

Western**DISTRIBUTOR**



Consultation report

Concept design, April – May 2016

Proposal design update, September – October 2015

About this report

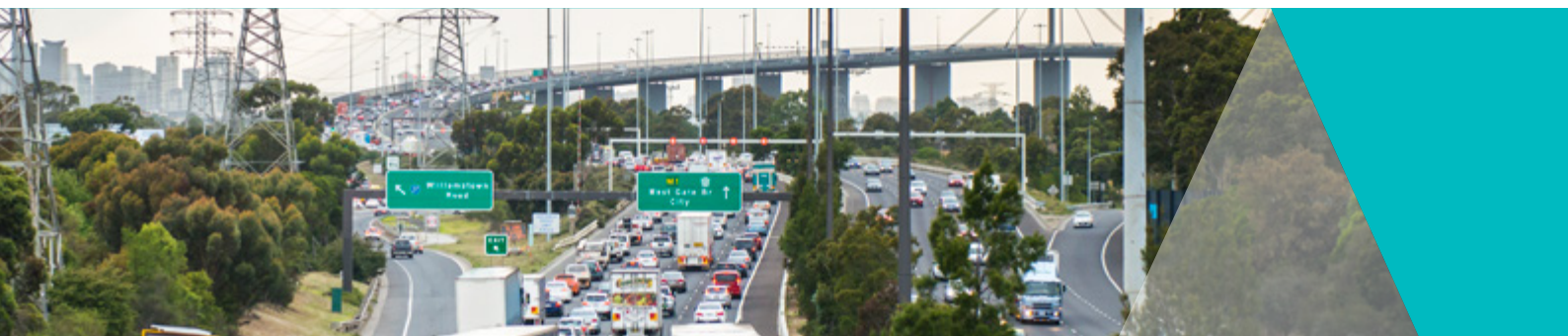
This report provides an overview of consultation and feedback received on the Western Distributor Concept design during April and May 2016.

It also outlines prior consultation and feedback received on from the Proposal design update, undertaken during September and October 2015, which helped inform the development of design options presented in the Concept design.

This report draws from detailed analysis conducted by an independent researcher, available on the Western Distributor website.

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Executive summary

The Western Distributor project has been developed in response to congestion on the West Gate Freeway, predicted growth in Melbourne's west and an increasing number of truck trips to and from the Port of Melbourne.

Community feedback has already played an important part in shaping the Western Distributor and is continuing to do so as the project moves into a competitive tender and detailed planning phase.

Following consultation on the project proposal throughout 2015 (Phase One) and confirmation that the project would proceed in late 2015, a Concept design was developed and released in April 2016 for discussion (Phase Two).

The Concept design had been informed by almost one year of consultation with local communities, councils and industry as well as technical studies, environmental conditions and construction constraints. It included updates to the project's design, new design options for key connections and more detailed information about how the project could work.

This consultation phase focused on:

- sharing information about the project's status
- discussing key design challenges, advantages, disadvantages and opportunities
- identifying and understanding key concerns relating to project planning and construction.

Multiple opportunities were provided to view information and provide feedback in many different ways, including meetings, online tools and face-to-face at community consultation sessions.

A broad range of interested stakeholders participated– from local residents and councils to freight operators, regulators and road user groups.

Consultation during this phase attracted 1750 statements about the Concept design and 784 statements about planning and construction topics including air quality, traffic and construction management, as well as active transport, human health and urban design.

Many of the themes identified through earlier consultations continued to be important, including truck impacts in residential areas; improving travel and access to work and other activities; and maintaining the amenity of local areas and facilities, to name a few.

Having considered the huge range of input, issues and ideas raised by hundreds of locals and diverse stakeholder organisations during the Concept design consultation, the following high-level themes have been identified to capture the main sentiment and nature of feedback received:

- understanding and addressing project impacts
- designing options that minimise community impacts
- maintaining community amenity and safety
- providing appropriate and efficient freight connections
- realising opportunities for community spaces and connections.

Feedback received has informed the preparation of a Reference design, contractor requirements, urban design guidance and will contribute to the preparation of an Environmental Effects Statement.

The Victorian Government, together with Transurban, will continue to engage with the people who live, work and travel across Melbourne's west to deliver the right solution for our growing city.

Many of the themes identified through earlier consultations continue to be important, including truck impacts in residential areas; improving travel and access to work; and maintaining the amenity of local areas.



What we heard

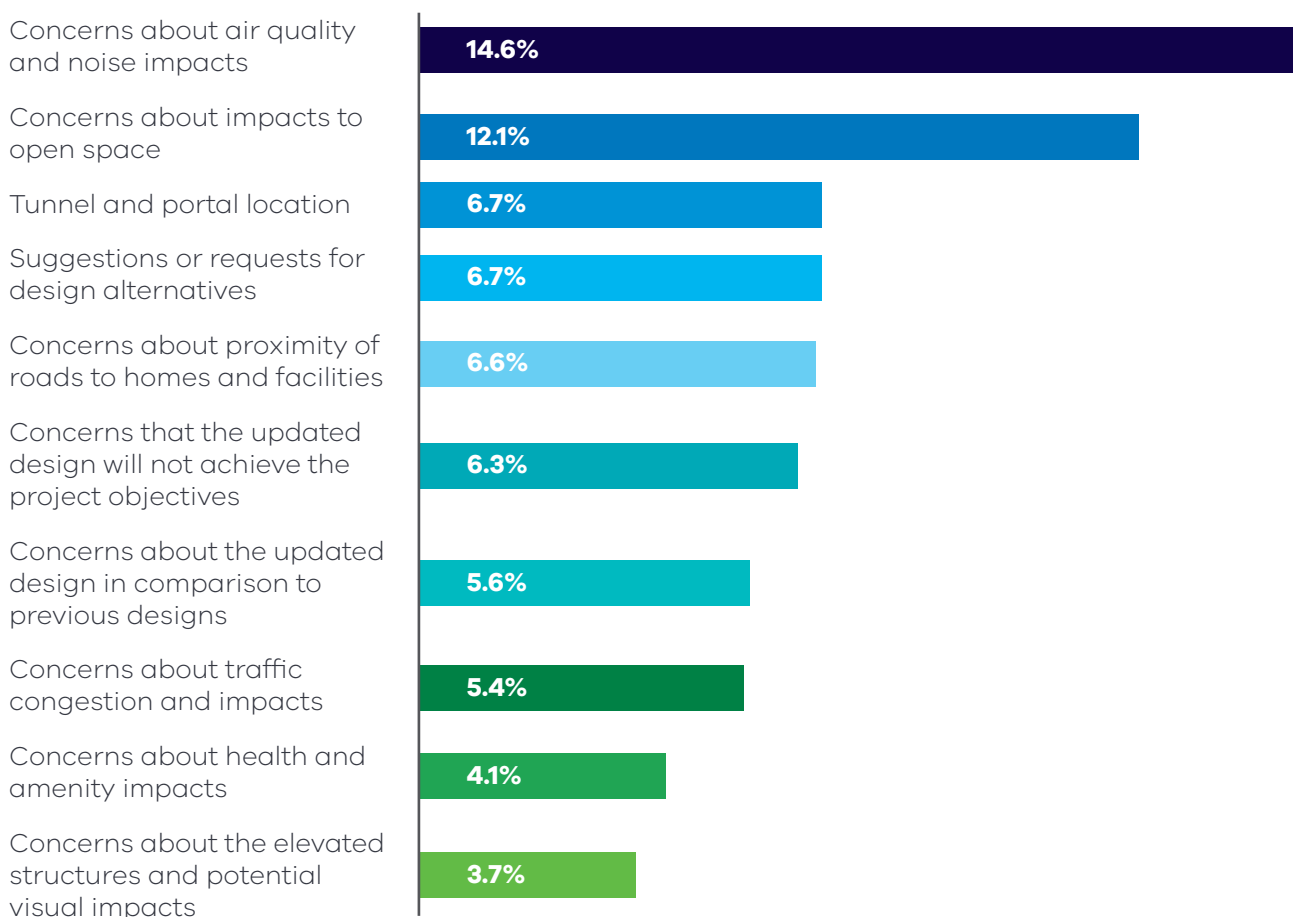
The vast majority of feedback related to the proposed relocation of the southern tunnel portal and the inclusion of a connection to Hyde Street for local and dangerous goods trucks.

An independent research specialist was engaged to analyse all feedback received through telephone and face-to-face discussions, door knocks, community consultation sessions and feedback forms, emails, the online Q&A tool and comments made on the interactive map.

Of the 1219 statements analysed, almost 15 per cent raised concerns about air quality and noise, 12 per cent related to concerns about impacts on open space, 6.7 per cent raised concerns about the tunnel or portal location, and a further 6.7 per cent indicated support or suggested improvements.

The analysis has identified the following statistics and main feedback themes.

Most frequent topics of feedback on the proposal design update:





Consultation to date

For major infrastructure projects to best meet the needs of communities, they must be informed by local knowledge. As such, community engagement is an essential part of the planning process.

From an early point in the Western Distributor's development, feedback from stakeholders and communities has been actively sought and used to support project development.

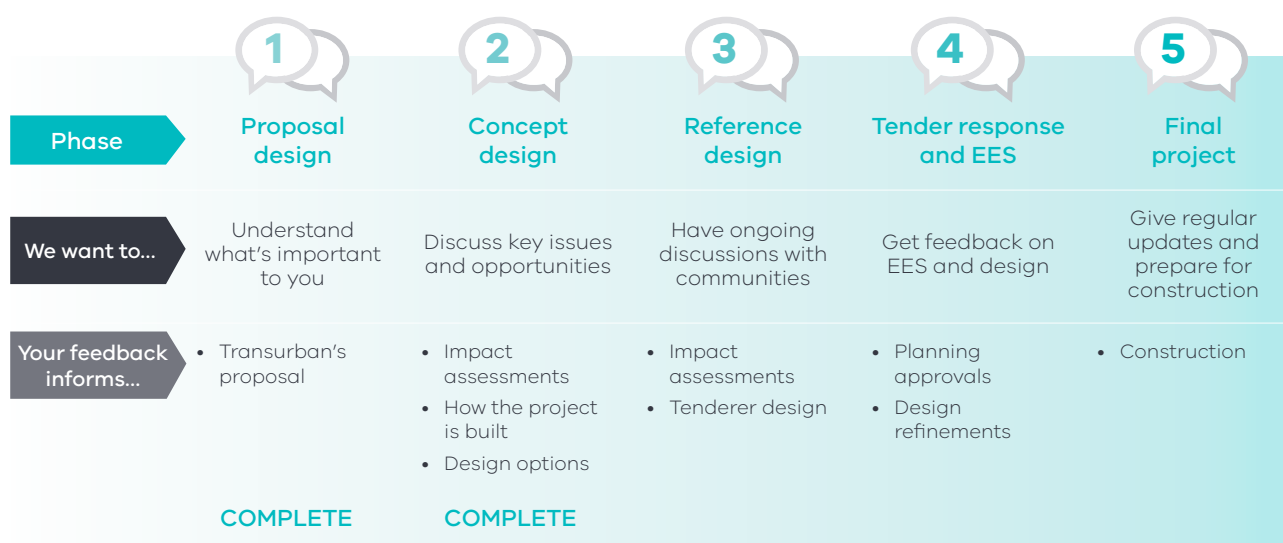
As the project evolves and more information becomes available, this information is shared with communities and a range of interested stakeholders for discussion and comment. Feedback is then used to inform the next stage of project planning.

This iterative process has allowed the project team to understand community and stakeholder input at each step, ensuring that the project can consider and respond to any issues raised and ideas presented as it develops.

This means that a progressive conversation has taken place between the project team and the community, and that discussions are becoming more detailed and specific over time.

As the project continues to evolve through the competitive tender and planning phase, information gathered from ongoing engagement with communities, councils and industry will continue to inform the project's development.

Overview of consultation and project development phases



Key consultation phases to date

PHASE 1

April 2015 – Proposal design

Transurban consulted on its Western Distributor Proposal, which had been submitted to the Victorian Government for assessment in March 2015.

The purpose of this consultation was to understand what is important to people who live, work and travel through the inner-west, and discuss the need for a project like the Western Distributor.

There was strong support for the Proposal objectives, particularly getting trucks off local roads and providing an alternative to the West Gate Bridge.

