



WHITEHORSE CITY COUNCIL SUBMISSION

# North East Link Urban Design and Landscape Plan Tram Road to Springvale Road

Endorsed by Council 13 October 2025



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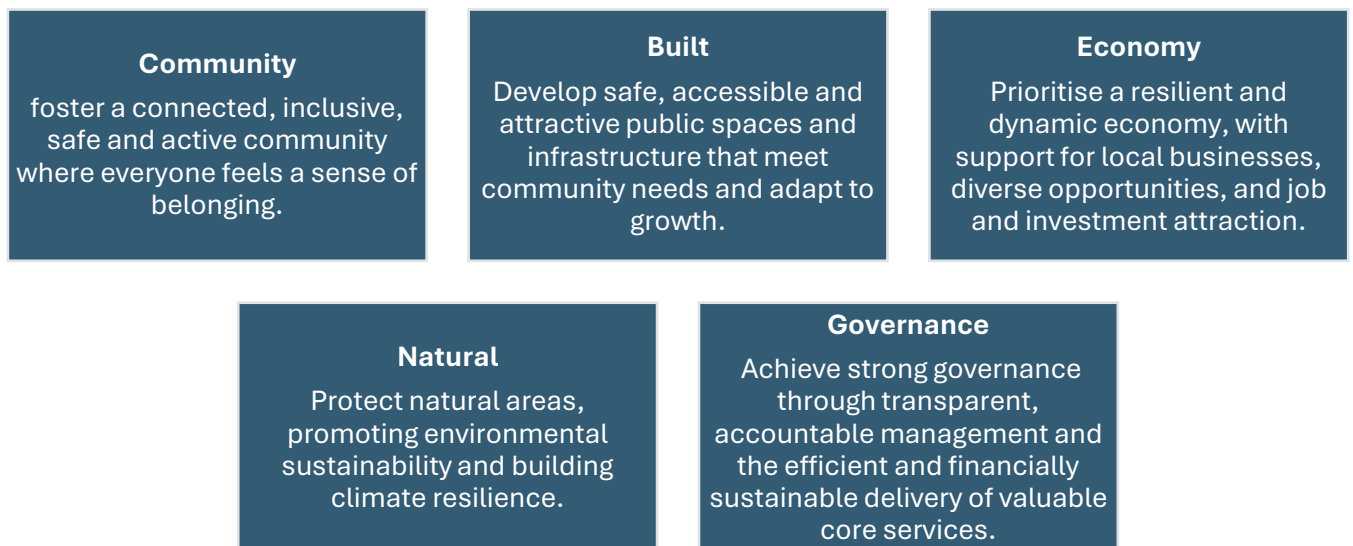
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# Overview

1. The widening of the Eastern Freeway as part of the North East Link (NEL) project will have significant impacts on residents, visitors and the environment within the City of Whitehorse.
2. The Whitehorse community cares deeply about the impacts on their local area including the spaces in which they live, exercise, work, play and use; their back yards and gardens that are adjacent to the project corridor; the public open spaces that form part of the project corridor; and where they can appreciate the thriving vegetation, wildlife and natural biodiversity.
3. The Whitehorse City Council Integrated Council Plan 2025-2029 outlines a roadmap for the short term future and has been developed through extensive community engagement. The Strategic Directions reflect the aspirations of the Whitehorse community and therefore are relevant for North East Link Program (NELP) to consider as you engage with Council, residents, businesses and visitors to design and deliver this major project.

The five Strategic Directions included in the Integrated Council Plan are outlined below:



4. Whitehorse City Council (Council) has worked with the Victorian Government over many years to advocate for the NEL project to meet its transport objectives whilst minimising and mitigating the local social, environmental and amenity impacts of the road widening.
5. Within the Tram Road to Springvale Road package of works, these impacts include:
  - a) Increased vehicle traffic volumes on the Eastern Freeway, arterial roads and local roads, resulting in community concerns about noise and air quality.
  - b) Extensive loss of vegetation and natural environments within the project corridor and open spaces.
  - c) Significant reduction in usable open space; particularly in the Eram Park precinct.

- d) Amenity impacts to residential properties and to community infrastructure like walking and cycling paths, as a result of the notable increase in the scale of the noise walls, and the resultant overshadowing.
  - e) Inconsistent and a piecemeal approach to walking and cycling outcomes, including a proposed partial reconstruction of the Koonung Creek Trail and other secondary paths.
  - f) Changes to waterway flows and potential impacts to assets and infrastructure, with unclear local flood mitigation measures.
  - g) A disconnect of natural landscape precincts, with limited consideration to improve the broader landscape holistically and *beyond* the project boundary.
6. Council and the Whitehorse community are looking for these impacts to be *truly and fully minimised*, and for the Victorian Government to commit to providing legacy projects that *compensate* for the NEL project impacts and open space losses that will remain a part of our community for years and generations ahead.
  7. The NEL Tram Road to Springvale Road Urban Design and Landscape Plan (UDLP) including the Report and Attachments, released for public comment on 1 September 2025, have been reviewed by Council to identify areas of support; and where amendments are recommended to align with Council's Strategic Directions and community expectations for the public spaces and urban realm; in and around the Koonung Creek Parklands, Eram Park Precinct, Slater Reserve Precinct, Junction Road Reserve Precinct and project corridor.
  8. There are several positives shown in the design intent in the UDLP. Our review has found that the documents and design response have some quality resolution and consideration, in comparison to some other UDLPs viewed by Council.

Specific highlights include:

|                                                                                                                                          |                                                                   |                                                                                                             |                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                     |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| The retention of high-amenity and valued segments of the Koonung Creek Trail – such as between Slater Reserve and Junction Road Reserve. | The engagement and reference to caring and connection to Country. | Thoughtfulness in the design of pedestrian and cycling bridges and their integration with navigation nodes. | The presentation of pedestrian focussed spaces. | The notable improvement to some of the designed landscape elements, relative to that presented in the equivalent stage in the previous UDLPs considered by Council. |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

9. It is however disappointing, that works shown in this UDLP predominantly focus on reinstating the freeway interface with limited improvements to the affected parklands / open spaces. Previously suggested open space enhancements expressed by Council are largely absent from this UDLP package.

10. Council acknowledges that the designs for the project will evolve as the project progresses; however, Council can only comment on what has been exhibited.

These plans unfortunately fall short of Council's expectations in appropriately mitigating the adverse impacts of the project on the Whitehorse community and balancing the project-related losses with meaningful, future community benefits. Of particular concern is the significant loss of public open space, the extensive removal of vegetation across the project corridor, and the very limited enhancements outlined in the UDLP. The enhancements that are included are presented only at a high-level, leaving many questions and some concern about how the Whitehorse community will ultimately benefit.

11. Council believes that modest enhancements to the designs can make vast improvements to the project outcomes. This can in turn provide a positive legacy for the Whitehorse community to appreciate and use for years to come; and for the natural and open space environments to prosper and thrive.
12. Council wishes to continue its collaboration with the Victorian Government and work together to refine the UDLP plans, as we continue to do so regarding the Burke Road to Tram Road package; and value add to the processes in place.
13. The specific commitments that Council is seeking from NELP as the project moves into its design finalisation stages, include:
  - a) Ensuring appropriate community infrastructure legacy projects are delivered as part of the project, including within the project corridor; the interfaces to the public open spaces; and particularly within the open spaces of Junction Road Reserve, Slater Reserve and Eram Park.
  - b) Openness and transparency of information being provided to Council throughout the project development, for information including but not limited to:
    - *Whole of project flood modelling,*
    - *All seasons' overshadowing impacts onto private property and community-use infrastructure (such as cycle / walking paths);*
    - *Evidence of public lighting standards being met along the project corridor that does not rely on Freeway "spill lighting"; and*
    - *Evidence of community concerns being addressed regarding noise, air quality and other environmental impacts being fully addressed.*
  - c) Incorporate expertise and recommendations from Council in developing the project designs and delivery.
  - d) A proactive "whole of government approach" that focuses on mitigating negative impacts and achieves quality design, construction, environmental and social outcomes from the project delivery.
  - e) Contribution to place quality, with meaningful places for people at the heart of design decision making.
  - f) Incorporation of Whitehorse Council's Strategic Directions and our community's voice into the design and delivery of the project outcomes.

