NORTH EAST LINK PROJECT

Nillumbik Shire Council – Environment Effects Statement Submission Presentation

Advocate: Joseph Emmanuel | Manager Infrastructure | Nillumbik Shire Council

Inquiry and Advisory Committee Panel Hearing – Day 13
The Veneto Club, Rialto Room, 191 Bulleen Road, Bulleen
Scheduled for 9 August 2019 at 1.30pm
I can start by thanking the Chairman, Deputy Chair and the rest of the committee for this opportunity for Nillumbik Council to be heard and it is recognised that this is an extremely important process for Councils, Community and other key stakeholders as a whole.

My name is Joseph Emmanuel.

I am the Manager Infrastructure at Nillumbik Shire Council and I will be presenting Nillumbik’s submission as an advocate for Council.

Also with me today is my colleague Ms Kirsten Reedy who is Council’s Coordinator Environment and Biodiversity.

Ms Reedy is present to assist in answering any questions the Committee may have with respect to the natural environment aspect of Council's submission.

Today, I will be presenting Council’s submission with respect to the North East Link Project and more specifically Council’s response to the Environment Effects Statement, endorsed by Council on 28 May 2019. This has been given a submission number, 691.

Nillumbik Shire Council is a Council for the purposes of the Local Government Act where it has one primary objective which is to endeavour to achieve the best outcomes for the local community having regard to long term and cumulative effects of decisions.

Council manifests this objective through its Council Plan 2017-2021 and various strategies and policies that support it.

The title of Nillumbik’s Council Plan is ‘Living in the Landscape’ intended to be an interpretation of the passion of our community to live amongst and within the landscape which the Council and the community are the custodians of.

Council’s Vision is; for Nillumbik to be Australia’s most liveable Shire and goes about its business by aligning this Vision to the following five main pillars:

First, Engaged, connected communities - A place where communities and ideas thrive, underpinned by trust, confidence and continuous learning.

Second, Active and creative people - Active lifestyles and artistic expression are fostered through participation and innovation.

Third, Safe and healthy environments - Healthy and safe communities enjoy living in our iconic environment.

Fourth, A prosperous economy - A strong local economy that supports business growth, jobs and community wealth.
And finally, Responsible Leadership - Collaborative and consultative leadership that builds trust and makes the best use of available resources to the benefit of all in the pursuit of excellence.

Nillumbik borders the North East Link at the projects northern extreme, where the interchange with the M80 is proposed.

While the proposed route does not cut through Nillumbik, Council’s position is that the project will have actual direct and indirect impacts that will hinder Council’s abilities to achieve its primary objective and therefore need further consideration and mitigation measures put in place.

The presentation made today although strongly aligns with Council’s submission seeks to provide further local context and emphasis on the main themes of Council’s submission and where possible reference some of the documents made available on the Engage Victoria webpage over recent weeks.

Any omission to highlight other items within Council’s submission is not an act of conceding on that matter rather is an appreciation for the limited time available and in the spirit of the Committee deliberation process is granted that these matters will be considered seriously nonetheless.

For ease and clarity of presentation I will be reading from notes which I understand have been made available to the Committee.

Ms. Reedy and I are more than happy to take questions from the Committee following this presentation.

And following this presentation, should the Committee require, I will be more than happy to make the slides available.

WHAT IS TO BE COVERED

In today’s presentation, I would like to cover:

a. A summary of Council’s submission

b. A little about Nillumbik Shire Council

c. Introduction to Council’s concerns
d. And a focus on the four main areas to be presented which include:

i. Traffic and Congestion

ii. The Gateway to Nillumbik Shire Council

iii. The Environment

iv. Tree Canopy

COUNCIL’S SUBMISSION

24. In opening it’s important to confirm that Council has been and is still supportive of North East Link and specifically supports the selection of Corridor A as the preferred route.

25. Council sees itself as a key stakeholder in the project and its process and is pleased that the EES acknowledges some of the impacts, both direct and indirect that residents and communities within Nillumbik, the natural environment and those who visit or travel to Nillumbik for work or leisure will experience.

26. However it is also noted that there are instances where Council has not been involved in NELP’s stakeholder consultations that it perhaps should have been, including for example discussions around contamination.

27. This is confirmed within the interim report prepared by Mr Craig Barker to the Committee document number 78 on page 14.

28. Council’s review of the EES has not been a deep technical dive, nor an engineering analysis of the reference design, rather focusing on material concerns and the respective Environmental Performance Requirements of relevant chapters.