September 2015 – Proposal design update

The Proposal design update included changes to the southern tunnel portal location and the introduction of a Hyde Street connection to get more trucks out of residential streets.

The purpose of this consultation was to understand concerns and ideas relating to the proposed design changes.

Feedback continued to indicate support for the overall project concept and benefits, but raised concerns about the design changes.

Further information about this consultation is captured in *Attachment A* on page 42 of this report.

December 2015 – Project milestone

The Victorian Government announced that it would partner with Transurban to build the Western Distributor and released a business case demonstrating that the project provides value for money for Victorians. This decision paved the way to continue project development, including preparation of a Concept design.

PHASE 2

April 2016 – Concept design

The Concept design included updates to the project's design, new options for key connections and more detailed information about how the project would work.

The purpose of this consultation was to understand advantages and disadvantages of the design, identify ways to address community concerns and to discuss key topics being assessed as part of the EES.

Many of the themes identified through earlier consultation continue to be important – addressing truck impacts in residential areas, improving travel and access to work and other activities, and maintaining the amenity of local areas and facilities.



Concept design

Community and stakeholder feedback was actively sought between 14 April and 12 May 2016 on the Concept design and on a range of planning and construction topics, including several that are being assessed for the project's EES.

The Concept design provided new information in the form of detailed engineering plans and 3D visuals, giving people an accurate and realistic view of where the road is expected be located and how it might look.

This level of information enabled more detailed, in-depth discussions and resulted in feedback that was mostly focused on localised issues and how the project may impact communities throughout the project area.

This phase of consultation focused on:

- sharing information about the project's status
- discussing key design challenges, advantages, disadvantages and opportunities
- identifying and understanding key concerns relating to project planning and construction.

Multiple opportunities were provided to view information and provide feedback on:

The Concept design – which was presented in five sections so that local people could provide feedback on the areas of interest to them:

- West Gate Freeway widening
- West Gate Freeway-to-tunnel connection
- Hyde Street access
- Tunnel, northern portal and bridge
- Footscray Road, city access and bypass.

Planning and construction topics – with the topics developed through feedback from prior consultation and designed to collect input relevant for the project's tender and EES:

- air quality
- noise
- construction management
- urban design
- cycling and walking
- traffic and transport
- human health.

A range of different tools for presenting information and providing feedback were used, giving people options and a way to participate that was most suitable for them.

Providing access to technical specialists and key project personnel was an important component of the consultation. This allowed for detailed and informed discussions on topics of interest to take place. Access to technical specialists was provided via video interviews posted on YouTube and face-to-face discussions at meetings and community consultation sessions.

Feedback collected through this phase informed:

- the next stage of design – the Reference design
- contractor requirements for the competitive tender process
- impact assessments for the EES.

More information about consultation activities, participants and the feedback received is provided on the following pages. The information presented draws from detailed analysis conducted by an independent researcher. This **Independent Community Consultation Report** can be viewed or downloaded from the Western Distributor website.

Who we consulted

A broad range of interested stakeholders participated in consultation – from local residents and councils to freight operators, government regulators and road user groups.



650+ face-to-face discussions through seven community consultation sessions as well as close to 400 doorknocks



9000 visits to the online portal



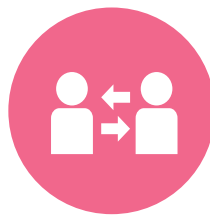
500+ responses to online engagement tools including interactive maps, surveys and discussion forums



40+ ads in local newspapers



30,000 households reached through a project update newsletter



60+ stakeholder meetings with over 40+ businesses and organisations



150+ emails, phone calls and letters to project team

Local residents and businesses

The project team has spoken to hundreds of community members with an interest in the Western Distributor to share information, seek feedback and respond to questions.

Activities to reach and engage local people have included door knocks, formal community consultation sessions, an enquiry phone line and email address, email updates and the establishment of a Community Liaison Group.

Councils

The key councils with direct involvement in the Western Distributor are the City of Maribyrnong, City of Hobsons Bay and the City of Melbourne. Surrounding councils including the City of Brimbank, Wyndham City Council, Port Phillip City Council and Moonee Valley City Council also have an interest.

The project team is working closely with all local councils, including through:

- working group meetings with officers on areas such as transport, planning and environment
- briefings with Chief Executives and councillors
- officer representation on the project's Technical Reference Group (TRG) and Community Liaison Group (CLG).

Peak bodies and community groups

There are a range of peak bodies and other organisations which represent businesses or community members with an interest in the Western Distributor, including:

- industry groups - such as the Victorian Transport Association and National Bulk Tanker Association
- community groups and facilities - such as Maribyrnong Truck Action Group, Friends of Stony Creek, Westgate Golf Club and Emma McLean Kindergarten
- transport focused organisations - such as the RACV, Bicycle Network Victoria and Bus Association of Victoria.

The project team has sought input and ongoing involvement by peak bodies and community groups through briefings and workshops.

Regulators and government agencies

Regulators and other government agencies play an important role in project planning.

Following several meetings with regulators, agencies and councils last year through the Western Distributor Stakeholder and Agency

Liaison Group, the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) has established a TRG to provide formal inputs to the EES process.

Comprising four councils, Melbourne Water, Port of Melbourne, EPA Victoria, Heritage Victoria, Environment and Wildlife, Public Transport Victoria, the Department of Health and other government agencies, the TRG meets monthly and plays an active role in ensuring the EES addresses regulatory and stakeholder requirements.

Property owners

Engaging with property owners has been a focus and is important in understanding the true impacts and opportunities of the project. Potentially affected property owners along the project corridor were engaged early so that they have adequate time to understand possible impacts and discuss any concerns with the project team.

More than 3000 addressed letters were sent to property owners adjacent to the West Gate Freeway from the M80 to Hyde Street, near the Maribyrnong River from Footscray Road to Bunbury Street, and others along the project corridor. Businesses that could be directly impacted have been assigned a relationship manager, providing a single point of contact for the duration of the project.

Community Liaison Group (CLG)

The CLG, which formed in April 2016, is an important avenue for seeking community feedback as planning for the project progresses.

Members were selected through a formal recruitment process which considered where applicants live, their community networks and linkages, their knowledge of local issues and their capacity to communicate what's important to their community.

The CLG takes a regional approach to membership and comprises:

- 10 community representatives - from suburbs and groups located in Altona, Brooklyn, Spotswood, Yarraville, Seddon, Footscray, and North and West Melbourne
- Seven industry and stakeholder group representatives
- members of the project team.

The group meets on a regular basis and is chaired by an Independent Facilitator appointed by the Minister for Roads.

How we consulted

The consultation program provided multiple opportunities to view and discuss designs and other key aspects of the project's planning. Flexible engagement techniques were employed to give people options about how they wanted to review information and submit feedback.



Community consultation sessions

Seven consultation sessions were held to provide an opportunity for people to talk face-to-face with the project team and to seek community feedback – see Table 1.

Participants were provided with a brief verbal update on the project's status and approach to planning approvals, design and competitive tender process. An information pack comprising fact sheets and consultation discussion papers was provided along with notes for recording feedback.

The session set up included two distinct areas – the **design** area and the **planning and construction** area.

In the **design** area, maps, photos, visualisations and detailed plans were displayed. A whole-of-project map and detailed plans of each project section allowed participants to access more detailed information on their area of interest, as well as taking in the whole design.

Design and technical specialists were available to explain the design development process, answer questions and encourage participants to record feedback on notes in response to the following questions regarding the Concept design:

- what are the main advantages of this design?
- what are the main disadvantages of this design?
- any ideas for improvements, managing impacts or addressing your concerns?

Table 1: List of community consultation sessions and attendee numbers

Location	Date and time	Venue	Attendees (approx.)
South Kingsville	Saturday 16 April 9.30am-1.30pm	South Kingsville Community Centre	107 (25%)
Altona North	Wednesday 20 April 5pm-8pm	Grand Star Receptions	31 (7%)
Yarraville	Thursday 21 April 5pm-8pm	St Augustine's Parish	72 (17%)
Footscray	Saturday 23 April 9.30am-1.30pm	VU at MetroWest	37 (9%)
North Melbourne	Wednesday 27 April 5pm-8pm	Meat Market	43 (10%)
Spotswood	Thursday 28 April 5pm-8pm	Pumping Station at Scienceworks	92 (22%)
Docklands	Tuesday 3 May 5pm-8pm	Limelight Room at Etihad Stadium	40 (10%)

TOTAL:

422 (100%)

In the **planning and construction** area, information was provided on key topics of community interest and areas of assessment under the EES. These topics were air quality, noise, traffic, walking and cycling, construction, urban design and human health.

The project's technical specialists in each of these areas were available to share information on how these topics are addressed in impact assessments, answer questions and encourage participants to record feedback in response to the following core questions:

- what are your main concerns on this topic?
- what would help to address your concerns?
- after talking to the technical specialist, has your thinking on this issue changed?



Website

The online consultation hub at westerndistributorproject.vic.gov.au provided a central location for information and consultation. Consultation tools were designed to provide the same information and a similar opportunity to provide feedback as the community consultation sessions.

Feedback on the **Concept design** was invited via discussion forums and, for sections of the design where options were provided, through interactive maps. Participants were asked to review the relevant plans and information on advantages and disadvantages associated with the Concept design and comment on any other advantages or disadvantages they saw:

- what are the main advantages of this design?
- what are the main disadvantages of this design?
- any ideas for managing impacts or addressing your concerns?

398 comments received online about the Concept design

Feedback on the **planning and construction** topics was invited using tools relevant for each topic.

Planning process, noise, air quality and construction management

A survey provided detailed information about the process being used to plan and develop the

project, and included the following questions focused on noise, air quality and construction:

- the Western Distributor is being developed through an integrated consultation, design and planning process. Were you aware the project is being developed in this way before today?
- are you interested in commenting on noise/air quality?
- what are your main concerns about noise/air quality in relation to the Western Distributor project?
- what would help address your concerns?
- did you find the noise/air quality discussion paper and video helpful?
- are you interested in commenting on construction management?
- from what you understand about the project, how do you think construction works might affect you?
- what is your number one concern?
- what would help address this concern?

195 visitors

Cycling and walking opportunities

An interactive map was also used to collect feedback on cycling and walking, allowing participants to identify an important route or priority for improvement and provide commentary.

96 comments

Urban design

Participants were asked to read the **Urban Design Discussion Paper** and respond to one or more of the following questions:

- in three words, describe your community in Melbourne's west. Alternatively, show us with a photo (or both)
- show us what good urban design means to you – post a photo. It could be a bridge in Europe, landscaping in Sydney or a place you love right here in Melbourne's west
- tell us which of the eight draft urban design principles outlined in the **Urban Design Discussion Paper** are most important to you? Why?

1 comment



Publications and videos

A number of consultation and information documents and videos were created to encourage participation, explain key aspects of the Concept design and discuss other topics of interest, including:

- a **community newsletter** distributed to over 30,000 letterboxes in March 2016
- a suite of information documents, including a **project overview and fact sheets**
- **discussion papers** which explored each of the consultation topics in detail and encouraged discussion
- a **Concept design update video** which explained key elements of the Concept design
- a series of **Concept design plans** and **3D visualisations**.

See *Appendix 1* for a complete list of materials, which were available at consultation sessions and on the project website.



Updates to community groups

Around 90 local business, sporting and other community groups received detailed information about the Concept design through phone calls, emails, presentations and meetings. These groups were asked to pass information along to their members or other interested parties and encouraged to attend a community session and provide feedback online.



Email updates

Six email updates were sent to over 1100 subscribers to keep them informed, provide new information and opportunities to participate in engagement activities.



Addressed mail and doorknocks

The project team door knocked almost 400 homes in the inner west to share information about the Concept design and consultation program.

In addition to wide distribution of the community newsletter, around 3000 addressed letters were sent to property owners to advise

of potential project impacts and provide information about the project, Concept design and consultation.



Information for culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities

Those who speak a language other than English (LOTE) could find out more about the project and consultation opportunities through:

- newspaper advertisements in local Leader and LOTE publications
- community newsletters translated into Arabic, Greek, Italian, Chinese and Vietnamese, which were distributed to a range of diverse community leaders and groups, available online and at consultations sessions
- a telephone interpreter service.



Email, telephone and letters

A direct line to the project team was available via email and telephone, with over 150 emails, calls and letters received.

