

# Submission Cover Sheet

West Gate Tunnel Project IAC

Sub no:

**343**

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Request to be heard?: Yes

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**Affected property:**  
**Attachment:** WGTP\_IAC\_-\_Fle  
**Comments:** Refer attached



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Westgate Tunnel Project Inquiry and Advisory Committee  
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Dear Sir/Madam

**WESTGATE TUNNEL PROJECT - INQUIRY AND ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Please find attached the Flemington Association's submission to the Westgate Tunnel Project Inquiry & Assessment Committee.

Yours sincerely

Les Potts  
**PRESIDENT – FLEMINGTON ASSOCIATION**  
**10 JULY 2017**

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## **SUMMARY**

The Flemington Association recognises that Flemington, Newmarket and Travancore residents live outside the defined West Gate Tunnel Project (WGTP) Study Area. Yet, in some cases local residents are impacted to a greater degree than the abandoned East West Link (Eastern Section) Project. The Flemington Association submits that mitigating the significant community impacts is a vital part of finalising the WGTP design.

The Flemington Association is cognisant of, and shares, the broader concerns of many other community groups. However, in our submission we propose a set of recommendations to improve local community acceptance and performance for the project; specifically, in relation to:

- Noise
- Air pollution
- Moonee Ponds Creek Waterway and Parkland Impacts.

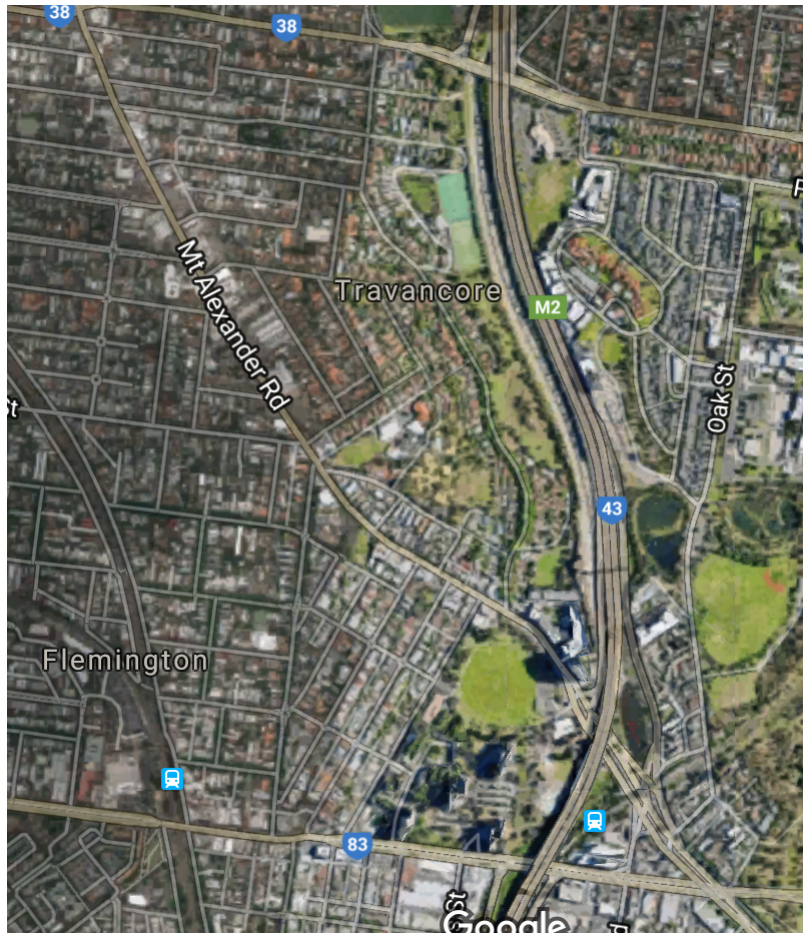
## **FLEMINGTON ASSOCIATION**

Flemington Association, originally Flemington Ratepayers Association, was formed in 1881 to represent the constituents of the Flemington and Newmarket communities. It has also represented the Travancore community from 1920 when Travancore's subdivision and development began.

The Association was incorporated in 2009. It is not affiliated with any political party. Further information about Flemington Association and its purposes can be found at [www.flemingtonassociation.org.au](http://www.flemingtonassociation.org.au).

## **FLEMINGTON AND TRAVANCORE AREAS**

The West Gate Tunnel Project (WGTP) Study Area ends at Racecourse Road on City Link, its northern Study Area boundary.