29. As an overview the following captures at a high level Council’s concerns with respect to the Project:

a. The impact on the Plenty River catchment during construction and operation

b. The risk to threatened flora and fauna species within the project boundary and those that migrate through; namely the Swift Parrot.

c. The increased traffic and congestion on the road network.

d. The level of vegetation loss.

e. Temporary stockpiling locations within Nillumbik and the transportation of contaminated soil and associated impacts on adjacent residences.
f. The exclusion of ‘complementary’ road infrastructure works, minor in nature in comparison to the scale of this project, that will significantly reduce traffic impacts of North East Link and enhance its overall value.

30. The request is that the Committee seriously consider Council’s concerns and request for complementary projects which are critical to the overall success of the North East Link.

ABOUT NILLUMBIK

31. The Shire of Nillumbik is located less than 25 kilometres north-east of Melbourne, and has the Yarra River as its southern boundary. It extends 29 kilometres to Kinglake National Park in the north. The Shire stretches approximately 20 kilometres from the Plenty River and Yan Yean Road in the west to Christmas Hills and the Yarra escarpment in the east.

32. The Shire covers an area of some 431 square kilometres and has an estimated population of approximately 64,000 who live in close-knit communities which range from typical urban settings to remote and tranquil bush properties.

33. There is also over 300 hectares of nature and recreation reserves, which does not include some areas of the Kinglake National Park.

34. To the west of the Shire is the City of Whittlesea where we have seen rapid growth and change in the last decade which has applied pressure on infrastructure within Nillumbik, including Yan Yean Road and Diamond Creek Road as motorists head toward the city and to the south more generally.

35. Recently, Yan Yean Road was duplicated in response to the increased through traffic from these development areas which is a recognition of the strategic link that it provides to city and to the south more generally.

36. To the south is Banyule Council and the south-east is Manningham Council. Banyule meets us where the M80 interchange is with the Greensborough Bypass, near the Plenty River bridge crossing. With Manningham meeting us at Fitzsimons Lane and Kangaroo Ground – Warrandyte Road as they cross over the Yarra River. All of these crossings are key connections for motorists travelling to, from and through Nillumbik in a north/south direction.

37. The shire is home to many nationally listed threatened faunal species including the Phascogale, Powerful Owl and the Swift Parrot. The Swift Parrot has a known migratory and feeding path through Nillumbik as the birds travel to and from their summer breeding sites in Tasmania.
38. Nillumbik has earned a reputation as Melbourne's Green Wedge for its protection and preservation of this natural environment. In some cases Nillumbik has been referred to as The Lungs of Melbourne. The mix of both natural bush and agricultural land within the Shire has attracted visitors and residents to the area for well over a century. The retention of the tree canopy provides residents with an opportunity to live in a relaxed and natural setting in close proximity to Melbourne.

39. Nillumbik is also proud to have some of the best waterways running within its municipality including the Yarra River, the Diamond Creek, Arthurs and Watsons Creeks catchment as well as part of the Plenty River's eastern catchment.

40. Nillumbik Shire Council and the community have a responsibility to manage these waterways and the natural environment as they form critical habitat links and are also a recreational resource which must be protected for the enjoyment of future generations.

ARTISTIC HERITAGE

41. A further key element of Nillumbik’s heritage is its strong artistic tradition, with some examples of that shown on this slide. We have a sculpture created by Mr Tim Reid to the top left, the Alan Marshall sculpture created by Mr Marcus Skipper to the top right, the Queen of the Shire created by Ms Deborah Halpern to the bottom left and Montsalvat to the bottom right built by artist friends and families of the artist-founder, Justin Jorgensen.

42. These are all examples of our community’s passion for art and culture, which the Council is extremely proud to be a part of.

ABOUT ME

43. I have been working at Nillumbik for approximately 13 years in a range of positions including development engineer, traffic engineer, design engineer, transport coordinator, roads and drainage maintenance coordinator, open space maintenance coordinator, Manager Environment and currently as Nillumbik’s Manager Infrastructure.

44. I am by no means a specialist or expert in a particular field, rather consider myself a civil engineering generalist.

45. I assisted Council in navigating its response to the EES so have therefore been appointed as an advocate to present it to the panel.
INTRODUCTION TO EES CONCERNS

46. This slide provides an overview of the specific concerns that I will be expanding on as part of Council’s submission:

   a. Request an upgrade to Diamond Creek Rd between Civic Drive and Yan Yean Rd and the upgrade of the intersection of Civic Drive and Diamond Creek Rd as part of the project

   b. The project to deliver an expedited Local Area Traffic Management Plan for Greensborough and Plenty to mitigate impact on municipal local roads.

   c. Modify the Urban Design Strategy to include a landmark feature at the entrance to Nillumbik at the M80

   d. Inclusion of the Plenty River into the project scope

   e. Modification to Arboriculture EPR’s to strengthen retention and offset of canopy.

