



**PUNT ROAD PUBLIC ACQUISITION OVERLAY  
STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE**

**Prepared By  
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**1<sup>st</sup> February, 2016**

## 1. INTRODUCTION AND SCOPE

The Victorian Government has committed to review the Public Acquisition Overlay (PAO) in the Stonnington Planning Scheme, along the east side of Punt Road between Alexandra Avenue in South Yarra and Union Street in Windsor. The overlay has been in place since 1954.

The Minister for Planning has appointed an Advisory Committee under Section 151 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 to undertake the review and report and recommend on whether to retain, modify or remove the PAO.

This statement provides my opinions on some of the transport and traffic engineering aspects of the matter.

## 2. WITNESS EXPERIENCE, PROJECT BACKGROUND AND SCOPE

<b>Witness Name</b>	James Donald Higgs
<b>Qualifications</b>	Bachelor of Engineering (Civil) The University of Melbourne
<b>Position</b>	Director TTM Consulting (Vic) Pty. Ltd. Suite 9, 70-80 Wellington Street, Collingwood Vic 3066
<b>Experience</b>	I have approximately 44 years' experience in Engineering including :- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One year experience at Shire of Mortlake</li> <li>• Three years' experience at Town of Kyabram</li> <li>• Ten years' experience at City of Knox</li> <li>• One year experience Higgs-TTM Pty. Ltd.</li> <li>• Twenty years' experience at TTM Consulting Pty. Ltd.</li> <li>• Nine years' experience at TTM Consulting (Vic) Pty. Ltd.</li> </ul>

<b>Areas of Expertise</b>	I have expertise in road and street planning and design, development traffic impact assessment including traffic and car parking demand generation and parking generation, traffic management and general traffic engineering, road safety and transportation and urban planning with an engineering focus.
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## **Experience**

My experience and expertise over the past 44 years includes road design, project assessment, inter disciplinary urban planning, preparation of movement network design codes including Livable Neighbourhoods and Clause 56.06 review, determination of pavement design parameters and numerous car parking and traffic generation assessments of a wide range of land use developments. I am therefore well qualified to provide this assessment in respect of the subject proposal.

## **Instructions and Existing Relationship**

I have been instructed by a group of resident owners of affected properties located along the eastern side of Punt Road in the subject section to provide a statement that includes :-

- Review of Arup Report issued 14 October 2015.
- Consider submissions made by Stonnington, Yarra and Melbourne City councils
- Address the VicRoads and PTV submission.
- Consider the proposed long term benefits and disadvantages of the PAO as it stands
- Provide an opinion on what should happen with the PAO.

The instructions also include presentation of evidence before the Panel. The instructions are written.

My relationship with the instructors is of a business nature.

## **Referenced Material including Facts, Matters and Assumptions**

In preparing this statement I have reviewed the following documentation :-

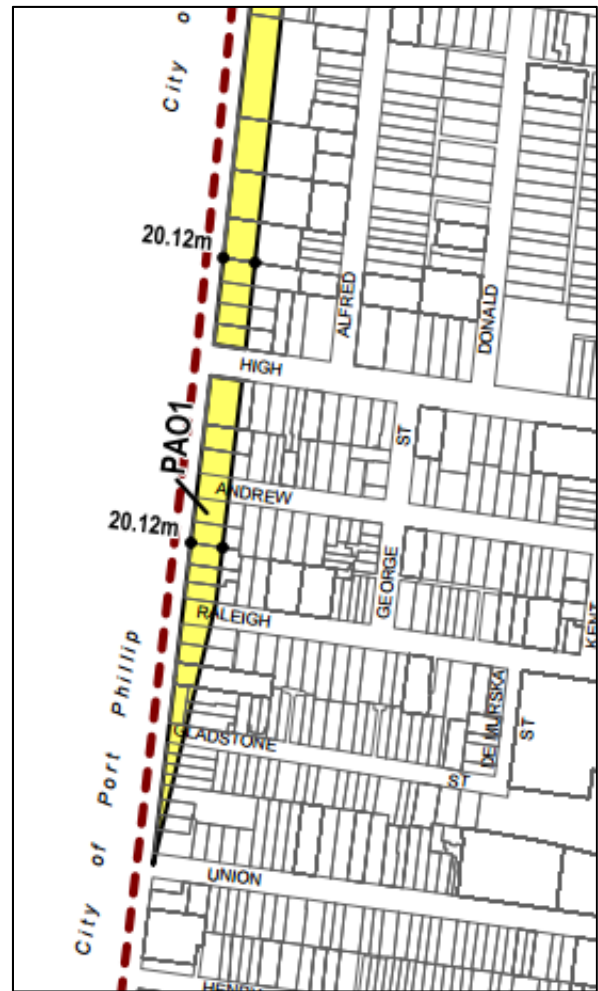
- Stonnington Planning Scheme, in particular Clause 45.01
- Melbourne Planning Scheme
- Yarra Planning Scheme, including Clause 21.06
- Arup Options Report issued 14 October 2015
- Part A Submission from VicRoads and PTV
- VicRoads Background Report

I have also visited the site and surrounds, and noted relevant traffic facilities and related elements.

