

Opening remarks Planning

1. The Project will:
 - (a) improve linkages between the western region and the central city;
 - (b) provide an alternative crossing of the Yarra and Maribyrnong Rivers;
 - (c) facilitate removal of truck traffic from residential streets in the inner west; and
 - (d) improve access to the Port of Melbourne for freight vehicles and support its ongoing operation.
2. There is strong strategic support for the Project on the basis, in particular, of:
 - (a) significant population growth in metropolitan Melbourne;
 - (b) significant population growth in the western region without commensurate employment growth;
 - (c) the expansion of the central city; and
 - (d) the role and importance of the Port of Melbourne.
3. Great weight should be given to the strategic importance of the Port of Melbourne to the State, and its role as the principal container port in the State of Victoria until at least 2055.
4. Less weight should be given to the landscape amenity of the Maribyrnong River corridor, particularly south of Shepherd Bridge, where it is highly influenced by the Port to the east and industrial land to the west.
5. The Project has minimized the impact on existing sensitive uses by:

- (a) following the existing M1 corridor between the M80 interchange and the West Gate Bridge;
 - (b) tunneling under Yarraville;
 - (c) locating tunnel portals in areas of least sensitivity; and
 - (d) adopting a relatively onerous acoustic design requirement that will result in reduced noise levels for many residents along the West Gate Freeway.
6. The Project will not preclude urban renewal adjacent to the Project alignment. The degree to which development of an urban renewal area has been planned, and the likely timing of that development, are relevant factors in considering the Project's impacts on those areas.

STUART MORRIS

EMILY PORTER

Counsel for WDA