

Submission Cover Sheet

North East Link Project EES IAC

671

Request to be heard?: no

Full Name: Garry Brennan

Organisation: Bicycle Network

Affected property:

Attachment 1: EES_NELP_-_Bicyc

Attachment 2:

Attachment 3:

Comments: Submission uploaded



Submission to North East Link joint Inquiry and Advisory Committee

NELP initiated discussions with Bicycle Network from the outset of the project and expressed the intention to explore all avenues for integration of important bicycle links into their planning.

Consequently we have been included as a stakeholder in the development of the reference design, focused on the identification, alignment and design of bicycle facilities.

From Bicycle Network's perspective, very large scale projects such as NELP are best suited to delivering substantial enhancements to the metropolitan bicycle network such as the establishment of key, end-to-end transport corridors, and crucial links to destinations such as universities, employment clusters, railway stations and district centres.

The current reference design substantially satisfies those high level ambitions as it pertains to the areas within the current scope of the project.

There are other other enhancements available that also should be explored, and Bicycle Network will make itself available to provide feedback to bidders who will likely seek opportunities where they can improve on, and add value to, the reference design.

For the Committee's benefit, examples of such enhancements are:

- Inclusion of replacement bridge over the Merri Creek, aligned with Roseneath Street in Clifton Hill, to properly link the proposed trail along Eastern Freeway into the inner city cycling network.
- Re-locate the Main Yarra Trail south of Banksia Street from the River flats to the escarpment where it can be sealed and offer year-round acceptable access to the potentially significant number of commuter and recreational riders that would be attracted.
- Realisation of bike and pedestrian footbridge across the Yarra previously investigated by the cities of Manningham and Banyule, to be located west of the college and community sporting complexes.

Additionally we note that the reference design was completed before Department of Transport had completed its review and mapping of what will be the formal Strategic Cycling Corridor Network. This is expected to be known before the completion of the EES process and may provide guidance about appropriate choices of further routes for enhancement.

Bicycle Network wishes to gain the Panel's support for a change in approach for the application, in this project, of the guidelines and standards for design of active transport infrastructure.

More people cycling more often

Level 4, 246 Bourke Street Melbourne VIC 3000 Australia PO Box 24013, Melbourne, Victoria 3001
p. (03) 8376 8888 f. (03) 8376 8800 freecall: 1800 639 634 (country callers) bicyclenetwork.com.au
Bicycle Victoria Incorporated ABN 41 026 835 903 ARBN 054 009 871 Reg No A0008607J



In other major infrastructure projects, the EES process has resulted in Ministerial assessments that stipulate the use of certain guidelines and standards applicable to bike facilities, including documents from Austroads and VicRoads.

Although these documents are guidelines, and pointedly, often contain an explanation to users that they are not intended to be considered mandatory, they are in fact being applied as compulsory standards in projects. The Independent Reviewer and Environmental Auditor practice is to regard them as mandatory.

Whether this is an unintended consequence of the complex legal process involved from EES through to contract Project Scope and Requirement, or a conscious and valid technique to manage compliance risk, the outcome is perverse and unsatisfactory.

The current versions of guidelines and standards are themselves dated, and contain information that, outside of these major projects, has been replaced by more contemporary practice.

Although there is provision in major projects for exemptions to be sought, such applications are time consuming, expensive, and can have negative impacts on the schedule, with the result that there is little enthusiasm for utilising the provision.

Bicycle Networks asks that the Committee investigates how a better system of deploying guidelines can be adopted by North East Link: one that accepts that a guideline is that and nothing more, and can be varied in order to achieve a superior result, taking into consideration project intention, site context, and experience and expertise of the project management and contractors.

7 June 2019

More people cycling more often

Level 4, 246 Bourke Street Melbourne VIC 3000 Australia PO Box 24013, Melbourne, Victoria 3001
p. (03) 8376 8888 f. (03) 8376 8800 freecall: 1800 639 634 (country callers) bicyclenetwork.com.au
Bicycle Victoria Incorporated ABN 41 026 835 903 ARBN 054 009 871 Reg No A0008607J