(Source: Google Maps)

Flemington (including Debneys Park community) is the first area outside the WGTP Study Area i.e. to the north of Racecourse Road as far as Mt Alexander Road.

Travelling northbound along City Link, Travancore is the next community adjacent to Flemington extending from Mt Alexander Road to Ormond Road/Brunswick Road (1.8km). West Parkville is opposite Travancore on the east side of City Link Tullamarine Tollway.

The Moonee Ponds Creek forms the eastern boundary of Kensington, Flemington, Travancore, Ascot Vale, Moonee Ponds, etc. and forms the western boundary of Arden-Macaulay, North Melbourne, West Parkville, West Brunswick, etc. Linear trails along the creek open spaces link these communities.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Flemington and Travancore are outside the WGTP Study Area and were therefore excluded from EES Studies and its impact assessments. However, Flemington and Travancore communities contend that they will be adversely impacted and that the EES Hearing Panel should recommend further studies and design changes to mitigate the material negative impacts of heavy trucks and traffic in particular.

This submission makes suggestions to the Panel of possible recommendations conceived by Flemington Association members and residents who have had many decades of living with the 24/7 effects of increasing City Link Tullamarine truck and traffic volumes.

This submission is made in response to the West Gate Tunnel Project (WGTP) EES reports, brochures and plans on public display. Some reports have been redacted or not made available. The reports

most relevant to this submission include Traffic (Technical Report A), Noise (Technical Report H), and Air Quality (Technical Report G).

## **TRAFFIC IMPACT ON FLEMINGTON AND TRAVANCORE**

THE WGTP purports to cater for a forecast 67% increase in freight from 15 billion tonne-kilometres (tkm) to 25 billion tkm by 2031 (i.e. 3.07%p.a. compounding growth over 14 years). Essentially it does this by redistributing 55K-67K vehicles a day (vpd) from West Gate Bridge on to routes further to the north and these routes emerge at the CBD fringe, Flemington and Travancore.

It also increases motorway capacity by about 60%<sup>1</sup> e.g. West Gate Freeway is to be expanded from about 8 lanes to 12+ lanes (or from 10 to 16+ lanes counting emergency lanes). Discounted tolls are planned for very large road shuttle combination vehicles to/from Melbourne Port on WGTP. Freight trains cannot compete with new generation road shuttle 'trains' such as 30-metre long Super B-doubles (carrying 4 20' long containers with up to 117 tonne gross vehicle mass) and eventually b-Triples<sup>1</sup> (carrying 5 20' containers) that do not pay for their full road wear and tear. These monster trucks are currently not legal on public roads in any Australian capital city.

City Link traffic at the Study Area northern boundary is forecast to increase by about 29% from 98-120vpd up to 126-155vpd by 2031 (i.e. 1.085%p.a. compounding growth over 14 years). Only a minute fraction of this increase is predicted to travel via Racecourse Road to/from Flemington Road outside Children's Hospital. No forecasts are given for Elliott Avenue, Mt Alexander or Ormond/Brunswick Roads (outside the WGTP Study Area). An implication is that the vast majority of this future WGTP generated traffic is predicted to stay on City Link Tullamarine.

The freight vehicle component in this City Link traffic stream is predicted to increase from 5% a few years ago towards 15% by 2031. We note that the increasing proportion of freight vehicles will make the whole traffic stream noisier, more polluting and less safe than currently, consequently proper impact assessment should have considered this particularly at critical locations such as

- a) the elevated tollway with 'sound tube' at Flemington,
- b) the gradients between this elevated tollway and ground level Tullamarine Tollway, a
- c) opposite Travancore Park.

At these locations the impacts are materially significant.

## **SUBMISSION**

### **Truck and Traffic Noise**

**Traffic Noise Background:** An outcome of the Southern and Western Bypasses EES in 1994 was a 63dBA L10 18hr maximum noise cap for the 34-year life of City Link, to 2034. This standard for the private toll road builder was deliberately more stringent than VicRoads guideline. It was legislated into the Concession Deed and specified in the Scope and Project Requirements. The community was given a guarantee by the Government of the day that noise would never exceed this.

The communities along Moonee Valley adjacent to City Link Tullamarine did not, and still do not, accept this high 63dBA L10 18hr limit due to the following.

- It was not low enough to match world best practice and not as protective as NSW's noise policy.
- It was less than the EPA's standard for protecting the environment.
- It exposes residents for 10% of the time to very intrusive noise interference in excess of 63dBA L10 18hr on the noisiest days i.e. for 6 minutes of every hour for up to 2.4 hours a day.

