor

67. A fundamental problem in the region is access to transport options.

68. Ms MacDonald notes that only 24% of the University staff, students and business partners travel by public transport, which is significantly lower than the reliance on public transport at other Melbourne universities:

19. Our annual travel survey of staff, students and business partners revealed that 67% of people who travel to our Bundoora campus come by private vehicle. 24% come by public transport.

20. Compared with other Universities, this 24% travelling by public transport is significantly lower and the reliance on people to travel to campus by car is neither environmentally nor economically sustainable. As an example in contrast, Monash University’s Clayton campus (a suburban based campus similar La Trobe Bundoora) reports that they have 42% travelling by public transport.

69. Mr Tivendale agrees, saying that a lack of good regional and inter-regional public transport services is causing an overly high reliance on cars that causes congestion in the region:

4.3. This high reliance on cars for personal transport in the region contributes significantly to the congestion experienced in the NEL corridor and around La Trobe NEIC.

70. Figures 4 and 5 show the contrast in accessibility for cars:

**Figure 4 – Private Vehicle (PV) access to La Trobe NEIC**
compared to Figure 5 showing accessibility for public transport:

**Figure 5 – Public Transport (PT) Accessibility to La Trobe NEIC**

71. It is clear that the current public transport network is not meeting customer needs.

72. Mr Tivendale attributes this to two factors:
   a) lack of network connectivity; and
   b) poor service quality:
      4.7.1. lack of network connectivity (journeys take a long time because there is no
direct connection between obvious origins and destinations); and
      4.7.2. public transport services are unattractive in terms of service quality (including
frequency, journey time reliability and transfer penalties), for example even
though the SmartBus has bus lanes from Doncaster all the way to Manningham
Road Bridge, there are no express buses, which makes every journey slower
(because the timetable has to be written as if the bus stops very often). Then to
actually get to La Trobe University a passenger needs to wait at Heidelberg
with minimal protection from the weather for up to 30 minutes for their
connecting service on Route 551.

73. The irony of the fact that the IAC had to put on its own bus service to get participants
from Box Hill to this hearing should be lost on no-one.

74. 5,000 staff and students from the University live south of the Yarra River and catching
public transport can take up to four times longer than driving a car.

75. These deficiencies in public transport for people travelling from south of the Yarra
contribute to an increase in commutes via private car:
4.32. These public transport network deficiencies contribute to an increase in the number of parents driving their children to school, and a greater number of students at Swinburne, Deakin and La Trobe Universities are ‘forced’ to cross the Yarra in cars rather than on public transport.

**This poor service will be exacerbated during construction**

76. The EES is, however, unclear on how specifically existing, already insufficient, public transport services will be impacted during construction.

77. The impact of Project construction on public transport passengers across the region has the potential to be severe and is listed in EES *Technical Report A - Traffic and Transport Impact Assessment* (TTIA) as a ‘high risk’ as shown in Figure 17 below:

Figure 17 – The EES recognises that construction poses a high risk to public transport – Extract from EES

78. According to Mr Tivendale, a clear understanding of what these impacts are, and how they will be mitigated, is vital:

5.3. A clear understanding of what these impacts are – and how they will be mitigated – is vital.

79. It is of serious concern then that the EES documentation barely address the impact that construction will have on public transport:

5.4. The EES Documentation barely addresses the impacts of construction activities on public transport. It focusses only on Watsonia Station car park, and the Doncaster Park and Ride. This is completely inadequate with regard to assisting the community [sic] understand the project impacts and does not assist the IAC to consider the environmental impacts of the project in a robust way.

80. This concern is shared by NELA’s own peer review of the TTIA:

5.5. This view of the paucity of the public transport analysis in the EES and supporting documents is shared by NELA’s own peer review of the [Traffic and Transport Impact Assessment] – which uses implicitly critical language to describe the analysis completed to date as shown in Figure 18 below.

