

CITY OF MELBOURNE SUBMISSIONS ON THE DONCASTER RAIL STUDY PHASE
ONE DRAFT REPORT

11 June 2013

Presenter: David Mayes, Manager Strategic Planning

Purpose and background

1. The purpose of this report is to recommend the Future Melbourne Committee endorse the City of Melbourne's submission to the Victorian Government on the *Doncaster Rail Study Phase One Draft Recommendations Report (DRS1)*.
2. The Victorian Government released the *DRS1* on 13 March 2013 for public comment by 28 June 2013.

Key issues

3. The *City Of Melbourne's Transport Strategy 2012 (MTS)* supports a Doncaster Rail along with other rail upgrades to increase the capacity, reach, frequency and reliability of Melbourne's train network.
4. The *DRS1* is the first detailed and comprehensive study of the options for a rail line through the Doncaster corridor. It identifies a preferred route from the Doncaster Park-and-Ride site via the Eastern Freeway connecting to the Clifton Hill line near Collingwood with stations at Thompsons Road, Bulleen and Chandler Highway in Kew. The estimated cost is from \$3 to 5 billion. (Refer to Attachment 3).
5. The *DRS1's* recommendations are broadly in line with the *MTS*. A key difference is that the *MTS* envisaged Doncaster trains using a new tunnel which would run west from Clifton Hill via Fitzroy and Parkville to Flagstaff Station. The *DRS1* concludes that this route would be needed instead for the significant patronage growth projected for the South Morang line because the Clifton Hill line would not have the capacity for South Morang line trains in addition to those from any other line.
6. The submission (Attachment 2) reiterates the City of Melbourne's support for a train to Doncaster. It highlights a number of issues as well as opportunities for further investigation as part of the proposed phase two of the study. These include:
 - 6.1. That construction of the Melbourne Metro rail project is a necessary precursor of the *DRS1's* preferred Doncaster Rail route. This emphasises the need for the Victorian Government to continue with the planning and construction of Melbourne Metro as Melbourne's highest priority transport infrastructure project.
 - 6.2. That the proposed phase two study should examine the projected strong growth of bus use on Lonsdale Street prior to the opening of a Doncaster rail line and make recommendations to ensure efficient bus operations in this period. A train to Doncaster would remove a significant number of buses from Lonsdale Street which would enable subsequent improvements to the public realm and pedestrian and car traffic in the street.
 - 6.3. That the phase two study should examine the potential of the alternative alignment designated as LA1 in the *DRS1*. This alignment would go through Kew to stimulate urban consolidation, generate greater patronage and provide new stations in the north of the central city near St Vincents Hospital and Franklin Street. The estimated \$9 to 11 billion cost of this alignment could be reduced using lighter rail technology.

Recommendation from management

7. That the Future Melbourne Committee endorse the City of Melbourne's submission (at Attachment 2) to the Victorian Government on their *Doncaster Rail Study Phase One Draft Recommendations Report*.

Attachments:

1. Supporting Attachment
2. City of Melbourne's Submission to the Doncaster Rail Study
3. Map of the preferred Doncaster Rail alignment

SUPPORTING ATTACHMENT

Legal

1. There are no specific legal implications related to this report.

Finance

2. There are no financial implications for the City of Melbourne related to this report.

Conflict of interest

3. No member of Council staff, or other person engaged under a contract, involved in advising on or preparing this report has declared a direct or indirect interest in relation to the matter of the report.

Stakeholder consultation

4. No external consultation was conducted in developing the City of Melbourne's submission on *DRS1*. The *MTS* which sets out the City of Melbourne's position on Doncaster Rail, was subject to extensive public and stakeholder consultation.
5. It is expected that there will be opportunities for consultation in the future as more detailed plans for Doncaster Rail are further developed.
6. Officers participated in the development of the *DRS1* through workshops conducted by the *DRS1* consultants.

Relation to Council policy (if applicable)

7. The recommendation is consistent with the proposed Municipal Strategic Statement and the *MTS*.

Environmental sustainability

8. Environmental sustainability issues have been considered in developing this report. The report is based on Council's position on transport issues established in the *MTS*. Achieving better environmental outcomes was one of the criteria for policies and actions in the strategy.