## Presentation & Legibility

14. There is general concern regarding the level of detail shown in the public open space outcomes and deliverables.

Page 42 of the UDLP Report states that “*opportunities for upgrades to Eram Park will be explored in consultation with the City of Whitehorse*”, however the UDLP itself should be the time and opportunity to provide a much greater degree of design resolution than what is articulated in the Urban Design Strategy and Reference Design.

Whilst a refined level of design is obvious in the structural elements shown in the UDLP (such as bridges, road infrastructure and noise walls); there has been very limited evolution in detail for the affected public open spaces and trail segments parallel to the freeway corridor.

This is generally disappointing and infers a *bias* towards the road components of the project, rather than addressing the project surrounds holistically; and for the whole community to benefit.

15. The plans within the UDLP do not show the extent of encroachment of the freeway corridor into adjacent open spaces, linear corridors and towards adjoining residential areas.

Indicating the location of the existing freeway corridor fencing, as well as local government boundaries, could be added to the landscape and architectural drawings to provide helpful information to understand the design impacts and site context. Without this information, an accurate understanding of the exact impact on Council land is unclear.

It is considered that a fundamental element of an UDLP would be for landowners to be able to understand if and how the designs are impactful.

16. To assist with preparing Council’s submission, indicative plans were prepared to understand the degree of encroachment into the open space corridor. These are presented in various sections throughout this submission, and are attached as Appendix A.



Mapping indicating approximate degree of freeway encroachment (refer to Appendix A for detailed mapping).

17. Across the UDLP, there are concerns relating to drawing legibility and the lack of detailed information provided, making some information difficult to decipher. This includes:
- a) The high-level scale of landscape plans provided at 1:2000, compared to the 1:500 scale applied in the NEL Tunnels UDLP, and the subsequent refined level of detail illustrated for public space outcomes.
  - b) The high-level scale of drawings that do not detail the functional or character elements of existing or modified public spaces.
  - c) The high-level nature of how noise wall heights and types are applied, often applying the full suite of noise walls to long segments of walls as opposed to specifying which noise wall type and height apply to *specific locations relative to localised freeway interface conditions*. For example, Noise Wall Type 1-5 is applied generically to interface segments up to 400 metres in length. The clarity and the ability to fully understand what is being proposed in what specific location is unclear.
  - d) Limited indication provided of the existing freeway corridor or Reference Design extent, resulting in difficulty in understanding the before and after effect of the widened freeway corridor (or full degree in which the Reference Design footprint has been reduced - as per UDLP Report commentary).
  - e) General lack of indication of levels and topographical proposed changes.
  - f) General reliance on delaying details to future design exercises. For example, page 42 of the UDLP Report notes “*details for open spaces will be finalised through design development and will be to the satisfaction of future asset owners.*” The UDLP should clearly set the design themes and overarching scope, with only refined specifics finalised during latter stages of the design process.
  - g) There is lack of clarity for the provision of landscape screening along the noise walls. This is unclear for areas such as along the narrow corridor segment pinch point to the rear of Eram Road properties where no landscape buffer or planting strips are illustrated in the Landscape Plan. This section of proposed works is illegible and we are therefore unable to know whether this element is proposed or not.
  - h) How transitions between proposed and existing shared user paths are navigated – particularly where they enter and exit the project boundary, and where path widths may vary.
18. In contrast to the Eastern Package UDLP, the approved *NEL Tunnels UDLP* paints a far clearer picture of the envisioned *look and feel* of spaces created or impacted by the project. The Tunnels package is also clearer for a range of audiences to understand what is proposed.

Whilst the Eastern Package NELP design team may consider this approach too detailed; it has been well documented that these UDLP plans are conceptual and ‘to be in general accordance with’ in future design stages. This is similar to that of a Development Plan mechanism in the Planning Scheme.

At this stage of the project, Council needs to see plans that offer more detail and commitment to infrastructure delivery. The detail provided in this UDLP unfortunately provides little more than what was illustrated during the EES stage of the project.

19. Tree removal plans are more detailed in the Eastern Package than other UDLPs considered by Council, which assists in clarity of understanding. More detail regarding proposed tree plantings in the Landscape Plans would however be beneficial. Planting appears more resolved in the 3D visualisations than as presented in landscape plans.

20. The 3D Visualisations provided in the Visualisations Package, provide the best indication of the envisioned look and feel of the proposed spaces. It is noted that there appears to be a greater level of detail provided that informs the 3D Visualisations compared to what is available in the Landscape Plans. For example, the Visualisation illustrates individual and species-specific tree plantings. There appears to be more detailed design work that has gone into producing them, but only limited detail has been provided within the Landscape and Architectural Packages.



*Comparison of landscape detail resolution in Visualisations (left) and Landscape Plans (right) – Eram Park*

21. Visualisations are arguably misleading, given that the dense vegetation, particularly as the trees depicted could take decades to mature into the form illustrated in the renders.

Additional Visualisations at time increments between Day 1 and canopy maturity would be useful in painting a clearer picture of impacts and the freeway interface design in the short (3 years) and medium terms (8 years).

22. The Landscape Plans provide limited insight regarding proposed slopes and proposed surface levels.

The creek escarpment is a key access barrier in some segments of the corridor, but the plans can be deceiving in illustrating land as though it is flat, open, accessible and usable. The use of contours, gradient or other graphic means would be useful for a more fulsome assessment of the accessibility and function of remaining open spaces illustrated on the plans.

## Eram Park Precinct Impacts & Opportunities

23. The Eram Park proposed noise / flood walls; reinstatement of some freeway interface vegetation; and reconstruction of the Eram Road pedestrian / cycling bridge has been reasonably developed in the UDLP.

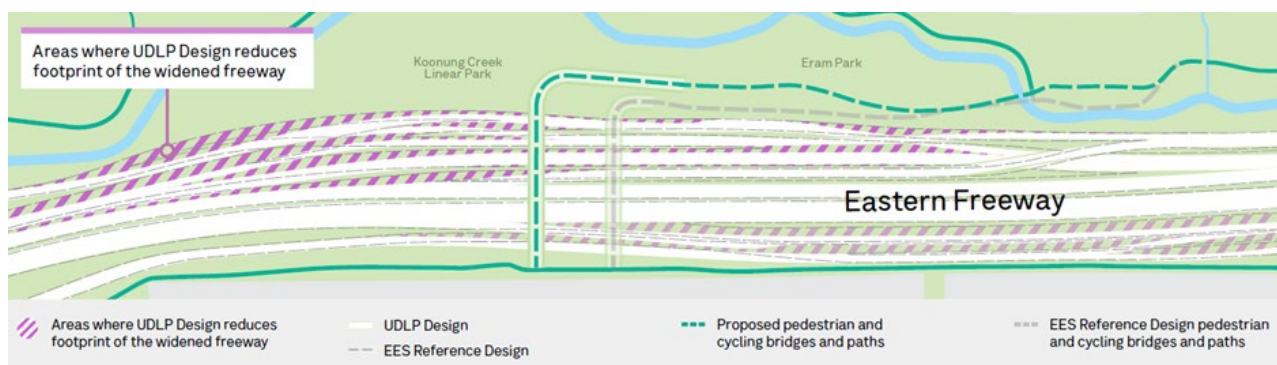
However, the remaining extents of the Eram Park precinct are relatively minimal in terms of the proposed improvements; especially within Eram Park itself. This is disappointing given the extensive impact of the long-term works during the construction phase and the open space reduction occurring within the park.



Approximate encroachment (red) recorded into Eram Park, totally approximately 19,000 sqm. (Red hashed area is within the City of Manningham).

### Eram Park

24. Whilst planting within the road corridor is proposed and appears to spatially accord with the demonstration of a minimised project footprint on Page 28 of the UDLP report, Councils strong preference is for any footprint minimisation to be delivered in the public open space network.



UDLP p28 diagram illustrating proposed footprint reduction relative to Reference Design



underside of the topographic ridgeline and therefore predominantly visually concealed from locations within Eram Park – it is critical for the presentation of visible elevated infrastructure to be sensitively treated to maximise ability to blend within the landscape setting.



*Eram Park existing conditions – demonstrating limited visibility to the freeway interface due to topography and vegetation*

30. The pedestrian bridge across Koonung Creek that is located within the eastern extent of Eram Park (in the City of Manningham local government area), presents a well-considered outcome with clear reference to the riparian landscape character.

It is understood that this bridge design has also been informed by Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung understanding of Country via engagement.



