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**Request to be heard?:** Yes

**Precinct:** General

**Full Name:** Brian O'Neil

**Organisation:** Victorian Transport Association

**Affected property:**

**Attachment 1:** Fishermans\_Bend

**Attachment 2:**

**Attachment 3:**

**Comments:** Please refer attachment.



victoriantransportassociation<sup>inc.</sup>

## **Fishermans Bend Precinct:**

Response to Draft Framework Plan

Submission on behalf of the  
**Victorian Transport Association**

15 December 2017

Submitted by:  
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## **1.0 ABOUT THE VICTORIAN TRANSPORT ASSOCIATION (VTA)**

### **1.1 Introduction**

The Victorian Transport Association (VTA) has over 800 members and is dedicated to the service of members and supporters in all sectors of the transport and logistics industry.

With over 100 years' experience and a specific business focus, we possess the industry acumen, market knowledge and industry contacts that enable members to capitalise on the current commercial and regulatory environments.

Recognised as Australia's pre-eminent multimodal prime contractor and employer organisation in transport and logistics, the association works with all levels of government, the unions, statutory authorities and the industry to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes. The VTA is committed to enhancing the image of the industry while helping to improve the commercial environment for our members to operate.

### **1.2 Representation & Services**

The VTA represents the industry through a variety of means and provides major services to its members and industry.

The VTA also has the experience and expertise to provide valuable information, advice and programs for:

- Industry Regulations and Compliance
- Industrial Relations
- Education & Training



## 2.0 RESPONSE TO THE DRAFT FRAMEWORK PLAN

The Victorian Transport Association (VTA) has made a strategic assessment of the Draft Framework Plan and has determined that there are serious deficiencies with respect to the safe, efficient and free-flowing movement of freight in what is – and will remain – a largely industrial precinct.

### 2.1 Provision for a Shared Bike Path on Lorimer Street

Fishermans Bend and the broader precinct is on the boundary of the Port of Melbourne – an economic zone that represents the lifeblood of the Victorian economy which access to by heavy vehicles must be preserved if Melbourne is to retain its mantle as the freight capital of Australia.

In the absence of rail access to the Port of Melbourne on the southern side of the Yarra, heavy vehicles must be able to have safe and efficient access to terminals on this side of the Port, most of which are accessible via Lorimer Street.

As well, heavy vehicles that cannot use the West Gate Bridge to access Webb Dock and the new Victoria International Container Terminal stevedore because of their weight, will require increasingly greater usage of Lorimar Street to access the terminal.

The thrust of our concerns with the Draft Framework Plan is therefore an apparent attempt to construct a shared, on-road bicycle path on Lorimer Street between the Bolte Bridge and the West Gate Bridge. This part of the plan is a direct contradiction of advice we have provided the department in preliminary meetings over the past 18 months.

The draft contains a map of existing and proposed cycling infrastructure, including a north-south strategic cycling corridor that connects to a new Lorimer Street on-road cycling path between the Bolte and West Gate Bridge.

Lorimer Street is a gazetted freight route for heavy vehicles and is intensively used by trucks of up to 70 tonnes travelling between Webb Dock and road and rail freight infrastructure closer to town. It is also home to numerous concrete suppliers that are visited by hundreds of trucks every day that deliver to building sites throughout Melbourne.

While the VTA fully supports infrastructure that encourages commuters onto bikes and away from cars, the last place a shared path should be constructed in the new precinct is on the only gazetted freight route servicing the south side of the Port of Melbourne.

Safety is the over-riding concern we have with putting a shared on-road bike path on Lorimer Street. Regardless of who is at fault, a cyclist will always be worse off in a collision with a heavy vehicle, so the better option on a gazetted freight route is to separate the modes of transport altogether.

This is being done elsewhere in Melbourne, such as Yarraville where heavy vehicles are curfewed or banned from using roads that are earmarked as cycling routes.



### **Recommendation**

Rather than encourage bicycles onto the Lorimer Street gazetted freight route for the reasons outlined above, the VTA recommends discouraging bicycles from using the road altogether, unless a separated option is formulated.

Instead, cyclists should be encouraged to use Williamstown Road, which could be transformed as a major boulevard for pedestrian, bicycle, light rail and commuter vehicle traffic, thus separating entirely heavy vehicle traffic from cyclists on Lorimer Street and mitigating safety risks.

This is consistent with previous advice the VTA has offered in its precinct planning, which we feel essential to mitigating the risk of injury or worse to cyclists, and their associated cost to the community.

### **2.2 Preserved Rail Corridor Access to Webb Dock**

The VTA is encouraged that the Framework Plan earmarks a range of options for future freight rail access to Webb Dock and the new VICT stevedore. It is encouraging three corridors have been identified and land reserves quarantined for future use.

With freight volumes in and out of the Port of Melbourne expected to grow, Webb Dock will play a vital future role in the national freight network. As road access is limited because the West Gate Bridge cannot accommodate high productivity freight vehicles that exceed certain weight limits, a future rail component will be essential for Webb Dock to attain its full potential.

### **Recommendation**

The VTA recommends greater emphasis for rail in and out of Webb Dock be considered in the final plan, notwithstanding the strong case that has been made for quarantining a range of corridors for future rail.



### 3.0 SUMMARY

In summary, the VTA is generally satisfied with freight transport provisions in the Draft Plan Framework, with the glaring exception of a possible on-road shared bike path on Lorimer Street.

It is possible for industrial and residential to harmoniously co-exist, but only if proper planning occurs that allows for separation of modes of transport where appropriate.

In a port zone, where heavy vehicles are necessary requirement to transport freight from ships and onto further destinations within the supply chain, serious consideration should be given to separating heavy vehicles from transport modes that are the most susceptible to injury or worse, such as cyclists and pedestrians – especially on routes that are intended and gazetted for freight.

The VTA is most prepared to offer further insights and recommendations on freight transport requirements for the future Fishermans Bend precinct as this plan is finalized.

Peter Anderson  
Chief Executive Officer  
**Victorian Transport Association**