### 3. THE EXISTING PAO



**North End**



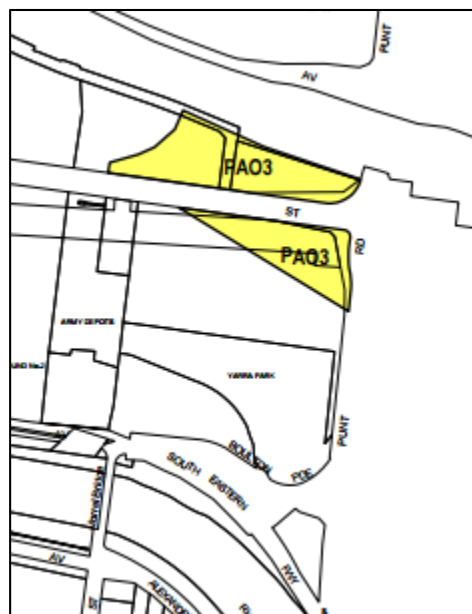
**South End**

It is worth noting that the only intersection widening of the PAO is at Alexandra Avenue, and that there are no extensions of the PAO into the major east-west streets that intersect with Punt Road in the salient segment.

PAO's from Melbourne and Yarra Planning Schemes are not present in relevant places, respectively indicating intents on the western side of Punt Road and north of the Yarra River.



The CLPO is only within the existing reservation of Punt Road.



The only Melbourne Planning Scheme Overlay that provides any indication of intent in relation to Punt Road is PAO3, but the Route 7 tram lines go through PAO3.

#### 4. CURRENT TRAFFIC CONDITIONS

The 2009 peak hour traffic loadings indicate that current mid-block capacity generally exceeds demand. However intersections operate at or close to capacity during peak periods, exacerbated by downstream conditions for northbound movement.

The 2015 counts in the TrafficWorks reports are not legible but there is significant commentary to the extent that volumes have remained constant or decreased in recent years, and thus the 2009 volumes are a reasonable guide. Bicycle volumes are very low, and the subject section of Punt Road is not part of the Principal Bicycle Network. I suspect that bicycle volumes are influenced by the traffic and also the Punt Road hill.

#### 5. HODDLE STREET-PUNT ROAD CORRIDOR CONSIDERATIONS

In respect of vehicular traffic along the Punt /Hoddle Corridor south of Victoria Parade the key points are :-

- Swan Street intersection /railway bridge /Brunton Avenue is the most significant impact on traffic capacity, but there is no expressed intent to do anything with the Rail Bridge.
- Alexandra Avenue intersection is the second most significant impact, but M1 interchanges are also significant.

Corridor capacity is primarily a function of intersection capacity, which includes approaches and departures.

Yarra Planning Scheme has no intent to allow any widening of Punt Road, and Melbourne City will not support a reduction of Goshes Paddock. That provides a capacity constraint that effectively states that the capacity of M1, Alexandra Avenue and Punt Road south of Yarra River should match the capacity of the corridor north of the Yarra.

Therefore, from a vehicular traffic standpoint, I see no viability in a general 6-lane cross-section south of the Yarra. Intersection treatments are another matter, as is provision for public transport.

The Concepts described in the Arup Report that provide peak period operational improvements but have four lane mid-block configurations are :-

- Concept 2 : 4 lanes with Central Right Turn lanes
- Concept 3 : as above with Narrow Central median
- Concept 5 : 4 lanes with Widened Intersections

I consider these as potentially viable options.

Concept 2 and Concept 3 are stated to be able to be provided within the existing road reserve, whereas Concept 5 would require part of the PAO near the major intersections.

The Arup Report provides Year 2031 level of service modeling for the key intersections. All concepts except Concept 1 show very satisfactory level of service for the peak periods. In the multi-criteria analysis the operational outcomes of Concepts 2, 3 and 5 are similar, and Concepts 6 and 7 are not rated significantly better than Concept 5.

In my opinion Concept 5 could provide an advantage in that bus queue-jump provision provided that left turn islands with bus stops could be included, in a similar form to that which is already present at Hoddle Street/Bridge Road.

Concept 5 could be further refined from the layout shown in the VicRoads Drawings Numbered 668664-668670 and dated 12/01/11, through reducing the extent of the 6 lane configuration through the intersections and thus reducing the extent of PAO that it would be appropriate to retain under adoption of that Concept.

The PAO makes no provision for enhanced tram stops and tram integration with pedestrian and vehicular traffic around the east-west tram route intersections at High Street, Commercial Road and Toorak Road. Surely under all stated transport objectives that should have priority over mid-block widening that does little or nothing for overall route efficiency for any of the transport modes except cycling. PTV and VicRoads have had more than 50 years to design or at least conceptualize appropriate arrangements in respect of those matters, if those matters are considered relevant.

## 6. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

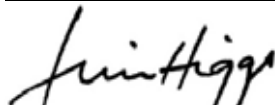
It is my opinion that in the context of relevant Planning Scheme provisions, Stonnington, Melbourne and Yarra, and in the context of the form and possibilities of the Hoddle corridor north of the Yarra River, the retention of the full extent of the PAO is not viable in respect of vehicular traffic related benefits. There are likely to be some traffic capacity benefits associated with intersections at key points, but the urban outcomes should be key considerations in balancing transport with other factors.

The Arup Concepts 2, 3 and 5 are viable options depending on the extent of additional traffic capacity, intersection capacity and public transport service levels being sought.

In summary it is my opinion that the PAO should either be removed in its entirety or limited to what would facilitate reasonable designs for intersection capacity enhancements.

In preparing this statement I have made all of the inquiries that I believe are desirable and appropriate and no matters of significance which I regard as relevant have to my knowledge been withheld from the Panel.

**TTM Consulting (Vic) Pty. Ltd.**



**J. D. Higgs**