*Proposed Koonung Creek bridge within eastern portion of Eram Park*

31. Given the significant impact to Eram Park during construction, a substantial increase in the enhancements to this area must be offered by NELP. This can be completed by providing the community with better connected paths, and other public open space improvements such as:
- a) A minimised project footprint to limit detrimental impacts to Eram Park and its established vegetation.
  - b) A new secondary path leading west from the pedestrian and cycle bridge, that provides connection towards Koonung Creek and Tram Road Reserve.
  - c) An additional pedestrian bridge connection over Koonung Creek connecting Eram Park with Tram Road Reserve.
  - d) Significant improvements to biodiversity and native vegetation along the whole creek line and sloped areas within the park setting – not just within the NEL project boundary and addressing the local environment holistically.
  - e) Integrated wayfinding and placemaking respectfully built into the Eram Park precinct through required signage and integrated art. Signage should capture and be relevant to local story telling of flora, fauna, indigenous and locally relevant topics.
  - f) Where it is unavoidable to remove existing vegetation, it should be reused to enhance the open space uses and placemaking. An example is the re-use of the existing sculptural tree within Eram Park that is expected to be impacted by the freeway widening.
  - g) Improved place quality and pedestrian focussed enhancements throughout this precinct.
  - h) Improvements to the Tram Road pedestrian underpass along the Koonung Creek Trail and the “entry node” to the precinct (south side of the freeway) that lacks presence behind residential properties.
  - i) A pedestrian focussed access on both the north and south sides (entry points) over the freeway bridge, leading pedestrians to / from Eram Park.
  - j) A clearer pedestrian connection from Lyndhurst Crescent to the new bridge over the freeway.

32. Additional wayfinding and navigation node opportunities should be explored where the Koonung Creek Trail intersects with the street network near Eram Road, and at the Eram Park entrances.

33. Specifically, the following opportunities should be explored for wayfinding including the:

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### Eram Road pedestrian and cycle bridge

34. The design of the Eram Road pedestrian and cycle bridge comprises positive attributes and a refined response. These include:
- a) The colour palette with reference to the landscape character of the precinct and link to Wurundjeri design integration.
  - b) The generally lightweight structural appearance, with the architectural and structural solution entwined to mitigate the need for cladding and additional “framing”.
  - c) The way in which the structure and ramping lightly touch the ground, allowing clearance beneath for accessibility and open space function; without reliance on substantial battering or retaining walls.
  - d) Lighting and artistic surface treatments to all pedestrian and cycling bridges and commitment to integrate artwork on the new Eram Road pedestrian and cycle bridge throw screen mesh (as noted on page 35 of the UDLP Report).
  - e) Navigation node to the southern side of the freeway comprising feature planting, lighting, seating, signage and interpretive elements.
  - f) Transparent noise walls applied on approach to the bridge, to maximise the visual relationship between trail users and bridge users. This maximises passive surveillance.



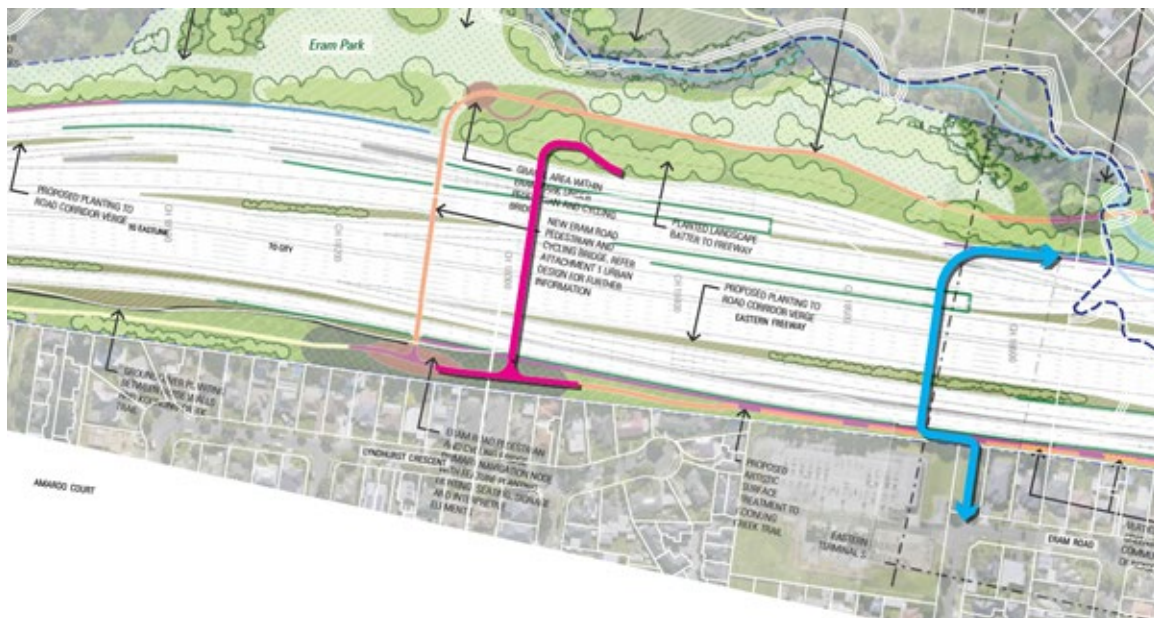
*Artist impression of the Eram Road pedestrian / cycle bridge.*

35. Council recognises opportunities to improve the Eram Road pedestrian and cycle bridge, specifically in relation to its location and accessibility; and the position of the ramping within Eram Park.
36. Council requests involvement in co-design and placemaking opportunities and urges for community input and awareness into these processes; to further advance the bridge design and community ownership of this infrastructure.
37. The bridge has been located approximately 300 metres west of Eram Road, which is approximately a 3 to 4 minute pedestrian walk. As indicated by the walking catchment mapping on page 30 of the UDLP Report, accessibility to the bridge lacks penetration into the southern street network compared to the existing condition; and by a reduced degree compared to the Reference Design.

Its position that is now *mid-block* between Eram Road and Lyndhurst Crescent will lack visual presence from the surrounding street network which is a significant concern for public awareness of this important “entry point”. It also lessens the opportunity for north-south pedestrian sightlines.

38. Despite the bridges positive design attributes articulated above, we disagree that its new position complies with *NEL Urban Design Strategy (UDS)* requirements and objectives including:

- a) *K4 1A – “Replace and relocate existing bridge near Eram Road over Eastern Freeway with a new walking and cycling crossing that connects to the Koonung Creek Trail and surrounding path networks. Entries to the bridge are to be clear, legible and are to include wayfinding to the entry points.”*
- b) *UDS Objective 2.1 – Connectivity: “Improve people’s ability to move through the immediate and wider area with ample, efficient and quality links across and along the corridor for all transport modes, including pedestrians and cyclists.”*



*Existing pedestrian/cycle bridge location (blue), Reference Design location (pink), UDLP location (orange)*

39. It is acknowledged that there are other infrastructure design elements that influence the position of the bridge, including the position of the new elevated infrastructure within the freeway corridor.

It is however Councils firm position that connectivity between the established street network and pedestrian / cycle bridge should not be compromised relative to existing conditions.

With voluntary property purchase mechanisms available within the *NEL Environmental Management Framework*, there is an opportunity to explore connections between Lyndhurst Crescent and the pedestrian / cycle bridge, if the bridge cannot be co-located with an existing north-south street or path connection.

40. Further, the northern ramp within Eram Park has been shifted further north compared to the Reference Design. It is unclear what has underpinned this. Whilst it does allow for a generously wide landscape buffer area (approximately 30 metres in width) between the ramp and freeway interface assigned with understorey planting mixes and proposed canopy tree areas; the area of open parklands to its immediate north is comparatively narrow (measuring at approximately 5.5 metres at its narrowest segment).

The openness of Eram Park is a valued attribute of its function and character that should be protected and maintained.

41. It is recommended that a more balanced outcome is achieved as the design progresses, through shifting the ramp or segments of the ramp closer towards the freeway interface resulting in a narrower landscape buffer and greater degree of openness north.

If the outcome as drafted within the UDLP plans is driven by *topographic conditions*, it would be helpful to understand that in more detail.

42. As this pedestrian bridge and connected Koonung Creek Trail segments comprise a mix of Strategic Cycling Corridor segments and secondary paths, it is recommended that a greater degree of intuitive cycling wayfinding is embedded into the path design in this location.

