

North East Link Summary of community Consultation

Council organised four community information sessions about the North East Link in August, to supplement the single drop-in community information session held by NELA in Nillumbik. They were held in Eltham, Diamond Creek, Hurstbridge and St Andrews. These sessions attracted over 480 local residents.

The sessions shared information from NELA and put forward Council's preferred option. Attendees were invited to leave their questions and comments for NELA, as well as encouraged to submit them online or via telephone directly to NELA.

Questions centred on 9 key areas:

- Understanding existing roads
- Traffic impacts
- Tunnels
- Tolls
- Costs
- Environmental concerns
- Other transport projects
- Non-car vehicles
- Other considerations

Comments, responding to "what do you think?" were largely focused on their preferences for and against each of the four corridor options. Overwhelmingly, the Nillumbik community rejected corridors C and D, and were supportive of corridor A as shown in the photo below.



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The comments also covered 9 key themes:

- Population and Growth
- Traffic
- Environment
- Fire
- Cultural
- Design
- Other transport options
- Reactions
- More information

The specific comments are tabled below.

Corridor A
A is the best option
This road is to funnel trucks from the ring road to the eastern freeway. The only question is where it should go. The shortest, cheapest route is the only sensible option. SAVE ELTHAM
Corridor A is the only way to go. B, C & D are disasters
Just get on and do it. Go A
A won't solve Eltham traffic congestion
A seems to be overwhelmingly the popular choice- should have been done 30 years ago
A or C
A is objectively the best
If option A is built, retain Greensborough Highway
Option A tunnel should be longer
Looking at option A, I'd like to suggest a modification to the southern end. Instead of doing a quick 90 degree turn at Bulleen and then if coming from the east, look at how the Eastern freeway curves up North before coming up West again. Where it turns North you could start a tunnel there and go straight North until around the rover and then go left a bit to join up to Greensborough highway after going through Simpsons Army barracks. The advantage I see with this route is avoiding the sensitive area the whole length of Bulleen road. Better to keep away from the river as much as possible.
Option A is the only option that fixes the issue of getting traffic from North to city and traffic from M80 to South East
Option A will cater for present problems. B and C will be needed in the future
Option A- best option for getting traffic north to city and shortest and cheapest

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Corridor B
Not B- Doesn't help outer suburb connections/traffic less direct to Eastern Freeway
Against B
B and D high cost and low benefit
B,C and D are crap options
Route B will cut the green wedge in half and divide the community and destroy the environment
Corridor C
Don't divide the green wedge with C or D
Option C destroys our homes and our green wedge
Not C
Just not C
Don't want option C, Wattletree road is too congested already for residents and Eltham North Primary school
Totally against C
Option C may help traffic conditions around D.C
Option C will divide Eltham North and is detrimental to the Diamond Creek Corridor
No tolls, No tunnels, Option C- Best transport corridor
Corridor D
Option D is dreadful for Green Wedge- development pressure
Option D... What a fairy tale

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Population/Growth
The further out the road goes, the further the development goes. Please limit Melbourne's sprawl
Stop Breeding
Time to consider reducing the growth in population infrastructure overall is failing
Planned well in advance- before areas become heavily populated, causing much greater costs to then acquire land, etc.
More information
Want more detailed information on the options including accurate maps
Want to know what the cost/benefit will be (not just the cost). Comes down to the 'score card' attached to each option
Environment
Protect our green wedge
Protecting the environment
Save the platypus
Protect the environment
My biggest concern- How to protect the environment
You can't walk on Lindsay Fox's Portsea Beach, but he wants to drive his truck on our green wedge
Please don't destroy our haven in Kangaroo Ground
Needs minimal impact to environment

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Other transport options
Better public transport system
Yes public transport
Public Transport!
We need a proper 'Metro' like London, N.Y- Too late? /Land already sold off?
Make PT so good that you'd be mad to own a car
More public transport
Genuine fastest in the world rails- Geelong, Warrnambool- Ballarat, Hamilton, Ararat- Seymour, Wodonga- Warragul, Latrobe
Reactions
Just Build it
I do care about our environment, wombats and our other wonderful creatures, BUT my initial reaction is 'Oh gosh, our family home where we raised our children'
I want an option that gets great outcomes for trucks and cars- off suburban streets for between \$5-10 billion
If you count the ticks on a scorecard that North East Link authority have done, it's a no brainer... isn't it?
This is about connecting outer Melbourne
Design
Do not want sky roads
Future highways should always be planned with railway lines alongside them

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Fire
Fire Agency position on fore evacuation is to 'leave early'. I want the council and NE link to advocate this too
Escape from a fire
Traffic
Traffic flow at present is disastrous
Use of large trucks for freight is actually decreasing. More freight moved on trains