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<sup>1</sup> Standing Committee on the Economy and Infrastructure Inquiry Into Infrastructure Projects evidence from Transurban Chief Scott Charlton 18 Nov 2015

- It causes sleeping residents to be awakened between midnight and 6am by noise bursts/peaks such as from truck engine breaks that can be as high as 80-100dB on the Lmax scale.
- Transurban has never made public its City Link noise monitoring and has refused to rectify exceedences above 63dBA L10 18hr.
- Despite residents' complaints, it has taken 22 years for the City Link Tullamarine Widening project to replace the inadequate wooden and concrete barriers with all their holes and gaps and retrofit noise-exposed multi-storey residential buildings. But this work was under-designed due to the 2015 Aecom 2-dimensional noise modelling being carried out at 85kph traffic speed instead of 100kph and taking no account of acceleration/deceleration on gradients or increasing numbers of heavy trucks, which under-estimated current and future City Link Tullamarine traffic noise. 3-dimensional modelling that considers the height of truck exhausts, topography, gradients, etc is necessary to determine the effective height of noise barriers and this work needs to be done.

**WGTP Noise Impacts:** The EES documents predict that the 29% extra WGTP traffic on City Link Tullamarine will add 50dBA of noise to the existing noise level which is frequently around the 63dBA cap. That 50dBA estimate fails to allow for two of the critical locations where truck acceleration/deceleration and use of engine brakes 24/7 is pronounced:

- the gradients between this elevated tollway and ground level Tullamarine Tollway, and
- opposite Travancore Park where traffic speed is increasing northbound and decreasing with braking southbound.

The additional 50dBA will cause the 63dBA L10 18hr policy to be exceeded more frequently and by greater amounts. Such truck noise serves no positive purpose. It is completely unnecessary and destructive to lives and property values. And it is relatively easy to minimise.

The City Link Tullamarine Widening planning completely failed to consider the anticipated WGTP traffic volumes and noise impacts, despite WGTP being the Government's next major road project to be built. Inadequate planning for City Link Tullamarine Widening and WGTP threaten to make the situation in Flemington and Travancore much worse, and our communities are counting on the Panel to help ameliorate our situation according to VicRoads' policy "that noise must be minimised".

**WGTP Noise Recommendations:**

<b>NOISE IMPACTS &amp; RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	
<b>Key Negative Impacts</b>	<b>Recommendation for Panel to Consider</b>
Midnight to 6am night time truck noise from City Link at Flemington and Travancore will cause sleep disturbance, ill-health, amenity and diminished property values. The maximum AS/NZS 2107 Standard for sleeping quarters in dozens of homes of 30-40dB Leq will be greatly exceeded.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce night time noise standard of 70dB Lmax or similar to NSW into City Link Concession Deed and WGTP EPRs with ongoing monitoring, publication of results and remediation of noise exceedences.</li> <li>• Introduce "No Engine Brake" signage and enforce wherever truck noise persists.</li> <li>• Only modern <u>silent</u> engine brakes be permitted on trucks.</li> <li>• Enforce EPA muffler noise standards for motorbikes.</li> <li>• All holes and gaps in Transurban noise barriers to be filled then given regular maintenance.</li> </ul>
Excessive daytime noise due to inadequacy of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All holes and gaps in existing Transurban</li> </ul>

63dBA L10 18hr policy causing loss of residential amenity and property devaluation.	<p>noise barriers to be filled then given regular maintenance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Upgrade 63dBA L10 18hr daytime policy to NSW standard or best practice including application rules to community buildings sports grounds and park as well as to homes.</li> <li>• Ensure ongoing monitoring, publication of results and remediation of noise exceedences by Transurban.</li> </ul>
Day-time noise at the windows of multi-storey residential buildings cause loss of peace and quiet and residential amenity due to noise measurement near ground level only.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All noise levels measurements and predictions to be carried out at upper storey window levels.</li> <li>• Fully enclose the City Link elevated tollway 'sound tube' at Flemington to upgrade it to a 'silent tube' to protect Debneys Park Estate, Flemington Hill, North Melbourne, etc.</li> </ul>
Noise-degraded environments worsening over time in the event that traffic forecasts are exceeded, especially after completion of the 2-year term of the WGTP Independent Reviewer of Environment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure 5-yearly reviews of excessive noise sources and updated methods of remediation by Transurban.</li> <li>• The State develops a best practice noise SEPP (State Environmental Protection Policy).</li> </ul>

### Traffic Air Pollution

**Air Pollution Background:** Another outcome of the Southern and Western Bypasses EES in 1994 was the recognition of common inversion layers of air occurrence above Moonee Valley and the predicted build up of pollutants to the maximum tolerable limits on Tullamarine Freeway between Flemington Junction and Ormond/Brunswick Roads. Epidemiologist Dr David Dunt of University of Melbourne warned of the future danger of this 'hot spot' of dangerous vehicle emissions.