Path width, colouring, wayfinding signage and wayfinding surface treatments can contribute to guiding the primary cycling movement, indicating a degree of hierarchy to help intuitively guide users.

As drafted, the t-intersection formation of paths at this (and other) bridges doesn't appear to achieve this and may risk misguiding users seeking the more direct and faster connections offered via Strategic Cycling Corridors.

43. There are opportunities for enhancement to the pedestrian and cycle bridge to introduce a greater degree in variability and texture; tone and structural formation, and to better reflect the similar variation that is found in the Koonung Creek in the immediate area.

This would avoid the presentation of an elongated and repetitive experience and help to maximise visual interest for users across its breadth. Given the substantially increased length of the bridge (compared to the existing); breaking up the journey for users is important. In addition to variation in tone and texture; variation in the structural composition of the throw screen posts (such as heights, form and spacing) could be explored in accordance with the structural requirements.

44. Further variation to the bridge design would minimise risk in the presentation of a *cage-like experience* due to long and consistent walling of tensile mesh.

Council also expresses concern regarding the maintenance of the tensile mesh, particularly regarding the build-up of rubbish and foliage, and the responsibility of cleaning.

Confirmation of the Victorian Government's commitment to regular maintenance and cleaning of the infrastructure is required.

# Slater Reserve Impacts & Opportunities

45. Council expects the landscape realm, urban realm and constructed environmental outcomes for the Slater Reserve precinct and surrounds, to be delivered to enhance and optimise community uses. In this location, the following has been assessed and noted as high priority considerations that should form part of the project delivery.

## 46. Movement & Access

- Improved path connections across Blackburn Road to ensure safer and more direct pedestrian and cycle movements.
- Integrated wayfinding and signage to improve the relationship between the Koonung Creek Trail and suite of destinations within Slater Reserve; including the basketball stadium, community gardens, and dog off-leash areas.

## 47. Lighting & Safety

- Lighting and safety upgrades to underpasses; with feature lighting, more vibrant materials, and local art to improve safety and visual appeal.
- Incorporation of lighting and seating nodes along the Koonung Creek Trail and secondary paths to increase usability and safety at night.

## 48. Noise Walls & Public Realm Enhancements

- Application of visually attractive treatments and additional understorey and canopy vegetation plantings along retained noise walls to reduce their visual dominance from Slater Reserve and the trail; and to improve amenity.
- Integrated art, text, or narrative elements built into noise wall surfaces and referencing the local natural landscape and water stories where suitable.

## 49. Heritage & Cultural Values

- Interpretive signage to tell the story of settlement history of Slater Reserve and of the farming legacy of the area.
- Acknowledging Aboriginal cultural heritage values in the design response, consistent with the *Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2018*.

50. It is positive to see in the UDLP that improvements are proposed for the Blackburn Road underpass including path upgrades and surface treatments, lighting and navigation / wayfinding enhancements.

A seating and navigation node proposed towards the more open segment of the trail on approach to Blackburn Road aligns with Council's expectations for this location.

Further, an indication of proposed tree canopy areas between the existing path and retaining noise wall, west of Slater Reserve is positive.

51. Beyond these initiatives, the UDLP works within the Slater Reserve precinct are generally minimal and limited to the existing freeway interface. There is generally limited footprint expansion through this segment of the corridor, reflected in the retention of the existing noise walls and Koonung Creek Trail segment.

Council however expects more significant works to be delivered as part of the project delivery in this precinct, regardless of within or just outside of the project boundary.

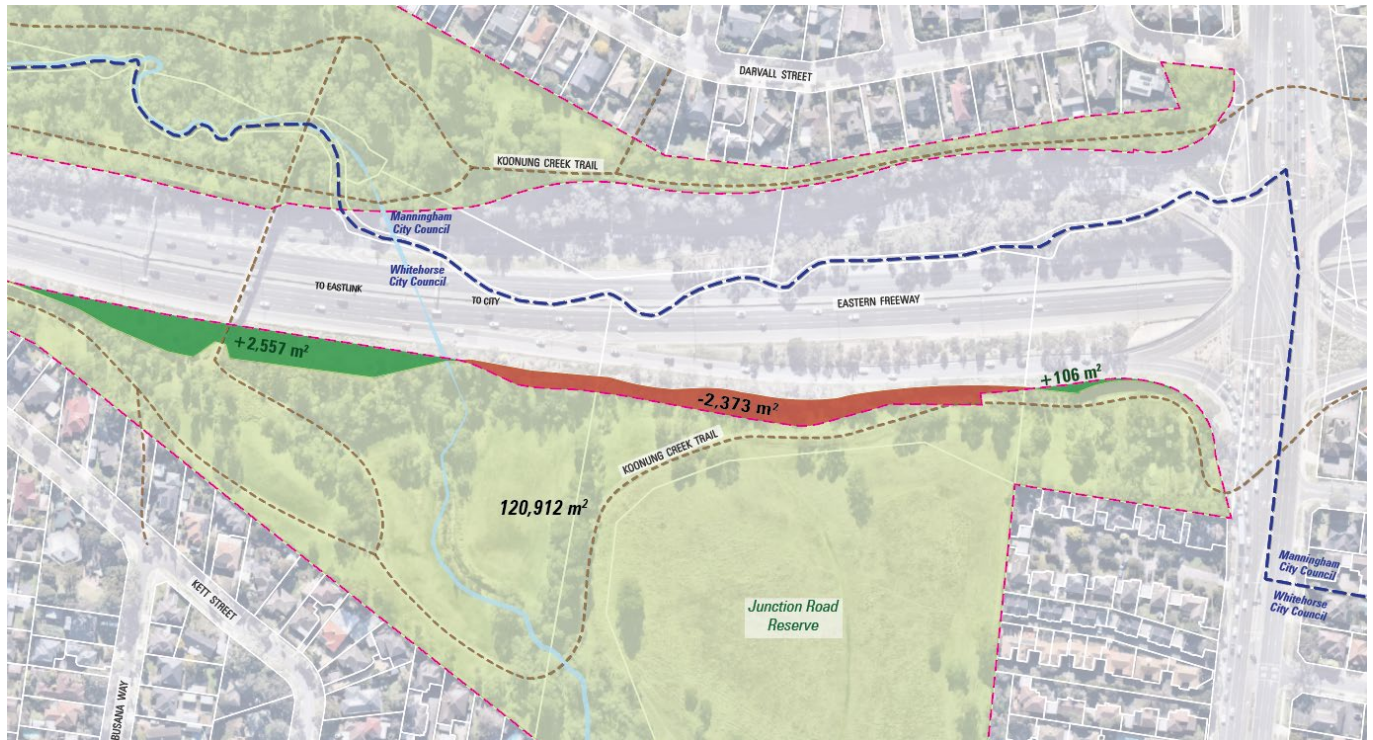
52. Whilst acknowledging that freeway widening works are minimal at this location, Slater Reserve and adjacent areas are an *important community places with unique community care attributed to its landscape*.

Council continues to advocate for interface improvements accordingly, and to maximise the amenity of the freeway's presentation to the precinct. The above opportunities that are summarised and align with Council's and community expectations are therefore reiterated - *to ensure there is a contribution to offsetting the broader impacts to open spaces along the freeway corridor within the municipality*.

53. With reference to the UDLP as drafted, Council wishes to continue to advocate for the following specific opportunities as the design progresses:
- a) Additional understorey and canopy plantings along the retained noise walls interfacing with Slater Reserve, which are currently visually exposed with limited foreground vegetation - aside from grassed areas.
  - b) Lighting upgrades along the Koonung Creek Trail with particular attention to its interface at Slater Reserve, signalling arrival at this key community location.
  - c) Crossing improvements along Surrey Road to better integrate the eastern and western segments of the Koonung Creek Trail, currently relying on a circuitous route across the arterial road.
  - d) Wayfinding integration in the form of an additional navigation node along the northern edge of Slater Reserve. This could incorporate elements of and references to the various functions on offer within the reserve and cultural significance and agricultural history of the reserve.

## Junction Road Reserve Impacts & Opportunities

54. The UDLP indicates that encroachment is expected within the Junction Road Reserve precinct of approximately 2,300sq.m. noting that equivalent gains are noted near the Cabena Street bridge. Modifications at the freeway interface and upgrades to the Cabena Street pedestrian / cycle bridge are now to be retained and upgraded as opposed to replacement as per Reference Design.