Many of the telephone calls were to request information about the Concept design. Where a concern was raised in multiple emails or if an email provided detailed feedback, the email was registered as a submission.



Submissions

Around 50 written submissions were received from councils, industry groups, local businesses, community facilities and community groups.

Around 30 people emailed the project team to raise concerns specifically about potential impacts on the children, staff and parents at Emma McLean Kindergarten and Daycare Centre.

Two submissions were also received from the Spotswood and South Kingsville Residents Group and the Eastern Spotswood Residents on the 24 June 2016 after analysis for the Independent Community Consultation Report was completed. The content of these submissions is consistent with the overall themes identified through community consultation. There is a direct correlation between the contents of the submissions received from these groups with the emails and

other feedback received from local residents in the Spotswood area.

Ten business owners at the Docklands Cotton Mills also emailed the project team to detail their concerns about the new crossing of the Maribyrnong River.



Advertising

Online and in-person engagement opportunities were promoted through 44 advertisements in suburban and regional newspapers covering the Geelong, Wyndham, Hobsons Bay, Brimbank, Maribyrnong, Moonee Valley and Melbourne areas.



Social media

The Western Distributor Facebook page was used to promote community consultation sessions and the online consultation hub.



Information for the media

Media announcements were released:

- 23 March 2016 – *Have your say on the Western Distributor*
- 14 April 2016 – *Delivering the second river crossing*
- 10 May 2016 – *Second river crossing fully funded and out to market.*

These announcements generated significant media coverage across print, radio, TV and online, helping raise general awareness of the Concept design, community consultation sessions and generated a significant number of visits to the Western Distributor website.



Stakeholder briefings, meetings and workshops

Consultation with key stakeholders continued through the Concept design phase:

- high level briefings with stakeholder CEOs and senior executives
- one-on-one meetings
- a freight industry briefing on 12 May 2016 attended by 18 people from 17 organisations
- telephone briefings and emails

- coordination with councils and government agencies through the TRG for the Western Distributor EES, convened by DELWP.



Evaluation survey

An online survey was used to seek feedback on the consultation process, activities and information provided. Everyone who participated in consultation and gave their consent to receive email updates was sent a link to the online survey on 13 May 2016 and had 18 days to provide feedback.

The online survey encouraged people to provide feedback on elements of consultation they had participated in and the effectiveness of communications during the consultation period.

More than 150 people viewed the online survey and just over one-third of those completed the survey. Of those who responded, 82 per cent had participated in the consultation to some extent. Of the 11 people who did not participate, most were not able to attend a session or didn't have time.

Sixty respondents had attended a consultation session, with 13 of those also participating online. Those who attended a session and participated online generally responded that they were more informed about the project and were more satisfied with the process.

Generally, those who weren't satisfied with the information available were seeking specific details about the project that were not available at the time of consultation. This includes information about the location, height and types of noise walls, standards for noise and air quality and traffic volumes on the Hyde Street access ramps. This information will be detailed in the project's EES.

More than half of those who completed the evaluation survey had received communications about the consultation through emails and the website, and were more likely to participate online. The project website, email updates, advertising and letterbox drops were the most commonly reported way of hearing about the consultation.

There was some feedback that earlier notice of consultation is needed. This will be considered for the EES public exhibition to ensure adequate time to prepare for the consultation.

60 responses



How we are using feedback

Community feedback is valuable and is used in many different ways.

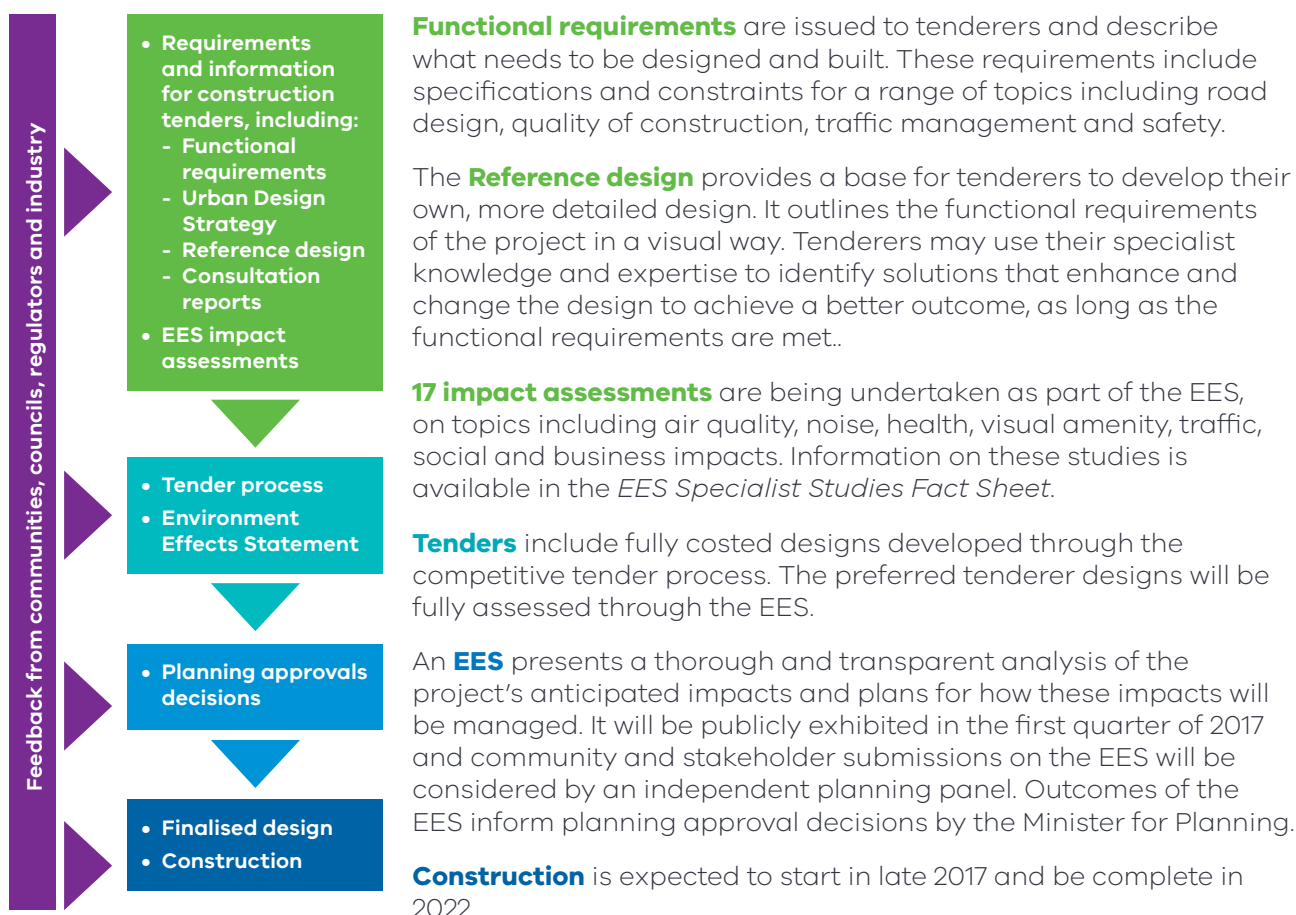
We've engaged with local communities and a range of interested stakeholders from the early stages of the project because we know that understanding their views and concerns will help us deliver a better project and the right outcome for Melbourne's future.

Input from communities, stakeholders, industry and regulators is used in many ways at each stage of the project's development, to inform assessments and decision making.

Feedback has already been considered in developing a Reference design, requirements for construction tenderers, and in investigations for the EES.

This feedback will continue to be used as the project develops further, feeding into impact assessments for the EES, tender responses and future consultation.

Where does feedback go?





What we heard

Consultation during this phase attracted 1750 statements about the Concept design and 784 statements about planning and construction topics.

Many of the themes identified through prior consultation continue to be important to people – maintaining amenity of local areas and facilities, addressing truck impacts in residential areas and improving travel and access to work and other activities, to name a few.

We continue to hear that there is a need to get trucks off local streets, improve traffic flow and capacity on Melbourne's critical M1, and provide an alternative to the West Gate Bridge.

While feedback varied among the different groups of stakeholders involved in consultation, topics that generated interest include:

- improving connections to the port, CBD and growing employment precincts in inner Melbourne
- how the project will move trucks off local roads, including incentives and restrictions on freight movements
- challenges associated with providing infrastructure to address growth while minimising local impacts
- the importance of well-considered urban design, particularly in locations where elevated structures may be needed
- how impacts including air quality, noise and vibration are considered and addressed
- expected changes to traffic movements
- cycling and walking improvements, both through new connections and on the existing network
- the importance and best use of public open space
- managing construction impacts including noise, traffic flow and access for residents and businesses.

Snapshot of feedback

Concept design

Of all the individual project sections or options, the West Gate Freeway-to-Tunnel Connection generated the most comments overall and the highest number of concerns, followed by the Tunnel, Northern Portal and Bridge. The West Gate Freeway widening attracted the lowest number of comments.

Of the 1750 comments on the Concept design, 60 per cent raised potential concerns. The most common included:

- the proximity of new or elevated roads to properties or community facilities
- impacts on open space
- traffic noise
- existing or future air quality.

Planning and construction topics

Of the 784 comments about seven planning and construction topics, around 40 per cent raised concerns, 20 per cent suggested improvement ideas, and a further 40 per cent provided other comments or queries.

While the nature of concerns varied, the sentiment generally related to noise and other amenity impacts for residents, and concerns about air quality and health.

Improvement ideas and other comments frequently related to urban design, extended restrictions on truck in residential areas, and improvements to cycling and walking infrastructure.

Key feedback themes and our response

Based on independent analysis of all feedback received – and taking account of the broad range of inputs, issues and ideas raised by hundreds of locals and diverse stakeholder organisations – the following high level themes have been identified to capture the sentiment and key feedback received through this consultation phase, as well as how we are responding.

Key themes

- understanding and addressing project impacts
- design options which minimise community impacts
- maintaining community amenity and safety
- providing appropriate and efficient freight connections
- realising opportunities for community spaces and connections.

An overview of these themes and further detail about how we're addressing feedback is provided on the following pages.

1. Understanding and addressing project impacts

We heard a strong desire for more information to help people understand the impacts associated with the project's design. In particular, an understanding of potential noise impacts and mitigations, changes in air quality as a result of the project and impacts to businesses, community facilities and open space.

Traffic noise and methods for addressing noise are a priority. Residents in the inner west will benefit from moving trucks out of their streets, but noise from new sections of road and particularly elevated roads generated a range of concerns.

Air quality is a prominent concern for people in the inner west, particularly health impacts including issues for children. Achieving improvements in air quality and the best outcome for the west are high on the agenda for residents, community groups and councils. Discussions with communities and councils will continue as air quality monitoring is conducted and options for the location of ventilation structures is considered through the EES and competitive tender process.

Changes to traffic present both opportunities and concerns. Providing an alternative route for freight and through traffic will benefit the inner west, but stakeholders in surrounding areas want to understand how traffic may change in their area, particularly where the city access and bypass will provide new connections around the city and to the growing employment hubs in Melbourne's inner north west.

Councils in particular have an interest in traffic changes, and while there has been some support for the project objectives and the reduction of traffic on some streets in their municipalities, there are concerns about changes to traffic volumes in other areas and the potential for toll avoidance.

Impacts for businesses will vary depending on their location in the project area, and businesses and employers want to understand changes to access and any impacts to their ongoing operations.

There is an ongoing desire for information about assessing and managing impacts, and consultation participants responded favourably to discussions with technical specialists on issues of most concern to them.

Urban design, extended restrictions on trucks in residential areas, and improvements to cycling and walking infrastructure across the inner west were frequently raised improvement ideas.

How we are responding

We will continue to work closely with the community and provide new information as the project progresses.

The key means of addressing impacts is through the EES. Seventeen impact assessments are being undertaken for the EES on topics of community concern. These include noise, air quality, visual amenity, business and social impacts, to name a few.

The EES also provides recommendations on how potential impacts will be managed, including setting out specific measures for addressing impacts like increases in noise.

Noise mitigation

Understanding the noise standard that will apply to the project and what this means for noise mitigation, including changes to noise barriers is of great interest, particularly to those living along the project corridor.