Nineteen years later in 2013, the air modelling for the East West Link CIS confirmed that pollutant concentration was already at Intervention Levels on City Link Tullamarine 350 metres south of the Ormond/Brunswick Road Bridge but this local effect was not investigated because it did not match EPA receptor sites elsewhere.

The 2015 Aecom Air Quality modelling for City Link Tullamarine Widening including at Flemington and Travancore assumed that stricter vehicle emission standards, gradual removal of older vehicles, transition to electric cars, etc. would reduce pollutants faster than traffic growth increases them, thus resulting in no pollutant exceedences at any City Link sensitive receptors in 2014 or 2035 but there were no results for intermediate years. Clearly, Victoria is lagging many parts of the world in cleaning up its vehicle fleet and transitioning to new electric vehicles.

The current WGTP EES studies do not extend to this hot spot location. Even on the nearest section of City Link next to the Debneys Park Estate these EES studies failed to carry out comprehensive modelling with sensitivity to the impacts of zero wind speeds and dispersion in the valley, 'canyons' of accumulated pollutants beside highrise buildings, occasional stop-start traffic conditions, accidents, acceleration/deceleration of traffic, increasing composition of heavy trucks in the traffic stream including (some 20% of which are (EPA defined) smoky vehicles), and so on.

Deaths are not infrequent on Melbourne’s bad asthma days yet the WGTP EES studies are dismissive of risk and neglectful of some of the most carcinogenic pollutants such as PM1s.

**WGTP Traffic Air Quality:** There is a risk that the pollution hot spot on City Link Tullamarine between Flemington Junction and Ormond/Brunswick Road bridge will continue worsening before it starts improving. Another Planning Panel is hearing a DEWLP proposed Amendment C281 to increase the West Parkville high rise limits from about 8 storeys up to 26 storeys along the eastern side of City Link Tullamarine. This could entrap vehicle emissions and exacerbate existing hot spots.

Along this same section of City Link on the western side adjacent to Travancore Park, City Link Widening contractors, CPB Contractors, cut down 152 7-metre high trees in December 2015 and decided not to replace them, thereby reducing the re-oxygenating capacity of the parkland at this critical location.

The WGTP EES should have adopted the precautionary principle. Now the Panel has the opportunity to do so and we make the following suggestions.

<b>AIR POLLUTION IMPACTS &amp; RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	
<b>Key Negative Impacts</b>	<b>Recommendation for Panel to Consider</b>
Some 29% more WGTP traffic on City Link Tullamarine by 2031 and other changes will likely worsen the recognised pollutant hot spot some 350 metres south of Ormond/Brunswick Road Bridge.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional air pollution modelling should be undertaken in Travancore’s recognised pollutant hot spots. The modelling should include all pollutants including the toxic engine lubricants that replaced lead in fuel.</li> <li>• Epidemiological evidence is also needed to satisfy the precautionary principle.</li> <li>• The EPA should establish a permanent air monitoring station at this hot spot.</li> <li>• Transurban should regularly monitor air quality along City Link in Flemington and Travancore, publish the results and mitigate pollution e.g. with area plans and Moonee Valley parkland afforestation.</li> </ul>
A disproportionately large percentage of freight traffic in Flemington and Travancore consists of smoky vehicles, making truck routes and Moonee Valley parkland unhealthy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Instead of EPA’s voluntary reporting scheme to control smoky vehicles, mandatory enforcement is needed to clean up Melbourne’s aged and offending truck fleets.</li> <li>• Trucks over 30 years of age should be subjected to annual roadworthy checks.</li> <li>• Transurban should install vehicle pollution detecting cameras on City Link and enforce regulations.</li> </ul>

### **Moonee Ponds Creek Waterway and Parkland Impacts**

**Background:** Despite the desecration of parts of Moonee Ponds Creek from the MMBW’s original construction of Tullamarine Freeway to the recent unsympathetic City Link Tullamarine Widening, the communities of Flemington and Travancore have re-adopted it, re-committed to restoration and greening plans and set about working parties. Flemington Association continues to share with the Friends of Moonee Ponds Creek and other community groups a strong ownership of Moonee Ponds



Creek and Moonee Valley parkland including upstream and downstream of our immediate patches, which are the ‘lungs’ of our community.

