



Yarra Climate Action Now
PO Box 372, Clifton Hill 3068
info@ycan.org.au www.ycan.org.au

10 May 2013

Doncaster Rail Study: Response from YCAN

As a community action group concerned with issues related to Climate Change, YCAN is extremely disappointed with the wasted opportunities of the Doncaster Rail Study. While we have absolute support for the development of a rail link between the city and Doncaster along the Eastern Freeway, we are concerned that the shortcuts shown in the recommended option, RAPID TRANSIT will do little to reduce vehicular traffic coming into the inner suburbs, thus failing in its aim of environmental sustainability.

Particular Concerns:

1. Doncaster Park-and-Ride Terminus:

It is best practice for public transport to terminate in major activity centres which generate passenger traffic and are safe. What size car park would be necessary to provide for commuters travelling to the Park-and-Ride to catch a train? Why alter the currently successful DART Service? Could not the Dart bus continue to provide a second public transport option rather than running as a short distance shuttle?

2. Network Constraints:

* South Morang - the City of Whittlesea is one of the fastest growing cities in Australia. The whole area, including South Morang, will require a vastly larger and improved public transport network in the near future as highlighted in the Study. The Doncaster rail should not be delayed until the Hurstbridge and South Morang lines are de-coupled, but should in fact be “de-coupled” from this issue to enable investigations into the improvements in efficiency, which could arguably be achieved by technological advances such as high capacity signalling, which could raise the number of trains per hour on a single track.

*Clifton Hill – as above, high capacity signalling should be investigated rather than postponing the whole project.

3. Collingwood Station Connection:

We are unclear about the reasons for connecting into the network at Collingwood station, and the implications of it on the surrounding area. Not using Victoria Park and its acres of land seems like a missed opportunity.

4. Costing and Benefits:

There appears to be a lack of transparency in the costing of the project, and an emphasis on monetary costs rather than environmental benefits. Although environmental sustainability was a stated aim of the study, it seems to be largely ignored in the report.

CONCLUSION

YCAN wants to see fewer cars on the road and a growth in clean, sustainable public transport. Thus we are very keen for the Doncaster Rail to proceed quickly and urge a more lateral exploration of the issue, particularly in view of the state government's support for the east-west tunnel. We also want a greater emphasis on environmental benefits to drive the investigations.

Thank you for this opportunity to submit our comments on this issue

Kerry Echberg
Yarra Climate Action Now