47. It is understood and appreciated that we have received responses from various experts appointed by NELP that consider Council’s submission.

48. Council is particularly pleased that the ‘GTA Peer Review Report’ document 24n and the appended memorandum from the technical team suggests that Civic Drive roundabout would reach an undesirable level of stress and will require an upgrade.

TRAFFIC

49. Chapter 9 of the EES on Traffic and Transport set out the following evaluation objective

50. To increase transport capacity and improve connectivity to, from and through the north-east of Melbourne, particularly freight movement via the freeway network instead of local and arterial roads, while managing the effects of the project on the broader and local road, public transport, cycling and pedestrian transport networks.
More specifically the project aspires to achieve the following key transport outcomes;

a. *Redistribution of traffic away from local and arterial roads and onto North East Link and the freeway network;*

b. *Less congestion at existing bottlenecks; and*

c. *Improved travel times across the north-east*

There are other outcomes, however these three are most relevant to Council’s submission.

In a sense the project intends to provide the ‘missing link’ in Melbourne’s orbital freeway network, however the consequence, Council feels is that this project will inevitably create a ‘missing local link’ for the Nillumbik and Whittlesea communities.

The lack of attention on the impacts on the Diamond Creek corridor as well as the adjoining local municipal road network is evident through the omission of reference to the increased traffic volumes on these roads in Chapter 9, namely in the discussion on page 6 of ‘existing conditions and project impacts’ and on page 15 and 16 in discussing existing traffic volumes.

There is further evidence of this through the omission of an upgrade of Diamond Creek Road between Civic Drive and Yan Yean Road and the upgrade of the Civic Drive and Diamond Creek Road intersection as part of the project proposal.

It is clear however that a level of analysis has been completed as both Chapter 9 and Technical Report A on Traffic and Transport both reference traffic data and modelling relating to this corridor.

It appears a mismatch has occurred as both Chapter 9 of the EES and Technical Report A on Traffic and Transport present a number of facts supporting Council’s claim, including:

a. Travel times between Wattle Glen and the M80 Ring Road are anticipated to **increase (albeit labelled as slightly)** in the peak direction.

b. There is an anticipated increase of traffic in the Greensborough Bypass and Diamond Creek corridors in the order of 130 percent without and 150 percent with the project by the year 2036.

It is Council’s view that the exclusion of upgrading Diamond Creek Road, between Civic Drive and Yan Yean Road results in the project falling short of its traffic and transport objective and associated desired outcomes.

The next part of the presentation is focused on providing context to Council’s request for:
a. The upgrade of Diamond Creek Road between Civic Drive and Yan Yean Road as part of the project

b. The upgrade of the intersection of Civic Drive with Diamond Creek Road; as part of the project and

c. Better management of impacts on the local municipal road network as part of existing EPRs or through the introduction of a new EPR.

**CURRENT TRAFFIC CONDITIONS**

60. On the screen shows an aerial photograph in around the north of Greensborough, Plenty and Diamond Creek, with the M80 interchange being in the southern most point of the plan.

61. The arterial road network is signified by the black lines.

62. The main features include, Yan Yean Road running north/south, Diamond Creek Road running east/west generally and the Greensborough Bypass also running east/west generally.

63. Current traffic count data shows that the two-way annual average daily traffic volumes for these roads is approximately:

   a. 45,000 for the Greensborough Bypass between Civic Drive and the M80 Interchange

   b. 42,000 for Diamond Creek Road between Civic Drive and Yan Yean Road and

   c. 20,000 each for the Diamond Creek Road, Yan Yean Road and Aqueduct Road (a local Link Road) approaches to the intersection.

64. We can see that the arterial road network and Aqueduct Road provide a direct link to the M80 interchange, the proposed starting point for the North East Link.

65. The local municipal road network is signified by yellow, grey and red lines. Yellow being the highest order, grey being the medium order and red being the lowest order.

66. The grey and red lines, in this image represent the local municipal roads that are predominantly used for rat running traffic in and around Diamond Creek Road for traffic trying to head toward the M80.

67. There are other local municipal roads, not shown on the slide within the directly abutting area.
CONGESTION

68. Council Officers observation indicate significant queue lengths and delays surrounding the Civic Drive roundabout and the corridor generally between Civic Drive and Yan Yean Road.

69. These observations have been validated by a series of assessments conducted by Council staff.

70. Chapter 9 of the EES on Traffic and Transport suggests that travel times between Wattle Glen and the M80 Ring Road are anticipated to increase slightly in the peak direction with the project.