As part of the EES, existing conditions, together with future noise modelling will be used to determine potential impacts of the project and recommend noise standards and mitigation requirements. Consideration will be given through the assessment to noise standards in Victoria as well as community and stakeholder feedback to determine recommendations on an appropriate standard and mitigation required.

New or upgraded noise walls will be built to a higher standard, with a life-span of at least 40 years.

In addition, in response to feedback, further noise testing will be completed to ensure existing noise conditions are well understood and can inform the impact assessment.

Noise testing will also be undertaken after the Western Distributor is built to ensure all noise walls are doing their job.

During construction, contractors must build new noise attenuation before removing existing walls and where this is not possible, they must use temporary attenuation measures to avoid disruption to residents.

Air quality

We heard that people want an enhanced understanding of local air quality conditions and how they may change with the Western Distributor project.

We're putting in place a range of approaches to ensure that the air quality assessment is comprehensive and the health impacts of the project are considered, including:

- assessing existing conditions to inform analysis of the potential change in air quality
- assessing a range of pollutants including PM10 and PM2.5
- supplementing the air quality assessment with a program of local air quality monitoring at five locations in the inner west
- considering impacts on air quality in all areas within 1km of the tunnel ventilation structures
- conducting the first Victorian health impact assessment for a major road project
- using internationally-recognised air dispersion modelling to help inform the design of a safe and effective ventilation system
- measuring air quality for at least one year before the tunnels open and after operations commence
- make all air quality monitoring results publicly available.

Traffic

We heard that people want to understand traffic changes and improvements not only on the freeway network but also in their local area. A Traffic Impact Assessment will be a key part of the EES for the Western Distributor, and will provide a detailed assessment of changes across the transport network.

The construction contractor will be required to maintain all freeway lanes during peak times, so that traffic can keep moving throughout the construction period. A traffic management coordination group will also be established to ensure that the construction contractor maintains and properly manages traffic flow at all times and considers traffic changes in coordination with the rest of the network.

2. Design options which minimise community impacts

Communities and stakeholders continue to indicate a strong preference for a design that contains the project to existing road areas and industrial land.

While the northern tunnel portal will be built in industrial land, residents in the surrounding area and businesses at the Docklands Cotton Mills have raised concerns about visual and noise impacts of the Maribyrnong River bridge and proximity to Coode Island.

The elevated road above Footscray Road was also the subject of questions about impacts on trees and maintaining safety for motorists, pedestrians and cyclists.

Design options for the West Gate Freeway-to-tunnel connection and Hyde Street access attracted a large amount of feedback and a variety of views.

Feedback on this location recognised that all options present impacts, with common concerns including proximity of elevated structures, portals and traffic to residents and community facilities such as sporting clubs and kindergartens.

Comments on the advantages and disadvantages of both tunnel options demonstrated a strong interest in minimising impacts on open space, particularly in Hyde Street Reserve and Stony Creek to the north of the West Gate Freeway and Donald McLean Reserve to the south of the freeway.

On balance there is a preference for the long tunnel option which contains the southern portal within the existing West Gate Freeway reserve. There is also general support for locating the northern portal within industrial land although some participants suggested this portal should be moved.

Councils and communities tended to favour options which didn't involve impacts in their area, particularly in relation to options for Hyde Street access.

A similar number of comments about advantages were received regarding Options 1, 2, 4 and 5. Option 3: South attracted the highest number of concerns, followed by Option 5: Hall Street.

Concerns regarding the Hyde Street access options were similar in nature and included air quality, noise, open space and visual impacts. Option 4: North-South attracted a view that this option presents a better balance for communities on both sides of the freeway and would help minimise and distribute impacts more evenly.

Some participants highlighted concerns about additional noise and visual impacts from elevated structures, which also underpinned preferences for Option 4: North-South, which does not include a flyover of the West Gate Freeway.



How we are responding

No homes acquired

We've always been committed to delivering this project without compulsory acquisition of people's homes. This has been confirmed in the Reference design.

Tunnel connection to the West Gate Freeway – long tunnel design

The Reference design includes the long tunnel design. This responds directly to community and council feedback that a design that stays within or as close as possible to the existing freeway is preferred to minimise impacts to open space, residents and community facilities.

The long tunnel option will be developed further through the tender and EES impact assessments to refine the design for traffic entering the West Gate Freeway and better understand impacts including noise and air quality.

Hyde Street connection – a refined north-south design

We heard through feedback received to date that a design which minimises impacts on both sides of the freeway and keeps the road as close as possible to existing infrastructure is preferred. The north-south Hyde Street connection option has been refined as a result of this feedback and included in the Reference design to provide a direct freeway connection to get placard loads off local streets.

This design keeps the freeway infrastructure away from community facilities including the Yarraville Community Centre and Emma

McLean Kindergarten and minimises impacts on sporting grounds and Hyde Street Reserve. Another key benefit of this option is that it does not include an elevated flyover of the West Gate Bridge, reducing visual amenity impacts to both sides of the freeway.

Wurundjeri Way extension and widening

The Reference design includes an enhanced CBD Bypass, with Wurundjeri Way being widened through to Flinders Street. This will allow this route to cater for traffic from the inner west which will move off parallel CBD roads – Spencer Street and King Street. In doing so, this can open up opportunities to improve cycling, walking and public transport in the CBD.

A sustainable design

We are aiming to achieve a design that meets the Infrastructure Sustainability Council of Australia excellence rating. The project requirements make recommendations for achieving a sustainable road, considering issues such as water sensitive design, integrated water management, protecting biodiversity and habitat values, and urban city cooling through the use of green infrastructure is considered important and must be demonstrated.

Ensuring the proposed design is assessed

The EES will assess the impacts of not just the Reference design but also any changes proposed by tenderers. This ensures that assessment of the project's potential effects are thorough and that people have the opportunity to provide feedback on what is expected to be built.

3. Maintaining community amenity and safety

For people across the project area, maintaining liveability is the top priority.

Comments received about amenity and safety relate not just to people's homes, but to the facilities they and their families use, places they work, and the ability to move safely around their area.

A strong desire to avoid building new roads near residential areas and recreation facilities is underpinned by concerns about noise and visual impacts from traffic on elevated structures.

Council submissions emphasise the importance of carefully managing temporary impacts during construction and of realising opportunities to enhance amenity through measures such as landscaping, new pedestrian and cycling connections, new noise walls and urban design.

For businesses in areas where elevated structures are necessary to achieve the objectives of the project, maintaining access and the ongoing operation of their business is critical and they have a range of concerns about traffic noise, air quality and visual impacts.

In these areas, the design and appearance of new structures is a key concern, with a range of comments made about the importance of a sensitive urban design approach and incorporating improvements such as improved public open space and connections for cycling and walking.

How we are responding

A planned approach to minimising construction impacts

The EES will directly address many of the concerns regarding construction raised by stakeholders, residents and businesses, including noise, dust, vibration, water disposal, spoil management and haulage routes, contaminated sites, ground movement, traffic, access and site compounds and contractor parking. We will continue to work with communities and councils to ensure preferences are understood and addressed in the EES.

Urban design

The urban design guidance includes a section on local areas in response to community and council feedback. This has been developed in five precincts to provide specific guidance and advice to tenderers on potential impacts and opportunities through themes that have arisen in consultation:

- Precinct A: M80 Interchange
- Precinct B: West Gate Freeway corridor
- Precinct C: Western Distributor, including portals, the bridge over the Maribyrnong and the viaduct above Footscray Road
- Precinct D: Footscray Road, CityLink connection and city bypass (E-Gate)
- Precinct E: Arden-Macaulay (north-west Melbourne).

Improved noise wall design

Guidance is also provided on noise wall design. Noise walls must not overshadow residential properties, community facilities or open space, and vegetation should be used to improve the appearance of walls.

The community side of noise walls and areas surrounding elevated roads are to be designed to provide safe environments and to promote safety and visual amenity.

Noise walls should be consistent in appearance across the corridor and adopt the higher quality types already located on other freeways, such as EastLink and Peninsula Link.

Bridge design

The urban design guidance provided to tenderers, directs them to pay specific attention to the bridge crossings over the Maribyrnong River and Moonee Ponds Creek. These crossings should be of appropriate scale, structural and architectural form, with the space below the bridge deck and associated elements designed to integrate current and future land use, consider safety, open space and community requirements, and provide high amenity environments either side of the river and creek.

4. Appropriate and efficient freight connections

Stakeholders and communities continue to indicate widespread support for moving trucks out of residential areas and improving traffic flow. There is strong interest in mechanisms to encourage trucks to move out of residential areas and onto more appropriate roads.

Communities want assurances that trucks will use the Western Distributor, that tolling arrangements will be attractive for heavy vehicles and that further truck restrictions will be implemented.

Freight industry groups and operators strongly support more direct connections between the freeway network and the Port of Melbourne, including Hyde Street access for placard loads. There is general support among transport operators for design options which avoid steep gradients, helping to reduce fuel and maintenance costs. This feedback aligns with community concerns about noise and vehicle emissions, which increase with steeper grade roads.

Freight operators have also indicated support for design elements which cater for heavier trucks and have provided feedback on options for targeted toll arrangements to meet their needs – such as trip caps for multiple and extended journeys.

How we are responding

The Western Distributor will deliver Melbourne's much-needed second river crossing, helping to free up traffic movement on the West Gate Bridge and the rest of the critical M1 corridor. Moving trucks into a tunnel will get them away from people's homes and address long-term amenity impacts of trucks for people in and around Yarraville.

We have confirmed in the project requirements a number of strict specifications to ensure the road is built to meet freight needs and provide an attractive connection.

This includes maximum ramp and tunnel gradients, swept paths for B-triples, bridge strengthening along the West Gate Freeway

between the West Gate Bridge and M80 interchange and intersection improvements, in particular at Grieve Parade.

The updated Hyde Street access ramps also respond to feedback from the freight industry to provide a direct freeway standard connection, reducing interfaces with local roads. This will help attract trucks off local roads with a direct and user friendly route.

We also continue to look at new tolling products including shuttle trips for the operators who make several trips to and from the port each day. This will continue to be refined in consultation with the freight industry as the tolling arrangements for the project are further considered.

We heard through consultation that ensuring trucks will use the Western Distributor is a key priority and that industry would like to see efficiency in the design.



5. Realising opportunities for community spaces and connections

Community groups, residents and the project's three key councils have stressed the importance of open space and recreational facilities for local people.

The football and cricket grounds at Donald McLean Reserve, West Gate Golf Club and Hyde Street Reserve are important for communities on both sides of the West Gate Freeway, and Yarraville Gardens is well-used and valued by many people in the inner west.

Concerns about impacts on open space have underpinned many comments about the West Gate Freeway-to-tunnel connection and Hyde Street access options, with a desire to avoid impacts on open space both to the north and the south of the West Gate Freeway. Open space and other land uses are also of interest at the city end of the project, where the design includes a new connections including changes to Dynon Road and an extension of Wurundjeri Way.

Ensuring potential for new cycling, public transport and walking connections on the western edge of the city are key priorities for stakeholders in this area.

The online cycling and walking map and discussions with councils and transport interest groups generated a suite of suggested improvements for cyclists and pedestrians right across the project area, from maintaining pedestrian access across the West Gate Freeway to improving the cycling highways to the CBD.

Key areas of concern and suggestions for cycling and walking improvements included:

- completion of the Federation Trail
- ability to travel safely – whether by foot, bike or motor vehicle – given the high volumes of truck traffic and shortfalls in the existing cycling network
- upgrade active transport connectivity adjacent to freeway for improved freeway crossing
- improve cycling route connectivity through the inner west in key locations including Federation Trail, Footscray Road and around the Moonee Ponds Creek Trail
- alleviate cycling congestion around Dynon Road path and Footscray Road.



How we are responding

Cycling and walking improvements

Cycling and walking in the west will be easier and safer with new shared paths and upgrades to existing infrastructure.

These include:

- completing the Federation Trail missing link between Williamstown Road and Hyde Street
- improved connectivity to the Federation Trail via improved connections at Millers Road and Williamstown Road, as well as provision for a connection on the west side of the Newport Freight railway line
- a new off-road connection from Somerville Road/Whitehall Street to Footscray Road
- new connections from the Dynon Road shared path to the Capital City Trail, Moonee Ponds Creek Trail and to Spencer Street
- grade separating the Footscray Road shared path, so that cyclists do not need to cross intersections at Sims Street, Dock Link Road and Appleton Dock Road
- upgrades to the Kororoit Creek Trail within the bridge works area under the West Gate Freeway
- safety and efficiency improvements to the Capital City Trail connection at Footscray Road to account for the large volume of cyclists using this route
- improved north south connections with new pedestrian bridges over the West Gate Freeway that will be compliant with *Disability Discrimination Act* and shared paths on both sides of Millers Road and Williamstown Road.