Figure 18 – Failure to assess construction impacts on public transport – Extract from EES
81. Like Mr Tivendale and the NELA peer review, La Trobe is also concerned that construction will exacerbate the already poor public transport services. As Ms MacDonald explains, this would be an unacceptable environmental impact for the University’s staff and students, who are already adversely affected by a limited public transport service:

64. Our students are facing seven years of disruption and if the performance of public transport services declines further, they will be more adversely impacted than any other commuter type.

65. This will significantly impact thousands of our students and staff every day. This is not an acceptable outcome.

82. Mr Tivendale explains that the impact of adding three (3) minutes to a bus journey, as is required for the rebuild of the Doncaster Road bridge over the Eastern Freeway, can have severe consequences:

5.12. Operating the buses for the additional 3 minutes that the TTIA estimates will be added to the 3,302 services per week is an additional burden to government. This estimate totals around $500,000 per annum or equivalent to 10% of the State budget for bus improvements over the forward estimates (Victorian Government, 2019).

5.13. The additional 3 minutes of travel time caused by the construction impact also has a negative impact on the community estimated to be around $1.5M in passenger time costs per annum.

5.14. Lastly, the additional three minutes of bus travel time (for no benefit) would cause some passengers to switch to driving, further increasing traffic congestion on the regional road network. A rough estimate of this number would be 500 passengers per day switching to driving (if all else remained equal).

5.15. Overall the inadequate analysis of construction impacts on public transport, when those impacts would soak up more than 10% of the State budget for public transport improvements is a significant oversight that needs to be addressed.

83. Given the high risk of adverse impacts to public transport caused by construction, and the severity of these likely impacts, it is unacceptable that the EES fails to adequately consider these impacts. As such, the IAC is urged to recommend that the EES be developed to include public transport impacts prior to endorsement:
5.16. The IAC should require the EES to include adequate analysis of public transport impacts prior to it being endorsed.

5.17. The lack of adequate detail of the impact of construction upon public transport operations is further evidence that public transport has not been considered in an adequate way within the NEL Project or EES and supporting documents.

The impacts on public transport during construction can be mitigated

84. As set out previously, the EES and Project documents do not propose to improve public transport services during construction. Mr Tivendale believes this should be a priority and would elevate the impacts during construction:

7.1. It is stark that no material action has been proposed by NEL Project that would help to alleviate the traffic congestion within the next decade prior to the opening of NEL.

85. Further, the improvements that could be made are relatively inexpensive to implement:

7.12. Urgent improvements to the bus network and service levels are required. These are essential to ensuring that the region can cope through the construction phases of the project.

7.13. These north east links are not difficult to define and are not expensive to provide. They have been defined and costing has been discussed with government. Three examples that could be implemented rapidly are express routes from La Trobe NEIC to:

7.13.1. Box Hill via Heidelberg, Bulleen and Doncaster; and…

7.13.3. Swinburne University Glenferrie Campus via Ivanhoe and Alphington.

7.14. These routes would significantly improve public transport connections across the Chandler Highway, Burke Road and Manningham Street bridges and provide long distance connections that will reduce traffic congestion in the NEL corridor and Study Area.

7.15. The IAC should consider how these north east link additions to the public transport network can assist the NEL Project to mitigate the construction impacts that will arise from the project. Timing of introduction of the services should also be considered given that it takes 18-24 months for the public to become familiar with new public transport services, and for patronage demand to reach a plateau.

Road replacement buses could further mitigate impacts from construction

86. In the Level Crossing Removal Project replacement bus services were provided to rail users when their line was affected. Mr Tivendale believes a similar model of ‘Road Replacement Bus Services’ should be adopted to supplement the transport capacity during construction:

8.1. When various agencies (such as the Level Crossing Removal Project or Yarra Trams) need to interrupt a transport network for upgrades or improvements they provide an alternative service to cater for some of the travel demand. Typically these are in the form of “Rail Replacement Buses”.

26
The Project entrenches car dependence in the region

87. As Mr Tivendale explains, the Project further entrenches car dependence in the north east region of Melbourne despite an underlying demand for public transport services and the significance economic consequences for those living in the region that could result from this dependence:

12.12. The model outputs show the mode split between public transport and car use remaining static ([Traffic and Transport Impact Assessment] page 3). This is surprising given that very few public transport improvements within the region have been included in the model. This highlights the underlying demand for public transport services that would increase if improved network and increased service levels are provided.

