

Submission to Council re Abandonment of Proposed Path at Rushall Reserve  
Tuesday 24 April

As one of the many groups involved, which attended community consultations, wrote submissions, spoke at Council meetings, YCAN is extremely disappointed to see the recommendation that Council not proceed with this project.

YCAN is, of course, a group which campaigns for strong action to tackle the climate emergency. Reducing car use, a major contributor to greenhouse emissions, has long been a priority of Yarra Council. The Rushall shared path has been regarded as a priority to facilitate access for cyclists, pedestrians and people with mobility disabilities to Rushall Reserve, to improve the bicycle network and link with other paths. The top priority status of this project in the 2010-15 Bicycle Infrastructure Strategy was repeated in Bicycle Refresh of 2016.

The current situation at Rushall Station is dangerous for all users due to the logjam of cyclists and pedestrians through the underpass. The planned project would provide an alternative path of access to Rushall Station that is now difficult for some people to access because of ramps and bollards. The shared path would also allow uninterrupted mobility access to the capital City Trail, and to Merri Creek path.

Yarra carried out an extensive community consultation process which had impressive participation. Despite vigorous debate, the project received strong support from both Yarra residents, and users from other municipalities. It would send a negative message to the community if the project is now shelved, possibly inhibiting participation in future consultation.

It does seem astonishing to us that Metro Trains Melbourne are unable to provide an accurate costing, yet are able to keep increasing the estimates. We question why neither Metro/Victrack or State Government is picking up some of these costs. Or why is it not possible to receive funding from Active Transport Victoria? We also wonder whether other redesign options have been investigated.

We do note that approximately \$600,00 have been allocated in the Budget to this project, and would be horrified to think that those funds could be lost to bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure in Yarra. We strongly recommend that the Council does not accept the recommendation from the manager of Open Space and Recreation.

Kerry Echberg