71. It goes on to state that this is likely due to additional traffic along the Greensborough Bypass approaching the M80 Ring Road and North East Link interchange.

72. Arguably the traffic modelling may be suggesting what has been branded as a slight increase in delays for this route however it is the opinion of the Council that the project should address congestion to this critical entry point for the Nillumbik community.

73. This claim is highlighted by the fact that Yan Yean Road has recently been duplicated to accommodate additional projected traffic from the north, particularly from within the City of Whittlesea.

74. Council’s observations of delays is consistent with the Travel Time Runs provided by BCC as shown in Figure 6 of the OBT Expert Witness Statement, document 28a. – the graph is shown on the screen

75. The traffic modelling prepared for the project does show an anticipated increase of traffic in the Greensborough Bypass corridor between the interchange and Civic Drive of between 20,000 and 39,000 combined trips per day with the project and 11,000 and 27,000 without the project by 2036.

76. Similarly, the traffic modelling prepared for the project does show an anticipated increase of traffic in the Diamond Creek Road corridor between the Civic Drive and Yan Yean Road of between 14,000 and 32,000 combined trips per day with the project and 6,000 and 21,000 without the project by 2036.
TRAFFIC TECHNICAL REPORT

77. On the screen before you is an extract of the travel time surveys contained with the Technical Report A on Traffic and Transport.

78. These surveys suggest that for all the infrastructure being delivered as part of the project, it provides no net benefit to reducing congestion between the M80 and Wattle Glen corridor, which of course includes Diamond Creek Road.

79. This can be clearly seen on this slide where the difference between travel times with or without the project in the AM and PM peaks are essentially unchanged and in fact worse off.

80. It is also important to note that each travel time route analysed as part of the project, six in total, all received an improvement to run times with the exception of the M80 to Wattle Glen corridor.

81. Council strongly believes the keys to enabling a positive outcome in this corridor is to remove the Civic Drive roundabout bottleneck and upgrade Diamond Creek Road between Civic Drive and Yan Yean Road as part of the project.

82. Furthermore, Council strongly believes the additional anticipated traffic with the project will add to congestion and result in an unjustifiable inconvenience to road users and is a reasonable case to call for an upgrade of Diamond Creek Road between Civic Drive and Yan Yean Road as part of the project, which we are pleased the ‘GTA Peer Review Report’ document 24n has recommended, albeit it is silent on timing.

ROAD SAFETY

83. The next set of slides shows the location of current crash statistics for Diamond Creek Road between Civic Drive and Yan Yean Road.

84. At the Civic Drive roundabout over the last five years there have been 28 crashes, 5 of which have been serious.

85. Surely this in isolation justifies the need for the intersection to be upgraded.

86. Along the remainder of the corridor between Civic Drive and Yan Yean Road there have been a further 13 crashes, 6 of which have been serious.

87. A simple extrapolation based on current anticipated traffic volumes could result in crash numbers of between 34 to 51 at the Civic Drive roundabout and 17 to 23 between Civic Drive and Yan Yean Road per five years without any significant changes to the corridor.
88. Council believes that the additional traffic volumes will result in an increase in the frequency of crashes and makes for a reasonable case for an upgrade of the corridor between the Civic Drive and Yan Yean Road.

**IMPACT ON LOCAL AREA TRAFFIC**

89. With respect to impact on the municipal local road network I provide the following relevant case study example.

90. The State Government, through Major Roads Projects Victoria (MRPV) is currently delivering the duplication of Yan Yean Road between Diamond Creek Road and Kurrak Road in Plenty.


92. Council has been monitoring traffic conditions as part of the Yan Yean Road duplication project prior and during construction.

93. Overall it was determined that the local municipal road network, on the typical through road routes received an increase in daily traffic on average of approximately 13 percent over a nine month period. At the worst, there was one road which received an increased daily traffic of over 110 percent. Similarly, we had a road where the PM peak traffic volume increased by 160 percent.

94. Furthermore, many of the local municipal roads experienced an increase in the 85th percentile speed of vehicles. At the worst case we had a road which not only increased in traffic volumes during the peak hour by over 160 percent but was recording 85th percentile speeds of almost 90 km/h in a 50 km/h speed zone.

95. This has resulted in Council having to invest unplanned capital to mitigate the impact caused by rat run traffic attempting to avoid delays along Yan Yean Road during construction. These works will cost Council in the order of $40,000 which appears negligent in comparison to a 16 billion dollar roads budget but is almost impossible to manage when the municipal local area traffic management budget is under $150,000.