City of Melbourne Submission to Doncaster Rail Study Phase One Draft Recommendations Report – 14 March 2013

June 2013

Table of Contents

Summary	2
City of Melbourne strategic position	2
Municipal Strategic Statement 2012 (MSS)	2
Transport Strategy 2012.....	2
Comments on Phase 1 Draft Recommendations Report	3
Development around CBD stations	3
Scope of Phase Two report.....	3
Public Transport Patronage Growth and DART	3
South Morang line	4
Car access to the city	4
Clifton Hill Interchange	4
Local Access Route recommendations	4
Flagstaff Gardens Station.....	5
Supporting infrastructure	5

Summary

The *City of Melbourne's Transport Strategy 2012 (MTS)* supports the [Doncaster Rail Study Phase One Draft \(DRS1\)](#) preferred Doncaster rail line and its confirmation of the priority of the Melbourne Metro as a necessary precursor to a Doncaster rail line and other planned lines.

DRS1 found that the preferred Doncaster Rail alignment (RT1) cannot be constructed until Melbourne Metro is complete and a new South Morang to city line has been constructed to free up capacity for Doncaster trains on the Clifton Hill route. Also Public Transport Victoria's (PTV) recently released *Network Development Plan for Metropolitan Rail (NDPMR)* has the proposed Airport rail line dependent on Melbourne Metro. This emphasises Melbourne Metro as Melbourne's highest priority transport infrastructure project.

In the interim until the Doncaster rail is constructed the continued strong patronage growth on DART and other bus routes serving the Doncaster corridor will increase the bus movements in Lonsdale Street. In this interim period Lonsdale Street must operate effectively for buses, pedestrians and motor vehicles as the city grows. The City of Melbourne therefore supports planning bus access to the city in the lead up to the opening of Doncaster Rail as part of the completion of the DRS phase 2 study.

The City Of Melbourne also supports further investigation of alternative Doncaster rail alignment LA1, because of its potential to carry more passengers, to focus development around stations in larger population centres and to provide new city access points at Franklin Street and St Vincents Plaza to serve fast-growing areas of the City Of Melbourne.

City of Melbourne strategic position

Municipal Strategic Statement 2012 (MSS)

The City of Melbourne's MSS sets out the prospect for continued high resident and jobs growth in the municipality over the next two decades. This growth can continue the role of the municipality as a highly productive contributor to the Victorian economy.

Sustaining this productivity however will depend on being served by an efficient and effective public transport system. Melbourne's train network is the most important component of its integrated public transport system and its improvement is critical to enabling this long term job and residential growth as well as the municipality's liveability and sustainability.

Transport Strategy 2012

The study's conclusion is broadly in line with the *MTS*. A minor difference is that strategy envisaged Doncaster trains using a new tunnel which would run west from Clifton Hill via Fitzroy and Parkville to Flagstaff Station.

The *DRS1* concludes that this route is still needed – but for South Morang trains. Significant patronage growth on the South Morang line means that the line south of Clifton Hill would not have the capacity for South Morang trains to share it with any other line. The proposed route via Parkville would carry South Morang trains so the existing Hurstbridge trains could share the Clifton Hill line with Doncaster trains. The Hurstbridge and Doncaster corridors are not projected to experience the same amount of growth as South Morang.

The *MTS* has a target of reducing bus travel times on Lonsdale Street by 30%, making Lonsdale Street an efficient trunk bus route and investigating center-of-the-road bus operation. As the activity in Lonsdale Street continues to grow the efficiency of the bus operation on Lonsdale Street will likely be compromised. The Phase two Doncaster Rail study needs to provide direction for planning Lonsdale Street.

Comments on Phase 1 Draft Recommendations Report

Development around CBD stations

The *DRS1*'s preferred alignment (RT1) envisages connecting the South Morang line to Parkville, Flagstaff and Southern Cross. This will significantly increase activity and land-use investment around these stations. It will bring people from Melbourne's fast-growing northern suburbs to the western end of the Central City including Docklands.

Tram and pedestrian networks will need upgrading to ensure passengers can disperse efficiently from city train stations. More space will be required for walking paths, crossings and station access links and with fewer delays, married with more frequent tram services and seamless pedestrian connections between stations and tram stops.

Scope of Phase Two report

The scope for *Doncaster Rail Study Phase Two (DRS2)* will likely be based on the State Government's response to *DRS1* and community feedback. The *DRS1* notes that a key issue for *DRS2* will be the timing and form of the decoupling of the South Morang and Hurstbridge train lines. The City of Melbourne supports resolution of this key part of rail planning in Melbourne.

Public Transport Patronage Growth and DART

The *DRS1* modeling shows that even without a train to Doncaster, the mode share of public transport for trips to the City of Melbourne from the east continues to rise strongly. For example, public transport's share of trips from Manningham to Melbourne is projected to rise from about 45% to nearly 60% by 2031. The amount of travel will also increase. Without a train line to Manningham, much of this growth would be on buses. Patronage of the Doncaster Area Rapid Transit (DART) has been growing strongly and the *DRS1* projections show this growth will continue.

