

# Submission Cover Sheet

North East Link Project EES IAC

# 678

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**Request to be heard?:** no

**Full Name:** Mohamad Kobayssi

**Organisation:** Watsonia Pharmacy

**Affected property:**

**Attachment 1:** EES\_Submission\_

**Attachment 2:**

**Attachment 3:**

**Comments:** Please find attached pdf submission

EES Submission Mohamad Kobayssi

- I am a pharmacist and working partner in Watsonia Pharmacy located in Watsonia Road Shopping Strip.
- I am deeply 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 turnover and profitability. 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 the best interests 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). I drive along Greensborough Rd everyday to come to work and am horrified that the very little natural beauty that is left will be bulldozed to make way for NEL. The loss of vegetation and fauna is totally unacceptable. Imagine the positive impact if the land was handed over to the community for the future and benefit of the younger generation.
- 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 EPR recommendations as detailed in our president's, Jeremy Richards, EES Submission.
- **Benefits** of proposed SMART Tax Payer Design ( also known as Community Design) featuring an extended tunnel needs thorough and 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 greatly 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.
- The Lower Plenty Road interchange is excessively land hungry and presents poor urban design outcomes which will have significant environmental and social effects.

The design of the interchange with Lower Plenty Road is overly cumbersome and counterintuitive for motorists, particularly those that arrive from east, west or south of the interchange and intend to travel south along the North East Link. They need to continue their journey 1.3km north to access the southbound ramps to the proposed tunnel.

Consideration needs to be given to the possibility of eliminating the Lower Plenty Rd interchange or changing to an alternate construction method of "bored" or "mined" access ramps.

- Allows for much greater connection for local streets onto 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.

The majority of my customers are in full support of an extended tunnel solution once the pros and cons of each design have been fully explained to them.

Mohamad Kobayssi  
Watsonia Pharmacy  
45-49 Watsonia Rd  
Watsonia Vic 3087