96. It is imminent that NEL during construction and operation will create similar issues in the local municipal road network surrounding Diamond Creek Road and the Civic Drive roundabout.

97. Council’s concern is that the increased traffic anticipated during construction and operations will further burden the local municipal road network, resulting in a high level of unplanned work and unbudgeted investment and aggrieve and inconvenience the local Greensborough and Plenty communities, and those passing through these areas.
98. This claim is validated in the Memo prepared by SMEDTECH to GTA in document 24n whereby in the background statement suggesting that a “high level of rat running” is occurring to avoid delays experienced at the Civic Drive Roundabout.

99. The observation I’d like to make is, how much worse the rat running will become if nothing is done.

100. The Traffic and Transport EPRs from Council’s perspective do not adequately address the known impacts that the project will create on the local municipal roads in and around Diamond Creek Road.

101. Council requests the Committee considers the presented case study and recommends that the EPRs are strengthened or a new EPR is created to require NELP to expedite its monitoring, allocate an appropriate budget and proactively implement mitigation measures, all in consultation with Nillumbik Council to address the imminent increase in traffic volumes on the local municipal road network.

102. Furthermore, Council believes that the burden on the local municipal road network and communities that abut these roads, adds to the weight for a case calling for the upgrade of Diamond Creek Road between Civic Drive and Yan Yean Road as part of the project.

TRAFFIC AND CONGESTION REQUESTS

103. Based on the presented information relating to congestion, crash statistics and local area traffic impact I make the following requests on behalf of the Council for the Committee to consider.

104. The upgrade of Diamond Creek Road between Civic Drive and Yan Yean Road is delivered as part of project

105. The upgrade of the intersection of Civic Drive with Diamond Creek Road is delivered as part of the project

106. These upgrade works are delivered as early as possible and as a minimum before the commencement of works at and around the M80 interchange.

107. The upgrade works are delivered in consultation with Nillumbik Shire Council and its community.

108. Amends EPR T2 or introduces a new EPR to require NELP to expedite its monitoring program of the local municipal road network, allocate an appropriate budget and proactively implement mitigation measures, all in consultation with Nillumbik Council to address the imminent increase in traffic volumes on the local municipal road network.
A QUALITY GATEWAY TO NILLUMBIK

109. The next portion of the presentation is focused on Urban Design Elements.

110. Two of the Key Design Directions identified in the Urban Design Strategy associated with the EES particularly require NELP to reflect local communities. These are Key Design Directions:

- 3 (reflect indigenous and historic values)
- 5 (reflect local context in the road)

111. Nillumbik has a distinct character as detailed in the introduction of this presentation, which is particularly shaped by the predominance of green wedge land in the Shire, agriculture, high biodiversity values and a strong and thriving artistic culture.

112. The interchange of the North East Link with the M80 is a key gateway point into Nillumbik and a location at which the project needs to provide a strong representation of Nillumbik’s identity through the use of appropriate landscaping, public art, design themes and signage.

113. Council feels, however that the Urban Design Strategy is light on with respect to referencing Nillumbik and its character.

114. Specific urban design outcomes appear to have been limited to particular elements relating to improving pedestrian connectivity, wayfinding, minimising visual obstruction of noise walls and general plantings.

115. All of these are important considerations, however a focus on providing a landmark style entrance to Nillumbik is the Council’s request.

116. This will enable the project to better deliver on its Key Design Directions identified in the Urban Design Strategy.

117. Therefore, it is Council’s request that the Urban Design Strategy is modified to incorporate a landmark sculpture entrance to the Shire which is reflective of Nillumbik’s local identity, developed in collaboration with Council and the Nillumbik community.
IMPACTS ON THE ECOLOGY OF THE PLENTY RIVER AND ITS ENVIRONS

118. This slide is now focused on addressing ecology impacts and the Plenty River.

119. As depicted on the NELP reference design, sheet 3 of 42, dated 5 March 2019, the project boundary extends east to the Plenty River and one of its tributaries.

120. Despite this the EES provides minimal reference to this geographic area and some chapters, for example surface water, have not referenced it at all.

121. It may be that there will be minimal adverse ecological project impacts in this area and/or on the ecology of the Plenty River, however no evidence has been provided to validate this, or to explain why the area has been largely ignored within the EES.

122. Council considers that the EES contains insufficient information to determine the environmental impacts of the project on the Plenty River and its environs; and as such that it does not demonstrate the capacity of the project and its EPRs to monitor and achieve acceptable environmental outcomes at this location or, by association, downstream.

