

22nd September 2010

Mr Ken Mathers
Chief Executive Officer
Linking Melbourne Authority
Building 1, Level 1,
Brandon Business Park,
540 Springvale Road,
GLEN WAVERLEY VIC 3150

Dear Ken,

LEADWEST SUBMISSION ON THE WESTLINK PROJECT

Please find attached the LeadWest submission on the proposed WestLink project.

LeadWest recognises that the project will have a significant effect on communities during and after construction. Thus, LeadWest requests that the issues raised in the submission be carefully considered and that continuous and close consultation occur with the councils of the western metropolitan region as the project progresses through its planning, design and implementation stages. LeadWest further believes that corridor based integrated land-use planning and high quality urban design is essential to achievement of optimal outcomes for the project.

LeadWest and its broad-based membership see the WestLink project as an important project for the future of road based transport to support the rapid population growth and associated development of the western metropolitan region and we commend the attached submission and recommendations to you.

Please feel free to contact me if you require further information on LeadWest's submission.

Yours sincerely,



Anton Mayer
Chief Executive Officer
LeadWest Ltd

Cc Mr David Buckingham (Chairman), Mr Bruno Aleksic (Director, Planning)
Hon. Tim Pallas, MP, Minister for Roads and Ports

LEADWEST SUBMISSION TO THE LINKING MELBOURNE AUTHORITY ON KEY STRATEGIC ISSUES ASSOCIATED WITH THE WESTLINK PROJECT

The WestLink project involves the proposed construction of a new freeway standard road link, including a tunnel in the easterly section and a surface road in the western section connecting to the Western Ring Road.

LeadWest, on behalf of its members which are key western metropolitan region stakeholders, is pleased to submit its views on the strategically important WestLink project.

LeadWest requests that the Linking Melbourne Authority and the Victorian Government work closely with the stakeholders, particularly LeadWest's key member councils, on issues to achieve a high quality result from what is a major infrastructure investment.

There is tremendous economic development and population growth taking place in Melbourne's West. This is coupled with vast expansion in freight / logistics activity through the Port of Melbourne, which is Australia's premier trade gateway. This unprecedented growth has placed huge demands and stresses on all aspects of our transport systems serving both Melbourne's West and the broader Melbourne metropolitan area.

In order to optimise the overall benefits from the project to both Melbourne's West and the broader Melbourne metropolitan area, it is important that both broader and local community viewpoints are taken into account.

Regional Strategic Drivers

The WestLink project can deliver significantly improved transport outcomes for the west, however there are several key points of concern for the regional stakeholders:

1. Optimising the opportunities for urban renewal

Accommodation of increased population in Melbourne's West in a manner that supports sustainability requires higher density development for residential and mixed uses in the Activity Centres throughout the region. Change to land use in areas adjacent to the Footscray Central Activities District, creating opportunity for a better grade of industrial uses and/or higher density residential and mixed uses, will support the sustainable economic and social development of Footscray.

Accordingly, regional stakeholders seek to realise opportunities for urban renewal in Melbourne's inner-west. This can be facilitated through the WestLink project by implementation of a variation to the extended tunnel (i.e. Aqua) option whereby the tunnel is further extended by approximately 500 metres to a western portal located to the west of Paramount Road.

Regional stakeholders request that this longer tunnel option be thoroughly considered as stakeholders seek to protect the potential rezoning of the large block of land bounded by Indwe Street to the north, Roberts Street to the east, Somerville Road to the south and Paramount Road to the west.

2. Optimising the opportunities at road intersections

Implementation of the WestLink project will include the creation of new road intersections and the re-design of some current road intersections.

In the east, new road intersections will be created on Dock Link Road and intersection re-designs will likely be required at the intersections of Dock Link Road with Dynon Road and Footscray Road.

In the west, if the combination of extended tunnel (i.e. Aqua) and southern surface road alignment (i.e. Blue) options is selected, new road intersections with WestLink will occur at or near to Paramount Road, potentially McDonald Road and Market Road in Brooklyn, Fairbairn Road and the Western Ring Road at Sunshine West.

New and re-designed intersections will also be created along the upgraded Dempster Street/Paramount Road alignment at Ashley Street/Sunshine Road, Indwe Street, Somerville Road and Geelong Road.

Accordingly, regional stakeholders seek intersection designs that are ‘future-proof’ insofar as they will continue to accommodate growth in traffic volumes over the long term and will not create new ‘bottlenecks’ and ‘blackspots’. Intersection designs should also accommodate the travel needs of pedestrians and cyclists.

3. Optimising the opportunities for future road and rail projects

In addition to impacting potential land use and development options, the selected alignments for Westlink, and aspects of its design detail, will impact on various potential future road and rail projects.

Accordingly, regional stakeholders seek in alignment and the design of WestLink measures that ‘future-proof’ by making allowance for future interfacing road and rail projects.

4. Enhancing the amenity of Melbourne’s West through good quality design

The amenity of Melbourne’s western region is impacted by the design and maintenance of facilities and landscaping along regional transportation corridors. WestLink will run in a corridor through both urban residential and industrial environs in Melbourne’s inner-western region. WestLink is intended to service much of the freight moved by road between the west and the Port of Melbourne.

Accordingly, regional stakeholders seek high quality urban design, landscaping and noise attenuation throughout the WestLink corridor so that it provides a positive contribution to the amenity of the region as experienced by people living and working within proximity of WestLink.

5. Enhancing the image of Melbourne’s West through good quality design

The image of Melbourne’s western region that is impressed upon people travelling through and within the region is impacted by the design and maintenance of facilities and landscaping along regional transportation corridors.

Accordingly, regional stakeholders seek high quality urban design and landscaping throughout the WestLink corridor so that it provides a positive contribution to the image of the region as perceived by users of WestLink.

6. Communication and community engagement

Both during and after construction, the WestLink project will have significant impacts on the communities living and working adjacent to it. It will also impact on communities more broadly in Melbourne’s West as the result of change to usual traffic flows spreads beyond immediately impacted areas (e.g. pressures build in other parts of the road network, trucks moving construction materials travel through the region, etc).

Consequently, a well researched Communication Program, keeping all stakeholders informed ahead of decisions being made, is essential to the planning and implementation of major infrastructure projects.

Accordingly, regional stakeholders request that as the WestLink project progresses through planning, design and construction phases, the Linking Melbourne Authority and the Department of Transport ensure close consultation with Maribyrnong and other affected councils in Melbourne’s West as well as the communities both directly and indirectly affected.