Long term improvement to public transport services should be made

88. As previously mentioned, greater support for more accessible public transport options is essential so that La Trobe and the La Trobe NEIC can thrive:

9.2. The EES TTIA notes on page 191 that “The growth in public transport usage is also lower in the north-east (85 per cent) when compared with metropolitan Melbourne (112 per cent)”.

9.3. This is the critical problem that the NEL is trying to address. The lower growth in public transport patronage implies higher growth in car use, and more congestion. The EES and supporting documents seem to invite the reader to ponder: if only there was something that could be done to improve public transport performance.

89. The University has been working with government agencies since 2012 to develop land use and transport strategies that support the economic development of La Trobe and the La Trobe NEIC. Most recently, La Trobe assisted the Department of Transport to develop a Future Transport Network plan. As Ms MacDonald explains:

30. The University has been working with various government agencies since 2012 in developing a range of land use and transport strategies that support the economic development of the University and more recently the La Trobe NEIC.

31. Most recently we assisted the Department of Transport to develop a Future Transport Network plan for the NEIC in late 2018 in collaboration with:
   a) The Victorian Planning Authority;
   b) Public Transport Victoria;
   c) Vic Roads; and
   d) Darebin, Banyule, Whittlesea Councils.

90. Mr Tivendale believes that the region’s public transport problem can be addressed within the scope of the Project. Such an approach accords with the planning policy previously set out, especially clause 18.01-2S “Transport System”, which calls for the incorporation of public transport, cycling and walking infrastructure in all new major state road projects.
Specifically, Mr Tivendale highlights the need for the EES and Project documents to consider a long-term bus network, which he believes will have significant long-term and immediate benefits:

9.4. There are some things that can be done, and the NEL Project includes a significant one in the Eastern Freeway Busway. It is incongruous that the Busway features significantly, but the same solution is not applied to solve the same problem when it comes to travel demand from north to south across the Yarra River.

... 

9.7. To assess the environmental sustainability of the project the EES and supporting documents need to consider a long term bus network and how it would serve the NEL corridor, more specifically how it would use the new infrastructure being planned (including the busway and tunnels).

Accordingly, Mr Tivendale urges the IAC to:

a) reaffirm the importance of the bus connections to Chandler Highway and Thompsons Road;\(^{12}\)

b) direct the Project proponent to include a direct bus connection from the busway onto the Eastern Freeway south of Doncaster Road;\(^{13}\)

c) direct the Project proponent to ensure the road and interchange design does not preclude a future direction between the Doncaster [confirm] busway and the NEL southern portal;\(^{14}\) and

d) recommend that the EES include clear commitments and/or design for the bus priority lanes to be provided on some regional roads.\(^{15}\)

**IMPROVEMENTS TO TRAIL NETWORKS ARE REQUIRED**

93. Improved trail networks for both bicycle and pedestrians are important to support the La Trobe NEIC. This was recognised in the VPA’s Draft Framework Plan, which aims to prioritise walking and cycling paths (along with public transport) in promoting a significant shift towards these modes of transport.\(^{16}\)

94. It is encouraging that the Project proposes to complete the Banyule Shared Trail and provides for a new north-south cycling corridor between Banyule and Greensborough. However, there are numerous deficiencies, which, as Ms MacDonald explains, include:\(^{17}\)

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\(^{12}\) Transport evidence of Knowles Tivendale, dated 15 July 2019, at [9.17].

\(^{13}\) Ibid, at [9.18].

\(^{14}\) Ibid, at [9.19].

\(^{15}\) Ibid, at [9.20]

\(^{16}\) Victoria Planning Authority’s Draft Framework Plan for the La Trobe NEIC, dated March 2017, at page 8.

