

Council Meeting

Council Chamber
Civic Centre
Boxshall Street Brighton

Tuesday
20 December 2022
at 6.30pm



Late Agenda

Late Items

- 10. Reports by the Organisation
 - 10.16 Level Crossing Removal Project Announcement, Highett 3

10. Reports by the Organisation

10.16 LEVEL CROSSING REMOVAL PROJECT ANNOUNCEMENT, HIGHETT

City Planning and Amenity - Urban Strategy
File No: PSF/22/35 – Doc No: DOC/22/383997

Executive summary

Purpose and background

The purpose of this report is to present the recent Level Crossing Removal Projects announced by the Victorian State Government along the Frankston Railway Line. Relevant to Bayside are two identified projects in Highett at Highett Road and Wickham Road.

The Frankston Railway line sets the municipal boundary between the City of Bayside and the City of Kingston.

Key issues

On 9 October 2022 the Victorian Government announced the level crossing removals at Highett Road and Wickham Road in Highett. The Level Crossing Removal Project (LXRP) has released the preferred design solution for each location as follows:

- Wickham Road, Highett – Rail Over Road
- Highett Road, Highett – Rail Over Road including a new station.

Council has been advocating to the State Government for the Level Crossing Removals at Highett and welcomes the announcement. However, whilst recognising some of the many benefits that a project of this scale can bring to the Bayside community, there is also a need for an integrated outcome between the two mayor transport projects (Suburban Rail Loop, Cheltenham and the Level Crossing Removals at Highett) happening within the corridor and a need for a robust community engagement process to inform and maximise the outcomes of the project.

The City of Bayside and the City of Kingston have worked effectively in the past to support the delivery of the Level Crossing Removal Project at Cheltenham and the initial stages of the Suburban Rail Loop at Cheltenham. Bayside is intending to continue to work closely with Kingston as part of future advocacy and delivery of the level crossing removals at Highett.

Level Crossing removal at Highett Road

The Level Crossing Removal at Highett Road will be a transformative project for the area. The Highett Activity Centre straddles over the two municipalities creating opportunities to improve access and mobility in the area and maximise economic development outcomes and employment opportunities.

The Highett Structure Plan has recognised some deficiencies with access and mobility around the Highett station precinct. The proximity of the station precinct to the former CSIRO Site in Highett provides opportunities to support sustainable and integrated transport outcomes that minimise the reliance on private vehicles.

The upgrades generated to the rail corridor as part of this project provide opportunities to maximise the provision of open space by supporting the creation of a well-connected and

accessible network of open spaces within the precinct to support the future needs of the community, minimise the impacts of climate change and maximise biodiversity outcomes.

Scope of works

Precinct Planning work is expected to commence in early 2023 as part of the Suburban Rail Loop project at Cheltenham. Whilst a radius of 1.6km around all SRL stations has been flagged as a starting point for discussion. No clarity has been provided about the scope of this project and the expectation from state government.

It is imperative that Council advocates for the integration of the Level Crossing Removal project and considerations as part of this work, to ensure an integrated transport outcome is delivered for the benefit of the community.

Council will continue to work collaboratively with Kingston officers as part of this process.

Recommendation

That Council:

1. writes to the Deputy Premier and Minister for Transport Infrastructure, in alignment with the City of Kingston endorsed position of 12 December 2022 to:
 - a. advocate for the consideration and integration of the precinct planning work at the Suburban Rail Loop Station at Cheltenham, to be developed in collaboration between the Suburban Rail Loop Authority, the Level Crossing Removal Project, Bayside City Council and Kingston City Council, with the support of a robust engagement process to seek views from the community
 - b. address key early considerations as part of the planning of the Level Crossing Removal Projects at Highett to ensure the delivery of:
 - i. sustainable and integrated transport and open space outcomes
 - ii. management and maintenance costed strategies and plans that support the long-term viability of newly created assets
 - iii. a strategic vision for the precinct that supports best practice urban planning and urban design principles
2. seeks a briefing from the Level Crossing Removal Project early in the new year on the recently announced level crossing removals at Highett
3. continues to work collaboratively with the City of Kingston to support the delivery of positive outcomes for the community as part of the delivery of the Level Crossing Removal Projects at Highett.

Support Attachments

Nil

Considerations and implications of recommendation

Liveable community

Social

The level crossing removal projects at Highett will provide opportunities to create high amenity, well served precincts around the stations which will contribute to the community by supporting improved mobility and access to jobs, education and services.

Natural Environment

Opportunities to increase active and public transport through the delivery of the SRL will contribute to reducing carbon emissions associated with private car trips.

Climate Emergency

The Climate Emergency requires an urgent shift to 'zero carbon' transport, including: electric vehicles, buses and public transport powered by renewable energy; alongside increased public transport use, cycling, walking and other forms of active transport. Through its Climate Emergency Action Plan 2020–25, Council is committed to supporting this transition, improving active transport infrastructure, advocating for more convenient and 'zero carbon' public transport, and working in partnership for better transport outcomes.

Built Environment

The level crossing removal projects in Highett are expected to create significant change to the built environment in the location that it is developed. It is expected that concentrated population growth and development will be required around the station precinct.

Customer Service and Community Engagement

No community engagement has undertaken as part of the preparation of this report. Council's position is informed by community aspirations shared through previous engagement process.

Human Rights

implications of the report have been assessed and are not considered likely to breach or infringe upon, the human rights contained in the *Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*.

Governance

Officers involved in the preparation of this report have no conflict of interest.

Legal

No legal implications and or the need to seek representation has been identified in this report.

Finance

Budget has been allocated in the 2022–23 operational budget to support input through the next stages of this process including as part of the preparation to inform discussion with the Suburban Rail Loop Authority as part of the imminent planning precinct plan work.

Links to Council policy and strategy

Bayside Housing Strategy 2019

Bayside's Housing Strategy identifies the areas around where the train station might be located as a moderate residential growth area.

Bayside Integrated Transport Strategy 2018–28

The Bayside Integrated Transport Strategy 2018–28 commits council to improving local accessibility, creating better public transport connections, creating user friendly streets, integrating transport and land use and improving perceptions of and enabling sustainable travel. Integrating and enhancing transport linkages with the confirmed station location will be critical to maximise the project benefits.

A significant number of additional relevant policy and strategy documents have informed Council's submission and will inform Council Advocacy efforts through the Inquiry and Advisory Committee hearing. Documents include:

- Community Plan
- Council Plan 2017–21
- Wellbeing for all ages and abilities Strategy 2017–21
- Bayside Affordable Housing Strategy 2021
- Bayside Walking Strategy
- Bicycle Action Plan 2019–26
- Public transport Advocacy Statement
- Highett Structure Plan 2018
- Bayside Economic Development Strategy
- Biodiversity Action Plan 2018–27
- Climate Emergency Action Plan
- Environmental Sustainability Framework 2016–25
- Bayside Open Space Strategy.