Urban design

The urban design guidance includes benchmarks and overarching performance

requirements for the urban design of the project. Some elements which have now been included will realise opportunities, such as design excellence being illustrated at every scale – whole of project, precinct and local area.

The project requires:

- the development of a distinctive project corridor identity through design of adjacent urban landscapes to provide useful, practical, safe and resilient public open spaces. This includes demonstrating how tree canopy vegetation can be developed in areas next to the project and how river crossings may be developed in the future as urban parkland
- a roadway design that maximises opportunities to create or enhance open space, community and recreation facilities
- protecting views from Yarraville Gardens, support development of a boulevard on Footscray Road and support future development for the Footscray Wharf precinct.

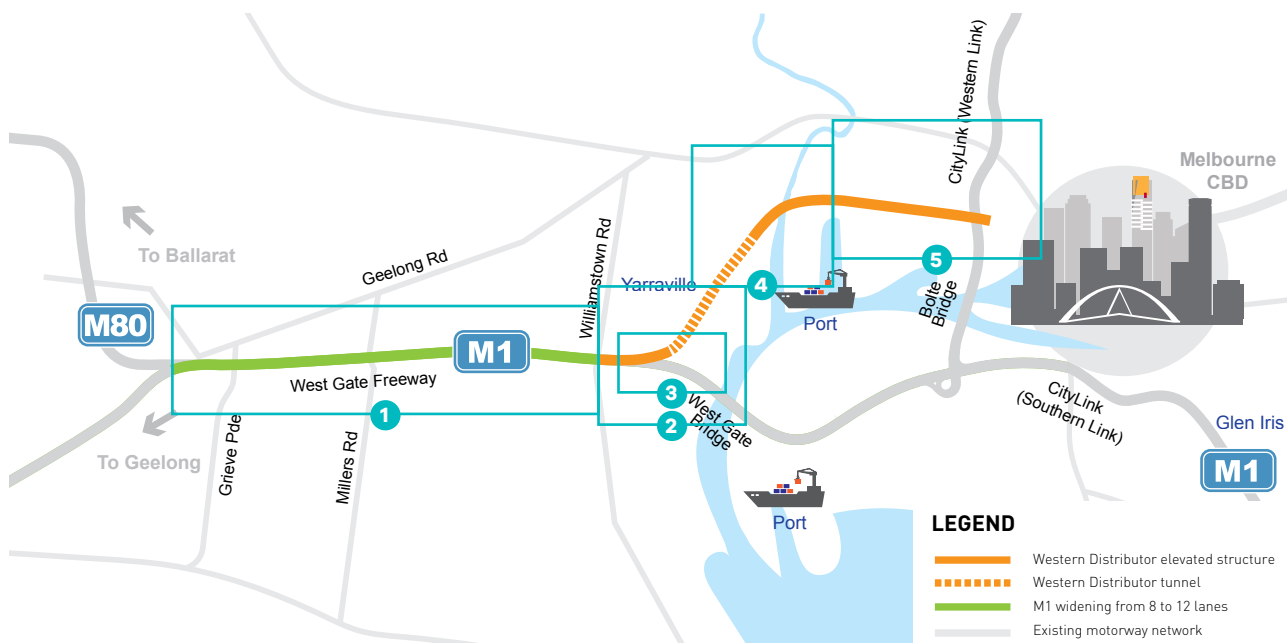
Allowing for future infrastructure

Tenderer designs must not build out potential future road, public transport and freight improvements, including:

- a tram route to connect the City of Melbourne to the City of Maribyrnong
- a new tram depot in the Dynon Road precinct
- bus routes along Footscray Road
- M80 and Princes Freeway upgrades
- freight rail on the Newport to Sunshine line, at the Port of Melbourne and in Dynon Road precinct
- allowing for future pedestrian connections between Docklands and North Melbourne station.

Overview of feedback on the Concept design

Feedback on the Concept design was invited by section so that local communities could comment the area/s of interest to them. This part of the report provides a brief overview of feedback received by section and further detail is provided in the **Independent Community Consultation Report**.



- 1 West Gate Freeway widening
- 2 West Gate Freeway-to-tunnel connection
- 3 Hyde Street access options
- 4 Tunnel, northern portal and bridge
- 5 Footscray road, city access and bypass

1: West Gate Freeway widening

Key features of this section include:

- freeway widening from eight lanes to 12 lanes between the M80 and Williamstown Road – most of which is able to be built within the existing road reserve
- changes to traffic lane configurations, with traffic to be separated by destination and three express lanes running direct between the M80 and the West Gate Bridge
- introduction of a full Freeway Management System and rapid incident response to clear delays quickly and help improve traffic flow.



What we asked

- what are the main advantages of this design?
- what are the main disadvantages of this design?
- any ideas for managing impacts or addressing your concerns?

What we heard

This section attracted a moderate to high level of community feedback, with a total of 95 statements.

Concerns about traffic flow and congestion (18 per cent); noise (10 per cent); and amenity (8 per cent) were most commonly raised.

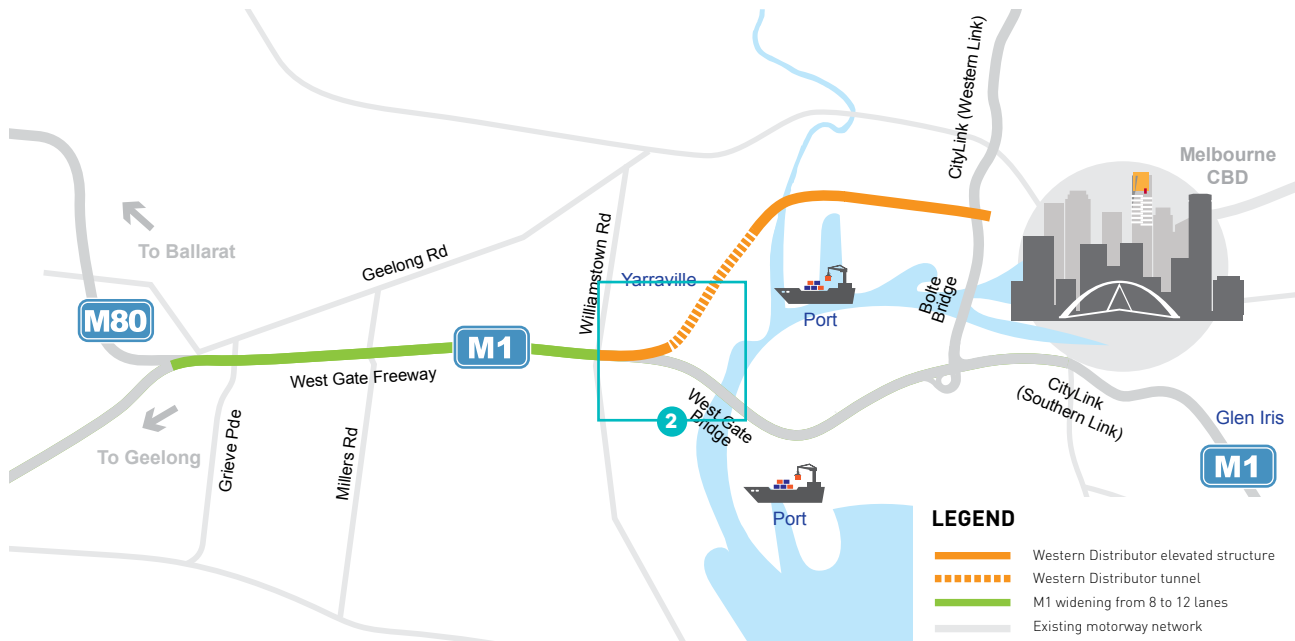
Improvement suggestions were made in relation to walking and cycling (10 per cent) and urban design (7 per cent).

2: West Gate Freeway-to-tunnel connection

Two options for connecting the West Gate Freeway and the Western Distributor tunnels were presented for discussion – a short tunnel option and long tunnel option.

The short tunnel places the tunnel portal in Hyde Street Reserve north of the West Gate Freeway and includes flyovers to connect the freeway and the tunnel portal.

The long tunnel option was developed in response to feedback that new road infrastructure should be kept close to the existing freeway. It places the tunnel portals within the existing West Gate Freeway reserve to the west of Williamstown Road.

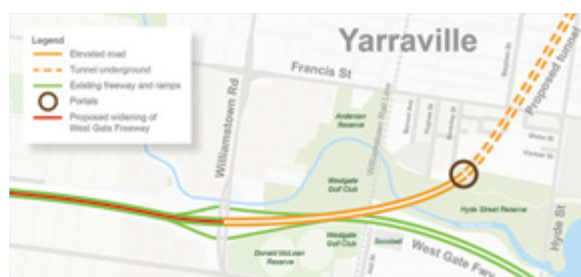


What we asked

- what are the main advantages of each option?
- what are the main disadvantages of each option?
- any ideas for managing impacts or addressing your concerns?

What we heard

Short tunnel option



The short tunnel option attracted a high level of community feedback, with a total of 291 statements.

Seventy-seven per cent of all statements raised concerns. These concerns related to open space (90 statements), amenity and visual impacts (39 statements) and noise (29 statements). Many of the comments about open space referenced Hyde Street Reserve, Stony Creek or Donald McLean Reserve. Concerns were also raised in relation to proximity, vibration, air quality, traffic flow and congestion and property values.

Fifteen per cent commented on advantages of the short tunnel option, such as less disruption and the opportunity to convert the AusNet Services site to open space.

The remaining 8 per cent of comments suggested improvements or made general comments.

Long tunnel option



The long tunnel option attracted a high level of community feedback, with a total of 185 statements. The overall sentiment was supportive with 63 per cent of comments about advantages.

The feedback received saw 58 per cent of comments citing advantages which referred to multiple aspects associated with the long tunnel option, while 42 per cent cited advantages related to open space, parkland and specific reserves, particularly regarding Hyde Street Reserve.

Most of the 44 comments raising concerns referred to proximity of the road to properties or community facilities, amenity and visual impacts and concerns about noise. Of all the improvement ideas received, 39 per cent were recorded at the North Melbourne community consultation session and related to improving noise barriers.

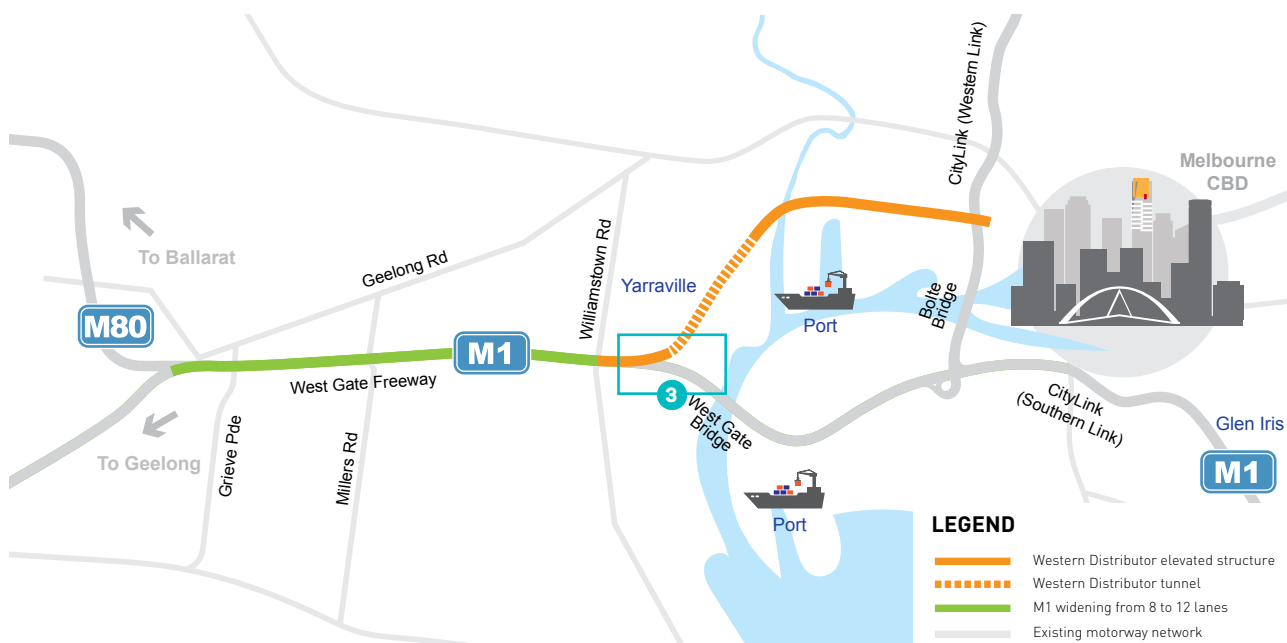
Communities and stakeholders continue to indicate a strong preference for a design that contains the project to existing road areas and industrial land.