Approximate encroachment (red) into the northern interface of Junction Road Reserve, with increases (green) also noted.

55. Despite these works being relatively confined along the freeway interface, Junction Road Reserve as an open space *will undergo considerable change and impact during the lengthy construction period as a nominated construction compound.*
56. The post-construction reinstatement of Junction Road Reserve brings opportunities for enhancements that can be made to part mitigation for the impacts across the project area.
57. Council is seeking the landscape realm, urban realm and constructed environmental outcomes for the Junction Road Reserve precinct and its surrounds to be delivered by NELP that *enhance and optimise community and passive open space uses.*

In this location, the following has been assessed and noted as high priority considerations that should form part of the NEL project delivery.

### 58. Movement & Access

- Accessible path integration with the Cabena Street pedestrian and cycle bridge.
- Improved path connections across Springvale Road (south side of Freeway) to support safe pedestrian and cycle movement.

- Integrated wayfinding and signage to improve navigation and strengthen links to surrounding neighbourhoods from the park and trail.
- Enhanced pedestrian and cycle access and wayfinding near Junction Road and Spencer Street to improve access from local streets.

#### 59. Lighting & Safety

- Feature lighting to the Cabena Street ramps and bridge crossings to enhance the user experience. Features should be linked to local context, local history, and placemaking.
- Upgraded Springvale Road underpass (north side of freeway) with integrated feature lighting, high-quality materials, and artwork to improve safety and amenity.
- Additional lighting and seating nodes along shared paths to support usability and comfort.

#### 60. Vegetation, Screening & Ecology

- Enhanced biodiversity through native revegetation along creek and sloped areas, supported by water-sensitive design.
- New planting and screening treatments to soften rear residential boundaries from the reserve.
- New botanic walk opportunities with native species and educational displays to highlight local ecology.

#### 61. Noise Walls & Public Realm Enhancements

- Integrated art or textured treatments to existing and new noise walls to reduce their visual impact.
- Integrated local wayfinding and storytelling in noise walls interfacing with the reserve.

#### 62. Recreation & Community Facilities

- Reinstate Junction Road Reserve, post-NEL construction works, with enhancements that future-proof the site, in accordance with *Council's Whitehorse Open Space Strategy 2025*. This Strategy sets the direction for how the open space will be planned and enhanced in the future.
- Provide opportunities for informal recreation, including simple nature-based play areas and fitness equipment nodes. This should not preclude the potential for an outdoor structured sporting field.
- Enhance the existing dog off-leash area with landscape enhancements and some path access.
- Improve the functionality of the precinct with options for a clearer arrival node, south of the open space; and to support wayfinding, access and community gathering.

#### 63. Heritage & Cultural Values

- Respecting and interpreting the identified *Area of Cultural Sensitivity* through design responses that acknowledge Aboriginal cultural heritage.
- Incorporating interpretative artwork and signage to recognise the cultural significance of sites within the reserve.

#### 64. The UDLP Report (p42) states the following regarding Junction Road Reserve enhancements –

*“Improvements at Junction Road Reserve will focus on opportunities to enhance this significant landscape site including the potential to introduce new and engaging topographic landmarks such as*

*landscape mounds to create a more inviting and secluded environment away from the road corridor for activities like walking, picnicking, and quiet reflection, ensuring it remains a valuable retreat for the community. These enhancements will reflect cultural understanding of the landscape and create opportunities for connecting with Country.”*

Whilst this sentiment is positive (although the origin of topographic mounding is unclear), there is generally little evidence of consideration to Council’s expectations to mitigate the project impacts and loss of open space, specifically during the construction period.

65. At a minimum, it is critical that open space reinstatement works and topographic works do not preclude future opportunities for Council’s anticipated future function of the space.

It is recommended that this is demonstrated in the next iteration of design drawings with regard to future proofing space for a grassed and flattened space, not precluding the development of an outdoor structured sporting field.

66. Retention and upgrade of the Cabena Street bridge is a positive outcome for the project, having contributed to local identity along the project corridor since the 1990s works. This outcome also contributes to maximising resource, material and construction efficiency.

As this bridge offers local access to the Strategic Cycling Corridor to the northern side of the freeway, bicycle repair stations and drink taps should be explored as part of the proposed navigation node at its entrances.

It is expected the bridge’s upgrade will be of a significant nature, and that the lifespan of the bridge has been considered and is expected to remain structurally sound for several decades. Council would like information to confirm this.

67. Environmental Performance Requirement (EPR) LP5 states *“where public open space is to be temporarily lost during construction, residual public open space should be enhanced where practical to minimise and mitigate land use impacts”*.

The Ministerial assessment explains further about EPR LP5 (page 43) that: *“residual open space should be enhanced through the provision of playgrounds, paths and plantings, for example, before adjacent open space is occupied and becomes unavailable…….This will be particularly important for residual areas of parkland along Koonung Creek where large areas of existing parklands are expected to be unavailable during construction.”*

The response provided within the UDLP Report (page 128) to this requirement is *“NELP will develop and implement the Public Open Space Relocation and Replacement Plan in advance of the operation of the North East Link”*.

The above response does not address the requirement to provide mitigation for the impact prior to the construction period. Council is eager to engage with NELP to determine appropriate enhancements that can be implemented prior to the commencement of construction activities in the Junction Road Reserve area.

## Koonung Creek Trail & Active Transport Connectivity

68. The below section focuses on the freeway interface with the Koonung Creek Trail and path network outside of the primary open spaces of Eram Park, Slater Reserve and Junction Road Reserve.

69. The Koonung Creek Trail plays a key role for commuter cycling, recreational cycling, walking, jogging and dog walking. It therefore caters for a range of abilities, confidence levels and speeds of active transport users.

Its use and strategic role in the active transport network is acknowledged by its C1 classification in the Victorian Government's Strategic Cycling Corridor (SCC) network.

The SCC criss-crosses the Eastern Freeway, on the south side west of Eram Road, and then on the north side from Eram Park. A secondary path continues along the southern side through to Springvale Road.

70. The primary and secondary network of paths are a major contributor to the health and wellbeing of our community. The NEL project has the opportunity to make positive impacts on the physical and mental health of those who live in Whitehorse, as well as those from beyond our boundaries. Council is seeking the UDLP to be amended to place people first so that the active transport infrastructure is well integrated and encourages safe, sustainable and healthy activities.

71. The UDLP Report (p44) states that *"the Project will create a seamless experience for pedestrians, cyclists and drivers by designing clear, safe, and well-integrated pathways and roads"*.

This is consistent with *UDS Objective 2.1 – Connectivity: "Improve people's ability to move through the immediate and wider area with ample, efficient and quality links across and along the corridor for all transport modes, including pedestrians and cyclists,"* as well as section 7(13.3) of the UDS (page 96): *"The transition between cycling paths is **continuous and seamless** with direct routes and consistent design elements. The riding environment is safe and appealing. Extent of local and strategic cycling corridors is maximised"*.

72. The approach to trail / path upgrades within the UDLP appears to be limited to only addressing paths where existing paths are directly impacted by the widened freeway corridor, or where affected by reconfigurations of pedestrian / cycle bridges.

The landscape plans indicate that shared user paths that are not directly affected will remain as they are, despite possibly being different widths, quality and materials.

73. The subsequent stitching together of paths of mixed widths, condition, quality, materiality and colour is not considered to be an integrated, continuous or seamless outcome but rather one that represents a piecemeal approach. It is not consistent with providing infrastructure that meets universal design standards to accommodate the use and accessibility for people with limited mobility or with sensory impairments.

74. Active transport continuity is not limited to physical connectedness, but also continuity of quality, consistency, colour, width and shared use path (SUP) compliance. It is unclear how the piecemeal approach to active transport integration satisfies the UDS and related requirements.

