Hearing Submission on behalf of Sophie and Lachlan Boyd

Mr Chairman and Committee Members,

I appear on behalf of Sophie and Lachlan Boyd of 40 Eram Rd., Box Hill. I am Sophie’s father. This submission deals only with the Eastern Freeway upgrade between Station Street and Middleborough Rd and in particular the proposed noise wall bordering the north of Eram Rd.

When this family purchased 40 Eram Rd six years ago they had no inkling that there might be a massive infrastructure development behind their back fence. When they built a second dwelling, a townhouse, at the rear of the property two years ago they had no idea. If they had known what was proposed they would never have gone ahead with their build.

Their new town house has three meters between the house and back fence filled with decking and grass. The existing noise wall is about 20 metres from their back fence and is almost unnoticeable. They currently have parkland at their back door and outside their picture windows. The outlook is quite delightful and the noise from the freeway is minimal.

The East Link Reference Plan Proposal shifts that eight metre high noise wall to within two metres of their back fence and within five metres of their picture windows. The wall will become their view. That wall will have an horrendous visual impact, ugly, intimidating and depressing. It will overshadow their small back garden and decking. It will limit the light into their kitchen and family room.

They will experience increased noise levels and loss of parkland at their back door. The existing greenery and treescape will be gone and replaced by an eyesore. The quality of their lifestyle will decrease significantly.

The value of their property will diminish. This is an honest, hardworking family – a nurse, a construction foreman and two small children. People starting out who can least afford and absorb a financial setback.
This family is one of the few in Eram Road to have built a home very close to the back fence and they will therefore be impacted far more than others in the street.

It is harsh, unjust, and unreasonable that a project intended to benefit the wider Melbourne community should impact so negatively on a small section of the community.

There are at least three things that could be done to alleviate the concerns of the Boyds and other residents of Eram Road.

1. The proposed new braid of freeways could be moved a small distance northwards into non-residential parkland to the north of the current freeway. The existing noise wall could then be left where it is. The total amount of community parkland available after the construction would not change – just be differently distributed.

2. The walking track/bike path should remain where it is now, on the south side of the noise wall rather than being moved to the north side as is proposed in the plan. Leaving it on the south would locate the noise wall slightly further from the back fences and allow at least some small semblance of green outlook and sky for the residents of Eram Rd.

3. Consideration should be given to financial compensation for Eram Rd homeowners faced with the visual impact, loss of amenity and financial detriment caused by the proposed changes. There is no justification for a small group of modest homeowners to bear a cost for a general community asset and benefit. I submit that the costs of financial compensation would be insignificant in the overall costs of the proposed project.

Thank you.

John Evans 0418 571 469

On behalf of Sophie and Lachlan Boyd, 40 Eram Rd., Box Hill Nth.