DART currently carries about 10,000 people per day. The *DRS1* modeling shows that almost all the growth in city-bound trips from the study catchment area will be by bus rather than car. The study also concludes that all the bus users will transfer to the train when it is constructed. By 2031 the combined inbound patronage of the four DART services that use Lonsdale Street (the 905, 906, 907 and 908) is expected to grow by 42%. Patronage of other Lonsdale Street bus services are also projected to grow - the 309 (162%), the 305 (59%) and the 302 (78%).

The Lonsdale Street DART services enter and exit the city via Victoria Street/Parade. There are already problems caused by high bus numbers using Lonsdale Street. Central city congestion is reducing timetable reliability. Buses are delayed behind by cars turning left (legally) from bus lanes waiting until pedestrians have crossed the intersection. With the high frequencies of about one bus per minute in peak hours (1200 buses per day) delays to a single bus affect other buses, cars and pedestrians. They find it difficult to pull out of the bus lane to pass other buses or turning vehicles due to general traffic congestion. The city growth will require more pedestrian crossing of Lonsdale Street which may conflict with the bus speed and reliability. All of these bus delays are an economic drag.

The *MTS* proposes investigation of center-of-the-road bus operation in Lonsdale Street as a way to reduce bus delays. Under this scenario, buses would operate like trams do in other streets where delays caused by turning vehicles are removed by hook turns and by pedestrians staging their crossing of the street. This would provide a better balance of movement for all of those modes. A rail line to Doncaster would remove a large number of buses from Lonsdale Street. This would reduce congestion and enable improved pedestrian facilities including crossings and wider footpaths to accommodate the growth in pedestrian numbers by then. The need for consideration of center-of-the-road bus operation clearly depends on decisions about the Doncaster Rail line route and timing.

South Morang line

The *DRS1* proposal to re-route the South Morang train line via Fitzroy, Parkville, Flagstaff and Southern Cross, could include the opportunity to continue through to a new station at Fisherman's Bend, as shown in the Public Transport Victoria's *NDPMR*. There is also the long term potential to extend the line across the Maribyrnong River to growth areas in the west.

The City of Melbourne supports the investigation of this option to make the metro rail connection to Fisherman's Bend part of a through route, rather than a terminating spur line. Through routes bring more activity because of the increased destination choices to and from the location. End-of-line locations have less destination access options and are less easy to visit.

Car access to the city

The *DRS1* modeling shows that while the proposed train services will take up the strong growth in trips to the city from the study area there will be little further mode shift from car to train. This means that the road network will still have to carry significant numbers of motor vehicles. Increased road-based public transport patronage will require better traffic management such as signal improvements.

Clifton Hill Interchange

The report recommends further investigation of whether Doncaster trains on the RT1 route could join the Hurstbridge line at Fairfield. This would allow them to run through Clifton Hill Station, rather than entering the Clifton Hill line further south at Collingwood. This would allow the Doncaster line passengers to interchange at Clifton Hill and head west to Parkville, Flagstaff and Southern Cross and on to Fishermans Bend. This would service the urban renewal areas in City North, Docklands and Fishermans Bend. The City Of Melbourne supports doing this investigation.

Local Access Route recommendations

Prior to resolving a preferred route the *DRS1* examined several other options. One of these is called Local Access 1 (LA1). LA1 would run underground from the city through Kew to Doncaster with eight stations (compared to three on RT1). It would operate completely independently of the existing rail network (i.e. not run on any existing lines) which would allow a lighter rail technology to be used

LA1 would attract significantly greater patronage of 76,000 trips per day versus 56,000 for RT1. It also has the potential to concentrate development around stations. The report shows that an additional 80,000 people could be attracted to live within walking distance of its proposed stations. This would generate an additional 7,000 trips, over and above the 76,000 that this alignment would be expected to attract without extra development. The report notes that concentrating development around stations would help preserve the amenity and neighbourhood character in other parts of the municipalities

LA1 would include eight new underground stations including a terminus at Franklin Street and a station near St Vincents Hospital. The Franklin Street terminus would be between Swanston and Elizabeth Streets. It would interchange with the proposed Melbourne metro's CBD North station, be close to Melbourne Central Station and provide improved access to Queen Victoria Market and the City North Urban Renewal Area.