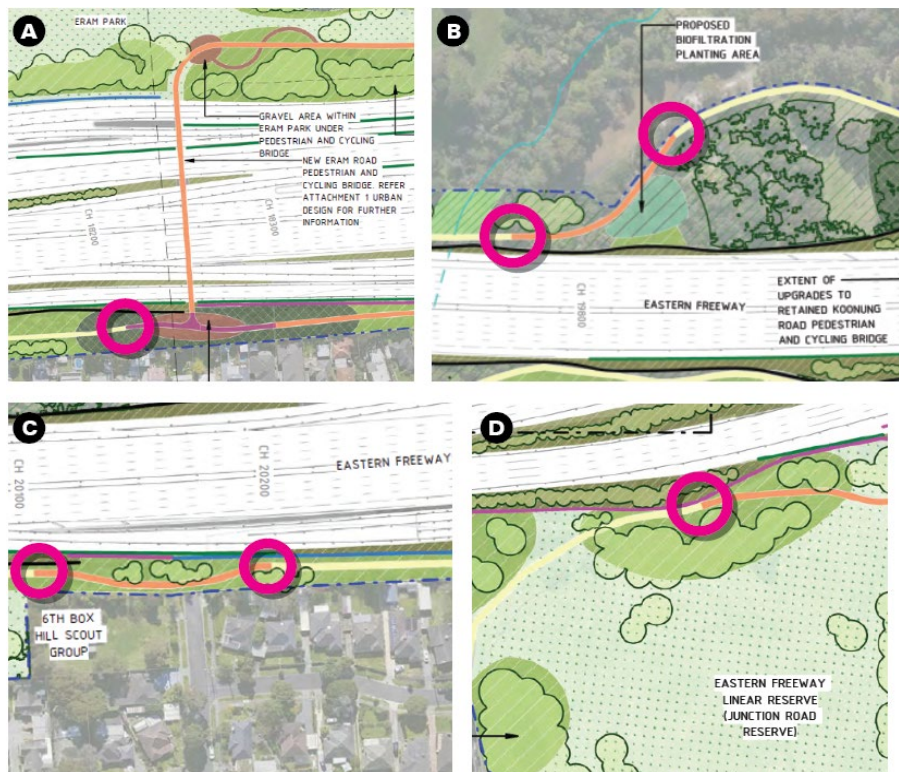
Council therefore advocates for (and has consistently advocated for, across all NEL project stages), the continuous upgrade of the SUP network adjacent to the freeway corridor.

75. Given the impacts that the widened freeway corridor has on open spaces and the SUP network; including the creation of much narrower segments between the freeway interface and adjacent residential properties – a more continuous and consistent approach to upgrades is considered a reasonable contribution to mitigation.

In the context of a project where numerous vehicle traffic lanes are being proposed to provide ease for motorists, the requested upgrade to SUPs to ensure consistency and compliancy in width and quality is comparatively modest.

76. Locations where the UDLP proposes this inconsistency within the City of Whitehorse include:

- a) Trail segments to either side of the Eram Road pedestrian/cycle bridge.
- b) Within Eram Park adjacent to the proposed biofiltration planting area.
- c) East of the Koonung Road pedestrian/cycle bridge near Koonung Road / Douglas Street.
- d) Along the northern edge of Junction Road Reserve.



Examples of intersecting retained and upgraded SUP segments, as per above list.

77. Clarification is required regarding the construction material for segments of upgraded paths – particularly where they are currently gravel. It is unclear whether these upgraded segments would retain gravel materiality or be sealed.

Further detail is therefore needed as to understand how segments of sealed and gravel path will transition into each other.

78. The gravel path between Slater Reserve and Junction Road Reserve performs the function of a secondary path, allowing a more relaxed journey.

An upgrade to this section of path is sought in a similar style of materials as it contributes to the rich landscape character formed by the layered vegetation, captures the existing noise wall textures and “borrowed amenity” from the adjacent residential allotments. It is acknowledged that cyclists and pedestrians wishing to travel at a higher speed or have a smoother surface can use the sealed Strategic Cycling Corridor via the Eram Road bridge to cross to the north side of the Eastern Freeway.

79. Further, continuity of the path / trail network is currently compromised by the intersecting arterial roads where no underpass is present. This results in circuitous crossing routes where vehicle movement typically takes precedence.

Council continues to advocate for crossing improvements to mitigate disruption to the user experience. For example, improving the path alignment at Middleborough Road so that it connects directly with the signalised crossing would be beneficial for pedestrians and cyclists seeking east-west trail / path connectivity. This would include providing wider crossings and pedestrian and cyclist lanterns at the signalised crossing.

Similar actions to improve connectivity across Surrey Road should also be explored.

80. It is recommended that trail / path upgrades are considered in areas with known flooding areas with suitable signage and / or other agreed constructed methods. This is specific to the approach to the Blackburn Road underpass, and may be required in other similar locations.

81. Navigation nodes proposed within the UDLP are positive.

Council recognises opportunity within the future detailed design for these nodes to also acknowledge the active transport function of the corridor, by integrating opportunities for bicycle repair stations and water taps within navigation nodes.

82. It is recommended that the design of all navigation nodes consider path design elements to ensure the main SUP route (Strategic Cycling Corridor) is obvious, so that users do not need to rely on wayfinding signs for the dominant movement.

Wayfinding and navigation elements at these locations should be located off the main SUP, where there is space for pedestrians to dwell and read any information provided.

83. Similar to the Cabena Street bridge retention, the upgrade of the Koonung Road pedestrian / cycle bridge presents a positive outcome for the project from a sustainability and re-use of existing infrastructure perspective.

Consideration should be given to locating bicycle repair stations and drink taps at its entrances.

The open area / cycle bridge and scout hall currently comprises a relatively basic landscape condition with exposed noise walls that have been subject to vandalism. It is encouraging to see that new canopy planting is proposed within this segment of the corridor. Council would like to see that this, and other linear segments strive to replicate the high amenity landscape character and condition that is present between Slater Reserve and Junction Road reserve – rather than being left as is.



*Path/trail segments west of Surrey Road are currently presented with a lower amenity freeway interface*

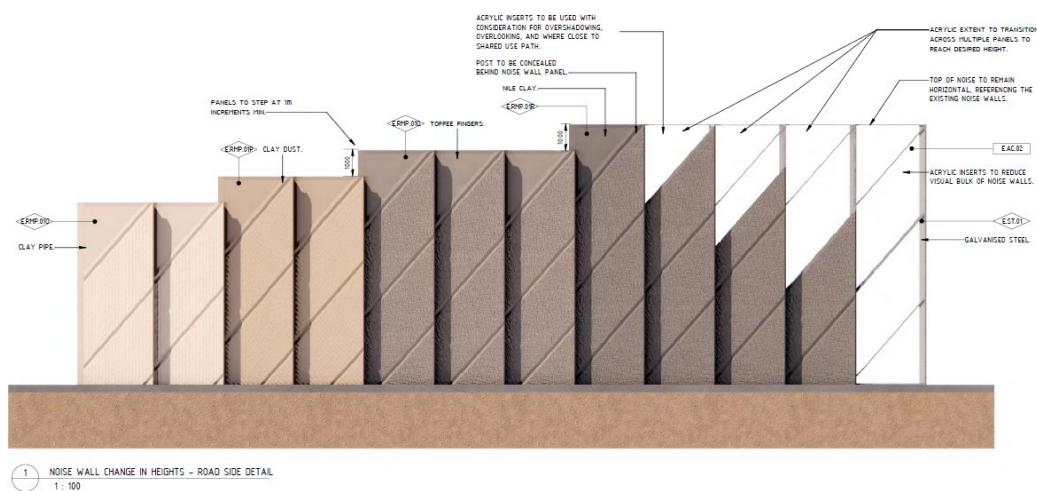
84. The retention of highly utilised path segment between Slater Reserve and Junction Road Reserve is positive – comprising the 1990s textured noise walls, vertical greening, established multi-layered tree canopy and community gardens.



*High amenity path / trail segments between Slater Reserve and Junction Road Reserve*

# Noise Walls

85. The suite of noise walls that are presented in the *Urban Design & Architectural Drawings Package* appear to have been well considered regarding their form, colour tones, texture and varying degrees of transparent acrylic applied. The design of these appears to have clear reference to the valued 1990s award winning noise walls which adopt natural tones and textures, contributing to landscape character.
86. *Page 56 of Attachment 1: Architecture and Urban Design* demonstrates how the transition will be achieved between varying noise wall heights. This stepped approach is effective as the transition is achieved in a gradual manner and avoids sudden transitions height.
87. Another positive attribute is how the staggering of connected noise wall panels is applied, as illustrated in typical scenarios within the *Architectural & Urban Design Plans*, is also effective in breaking up long segments of walls via vertical division while also providing added depth between connected panels.