\(^{17}\) Natalie MacDonald’s evidence statement at [67] – [71].
a) the EES failing to articulate when these paths will be completed and, in general, failing to adequately discuss trail networks, including how they can be leveraged to reduce congestion;

b) the connections into the new north-south trail are generally of local scale and confined to connecting east-west across the projects; and

c) the works provide for few improvements beyond the Project boundary, including LTU and other major destinations and especially south of Plenty Road to the Main Yarra Trail in the Banyule Flats.

95. Further, it is unclear to Mr Tivendale why the focus of the trail improvements relates to an existing pathway between Burke Road and Hoddle Street. He says that trails location to the University should be introduced due to the number of staff and students within a suitable bicycle distance.18

96. Mr Tivendale also discusses the deficiencies of the EES and supporting documents in relation to the Banyule Shared Trail and the new north-south trail:

10.5. The statements about completing the Banyule Shared Trail and the introduction of a new north-south path along the NEL are welcomed. However, the EES and supporting documents do not articulate when these will be built, and the project timing does not seem to take advantage of the potential mode shift to active transport that could reduce congestion during the NEL construction period.

97. He recommends additional trail networks that should be improved or created to enhance access to key locations within the region:

10.6. The NEL documentation should detail the specific shared trail improvements that will be installed prior to commencement of the project and those that will remain following completion of the project. This should include commuter bicycle rider paths, recreational shared trails and specific links to improve access to local schools and regional attractors such as links that connect:

10.6.1. the Main Yarra Trail to La Trobe University;

10.6.2. Yallambie to Macleod Station and La Trobe University across the construction corridor;

10.6.3. Bulleen via Heidelberg to La Trobe University;

10.6.4. Templestowe via Heidelberg to La Trobe University; and

10.6.5. Greensborough via Watsonia to La Trobe University.

98. According to Mr Tivendale, these paths should be installed early in the works process to help mitigate the construction impacts of the Project. He therefore urges the IAC to recommend that these paths be included in the preconstruction activities of the Project:

10.7. These paths should be installed early in the works process, to help mitigate the construction impacts of the NEL Project. The IAC should specifically require these

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paths to be included in the preconstruction activities as a way of mitigating the impact of construction on traffic congestion.

99. Ms MacDonald also suggests improvements to the Project’s proposed trail upgrade:\(^\text{19}\)

1) an improved cycle-priority link between La Trobe University and Macleod Train Station and to the east of the NEL;

2) a new link between La Trobe University and Watsonia town centre; and

3) improved links south of Plenty Road to the Main Yarra Trail.

THE UNIVERSITY WISHES TO SEE KINGSBURY DRIVE UPDATED

100. As explained previously, Kingsbury Drive is a key regional asset critical to the success of the La Trobe Sports Park, the realisation of the University’s vision of becoming a University City, and in connecting the La Trobe NEIC to the NEL.

101. Kingsbury Drive will be impacted both during construction and following completion of the Project, yet the EES is absent any discussion regarding mitigating treatment for Kingsbury Drive. As Ms MacDonald explains:

\(^\text{50.}\) Kingsbury Drive is one of many arterial roads outside the project boundary that is profoundly impacted by the NEL – during construction and post-completion with changes in traffic movements expected.

\(^\text{51.}\) The EES documentation is absent of any discussion regarding mitigating treatments for these externally-impacted roads.

102. While there is a forecasted reduction in the number of vehicles using Kingsbury Drive following completion of the Project up to 2036, the EES does not consider – or provide for – assistance beyond 2036 to ensure that these benefits are permanently realised.\(^\text{20}\)

103. The University is concerned that the temporary improvements between completion of the Project and 2036 will be lost if the State Government does not commit now to improve Kingsbury Drive in a way that positively contributes towards the realisation of La Trobe’s Master Plan:

\(^\text{54.}\) We believe that we have a window of opportunity before NEL is completed to formalise the function and look of the road and avoid exacerbating the disconnection of our campus to a more significant degree.

\(^\text{55.}\) Our discussions with the Department of Transport reveal that there is no current or planned funding commitment in place for improvements or upgrades to Kingsbury Drive.

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\(^\text{19}\) Ibid, at [62].

