

Councillor Catherine Ng
Chair of Planning Committee
City of Melbourne

3 June 2008

Dear Councillor Ng and Councillors

Royal Park Protection Group Inc.: Statement to Planning Committee Meeting of 3 June 2008 on Council Submission to State Government relating to East West Link Needs Assessment (EWNA) Recommendations.

The Royal Park Protection Group Inc. deplors the Council's response to the Eddington Report on the East West Link Needs Assessment especially that relating to Recommendation 4: East West Road Tunnel. Council has failed to oppose outright the preposterous road tunnel project.

RPPG considers that Council has failed to understand that the tunnel project will increase traffic congestion and gridlock; won't serve most commuters travelling to the city by the Eastern Freeway, given that there are no outlets; lay waste a large area of Royal Park plus Holland Park in the course of construction which is anticipated to take from 5 to 10 years; destroy sports and community facilities; badly affect residential amenity of inner suburbs with years of road works; ruin views of the open park with the introduction of 12 storey chimneys or vent stacks at 3 km intervals along the tunnel's route; destroy the wetlands; and lay siege to West Parkville residential area, including the Parkville Gardens, not only with tunnel construction on their doorstep but with the widening of CityLink. It is anticipated that many homes close to the Tunnel may be compulsorily acquired by the State Government.

1 The East West Link is a misnomer. It was intended that the Eastern Freeway be extended west in a tunnel. True the Tunnel extends west under the Cemetery and emerges in Royal Park outside the State Netball and Hockey Centre but it then divides and travels South to the Port. The other "spur" crosses the Park and comes out – headed north - joining City Link. See the computer graphics sketch - labelled A Royal Park Aerial Map - by Dr Jan Scheurer, transport planner from RMIT University in Melbourne and Curtin University in Perth. RPPG is the only group to have produced a graphic illustration of Eddington's road tunnels.

2 The tunnel junction in Royal Park located in the open parkland next to the State Netball and Hockey Centre will form a giant quarry. It may well stay as an open cut as Dr Scheurer claims that that it would be very difficult to maintain a large junction underground given safety concerns. He considers that might have to be located at a lower level than surrounding land and have a service road surrounding the tunnel junction. In addition there will have to be emergency exits. See A aerial map and Dr Scheurer's depiction of this. (Dotted lines represent the open cut tunnel and coloured bands the underground tunnel) See also B photo of Burnley Tunnel Vent stack 12 to 14 storey high. See C View of Royal Park south of the SNHC. The green grassed area will be the quarry site.

3 The Tunnel constructed by open cut will traverse west Royal Park, then the Ross Straw Field and Wetlands before entering CityLink, which will have to be widened on the west side. See A Aerial photo. Also D distant view of CityLink with art installations - the Yellow Beam and Red Zipper. It is proposed to widen City Link just after this point. Photo E is of "sound tube" built after CityLink was constructed to baffle noise of traffic from residents of flats. Similar treatments might have to be undertaken with tunnel.

Recommendation: We ask that Council review its response to the Eddington Road Tunnel project and strenuously oppose the road tunnel, advocating instead expanded funding on public transport.

Signed:

Julianne Bell RPPG Convenor