Suite of noise wall colours and demonstration of stepped transition in height

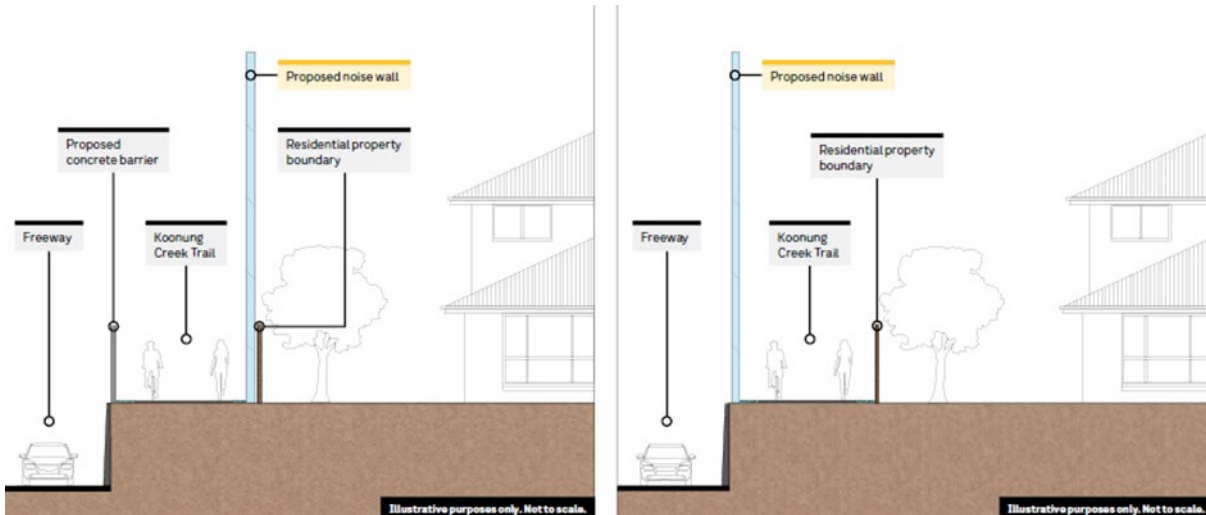
88. *Page 43* of the same document illustrates an example of noise walls positioned on sloping land in elevation form. These instances would likely present more sensitively if the noise wall steps with the slope in a similar manner to the stepped approach to transition.

Stepping with the land where practical would present as a lighter touch outcome and minimise the perception that they are forcefully positioned into the landscape.



Less successful example of stepping in relation to topography as illustrated in *Page 43* of the *Urban Design & Architectural drawings*

89. Council would like specifics provided regarding how old and new walls will interface with each other, and how the connection is streamlined, or otherwise created.
90. Removal of noise walls along rear property boundaries as proposed in the Reference Design, such as the rear of Eram Road is positive; as it provides a buffer from residential land; maximising openness and reduces visual impacts.



Images from UDLP Report p29 illustrating changes in noise wall position relative to property boundaries

91. While the plans contain some information regarding the scale of noise walls and where they are applied spatially – this is done so in a high-level manner which lacks a more intricate breakdown of the height and type of noise wall applied in specific locations. For example, long segments of proposed noise walls apply a single height and the full suite of noise wall types (i.e. labelled with NW1-5).

It is therefore difficult to evaluate the appropriateness of selections relative to context. Council would like further information to understand how this is specific at each location along the project corridor interface.



Example of long segment of new noise wall (over 400m) where a 10m noise wall height and the full range of noise wall types (NW1-5) are applied in totality.

92. While the suite of noise walls presented in elevation catalogued within the Architectural Package, they comparatively appear blander in visualisations where they adopt a predominantly grey and consistent palette.

Clarity is sought whether these are indicative and if alignment to the earthier tones presented in the Architectural Drawings is closer to what will be delivered aesthetically.

93. While the use of transparent acrylic noise wall (in segments of; or in full noise walls) is a useful way to maximise openness and solar penetration, existing transparent noise walls along the Eastern Freeway have been subject to build up of dirt on the freeway site. This diminishes their effectiveness.

Again, commitment from the Victorian Government is sought for regular maintenance and cleaning to maximise their effectiveness.



*Example of compromised transparency in acrylic noise walls further west along Eastern Freeway (now demolished)*

## Overshadowing Impacts

94. Overshadowing impacts are generally limited to narrower trail segments and to private open space of residential allotments abutting these narrower pinch points.
95. Limited impact is recorded within the adjacent parklands – given that noise walls are positioned to the south of Eram Park; walls are being retained along the Slater Reserve interface; and the vastness of Junction Road Reserve results in a minor degree of additional overshadowing relative to the expanse of the parklands.
96. The greatest degree of public realm overshadowing impacts are recorded within the narrow pinch point segments of the trail / path network adjacent to the freeway corridor due to the increased height of new noise walls. Hotspots include:
- East of Eram Road pedestrian / cycle bridge.
  - East of Koonung Road pedestrian / cycle bridge.
  - West of Surrey Road.

97. In these locations, vegetation viability and lighting form key considerations to ensure that noise walls are adequately presented to the public realm in an appropriate manner and softens their visual prominence while allowing daylight penetration.

The use of noise walls that apply transparent acrylic should be maximised in these locations, as to also mitigate the sense of enclosure due to the increased height of new walls relative to the diminished width of the trail/path segment.

98. Private realm overshadowing is generally limited to morning hours.

It is acknowledged that effort has been made to minimise the shadow impact and visual dominance of noise walls in locations where noise walls have been shifted from rear boundaries (as per Reference Design) to the freeway interface, allowing a degree of separation and transition in structural height.

Areas that record highest impact include:

- Conrad Court properties, particularly in the northeast corner of the court.
  - Eram Road / Lyndhurst Crescent - generally contained to northern boundaries after morning hours.
99. It is noted that shadow diagrams are presented at Spring Equinox as per *Environmental Performance Requirement (EPR) LP4*. Impacts will be substantially worse at Winter Solstice. While the Winter Solstice measure is not included in the EPR, it still forms a relevant consideration when contemplating impact to the adjoining residences.

Further effort in the detailed design stage should be made to maximise solar access to private open space at all times of the year. Many private open spaces comprise a mix of functions and landscape characteristics including open areas, vegetable gardens and solar panels. It is therefore imperative that solar access is maximised at all times to minimise project impact along these sensitive interfaces.

100. The overshadowing diagrams at the hotspot locations are initially informed by solid walls as to demonstrate the worst-case scenario at the Spring Equinox measure. The subsequent set of diagrams apply *Noise Wall Type 5* – completely comprised of transparent acrylic. While this is useful to see as a

comparison, the application of top-to-bottom transparent noise walls need to be balanced with other factors including:

- The ability for transparent panels to be consistently clear of dirt build up on the freeway side that would compromise transparency and daylight penetration.
- Locations where climber vegetation is envisioned to soften the presentation of noise walls to the trail / path interface.
- The user experience of trail/paths adjacent to completely transparent noise walls. Visibility to freeway traffic may be detrimental to the user experience relative to other tranquil segments of the trail/path network.



*Shadow hotspot example – Eram Road, showing solid wall overshadowing (top row) and transparent wall overshadowing (bottom row)*

101. Subject to shadow testing, *Noise Wall Type 4* (solid base with transparent upper half) may present a more balanced outcome for both active transport users and private residences. Alternatively, a middle-ground between *Noise Wall Type 4* and *5* may be appropriate (i.e. solid base with transparent upper two-thirds or three-quarters).

## Planting Palette

102. Council notes the proposed Planting Palette and species proposed in the UDLP.
103. Preference is to include species that are locally indigenous to assist with local biodiversity generation, as well as a preference for naturally occurring species - not modified nursery stock as noted in the planting palette list.
104. It is noted that *Dactylis glomerata* (Cocksfoot) is a suitable species for lawn grass but can negatively affect conservation and sensitive environmental areas.
105. Council expects to be further consulted regarding the plant species selection as the project design develops and the microclimates of specific parts of the project areas are clearer, and species can thrive in the long term.

## Lighting

106. Feeling safe and perceptions of safety is of key importance to people who use the path / trail network adjacent to the freeway corridor, and is a key principle in the Crime Prevention through Urban Design (CPTED) that is applied to public use areas.

Public lighting is an element that can contribute to a functional and perceived safer environment.