The *DRS1* terms of reference were to assess all route options using heavy rail. LA1 was not selected as the preferred route because it was significantly more expensive to build (\$9-11 billion compared with \$3-5 billion for RT1) because it requires more tunnelling than RT1. However the line could be less expensive if built using lighter rail technology and tunnelling.

The City of Melbourne supports the *DRS1* recommendation that a phase two study should examine the feasibility of this route including an assessment of the economic and financial benefits of urban consolidation around station areas compared to developments on the city fringe.

Flagstaff Gardens Station

DRS1 proposes a new station adjacent to the existing Flagstaff Station. It would be required when the South Morang train line is diverted from its current alignment near Clifton Hill and follows a new tunnel through Fitzroy and Parkville to the city. The City Of Melbourne would support this option, but would seek to work closely with PTV to ensure construction does not adversely impact Flagstaff Gardens.

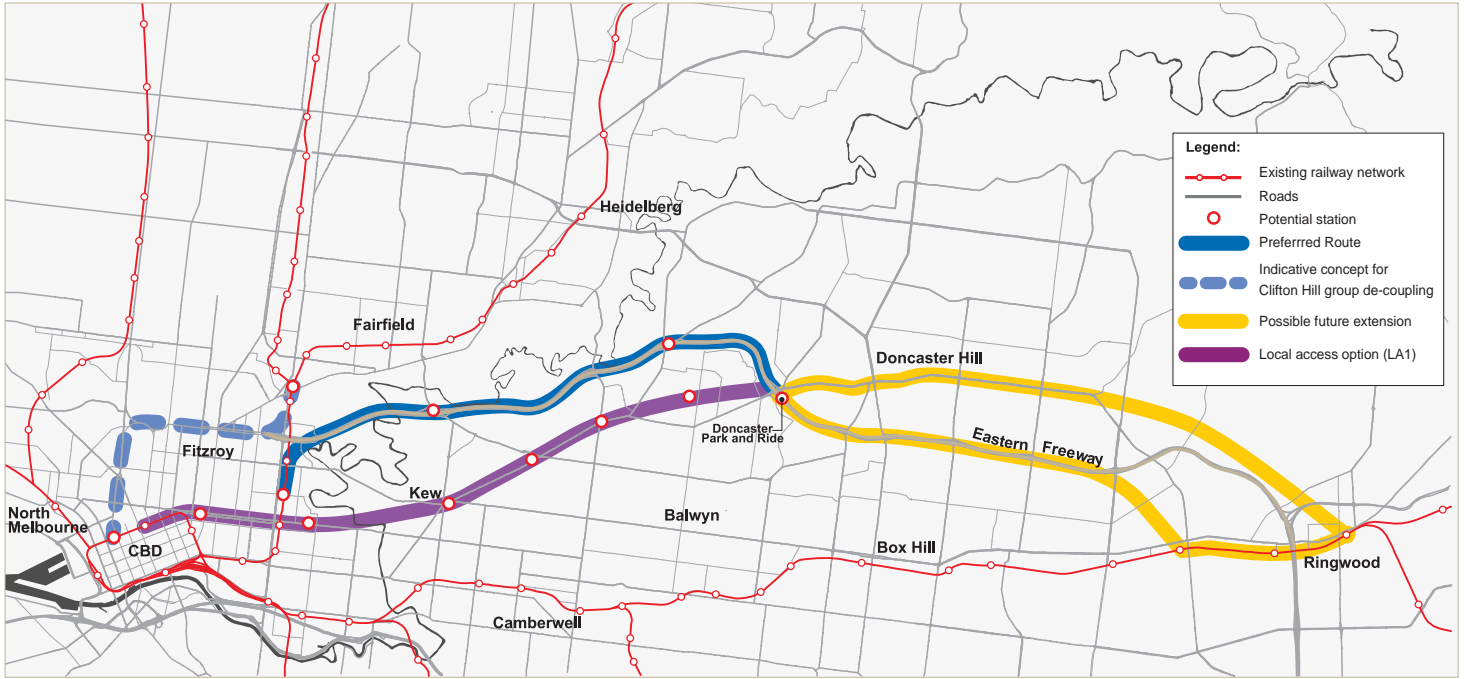
Supporting infrastructure

The Doncaster Rail Local Government Group has suggested that tram services should be expanded to provide orbital connections to the Doncaster train including along Burke Road to connect with an additional station there. This proposal appears to have merit and warrants further investigation.

By the time of construction of the Doncaster rail cycling will likely be a more significant mode in Melbourne, particularly given the success of the existing Parkiteer bicycle cages at train stations, the general trend towards increased bicycle use for travel to work, trends in station access overseas and the worldwide growth in sales of power assisted bicycles. Although the Melbourne rail network is somewhat dependent on parking near stations these are space-hungry compared to bicycle parking.

