

Union Road, Surrey Hills and Mont Albert Road, Mont Albert level crossing removals

Amendment to the UMA LXP project boundary

Submission from Boroondara City Council

Endorsed: 15 November 2021, Council meeting

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a response to the October 2021 consultation on the Union Road and Mont Albert Road level crossing removal amendment to the approved planning project boundary under Clause 52.03 of the Boroondara and Whitehorse Planning Schemes.

As noted in our February 2021 submission to the Level Crossing Removal Project (LXRP) about the level crossing removals (LXRs), Council welcomes the removal of the dangerous level crossing on Union Road, Surrey Hills and is generally supportive of the planned removals at both Union Road and Mont Albert Road.

Council continues to object to the removal of the two train stations and construction of one station.

This submission has been prepared to respond to impacts in Boroondara from the proposed amendment to the Union Road and Mont Albert LXRP planning project boundary.

Inclusion of 12 and 14 Montrose Street, Surrey Hills

Council offers no objection to amending the planning project boundary to include two residential properties at 12 and 14 Montrose Street, Surrey Hills recently purchased by the LXRP to enhance design of the station entrance that fronts Montrose Street.

We appreciate that these additional land parcels will provide:

- Improved access the station for residents living on the north side of the train line;
- Improved pedestrian access to the station and across the station; and
- Potential for landscaping to enhance amenity in the vicinity of residential homes along Montrose Street.

General traffic and construction traffic concerns

We understand that as part of the planning approval process letters were sent to approximately 120 local residences in nearby streets including Blackburn, Wilson, Montrose, Bedford and Gordon Streets (City of Whitehorse) in the week beginning 11 October 2021 advising them of the consultation and how to make a submission.

Council officers were advised in email correspondence about the letters the area selected for letter distribution was based on potential traffic impacts arising from the planning amendment. We refer to Council's submission to the LXRP and Minister for Planning on the 13 February 2021 and commentary in the submission on the use of local streets (refer to page 36).

'The local streets identified as being in the PPB [planning project boundary] are generally narrow, asphalt roads with bluestone kerb and channel and on-street parking on both sides. The streets contain many traffic management devices which aim to slow vehicle speeds, reduce cut through traffic and enhance the neighbourhood amenity. Some streets are essentially impassable by heavy vehicles without significant tree trimming, traffic management device removal (or damage) and banning of all on-street parking. None of these three measures will be tolerated by Council or the community'.

The use of local streets by heavy vehicles can cause distress to residents' and disruption pending individual circumstances and proximity of work, sleep and living areas to the road. This is exacerbated if heavy vehicle haulage occurs 24/7 in order to complete the project more quickly as has occurred at many other level crossing removals across Melbourne.

We ask that the Minister for Planning directs the LXRP to:

- Not use local streets for heavy vehicle and haulage operations associated with the project;
- Use only arterial roads and major roads for all heavy vehicle and haulage operations;

- Engage and work with each and every community member impacted by the project to listen and respond to their concerns, to the satisfaction of the community member. This includes and is not limited to, schools, preschools, community and sporting groups;
- Maintain the community's access to Council services and those from other agencies at all times including, but not limited to rubbish, recycling and food and organics (FOGO) collection, meals on wheels, early childhood intervention services, Maternal and Child Health Services and on street parking;
- Maintain access to businesses and commercial properties for collection of rubbish, recycling, FOGO, waste oil and the like through the construction period;
- Maintain access to on-street parking along the length of Union Road though out the construction period; and
- Prepare Traffic Management Plans (TMPs) for discussion and review by Council well in advance of works starting.

Inclusion of a commercial property at 605 Canterbury Road, Surrey Hills

Council offers no objection to the inclusion of the 605 Canterbury Road, Surrey Hills in the amended planning project boundary.

We understand the property will be leased for the duration of the project and used as site office, and potentially as laydown for materials and vehicle parking. The building is currently vacant and sits within a commercial zone. It has vehicle access onto Stirling Crescent and Canterbury Road. We recognise:

- The building is conveniently located to the construction area and will provide easy access for SEPA staff and LXP contractors;
- The inclusion of 605 Canterbury Road as a site office removes the need for the workforce to occupy public open space or other areas; and
- The potential use of the yard for materials laydown will reduce the need for other areas to be used for materials laydown within the project area/works site.

General construction and traffic concerns

As part of the planning approval process, letters were sent to 21 nearby properties and businesses due to potential impacts.

If the main access to 605 Canterbury Road is via Stirling Street, we expect that consideration is given to vehicles coming and going from other businesses and properties along Stirling Crescent. That is, vehicle and pedestrian access is maintained at all times for businesses with properties fronting or backing onto Stirling Crescent.

We ask that the Minister for Planning directs the LXP to:

- Ensure no construction vehicles are parked on Stirling Crescent at any time of the day or night;
- Ensure vehicle and pedestrian access is maintained at all times for other properties with properties backing onto Stirling Crescent;
- Engage and work with nearby businesses (bound by Stirling Crescent, Canterbury Road and Union Road) to listen and respond to their concerns, to the satisfaction of each business or resident; and
- Maintain the access to Council services and those from other agencies at all times including, but not limited to rubbish, recycling and food and organics (FOGO) collection, meals on wheels and on street parking.