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Cultural
Roads (low cultural value) built on traditional Aboriginal land (high cultural value)
Build Aboriginal history museums/cultural centre and parkland
4% of tolls given to Aboriginal projects
<p>You asked for us to voice our inputs toward building the North East Link. The NEL is by geographical necessity needing to cut across traditional aboriginal land owned, accessed, enjoyed, occupied and used for 77,000 years by the traditional owners until the 25th of January 1788. For the next 229 years, roads to satisfy temporary and commercial ends are built over the traditionally owned real property using 'terra nullius'. Bearing in mind that the value of this link freeway is of a temporary 50-100 year lifespan the design considerations must respect this pristine condition and be absolutely restorable in 50-100 years to the legacy that 2000 generations of real Australians over 77,000 years, bestowed us and thus must not be overly changed damaged or made inaccessible for a culturally low value freeway link taking into considerations that black fellas maintained this NEL; not just in pristine but perpetual and to its natural absolute fullest value, regarding access, enjoyment, occupation, inheritance use Alistair Knox (former Nillumbik president) respected the Australian beauty and designed homes and environment and parklands and roadways that integrated white fella and black fella maxims. This link must be built I believe with minimal earthworks, vegetation removal and Australian fisheries and wildlife disruption. Only one commercial venture is to be contained within this Greensborough/Ringwood area and 1 parkland, an aboriginal natural history museum/gift shop (ref: Westerfolds Park/Grampians Museum) NO dog on a tuckerbox no petrol stations at all in this link section. Remember, this is a link between Greensborough and Ringwood and must not have internal on ramps, tolling gantries or engineering monstrosities. I have no problem driving to Greensborough or Ringwood to access or exits, so apart from the Aboriginal cultural centre and parkland, no complication to design which would necessarily further permanent destruction of Aboriginal traditional land to jeopardise this near pristine legacy over 77,000 years. As Australian Aboriginals have a census population of 4%... then 4% of tolling must be creamed off the gross commercialisation if this link is tolled, and compensated to Australian Aboriginals for the compulsory acquisition of this land as required by L.O.R.E (spelt). Finally, many established internal community road links must be maintained (ref the Kew Golf course access over the freeway) and thus the purpose of a link is just that and not an environment and design "CARTE BLANCHE" believe me this would be a world model.</p>
Community
Community Advocacy Groups- Our Rural Link - # buildthelinkbutdontsplitthewedge. - Facebook- Rural Link- email- ourrurallink@gmail.com

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The community also had a number of questions as detailed below:

Traffic impacts
If option 1 (westernmost) link is chosen won't it create a massive increase in traffic into the EastLink tunnels that are already at capacity late in the day?
Can the ring road take more traffic?
Will this reduce congestion, or just move it around?
What will be the impact on feeder roads (to North East Link)? More congestion?
Understanding existing roads
Option C is a disaster. Does the N/E link authority really understand the complexities of Ryans Road even as a local road? As an off-ramp it would be a nightmare.
Table 6 of technical paper shows eliminates of potential traffic changes at 10 locations including 3 of the river crossings (Bourke Road; Banksia Street; Fitzsimons Lane). However not for Warrandyte Bridge. Qn- what are the implications for Warrandyte Bridge traffic of each option?
Do all four options improve the Warrandyte Bridge situation?
To prevent 'rat running' on Rosanna Road- What additional changes will be made to this road? Will there be improvements made to the cycling infrastructure?
Will the tunnel need to be widened on East Link Ringwood for corridor A leading to the Eastern Freeway upgrade?
Can more clarity be given on route A, B, C, D and how they cross various roads? It is difficult to follow exact planned route and interchange points. Does a more defined map exist?
What about the Mullum Mullum tunnels?
Is there an assumption that Ring Road will cope with increased traffic? (Especially with the increased development to the north)
Are any of the surface roadways going to be extended or elevated sections over the top of residential areas? So I don't refer to bridges. When I can see how much \$ could be spent on these roadway corridor options, it seems that public transport is missing out in comparison.
With 'new' roads... are they added or replace existing?

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Environmental
Will air dispersion modelling take into account local climate conditions? Eg. Inversion layers? When will exhaust ventilation stack locations become known and released to the public?
How can the environmental impact statement impact the chosen route when the statement will take 12 months to create 'September to September' and yet the preferred route will be made by this December?
If C, what's the plan to protect the wedge?
How and where will vegetation removal be offset?
What protections for the Green Wedge? Flora and Fauna? Increased fire risk?
You mentioned that majority of survey respondents extended concern for the environment so why put it second last on the assessment for options
There are still powerful owls, frogs, wombats, wallabies in Diamond Creek reservoir. Are they worth nothing?
Tunnels
What guarantee is that the tunnels will not be abandoned for the cheaper option of surface only?
What would be the longest stretch of tunnel anticipated? (Having been in a tunnel beneath the Thames in a car accident scenario, this is a safety issue)
What provisions has been made for autonomous cars and trucks in tunnels?
Costs
What is the cost of option A and a duplication of the eastern?
Other transport projects
Can we have a North East Link train line? This would reduce traffic up to the next ten years and during the actual road being built.
Will public transport be considered in road design? (eg. Ref to proposed tram line down centre of Eastern Freeway?)
If we consider C/D- What happens if a station and parking is put in at Allendale Road? How do you achieve both projects and how will that be negotiated?
What about more effective public transport? (Particular need for park and ride options)
What public transport initiatives will occur to enhance the link?

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Tolls
At what stage are toll sections are going to be known as these will impact on usage?
Will it be a toll road? What is the involvement of transurban now?
Seems to be an assumption that people will pay tolls. How much?
If option A, will tolls be put on Eastern Freeway between Bulleen road and east link?
Who benefits from \$1,000,000 tolls?
Non-car vehicles
What will happen to placarded vehicles?
Will hazardous freight be allowed in tunnels?
Other considerations
How long is the NEL planning/outlook?
NEL largely about freight- Why?
Is NEL planning considering aesthetics? (eg. Great Ocean Road) Potential for option D?
Pressure of development on Melbourne and Nillumbik. Will A, B, or C make a difference? Perhaps consider D- development might 'leap frog' Nillumbik and follow path of D?
Are developers pressuring for option C and D? (Both go outside the urban growth boundary- not ok)
What will Simpsons Barracks be, once sold, if it's not a road? (parkland or houses?)
Self Drive Vehicles- claims tag teaming cars = less traffic. Therefore is this a white elephant?
So when the preferred corridor is decided, when will people know if their home will be acquired? And if corridor C is decided, will it be on elevated roads over the flood plains and an elevated bridge over the railway lines? Wouldn't tunnelling all the way be the best solution?