123. We request that the Committee instructs NELP to undertake further work to:

   a. Detail the baseline ecological communities, condition and habitat suitability in the area extending east from the potential construction compound to and including the Plenty River, including its tributary and associated gully which are depicted on sheet 3 of 42, and its downstream reach.

      This should include particular consideration of River Swamp Wallaby Grass, Green-striped Greenhood, Swift Parrot, Australasian Bittern, Little Bittern, Little Egret, Intermediate Egret, Eastern Great Egret, Hardhead, Blue-billed Duck, Musk Duck, Glossy Grass Skink, Burrowing Crayfish and Australian Grayling.

   b. Assess this data against the relevant EPRs and demonstrate that ecological assets and the water quality of the Plenty River and its environs will be appropriately monitored, protected from project impacts and where possible enhanced through the project activities.
NILLUMBIK’S CANOPY

124. This portion of the presentation is focused on Nillumbik’s tree canopy.

125. Nillumbik have the second highest canopy coverage (to the Shire of Yarra Ranges) of the Melbourne Metropolitan area.

126. There are over half a million trees on Council land and a total of 49 per cent of canopy coverage across public and private land. Although we have a high percentage of canopy coverage we also have an aging tree population.

127. Council is consistently looking for ways to positively contribute through proactive tree planting in streets, parks and reserves to build resilience and develop a young canopy that can take over once the over mature canopy declines.

128. Our trees provide a number of ecosystem services (Carbon sequestration and storage, biodiversity value, air filtration, cooling etc.) for the greater Melbourne metropolitan area.

NILLUMBIK’S CURRENT VEGETATION CHALLENGES

129. Due to the current state of Nillumbik’s canopy, we are faced with challenges. Challenges that are inflicted by external factors and ones that we cannot address in isolation.

130. North East Link is not the first road infrastructure project which will remove a large amount of trees within Nillumbik.

131. Stage 1 of the Yan Yean Road duplication has removed significant amounts of Nillumbik’s canopy and Stage 2 is also likely to remove further canopy and important habitat.

132. DEWLP have recently produced maps which confirm the canopy impacts being experienced in the north-east of Melbourne and has recorded a canopy loss of in the order of 10 to 20 per cent in the last four years.

133. Industry wide the following climate challenges are acknowledged

   a. increased average temperature
   b. increased overnight temperatures
   c. increased extreme temperatures
   d. decreased average rainfall
   e. increased rainfall intensity,
   f. reduced average humidity
   g. increased evaporation; and
   h. longer bushfire seasons.
134. It is Council’s opinion that trees are critical to mitigating these climatic challenges.

135. NELP’s removal of trees will add to the cumulative impact on the tree canopy coverage in the north-east and it is therefore extremely important that appropriate measures are taken to minimise and avoid where possible and mitigate replacement where it is unavoidable.

**TREE CANOPY MAPPING**

136. As I alluded to earlier the North-East area of Melbourne has already seen significant loss in canopy

137. The map on the screen taken from the maps.vic website shows the immediate area where the M80 connects with the Greensborough Bypass

138. This indicates a significant reduction in trees over 4 years which is of concern to Council.

139. The map on the left shows tree coverage in 2014 was 20-30 per cent and the map of the right in 2018 shows a reduction to 10-20 per cent coverage

140. This is why Council is very supportive of any actions that will firstly mitigate tree canopy loss and secondly enhance and contribute to increasing tree canopy coverage.

**ARBORICUTURE EPR RESPONSES**

141. On this slide are the proposed EPR’s relating to the Arboriculture Chapter in the EES

142. Council is generally in support of these EPRs and commends NELPs intent to achieve net-gain by 2045.

143. Council does however presents the following for the Committee to consider and challenge NELP with respect to the proposed EPR’s as well as additional EPRs.

144. With respect to EPR AR1 to maximising retention of trees. While we support retaining as much canopy as is possible, we also understand that the health of retained trees can be compromised through the construction process.

145. Council considers that the magnitude of canopy loss as part of this project adjacent to the M80 interchange has been underestimated and requests that the Committee require that NELP ensure the projected impact is well understood and appropriately mitigated through the proposed EPR’s.
146. Council supports a tree protection plan as specified in EPR AR2 but would like the method/s to decide which trees will be retained more clearly defined and therefore request that the Committee require NELP to clarify and respond to this.

147. Council also recommends that EPR AR2 is strengthened to specify monitoring and enforcement of the tree protection plan during construction.

148. There should also be a control in place requiring that trees which are adversely impacted, or removed due to unforeseen circumstances should then be included in the tree replacement plan at the same replacement ratio (2:1).