**Waterway and Parkland Impacts:** Replacement of fresh public open green spaces with noisy, dusty, smelly and unsafe private toll roads is one of the greatest economic losses a community can experience. A walk along Flemington and Travancore’s sections of Moonee Ponds Creek demonstrates one of the highest prices ever paid by any inner Australian suburb. Along Moonee Valley the transition from green open spaces to ugly concrete drain structures informs visitors arriving from Tullamarine Airport of the changed values of this once garden state capital city. There is nothing local communities can be proud of except their own camouflaging tree plantings.

<b>WATERWAY AND PARKLAND IMPACTS &amp; RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	
<b>Negative Impact</b>	<b>Recommendation for Panel to Consider</b>
Flora, fauna and habitat unnecessarily disturbed by construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All trees in WGTP Study Area above 2m height to be catalogued and protected, replaced with similar in the event that they have to be removed, irrigated and fertilised and maintained for the first 5 years.</li> <li>Linear access along waterway banks to be continuously preserved, with or without paths.</li> </ul>
Road and bridge over-shadowing of waterway and parkland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Overshadowing by civil structures should be minimised together with use of concrete and unnatural materials.</li> <li>Lighting of paths should be incorporated to enhance public safety and cycling safety.</li> </ul>
Public access along and across Moonee Ponds Creek inhibited, made noisy and unsafe.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The WGTP bicycle pedestrian paths should have regular access/egress intersections with local paths (at least every 200 metres) to integrate with community networks.</li> <li>Path and waterway users should be protected from excessive traffic noise that destroys amenity.</li> <li>Lighting of paths should be incorporated to enhance public safety and cycling safety at overshadowed potential blackspots created by unsympathetic overhead structures.</li> </ul>
City Link traffic litter contaminating Moonee Ponds Creek waterway.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Spillage and littering from trucks and other vehicles using City Link should be collected in litter traps that prevent contamination of Moonee Ponds Creek.</li> <li>Moonee Ponds Creek management should be integrated with Lower Yarra Management.</li> <li>Transurban should fund development of the Moonee Ponds Creek Concept Plan implementation and ongoing maintenance.</li> </ul>

### **Public Roads Accessibility & Tolling**

**Background:** Tullamarine Freeway was a free public road for some 15 years before its conversion into a toll way in about 1985. One condition of the City Link Concession Deed was that this Transurban private tollway would be returned to public free use in 2034. Flemington and Travancore residents would then regain their lost local accessibility e.g. to/from Brunswick and other suburbs.

Traffic rat-runs of City Link tollway dodgers have developed through Flemington and Travancore, the main one being along Mt Alexander Road from Flemington to Bulla Road. Traffic congestion along Mt Alexander Road is worse than if there were no City Link tolls to avoid. Also, whenever City Link is closed for maintenance, huge volumes of traffic are diverted through Flemington and Travancore.

**WGTP Tolling Impact on City Link Users:** Not only it is proposed by WGTP to extend the City Link Concession Deed for 15 years after 2034 and continue tolling City Link Tullamarine users to raise \$8 billion towards the WGTP, even if they don't use any part of WGTP, but Flemington and Travancore will not regain 'their' Tullamarine Freeway access until 2049. The economic loss and inequity associated with this additional local congestion and more costly local access caused by City Link tolls is significant. The 'art' of taxation/road tolling should be to raise revenue in the most efficient way possible to minimise such a loss and inequity; for example, by charging the WGTP road user beneficiaries according to the user pays principle.

<b>TOLLING IMPACTS &amp; RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	
<b>Negative Impact</b>	<b>Recommendation for Panel to Consider</b>
<p>Cross subsidy from City Link Tullamarine users to WGTP users after 2034 and increased congestion and rat-running in Flemington for a further 15 years.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow the City Link Concession Deed to end as planned in 2034 and return Tullamarine Freeway to its original free public road status.</li> <li>• Raise the \$8 billion from WGTP users or from users of all Melbourne motorways and tollways equitably.</li> </ul>