3: Hyde Street access options

The Hyde Street access ramps provide a direct connection for local industry and alternative route for placard loads which cannot use the tunnels. This connection is challenging due to the large number of constraints in the area, particularly surrounding land uses and existing infrastructure such as the rail line and high voltage power lines.

Five options for providing a connection between the West Gate Freeway and Hyde Street were presented for discussion.



What we asked

- what are the main advantages of each option?
- what are the main disadvantages of each option?
- any ideas for managing impacts or addressing your concerns?

What we heard

The Hyde Street access options attracted a high level of community feedback with a total of 849 statements. The majority of the feedback was recorded at the South Kingsville consultation session.

All options generated more concerns than comments on advantages. Of the five, Option 3: South generated the most concerns followed by Option 5: Hall Street. Option 2: North generated the most comments about advantages and the least concerns, and Option 4: North-South attracted a view that this option presents a better balance for communities on both sides of the freeway and would help minimise and distribute impacts more evenly.

Option 1: Hyde Street Reserve



Designed for the short tunnel, this option includes a flyover of the West Gate Freeway and connects to Hyde Street next to the AusNet Services site.

This option attracted a high level of community feedback, with a total of 131 statements.

56 per cent of comments were concerns, with 22 per cent of these concerns relating to impacts on residents or nearby communities resulting from the proximity of the road and from noise and air quality impacts. Another 21 per cent raised concerns about impacts on open space. 34 per cent of statements cited advantages, including minimising impacts on Donald McLean Reserve.

Option 2: North



Designed for the long tunnel, this option includes a flyover of the West Gate Freeway, runs alongside and to the north of the existing freeway and connects to Hyde Street next to Stony Creek.

This option attracted a high level of community feedback, with a total of 122 statements.

52 per cent of comments were concerns, with 33 per cent of these mentioning impacts on Stony Creek and open space at Hyde Street Reserve.

38 per cent of statements citing advantages included reduced residential impacts and locating the new connection closer to the West Gate Bridge.

Option 3: South



Designed for the long tunnel, this option includes a flyover of the West Gate Freeway, runs south of the existing freeway and connects to Hyde Street via Simcock Avenue.

This option attracted a high level of community feedback, with a total of 194 statements.

80 per cent of statements were concerns, with 60 per cent of these relating to the proximity of the road to residents, community facilities and open space including Emma McLean Kindergarten and Donald McLean Reserve.

17 per cent of statements commented on advantages, including reduced impact on Stony Creek.

The map illustrates the proposed West Gate Freeway interchange in Yarraville. Key features include:

- Proposed Freeway:** A thick purple line representing the West Gate Freeway, which includes a tunnel section (indicated by a dashed orange line) and a direct freeway access for placard loads.
- Existing Infrastructure:** A grey line representing the existing motorway network, and a green line representing the existing freeway and ramps.
- Streets and Landmarks:** Francis St, Williamstown Rd, Hyde St, and the Yarra River are shown. Other landmarks include the Anderson Reserve, West Gate Fwy, and various golf courses (Intergate Golf Club, Donald McEwen Reserve).
- Interchanges and Connections:** The map shows the intersection of the freeway with the existing motorway network and the direct freeway access for placard loads.
- Legend:** A legend in the bottom right corner identifies the symbols used: a grey line for 'Existing motorway network', a dashed orange line for 'Tunnel underground', a green line for 'Existing freeway and ramps', and a purple line for 'Hyde Street connection'.

69 per cent of statements were concerns, with 43 per cent of these relating to the proximity of the road to residents, community facilities and open space including Emma McLean Kindergarten and Donald McLean Reserve.

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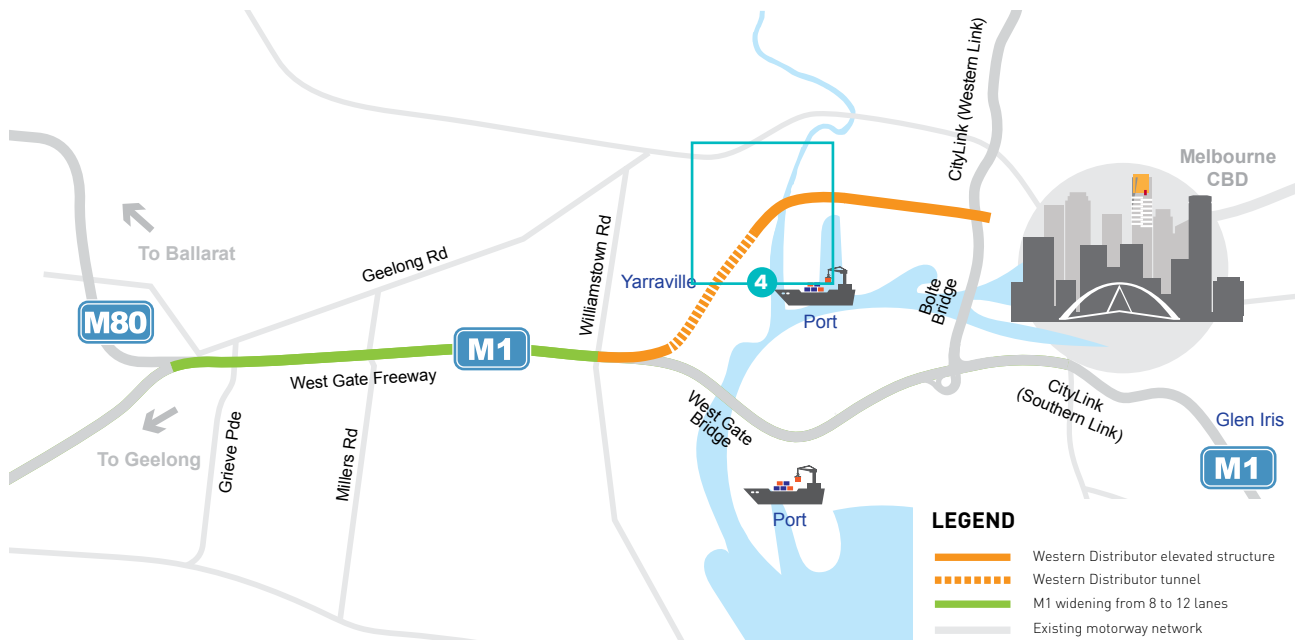
69 per cent of statements were concerns, with many of these relating to the proximity of the road to residents, community facilities and open space such as Donald McLean Reserve and associated concerns about noise and air quality impacts. This option generated the highest number of concerns regarding impacts to Emma McLean Kindergarten.

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4: Tunnel, northern portal and bridge

This section of the Concept design includes the following key features:

- a tunnel under Yarraville with portals located in industrial land between Whitehall Street, Somerville Road, Youell Street and the Maribyrnong River
- a bridge over the Maribyrnong River connecting with an elevated motorway that will run above Footscray Road
- a direct port connection to MacKenzie Road to improve access to the Port of Melbourne.



What we asked

- what are the main advantages of this design?
- what are the main disadvantages of this design?
- any ideas for managing impacts or addressing your concerns?

What we heard

This section attracted a high level of community feedback, with a total of 242 statements.

A prominent concern raised was proximity of the new elevated road (the Maribyrnong River crossing and MacKenzie Road connection) to the Docklands Cotton Mills.

24 per cent of the 130 concerns raised noise and visual impacts for businesses and other activities at the Cotton Mills. Several comments about the new bridge indicated concern about impacts on the use, visual amenity and enjoyment of the Maribyrnong River and surrounds (18 per cent).

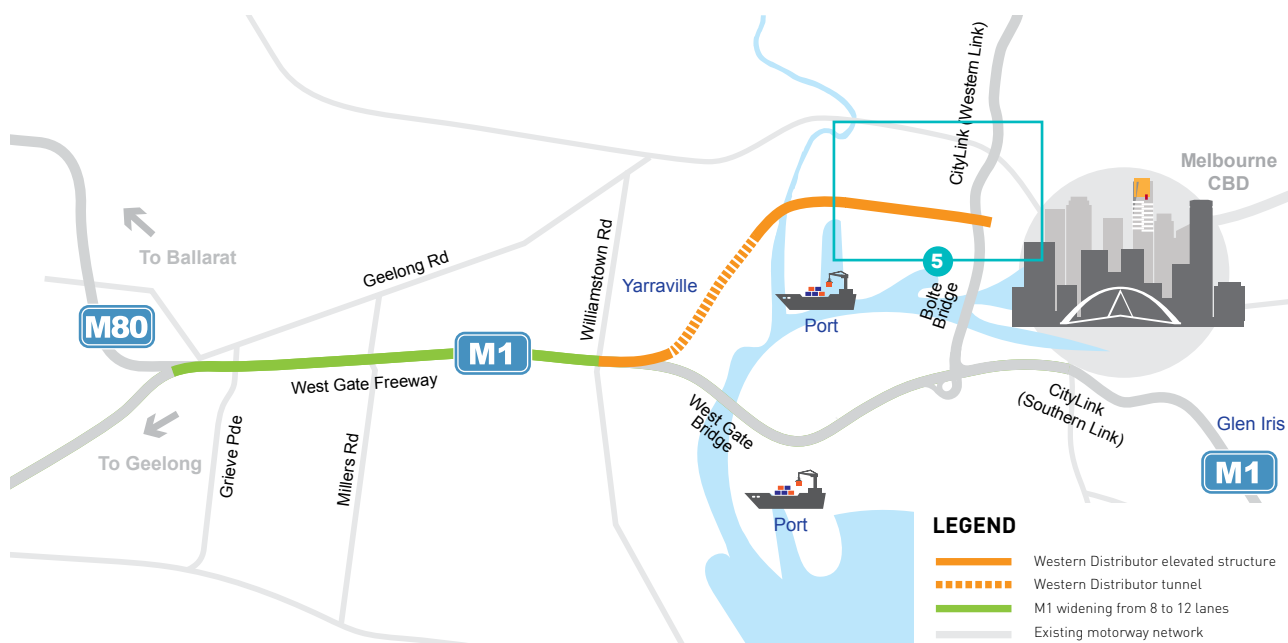
91 comments were made regarding suggestions for changes or improvements to the Concept design, with over 40 per cent of this feedback asking either for the bridge to be moved further south or for the tunnel to be extended under the river to place the portal away from the Cotton Mills area. Conversely, several participants suggested moving the road alignment and tunnel portal further north to move it away from Yarraville Gardens.

20 per cent of comments about improvements mentioned ideas such as moving the project to another area, extending truck bans and ensuring tolls are set at the right level to avoid discouraging trucks from using the new road.

5: Footscray Road, city access and bypass

This section of the Concept design includes the following key features:

- an elevated motorway above Footscray Road
- a direct port connection to Appleton Dock Road to improve access to the Port of Melbourne
- connections to CityLink north, Dynon Road, Footscray Road and Wurundjeri Way
- an extension of Wurundjeri Way is proposed to allow traffic from the inner west to bypass the city on trips to the south, easing the load on inner CBD streets.



What we asked

- what are the main advantages of this design?
- what are the main disadvantages of this design?
- any ideas for managing impacts or addressing your concerns?

What we heard

This section of the Concept design attracted a moderate-to-high level of community feedback with a total of 88 statements covering a broad spread of both concerns and improvement ideas.

Almost 32 per cent of all feedback raised concerns about potential impacts including traffic flow and congestion in the inner west and north of the city, and impacts on Moonee Ponds Creek.

