



Hon Jacinta Allan MP

Minister for Transport Infrastructure
Minister for the Suburban Rail Loop

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Cr Steve Staikos
Mayor
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09 / 06 / 2021

Dear Mayor

I refer to your letter of 24 February 2021 to the Premier of Victoria, Hon Daniel Andrews MP, regarding the Suburban Rail Loop (SRL) project. As the matter falls within my portfolio responsibilities, it has been referred to me for response. I apologise for the delay in responding.

Suburban Rail Loop (SRL) is a city and state-shaping project that will transform the way we move around Melbourne and Victoria, connecting our suburbs and making travel easier and more convenient. It will connect every major train line from the Frankston Line to the Werribee Line, via Melbourne Airport, improving access to housing, jobs, schools, universities, and hospitals in Melbourne's middle suburbs.

The SRL will also create up to 20,000 jobs during construction and kickstart the careers of 2,000 apprentices, trainees, and cadets. Initial Works on Stage One of the project, set to commence in 2022, will create up to 800 direct jobs. The train stabling facility is expected to deliver more than 200 permanent local jobs.

A train stabling facility is required near the start of the rail line to allow SRL's fleet of new high-tech trains to begin services efficiently each day. Train stabling is a critical part of the new SRL and it would not be possible to provide high frequency turn-up-and-go services without it.

The Suburban Rail Loop Authority (SRLA) is committed to consulting widely with local government stakeholders and ensuring that Kingston City Council (Council) is informed of project developments, while also providing Council with opportunities to offer feedback on this city and state-shaping project.

SRLA have consulted with Council regarding stabling location options since April 2020. In determining the preferred location, SRLA assessed several options, including sites proposed by the Council.

The site at Old Dandenong Road, Heatherton, has been selected because it will significantly minimise residential and commercial property acquisition, including impacts on local jobs, agricultural land and the environment.

Plan Melbourne outlines Victoria's strategic planning policy in relation to Melbourne's green wedges and peri-urban areas. It recognises that planning for green wedges should define and protect the environment, biodiversity and open space, as well as areas that are of strategic importance for the State – including the State's priority infrastructure requirements. Decisions related to SRL are undertaken in accordance with these priorities.

The Victorian Government is committed to protecting Melbourne's green wedges and recognises the importance of these community assets.

I understand that Council has made a submission in response to the *Planning for Melbourne's Green Wedges and Agricultural Land* consultation paper. The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) is currently reviewing submissions and will continue to work closely with Council on these issues.

In 2018, the Andrews Labor Government committed to creating the Sandbelt Parklands from Moorabbin to Dingley Village, comprising walking and cycling trails, conservation and play areas. DELWP is leading the delivery of the Sandbelt Parklands as part of the \$154 million Suburban Parks Program.

The Victorian Government remains committed to the Chain of Parks concept and will work closely with Council, residents and local stakeholders to deliver a Chain of Parks through this area.

In addition, consultation is underway with the local community at Heatherton to help SRLA address the community's views and inform SRL's design, including measures to minimise impacts to the community and opportunities to provide high-quality public open space and urban design treatments.

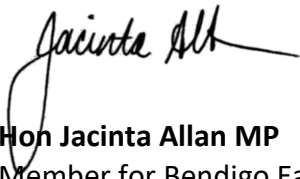
I have enclosed a copy of the document *What We've Heard So Far: Community Feedback on Train Stabling for Suburban Rail Loop*, which provides a summary of community feedback to date, and addresses the topics that have been identified. This document was distributed to the local community recently in April and precedes further engagement opportunities in the coming weeks and months.

The Andrews Labor Government is also committed to consulting widely with Council, the community and key stakeholders on SRL station designs and their surrounds. This means that as well as delivering significant transport benefits, SRL provides an opportunity to plan the services, amenity, and infrastructure Victorians are going to need outside of the CBD for future generations.

The Government welcomes Council's advocacy for an integrated approach for Sir William Fry Reserve and the Highett Gasworks site. SRLA is working closely with Development Victoria and will continue to consult with Council to understand and integrate feedback on the project.

Thank you for sharing your views and for your commitment to working with the Andrews Labor Government on this city and state-shaping project.

Yours sincerely



Hon Jacinta Allan MP
Member for Bendigo East
Minister for Transport Infrastructure
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Enc: *What We've Heard So Far: Community Feedback on Train Stabling for Suburban Rail Loop*