\(^\text{20}\) Natalie MacDonald’s evidence statement at [74].
104. As such, the University urges the IAC to recommend that the State Government work with La Trobe in developing the University’s Kingsbury Drive boulevard strategy prior to the completion of the Project:

56. We request that the IAC Panel recommend that the road owner (State Government) work with La Trobe University on developing the Kingsbury Drive boulevard strategy so that the ultimate concept is designed, funded and constructed prior to the opening of the NEL project. …

72. In summary, La Trobe University seeks the following improvements to the NEL design in order to create a truly integrated transport solution:

73. Major redesign of Kingsbury Drive Bundoora to create a boulevard by developing a “place-based” slow-speed environment and regular pedestrian connections across the road to unite both sides of the La Trobe University campus.

105. To mitigate the impacts of construction on public transport and traffic congestion, as well as work towards the realisation of the University’s plan for Kingsbury Drive, Mr Tivendale proposes an upgrade of Kingsbury Drive to a four-lane road.

106. Road widening of Kingsbury Drive has also been proposed by the VPA in its Draft Framework Plan, as shown below:

107. Mr Tivendale explains that the design of Kingsbury Drive should also include the Strategic Cycling Corridor identified by the State Government as being required for the area, which he believes will further assist to mitigate construction impacts:

6.10. The design of Kingsbury Drive should also include the Strategic Cycling Corridor identified by State government as being required for the area. This will further assist to mitigate the impacts of NEL construction on traffic congestion. A potential concept for the road cross section is shown in Figure 21 below:

Figure 21 – Potential Cross Section for Kingsbury Drive
108. Mr Tivendale encourages the Project proponent to work with the University to develop Kingsbury Drive in a way that will positively contribute to the NEL, as well as the long term amenity of the University and La Trobe NEIC:

6.16. The NEL Project team should work with LTU to agree a design, funding mechanism and future ownership for Kingsbury Drive as a boulevard that contributes positively to the NEL Project (by mitigating construction impacts) and the long term amenity of the La Trobe University campus.

109. He also urges the IAC to recommend that the EES address the impact of improvements to Kingsbury Drive, and that the Project proponent make best use of this boulevard as a relief route during construction:

6.17. Despite the strategic importance to the NEIC and relevance to the problem being addressed by the NEL project, the EES and supporting documents do not adequately address plans to introduce a Boulevard treatment to Kingsbury Drive (including in the modelling assumptions). The EES should address the impact of reducing the speed limit, providing bus lanes and improving pedestrian amenity and bicycle rider safety on Kingsbury Drive.

6.18. The IAC should require the NEL EES to make best use of the Kingsbury Drive corridor as a relief route during the NEL construction phase and support this with construction of a boulevard treatment along the corridor in advance of NEL construction commencing.

RECOMMENDATIONS

110. In closing the University makes the following recommendations.

Public transport should be improved to the La Trobe NEIC

111. The IAC should recommend improved public transport services that will enhance access and bring the region’s public transport network up to speed with the rest of Melbourne, including:

a) a new high-capacity and high-speed bus that links La Trobe and Doncaster and Box Hill (train station); and
b) a new high-capacity and high-speed bus that links La Trobe and Swinburne University (at Glenferrie Train Station).

Public transport should be improved around the North East Link

112. The IAC should recommend improve public transport around the North East Link including bus-queue jump infrastructure at traffic lights and bus priority lanes along key major roads, including Bell Street, Manningham Road and Bulleen Road.

Trail networks for cyclists and pedestrians should be improved

113. The IAC should recommend improved trail networks for cyclists and pedestrians including:

a) improved cycle-priority link between La Trobe and Macleod Train Station to the east of the NEL;

b) a new link between La Trobe and Watsonia town centre and on to Greensborough; and

c) improved links south of Plenty Road to the Main Yarra Trail.

The State Government should help develop Kingsbury Drive

114. The IAC should recommend that the State Government work with the University on developing the Kingsbury Drive boulevard strategy so that the ultimate concept is designed, funded and constructed prior to the opening of the Project.

115. This will relieve construction impacts, protection Project gains, and support the future development of the University.

Matthew Townsend
Owen Dixon Chambers

29 August 2019