Several comments indicated a preference for prioritising public and active transport projects over road improvements. The majority of the 44 improvement ideas recorded suggested improvements for cycling and pedestrian access, particularly around Moonee Ponds Creek, and requested high quality urban design and landscaping approaches, particularly in relation to future development sites like E-Gate.

Overview of feedback on planning and construction topics

Feedback was invited on seven planning and construction topics. This part of the report provides a brief overview of feedback received by topic.

Air quality

Air quality is one of 17 areas that will be addressed in the EES through a detailed impact assessment.

What we asked

- what are your main concerns about air quality?
- what would help to address your concerns?

What we heard

Air quality attracted moderate-to-high community interest, with a total of 75 statements. A similar number of concerns and improvement ideas were proposed.

27 per cent of all comments related to how air quality changes will be understood and assessed, with several requests for more information.

The overall sentiment about air quality related to concerns about impacts from pollution or emissions (31 per cent) with existing air quality a recurring concern, and several comments about the ventilation structures, ventilation technology and air quality near the tunnel portal.

The most common improvement ideas related to measuring air quality and sharing information about the findings (20 per cent of all comments); the design of the ventilation system and location of ventilation structures (16 per cent); and truck restrictions (11 per cent).

Human health

The human health impacts of the project are one of the 17 areas that will be addressed in the EES through a detailed impact assessment.

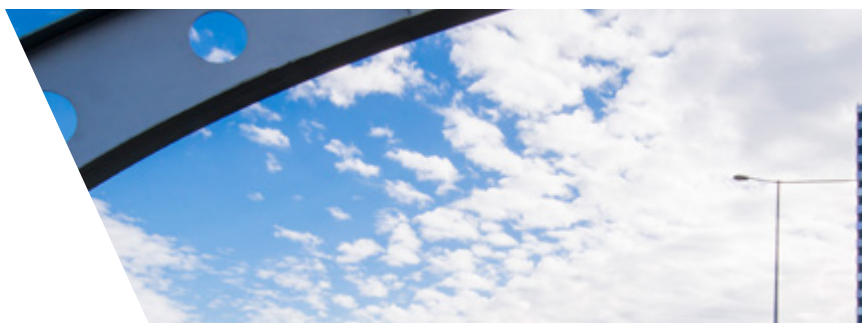
What we asked

- what are your main concerns about human health?
- what would help to address your concerns?

What we heard

Human health attracted a moderate level of community feedback, with a total of 56 statements. 88 per cent of statements related to concerns, with 36 per cent mentioning concerns about air quality (20 statements) as well as comments about tunnel ventilation and structures (5 statements); trucks on residential streets (12 statements); environment (5 statements); noise (4 statements); and contaminants (3 statements).

Comments about air quality, noise and health impacts for local residents were key feedback themes, along with requests for information about how these impacts will be managed.



Managing construction

Impacts from construction will be considered in several of the impact assessments to be conducted as part of the EES, and part of the EES process will involve setting out the requirements that construction contractors need to meet to manage impacts during the works.

What we asked

- how do you think construction might affect you?
- what is your main concern?
- what would help to address your concern?

What we heard

Managing construction attracted a high level of community feedback, with a total of 136 statements. More concerns than improvement ideas were recorded.

Comments about managing construction related to concerns about traffic and access (26 statements); residential amenity (25 statements); noise (17 statements); vibration (7 statements); air quality (12 statements); business disruption (5 statements); and open space and recreation (4 statements).

Ideas for addressing concerns included conducting property condition surveys prior to works, ensuring traffic diversions are well planned and communicated and providing alternative accommodation during night works.

Noise

Traffic noise is one of the 17 areas that will be addressed in the EES through a detailed impact assessment.

What we asked

- what are your main concerns about noise?
- what would help to address your concerns?

What we heard

Traffic noise attracted a high level of community feedback, with a total of 203 statements.

17 per cent of all comments raised concerns about the amenity impacts of traffic noise, in people's homes and also for people using open space and recreation areas, and 13 per cent nominated specific locations of concern including the West Gate Freeway/Williamstown Road interchange and the Docklands Cotton Mills near the new bridge over the Maribyrnong River.

The quality and effectiveness of noise barriers was raised as a concern (11 per cent of comments) and also generated the most improvement ideas with 41 statements suggesting locations for new noise barriers and requesting more effective barriers.

Walking and cycling

Opportunities to improve facilities for cycling and walking are being incorporated in the development of the Western Distributor.

What we asked

- which cycling and walking connections are important to you and why?
- which location is the top priority for improvement in your area?

What we heard

Active transport attracted a high level of community feedback, with a total of 172 statements, 56 per cent of statements were recorded online via the interactive map.

A total of 23 locations were referred to two or more times in the statements. The most frequently referred to locations were Federation Trail (23 statements); Hyde Street (17 statements); Footscray Road (16 statements); and Dynon Road (10 statements).

The feedback highlighted several areas where gaps in the cycling network are a barrier or safety concern for cyclists, including around Millers Road to connect to Sunshine, the Federation Trail, and Footscray Road and Dynon Road which are key routes for access between the west, CBD and inner north.

Traffic

Traffic and transport is one of the 17 areas that will be addressed in the EES through a detailed impact assessment.

What we asked

- what are your main concerns about traffic?
- what would help to address your concerns?

What we heard

Traffic attracted a moderate level of community feedback, with a total of 62 statements.

The 37 per cent of comments that raised concerns were varied so key themes did not emerge. However, several comments indicated concern that trucks may not use the tunnel to avoid tolls.

A third of all comments were improvement ideas relating to introduction, enforcement or extension of truck restrictions.

Urban design

Urban design guidance has been developed for the Western Distributor which provides advice to tenderers about how the road should function, look and fit within the surrounding natural and build environments.

What we asked

Participants were invited to describe their local area and comment on the project's eight draft urban design principles (identity; connectivity and wayfinding; urban integration; resilience and sustainability; amenity; vibrancy; safety and accessibility).

What we heard

Urban design attracted a high level of community feedback, with a total of 121 statements.

34 per cent of statements related to the urban design principle of identity, 12 per cent of statements related to amenity, and 16 per cent of statements did not appear to relate to a specific urban design principle and referred to topics such traffic, urban design pictures and using landscaping to offset impacts on vegetation from construction.

Many participants highlighted a preference for extensive landscaping to improve important open space areas and soften or shield structures including noise walls. Several participants focused on the design of the ventilation structures or the new bridge over the Maribyrnong River, with a desire to see various options for this design. The design of noise walls also generated several comments, with a preference for high quality materials.

Many commented on the importance of a sensitive urban design approach and incorporating improvements such as public open space enhancements and connections for cycling and walking.



Overview of feedback from key councils

The Western Distributor passes through three council areas – Hobsons Bay, Maribyrnong and Melbourne. The project team has actively engaged with each of these councils on a range of topics and sought formal input to the project's ongoing planning and procurement activities.

In addition to regular meetings to discuss specific topics in detail, each council is represented on the project's TRG and CLG.

A key focus is ensuring that the project is designed and delivered in a way which minimises impacts on their communities and assets and maximises the social, environmental and economic opportunities that the project presents.

Hobsons Bay City Council

Hobsons Bay City Council has developed a draft framework against which it intends to assess the Western Distributor. It has also provided this to the Western Distributor project team to consider in order to mitigate impacts on, and enhance outcomes for, the people of Hobsons Bay.

Council provided feedback on opportunities and issues relating to:

- key traffic and transport issues and opportunities
- opportunities for improved cycling and walking connections and infrastructure
- truck bans
- changes in local traffic volumes and movements
- tolling structure and toll avoidance
- amenity impacts – particularly noise, vegetation removal and air quality
- urban design
- undergrounding of power lines.

Based on a preliminary assessment of design options presented in April-May 2016, Hobsons Bay has indicated a preference for the long tunnel design and Hyde Street connection Option 2: North.

Further information about Hobsons Bay City Council's position is available on their website.

Maribyrnong City Council

Maribyrnong City Council has provided feedback to the project team and confirmed its conditional in-principle support for the project.

Council recognises that the project will deliver many local benefits such as reduced noise and pollution on some residential streets as well as opportunities to improve walking, cycling and landscaping.

Some of the key concerns raised by council include:

- tolling structure and toll avoidance
- affect on access to and usability of public space
- noise, air and visual pollution
- impact of elevated roads and structures on the built form and amenity.

Council has stated a preference for the 'long tunnel' design and Hyde Street connection Option 5: Hall Street.

Further information about Maribyrnong City Council's position is available on their website.

City of Melbourne

The City of Melbourne provided a submission, including input to the Request for Tender.

Some of the key concerns raised by council following their assessment of the project in its current stage of development include:

- changes to traffic in north and west Melbourne
- impacts of traffic and new road capacity
- removal and replacement of trees
- impacts on future land uses/urban renewal areas
- walking and cycling links
- Moonee Ponds Creek open space
- urban design challenges.



Next steps

The Victorian Government, together with Transurban, will continue to engage with the people who live, work and travel across Melbourne's west.

From July 2016 to early 2017 the project will move through a detailed planning and competitive tender process. During this time:

A short list of construction companies are asked to develop a tender design based on strict criteria known as functional requirements

- a Design and Construct (D&C) Request for Tender is released to construction companies bidding for the project
- tenderers prepare a response which must be submitted in late 2016 for assessment.

The EES is progressed in preparation for public exhibition

- impact assessments are completed by technical specialists
- the EES is prepared
- in late 2016, tenderer designs are incorporated.

Feedback from communities and stakeholders is provided to tenderers and specialists completing the EES

- the project team continues discussions with local communities about the Reference design, the EES, the tender process and what happens next
- the CLG and TRG continue to meet regularly, providing a forum for the project team to seek advice and provide updates about what's happening.

In early 2017, the EES will be exhibited. We're encouraging the community to actively engage in the EES process and participate in the public exhibition. Through this process, people can make a formal submission and present to an independent panel. The panel considers all feedback received before making recommendations to the Minister for Planning, which informs the Minister's planning approvals decisions. Construction will commence in late 2017.

Key steps



APPENDIX 1

List of consultation materials and other supporting documentation –
Concept design (April-May 2016)

Concept plans and 3D visuals

- West Gate Freeway widening plan and 3 x 3D visuals
- West Gate Freeway to tunnel connection – Short Tunnel Option plan and 5 x 3D visuals
- West Gate Freeway to tunnel connection – Long Tunnel Option plan and 5 x 3D visuals
- Hyde Street access option 1 (Hyde Street Reserve) plan and 1 x 3D visual
- Hyde Street access option 2 (North) plan and 1 x 3D visual
- Hyde Street access option 3 (North-South) plan and 2 x 3D visuals
- Hyde Street access option 4 (South) plan
- Hyde Street access option 5 (Hall Street) plan and 1 x 3D visuals
- Northern tunnel portal and bridge plan and 3 x 3D visuals
- Footscray Road, city access and bypass plan 2 x 3D visuals

Information and consultation documents

- Western Distributor project overview
- Western Distributor scope map
- Community newsletter
- Concept design and consultation update
- Design update – West Gate Freeway connection and Hyde Street options
- Design update – City access and bypass
- Fact sheet – Consultation process
- Fact sheet – Planning process
- Fact sheet – Project investigations
- Fact sheet – Freight
- Fact sheet – Design development process
- Discussion paper – Air quality
- Discussion paper – Urban design
- Discussion paper – Walking and cycling
- Discussion paper – Noise
- Discussion paper – Tunnels and construction
- Discussion paper – Environment

Translated documents

- Community newsletter – Arabic
- Community newsletter – Chinese
- Community newsletter – Greek
- Community newsletter – Italian
- Community newsletter – Vietnamese

Find out more and stay involved

There are many ways to stay informed and involved:

- Sign up to email updates or ask a question through our website
- Visit our pop-ups during July, August and September
- Follow us on Facebook and Twitter
- Talk with your local Community Liaison Group member to stay informed or to provide feedback for the project team to consider
- Look out for updates from the team via newsletters, email, our website and at local events.

Western**DISTRIBUTOR**



Western Distributor

Attachment A - Consultation summary

Proposal design update,
September to October 2015

Proposal design update phase

Following consultation on the initial Western Distributor proposal in mid-2015, Transurban refined key elements of its proposal and put this – the Proposal design update – to communities, councils and industry for further discussion between 17 September and 16 October 2015.