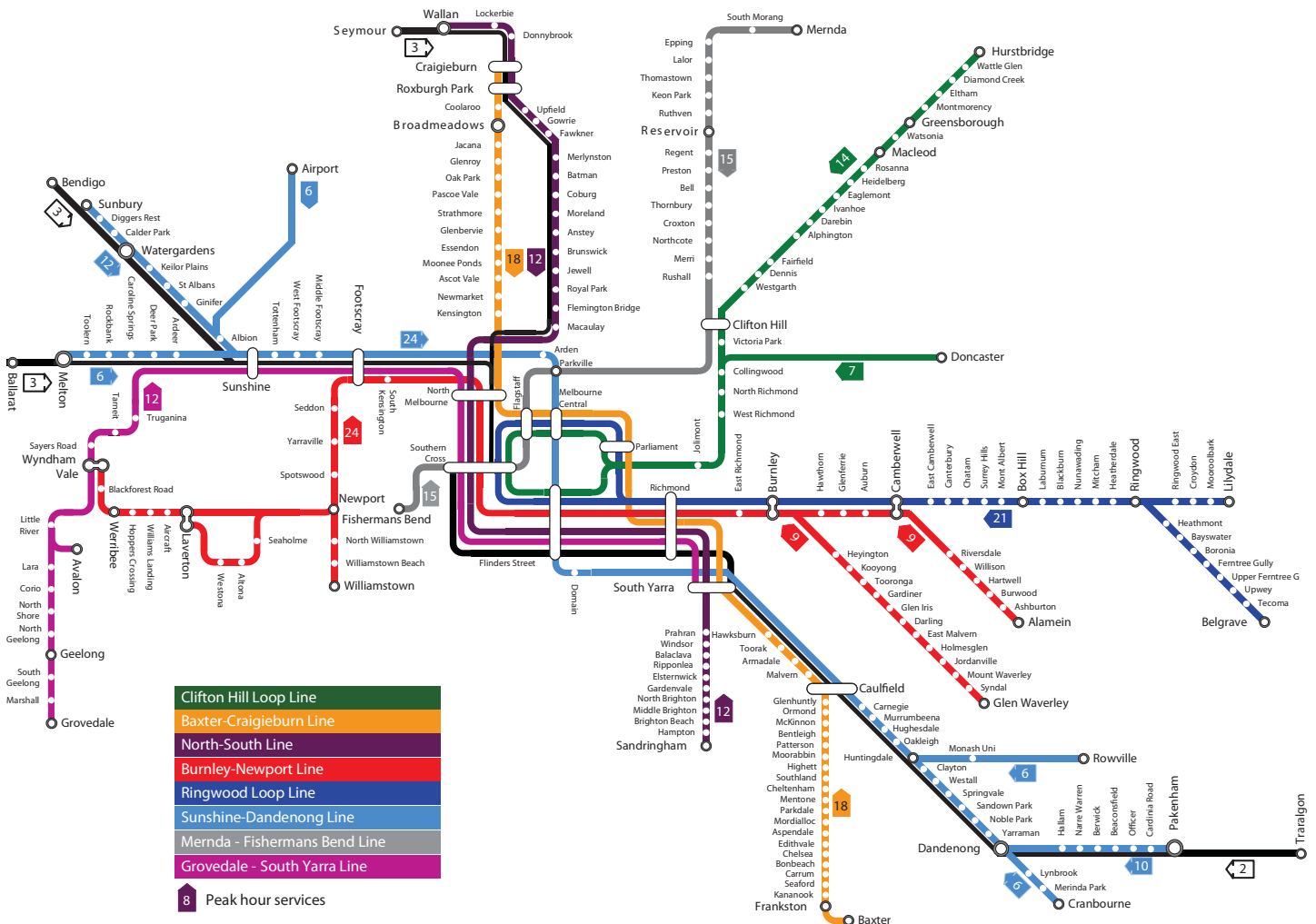
The Doncaster Rail line planning should incorporate bicycle access to and at the stations. This should include provision of high quality, separated bicycle lanes and paths to stations as well as bicycle parking. For example, the cycle path alongside the freeway will allow residents of Box Hill North to access the proposed train.

Doncaster Rail Study Preferred Alignment



Source, Doncaster Rail Study, 2013

Network Development Rail Plan Stage 4, 2030



Source, PTV, Network Development Rail Plan 2013