149. With respect to EPR AR3: Implement a tree canopy replacement plan. Council sees a real opportunity to partner with NELP in delivering on this EPR.

150. The expert witness report prepared by Urban Forest Consulting (document number 24u) communicated that it is estimated that 30-40 per cent of tree canopy removed to facilitate the project could be replaced within the project boundary. The remaining 60-70 per cent would need to be planted outside the project boundary.

151. Council has extensive knowledge of appropriate locations for planting and species selection for long term benefit.

152. Council can provide land locations that have capacity for proactive tree plantings identified as part of the tree replacement plan.

153. We believe that this presents a real opportunity for NELP to achieve its desired EPR’s and significantly contribute to mitigating the impact of cumulative canopy reduction caused by state road infrastructure projects in Nillumbik.

ARBORICULTURE FURTHER OPTIONS

154. In addition to the proposed EPR’s on arboriculture, Council also requests the following.

a. To ensure that temporary stockpile sites, if they are outside the project boundary are treated as though they are contained within the project boundary and therefore the appropriate EPR’s apply.

b. Develop a tree register that captures all trees removed throughout construction to ensure there is full transparency over all tree removals and they are recorded and incorporated into the proactive tree planting program at the two trees planted to every tree removed ratio.
CLOSING REMARKS

155. Nillumbik Shire Council remains committed to assisting North East Link Project delivering ‘Corridor A’, however highlights that mitigation of impacts during construction and beyond is of significant importance.

156. A project of this scale presents excellent opportunities to provide a range of outcomes. Opportunities that can only be realised with a project like this.

157. Council’s submission is painted with many opportunities which we believe will add significant value to the project and in most part are crucial to its overall success.

158. Today, I have presented a range of Council’s requests and I offer this as a short closing summary:

a. The upgrade of the Civic Drive and Diamond Creek Road intersection is required as part of the project, prior to works commencing on the M80 interchange

b. The upgrade of Diamond Creek Road between Civic Drive and Yan Yean Road is required as part of the project, prior to works commencing on the M80 interchange

c. The delivery of a Local Area Traffic Management Plan for the road local municipal road network surrounding the Diamond Creek Road corridor and the proactive implementation of mitigation measures to manage rat running traffic prior to works commencing on the M80 interchange.

d. Require NELP to strengthen the Key Directions within the Urban Design Strategy to more specifically capture the Nillumbik local identity and culture.

e. Require NELP to include a landmark feature at the M80 interchange that accurately reflects the Nillumbik local identity and culture.

f. Elevate the importance of the Plenty River by requiring NELP to consider the impacts and appropriate mitigation required to properly manage any adverse impacts.

g. Requesting NELP to validate the extent of vegetation loss experienced by the project.

h. Require NELP to work closely with Nillumbik to implement its tree replacement plan by planting some of the projected 60 to 70 per cent that can’t be accommodated within the project boundary, to be planted on Council designated sites.
159. Council officers would like to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of North East Link Project staff. To date they have been professional and easy to work with.

160. I would also like to thank the Chairman, Deputy Chair and the rest of committee for their time and consideration of Council’s submission and wish you all the best on your deliberations with respect to North East Link Project.

END
North East Link Project

Nillumbik Shire Council Submission Presentation

Joseph Emmanuel | Manager Infrastructure
Kirsten Reedy | Coordinator Environment and Biodiversity
What’s to be covered

• Summary of Council’s Submission
• About Nillumbik
• Introduction to Council’s Concerns
• Four Focus Points
  – Traffic and Congestion
  – Gateway to Nillumbik
  – The Environment
  – Tree Canopy
Council’s Submission

- Supportive of Corridor A
- Plenty River Catchment undefined impacts
- Risk to threatened flora and fauna
- Vegetation loss
- Increased traffic on Diamond Creek Road and impact on the local road network
- Temporary stockpiling locations
- Complementary Projects list
About Nillumbik

91% Green Wedge

High biodiversity values

Farmers’ Markets

Wineries
Artistic Heritage
Introduction to EES Concerns

- Request an upgrade to Diamond Creek Rd between Civic Drive and Yan Yean Rd and the upgrade of the intersection of Civic Drive and Diamond Creek Rd as part of NEL
- An expedited LATM Plan for Greensborough and Plenty to mitigate impact on municipal local roads to be delivered as part of NEL
- Modify the UDS to include a landmark feature at the entrance to Nillumbik at the M80
- Inclusion of the Plenty River in the project scope
- Modification to Arboriculture EPR’s to strengthen retention and offset of canopy.
Traffic
AM Peak travel times, westbound / southbound