This phase of consultation focused on the most significant refinements:

- the addition of a connection to Hyde Street for local and dangerous goods trucks that cannot use the tunnel
- relocating the southern tunnel portal to the north of the West Gate Freeway.

These changes presented new impacts for Hyde Street Reserve, Stony Creek and residents in surrounding areas and generated a lot of interest and feedback.

The update also considered potential changes to the northern portal location, additional connections to the Port of Melbourne and changes to the way new lanes are added to the West Gate Freeway.

The purpose of this phase of consultation was to:

- share information about the Proposal design update
- understand stakeholder and community views about the updated design

Multiple opportunities were provided to view information and provide feedback on the Proposal design update, through face-to-face and online consultation.



Who we consulted

Input was invited from those living close to areas where changes were proposed and more broadly from those who live, work and travel in Melbourne's west – including local councils and the freight industry.



Letter drop to 30,000 households



Around 350 face-to-face discussions through three consultation sessions, a doorknock of 150 households and two pop-up stalls



Nearly 300 people provided direct feedback via online tools and feedback form

In addition to discussing the Proposal design update with local residents, Transurban provided updates and spoke with many stakeholder organisations, government bodies and other interested groups, to explain the design refinements and understand their views, for consideration in ongoing development of the proposal.

Engagement across stakeholder sectors:

- local government – three key councils, several other interested councils and the municipal Association of Victoria
- community groups – including Maribyrnong Truck Action Group, Friends of Stony Creek and local bicycle user groups
- freight industry and operators – including Victorian Transport Association, Container Transport Alliance Australia, Toll and L'Arthur
- local businesses which may be directly or indirectly affected by the project – including AusNet Services, Harbour Town and fuel terminal operators
- community facilities – including Yarraville Community Centre, Westgate Golf Club and other sporting groups
- regulators and other government agencies – including Melbourne Water and EPA Victoria.

How we consulted

The main activities undertaken to communicate with and engage communities and stakeholders on the Proposal design update are outlined below.



Door knocks and letter drop

With the Proposal design update presenting new impacts for communities around Hyde Street Reserve, a door knock and letter drop was conducted in this area to provide information directly to residents before information was communicated more broadly.

150 households were doorknocked in Beverley Street, Hughes Street, Banool Avenue, Lormer Street, Francis Street, Hyde Street, Globe Street and Vockler Street. Transurban's team spoke directly with over 40 residents and provided 'sorry we missed you' cards and other information encouraging residents to participate in consultation.



Email and telephone

A direct line to Transurban's project team was provided via email and telephone.



Website and online engagement

The website consult.transurban.com provided a central location for information and consultation, and an accessible and flexible way to participate in activities.

6670 visits / 3230 document downloads

During September and October, the following tools were used to provide information and seek feedback on the Proposal design update.

Interactive map

An interactive map allowed people to pinpoint concerns, ideas and opportunities or to submit a general comment.

Given the expected interest and new impacts involved with proposed changes to the southern portal location, the interactive map focused on the area in and around Hyde Street Reserve. The map included four visualisations depicting how the new road may look from streets.

The map was open for comments from 17 September until 16 October.

250 comments

'Ask a question' tool

Between 17 September and 13 November, Transurban responded to 51 questions posted on the website by 38 individual community members.



Mail out and email update

A mail out to 30,000 local residents and businesses providing an update on the proposal, feedback to date, the proposed design refinements and community consultation sessions. An email update was also sent to 135 subscribers.



Information for CALD communities

Those who speak a language other than English (LOTE) could find out more about the proposal through:

- newspaper advertisements in local Leader and LOTE publications
- a telephone interpreter service promoted on key materials.



Promotion and advertising

Transurban promoted the Proposal design update and community sessions widely in the inner west, with 20 advertisements appearing in nine local newspapers over a three week period.

The project team also spoke to over 50 people at two 'pop up' stands in Spotswood and Yarraville to build awareness of the Proposal design update and encourage attendance at the community sessions.



Community consultation sessions

Transurban held three community sessions to discuss the Proposal design update with interested community members, providing a forum for people to talk with technical experts and share their views, ideas and concerns.

All sessions were drop-in style so that people could attend at a time that best suited them. Maps and visualisations were displayed to enable discussion of the design refinements and proposal publications were available and taken by many attendees.

- Yarraville Community Centre, Saturday 19 September - 54 attendees
- South Kingsville Community Centre, Thursday 8 October - 56 attendees
- Yarraville Club, Saturday 10 October - 162 attendees

The initial session at the Yarraville Community Centre was held two days after publication of the Proposal design update to provide an immediate opportunity for directly-interested residents to discuss the design update in more detail.

A short feedback form was developed to enable participants to provide written feedback in their own words, and 119 forms were submitted over two sessions.

The Concerned Locals of Yarraville community group launched a change.org petition and provided a copy of the comments by signatories for consideration by Transurban. Several other submissions were accepted following the completion of the consultation period, including from the Inner Melbourne Planning Alliance and the Owners Corporation of 200 Stephen Street Yarraville.

250 attendees / 119 feedback forms



Publications and videos

Several publications were created to explain the design refinements and made available on the website and at community sessions:

- **Proposal design update brochure** details feedback to date and refinements made to the design
- **Southern portal discussion paper** provided further detail on the reasons for the proposed relocation of the southern portal and inclusion of the new Hyde Street connection
- **Proposal design update video** outlining the key design refinements
- **Targeted discussion papers** prepared for the first round of engagement remained current and addressed issues including air quality, noise, environment and the project need.

What we heard

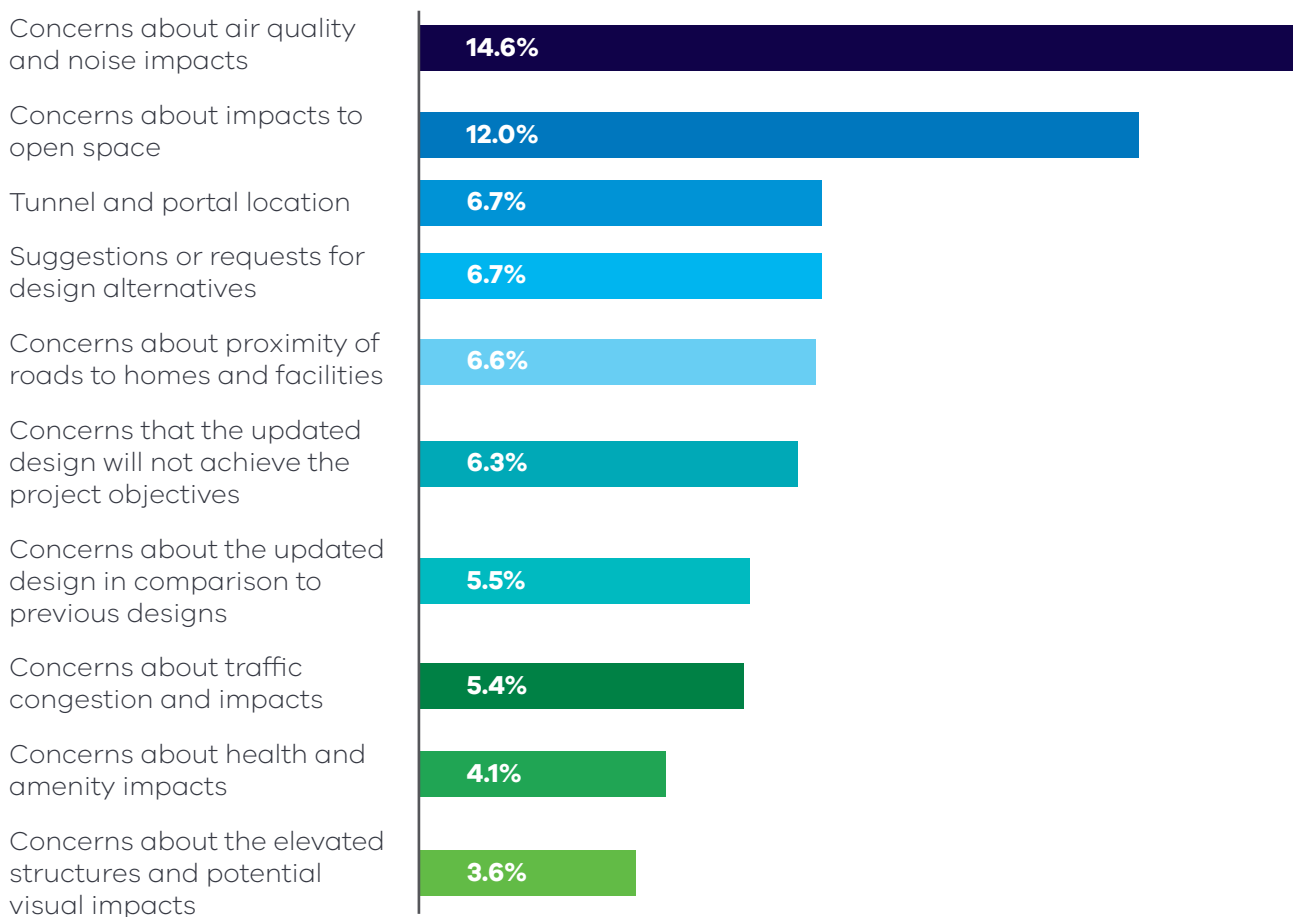
The vast majority of feedback related to the proposed relocation of the southern tunnel portal and the inclusion of a connection to Hyde Street for local and dangerous goods trucks.

An independent research specialist was engaged to analyse all feedback received through telephone and face-to-face discussions, door knocks, community consultation sessions and feedback forms, emails, the online Q&A tool and comments made on the interactive map.

Of the 1219 statements analysed, almost 15 per cent raised concerns about air quality and noise, 12 per cent related to concerns about impacts on open space, 6.7 per cent raised concerns about the tunnel or portal location, and a further 6.7 per cent indicated support or suggested improvements.

The analysis has identified the following statistics and main feedback themes.

Most frequent topics of feedback on the proposal design update:



Key feedback themes

Support for overall concept and benefits

Many participants indicated that they support the overall Western Distributor concept, with views that the proposal addresses the problem of trucks in the inner west and will free up traffic on and around the West Gate Freeway.

Key commitments such as avoiding the acquisition of homes and including major cycling improvements were supported.

The revised southern tunnel portal and concerns about impacts

The proposed relocation of the southern portal and placement of connecting roads in Hyde Street Reserve raised significant concerns for local communities.

Participants frequently said that the road and tunnel portal would be too close to their home and raised concerns about potential impacts on open space, air quality, noise, health and general amenity of the area.

Many participants highlighted the importance of Hyde Street Reserve and Stony Creek for the local community and improvements that have been made over many years by local residents and the Friends of Stony Creek.

The section of elevated road proposed to connect the West Gate Freeway with the tunnel portals and Hyde Street generated a range of concerns about visual impacts and increased traffic noise.

Concerns about air quality, noise and health impacts for local residents were key feedback themes, along with requests for more information about how these impacts would be managed.

Requests to consider further design changes and include improvements

There was a strong preference to revert to the original Proposal design, which placed the tunnel portals within the centre of the West Gate Freeway, west of Williamstown Road.

There was also a commonly expressed view that including the Hyde Street connection for placard trucks was, on balance, not worth the impact on Hyde Street Reserve and nearby residents.

Participants also told Transurban that alternative locations or designs should be considered, such as moving the Hyde Street connection closer to the West Gate Bridge or locating elevated roads on the south side of the Bridge with a tunnel portal in disused industrial land. Others noted that it was not acceptable to shift the impact from Hyde Street Reserve to Donald McLean Reserve.

How we have used feedback

The Proposal design update was released at an early stage in the project's development – when the Victorian Government was still considering Transurban's proposal and preparing a business case to assess the merits of the Western Distributor Project.

The project team listened to concerns raised by local communities about the tunnel portal location and Hyde Street connection and, following the Government's decision to proceed with the project, undertook further design and planning work to develop a Concept design.

The Concept design included a range of alternative options for connecting both the tunnel and Hyde Street with the West Gate Freeway. Two options for the tunnel connection and five options for the Hyde Street connection were developed.

Further information on these design responses and how potential impacts of the project will be assessed as part of the project's EES is available in the **Consultation Report – Concept design**, to which this report is attached.

The community feedback we received is greatly appreciated and was used in developing the Concept design presented for consultation in April 2016.

