I wish to commend this Government, lead by Premier Andrews, for taking on this long overdue, essential and vital connection between the Eastern Freeway and the Ring Road at Greensborough originally planned in the 1960’s and included and recorded in the Melways Directories 1969 to 1974 (scans enclosed). I am also very heartened to see that Premier Andrews has prioritised this project over and above the Liberal promoted East / West tunnel.

However, I and I am sure many others, are concerned with a number of aspects of this proposal as follows:

1) Why the original proposed route was ever apparently changed by the Liberal Government in the 1970’s from (a) the Western side of the river - from the south of Banyule Road and Banksia Street to the freeway at Burke Road - to (b) the Eastern side of the river - involving Bulleen and Manningham Roads;

2) How the Government can justify adopting this proposed route when the financial cost could rise by over $2 Billion with land acquisition and compensation payout and consequential costs for over one hundred and five businesses in the affected area of which over sixty and their associated work force who will be forced to close and / or to relocate;

3) How will this project be financed? At an estimated cost of $15 Billion I would like to know how and where will this finance come from;

4) Will this be a tolled road? If so, what time frame will be estimated by the Government for the tolls to be imposed and what guarantee do we have that these tolls won’t be extended as has recently happened on current toll roads; and

5) Are Double B trucks able to travel in the proposed tunnel? If not, what action will be taken to address the problem of trucks on Rosanna Road and their noise and safety hazard.

These are important and fundamental questions that require clear answers before this proposal should proceed.

I am of the opinion that the State Government’s proposed tunnel at an estimated $1 Billion a kilometer also poses possible problems of ventilation and potential "fire hazard" and compares poorly with the original route of an above road construction with sound barrier walls on both sides or the channel with land bridges as currently proposed on the centre part of the route eg. the Watsonia Camp Hill. This system could be used on the western side of the Yarra River from Banyule Road to Burke Road with one bridge over the river and reduce the cost to taxpayers of several billion dollars and address the problem of ever increasing Government debt. This option would also save so many businesses from closing down and / or relocating thus saving the existing, all important jobs of over five hundred people as well as addressing the problem of large trucks and vehicles traveling along the route.

We await your reply.

Yours faithfully

Ralph and Lois Provan