PM Peak travel times, westbound / southbound

AM Peak travel time, eastbound / northbound

PM Peak travel time, eastbound / northbound

Source: NELP Travel Time Surveys, 2017 and Veitch Lister Consulting, 2018
Yan Yean Road – Stage 1 Case Study

- Traffic volumes increased by 13 % (112 % at worst)
- We also had some roads have a peak our traffic increase up to 168 %

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Average Annual Daily Traffic</th>
<th>AM Peak Hour</th>
<th>Peak Hour</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Heard Av between YY Rd &amp; Faneco Rd</td>
<td>419 695</td>
<td>82 82</td>
<td>25 67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faneco Rd west of Heard Av</td>
<td>287 310</td>
<td>29 24</td>
<td>28 29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Browns Ln west of Yan Yean Rd</td>
<td>685 661</td>
<td>51 46</td>
<td>59 58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Browns Ln western end of seal</td>
<td>244 315</td>
<td>19 23</td>
<td>25 31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blackwood Gv</td>
<td>372 416</td>
<td>46 48</td>
<td>39 38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>River Av west of Yan Yean Rd</td>
<td>944 880</td>
<td>138 124</td>
<td>77 72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heard Av north of Yan Yean Rd</td>
<td>644 962</td>
<td>95 104</td>
<td>47 85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McLennans Rd</td>
<td>125 170</td>
<td>14 17</td>
<td>11 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Craig Rd</td>
<td>873 962</td>
<td>184 192</td>
<td>81 91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Butlers Rd</td>
<td>253 537</td>
<td>23 36</td>
<td>37 56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mackelroy Rd</td>
<td>1,288 1,205</td>
<td>86 74</td>
<td>110 111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treetop Tce</td>
<td>1,948 1,971</td>
<td>238 213</td>
<td>188 192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dry Creek Dr</td>
<td>737 816</td>
<td>166 164</td>
<td>71 72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ironbank Rd north of Pioneer Rd</td>
<td>6,076 6,972</td>
<td>469 505</td>
<td>498 602</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table shows the average annual daily traffic, AM peak hour change, and peak hour change for various locations.*
Traffic and Congestion Requests

- Upgrade the Civic Drive Roundabout and Diamond Creek Road between Civic Drive and Yan Yean Road
- Monitor conditions and implement mitigation as required for surrounding municipal road network
A Quality Gateway to Nillumbik

- Key Directions 3 and 5 for Urban Design promote the local identity and culture.
- Nillumbik – green wedge, bushland, agriculture & strong artistic history
- M80 – NEL interchange will be a key gateway to the Shire and should reflect Nillumbik themes with at least public art, landscaping, views and signage.
- Request the UDS is modified to include a landmark sculpture sensitive to Nillumbik’s local identity.
Nillumbik’s Canopy

• Second highest canopy coverage to the Shire of Yarra Ranges
• Maintaining existing and increasing canopy through proactive programs
• Aging canopy population in Nillumbik
• Nillumbik’s trees provide a key service to Metro Melbourne
Nillumbik’s Current Vegetation Challenges

• Yan Yean Road Stage 1 duplication has removed significant amounts of Nillumbik’s canopy.
• Yan Yean Road Stage 2 will further remove canopy and important habitat.
• NELP’s canopy removal will further negatively impact canopy loss.
Tree Mapping

2014

Tree mapping 2014: 20-30% trees (DELWP, 2019).

2018

Tree mapping 2018: 10-20% trees (DELWP, 2019).

## EPR Responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>EES Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EPR AR1</td>
<td>Maximising retention of trees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPR AR2</td>
<td>Implement a tree protection plan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPR AR3</td>
<td>Implement a tree replacement plan.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Further Canopy Options

- In conjunction with EPR AR3 Proactive tree planting program to ensure net gain by 2045 Council proposes two additional EPRs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proposed Reference</th>
<th>Proposed EES Description</th>
<th>Proposed Council’s Concern/ Comment</th>
<th>Proposed Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proposed EPR AR4</td>
<td>Temporary stockpile zones tree impacts.</td>
<td>Consideration of vegetation in temporary stockpiles need to be made.</td>
<td>Council requests any trees impacted in these zones need to be approached the same as trees within the project boundaries. Areas disturbed by temporary stockpiles need to be regenerated as part of a proactive replacement tree planting program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposed EPR AR5</td>
<td>Develop tree register that captures all trees removed throughout the preparation and construction of the project.</td>
<td>Recording of vegetation loss for the life of the project.</td>
<td>Ensure all tree removals are recorded and incorporated into the proactive replacement tree planting program at the same rate and trees.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Closing Remarks