



Surrey Hills Progress Association Inc.
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Hon Jacinta Allan MP
Minister for Transport Infrastructure

Hon Richard Wynne MP
Minister for Planning

cc: Hon James Merlino MP, Acting Premier
Hon Josh Frydenberg MP
Paul Hamer MP
Will Fowles MP
Matthew Bach MP
Cr Andrew Munroe, Mayor & Cr Amanda McNeill (Whitehorse)
Cr Garry Thompson, Mayor & Cr Jane Addis (Boroondara)
Simon McMillan CEO (Whitehorse) & Phillip Storer CEO (Boroondara)
Steve Brown LXP Program Director

29th April 2021

Dear Ministers

SURREY HILLS - MONT ALBERT LEVEL CROSSING REMOVAL PROJECT

We the undersigned write to register our strong concern about the likely negative impacts on our community if the Level Crossing Removal Project's (LXP's) plans for this project do not take into account the sensible and constructive principles and proposals put forward by the Surrey Hills Progress Association (SHPA).

The local community supports the removal of the dangerous and congested level crossings at Surrey Hills and Mont Albert. There is also support for the amalgamation of the two existing railway stations into one. However, this support is conditional on and subject to the significant and unique challenges and problems created by this engineering-driven solution being properly addressed in the final design of the project.

We call upon the Government and the LXP to accept and respond thoughtfully, constructively and comprehensively to the following principles and key outcomes for the project put forward by the SHPA:

Principles

- 1. Savings made by replacing two stations with only one should be reinvested in the project**
- 2. The scope and budget of the project should be expanded to address its unique impacts**
- 3. The project should incorporate as much cover over the rail trench as practicable, including sufficient cover to enable legitimate urban design and amenity concerns to be properly addressed**

Key outcomes

1. New, **integrated community spaces over the railway line** to compensate for loss of stations **in historic shopping villages** and to reduce disconnection on either side of the railway corridor
2. Pedestrian space and **landscaped frontage to Mont Albert Road, over the railway line**, for the new station
3. Convenient, visible **links from the new station to the village centres**
4. **Effective traffic management and coordination** with other transport modes
5. Adequate dedicated **car parking to meet current and future demand** created by the new station and to compensate for loss of car parking resulting from the consolidation of two stations into one
6. **Preservation of public open space and replacement of unavoidable losses**
7. **Preservation of trees/vegetation and replacement of unavoidable losses** (on a reasonable practically equivalent basis)
8. **Uncompromised pedestrian and disability access** to the new station, necessitating building design review at the entrance at the Surrey Hills end
9. Thoughtful **mitigation of unavoidable amenity impacts for nearby residents**
10. A **safe and convenient shared user path** (bicycle and pedestrian), with separation from motor vehicles at main roads.

We request that the Government move urgently to direct the LXP to engage in a meaningful and cooperative way with the two responsible local councils - the Cities of Whitehorse and Boroondara - and the local community to ensure that the final plans for the project incorporate these legitimate community expectations and key outcomes. Such engagement must include timely provision of relevant project information/data and development and transparent consideration of alternative design options and treatments, including those put forward by the SHPA.

We believe that this project can and, if properly designed and delivered, will leave a positive and enduring legacy for our community. However, based on the unsatisfactory consultation process conducted by the LXP to date, we are concerned that our views are not being respected and that we risk being 'short-changed' by this project. This will leave the community with a sub-optimal and undesirable infrastructure and urban design legacy

We call on you to demonstrate your Government's bona fides. Make sure this project lives up to the values professed in *Plan Melbourne* and your other urban amenity policies and doesn't simply leave a divisive scar across our suburbs.

Finally, we request that you, directly or through the LXP, provide a report back to the community on progress in response to the above requests by the end of May 2021.

Yours sincerely