Given Koonung Creek Trail's role as a commuter link, it is important to have adequate lighting in early morning and evening hours – particularly during darker months of the year. This is again advocated for by Council as a requirement as part of the NEL project delivery.

107. Feature lighting is proposed at pedestrian / cycling bridges and within navigation nodes, and lighting upgrades are proposed within the existing pedestrian / cycle underpasses.

This is a positive attribute of the UDLP design and Council looks forward to seeing further detail regarding feature lighting design.

108. Outside of these locations, no functional lighting is proposed along the Koonung Creek Trail and secondary paths. The UDLP Report states that light spill from the road corridor is adequate and compliant with public lighting standards.

Council disagrees, and would like to see evidence of this provided.

Council seeks smart solar on-demand lighting along the Koonung Creek Trail to support lighting overspill from the Eastern Freeway. EPR LV4 requires CPTED to be a key consideration for the safe movement of pedestrians and cyclists within open spaces and within underpasses.

Relying entirely on borrowed light from the Eastern Freeway is not considered appropriate due to:

- Noise walls that have substantially increased in height and vegetation are likely to at least partially screen the light from the Freeway in several locations, particularly narrow trail / path segments where access to light is likely to be further compromised.
- Lights on the Freeway will be a considerable distance from the SUP at some locations and are unlikely to provide adequate illumination.

## General Matters

109. Open space is a highly valued within Whitehorse to provide for physical, mental, social and environmental activities. The overall reduction of usable open space within the City of Whitehorse, due to NEL activities, across the Tram Road to Springvale Road package, combined with the Burke Road to Tram Road package, is noteworthy:

|                                                                                       |                            |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Approximate net loss within City of Whitehorse (Tram Road to Springvale Road package) | 16,400m <sup>2</sup>       |
| Approximate net loss within City of Whitehorse (Burke Road to Tram Road package)      | 15,500m <sup>2</sup>       |
| <b>Approximate total net loss within City of Whitehorse</b>                           | <b>31,900m<sup>2</sup></b> |

New open space is therefore required to be provided within the City of Whitehorse, on the south side of the Eastern Freeway, to offset these losses.

110. The effects of the extensive loss of vegetation from the NEL project is intensified by the concurrent and recent construction of two other Victorian Government ‘Big Build’ projects within the City of Whitehorse – Suburban Rail Loop and Mont Albert Road Level Crossing Removal. Combined, it is estimated that approximately 5,000 trees are being removed within the City of Whitehorse as part of these three projects.

This is a massive impact on the canopy cover within the municipality and will take many decades to recover. In the meantime, the environment, residents, visitors and wildlife are disadvantaged. Council has set canopy targets within its ‘*Urban Forest Strategy*’ which will be very hard to achieve as a result of the Victorian Government projects.

EPR AR3 states “*Maintain at least a ratio of 2:1 for replacement of amenity plantings*”. In light of the cumulative effect from multiple Victorian Government projects, Council suggests NELP should consider a canopy replacement rate higher within Whitehorse.

111. There are opportunities to incorporate water sensitive urban design (WSUD) measures; however, these should be considered as part of broader flood management strategies rather than being relied upon as the sole solution to drainage or flooding issues.

The UDLP references WSUD in Section 4.6.1 (page 39) under “*Protecting and enhancing the creek and biodiversity,*” including pollution reduction measures, and outlines a range of WSUD options to be explored at detailed design (page 98). Council seeks clearer articulation of where these measures are proposed, how they will be delivered, and who will be responsible for maintenance, particularly where works occur on Council land.

Where interventions are proposed within the City of Manningham, Council notes that responsibilities and governance would rest with that municipality.

112. Updated flood modelling is required to assess the impacts of the proposed NEL works. This applies across the whole of the project area.

Council requests copies of Melbourne Water approval for the updated modelling and the proposed works. The modelling should include upstream catchments within the City of Whitehorse and

demonstrate that the works will not result in adverse impacts on adjacent areas, including private properties and public open space.

If any negative impacts are identified, additional mitigation measures will be required as part of the project's scope.

113. NELP should also explore potential flood mitigation projects within and adjacent to the Tram Road to Springvale Road Package to minimise flood impacts across the corridor. Council needs to fully understand and encourages NELP to complete this study to ensure sections of our locality are not impacted; and if they are – the risk is removed.

114. Page 28 of the UDLP Report references an outbound exit ramp (Exit Ramp 5) providing a direct connection from the express lanes to Middleborough Road.

Whilst this may sit beyond the typical scope of the UDLP, clarification is sought on the operational necessity of this ramp.

An alternative arrangement would direct drivers to enter the collector lanes upstream and use Exit Ramp 3, which would avoid the additional freeway width required to deliver Exit Ramp 5 and in turn, reduce impact / loss of existing public open space.

Retaining Exit Ramp 5 would also necessitate extended elevated ramp structures with corresponding visual, acoustic, construction, and maintenance impacts, as well as significant capital and lifecycle costs.

If the ramp is to be retained, Council requests the underlying traffic modelling, options assessment, and cost-benefit analysis that demonstrate why this outcome is preferred over lower-impact alternatives.

115. The data presented by NELP as part of the Environmental Effect Statement (EES) phase of the project showed significant increases in volumes of vehicle traffic within the City of Whitehorse as a result of NEL, compared to other municipalities that will see reductions.

This includes the Eastern Freeway, as well as arterial roads and connections to local roads, such as Surrey Road at Grosvenor Street and Surrey Road at Junction Road.

The design of the Eastern Freeway (ie the widening) as presented in the UDLP has a direct link to the expected increase in vehicles expected, yet it does not provide mitigation. The ongoing lack of information from NELP across multiple project packages infers that addressing the issue is not being planned for. Clarification from NELP is sought as to the avenues available for this matter to be resolved by the Victorian Government, including but not limited to tasks required under EPR T5.

116. It is disappointing that public transport services will not be enhanced within the City of Whitehorse through the NEL project.

The upgrade of bus services and infrastructure along the Eastern Freeway from Doncaster to Hoddle Street is welcome, however provides minimal relief for Whitehorse residents. Bus services are key to north-south movements within and between the Cities of Whitehorse and Manningham.

Pressures on the arterial road network due to NEL will create further problems with these important bus services. It is vital that provision be made within the NEL designs for safe, efficient and attractive public transport movements and Council calls for the pedestrian / bus passenger connections between the

Eastern Freeway bus services (eg Route 906 service) and local bus service, (eg Route 279 service along Surrey Road) to be enhanced.

Consider improvements to aid the pedestrian changeover, including signage to direct connections between interchanging bus stops, installation of safe pedestrian crossing points, and provision of bicycle parking to encourage cycling to bus stops. This needs to be considered and applied throughout the construction period as well as the operational phase.

117. The predicted increase in vehicle volumes along the arterial and the local road network has resulted in community concerns regarding noise and air quality. Information is sought from NELP regarding how noise and air quality matters will be mitigated during construction and operation of the project and long term output of the works. Additional landscaping and noise attenuation features along arterial roads, within open spaces and private properties may need to be proposed to address this. These are absent from the UDLP.

## Conclusion

118. Council supports many of the design responses within the NEL Tram Road to Springvale Road UDLP. Substantial amendments are however required to meet needs of the Whitehorse community.

119. Council considers that the UDLP has not adequately demonstrated that the adverse impacts of the widening of the Eastern Freeway within the City of Whitehorse have been appropriately mitigated and the significant impacts these will have on the municipality, the environment and the community.

120. The matters Council calls upon the Victorian Government to address includes, but are not limited to:

- a. Reduction in the footprint of the Eastern Freeway widening.
- b. Provide significant enhancements to public open space and the landscape corridor, particularly within the Junction Road Reserve and Eram Park precincts.
- c. Upgrade the Koonung Creek Trail (KCT) in its entirety - within and outside of the NEL project boundary; with full resurfacing works and on-demand lighting.
- d. Install community infrastructure such as seats, wayfinding signage, bike repair stations, drinking fountains.
- e. Improve the safety, accessibility and amenity of the underpasses and at-grade pedestrian crossings at Tram Road, Middleborough Road, Surrey Road / Blackburn Road, and Springvale Road.
- f. Provide further information to Council to enable a full understanding of project impacts, including but not limited to:
  - i. Flood modelling and mitigation measures for all packages.
  - ii. All season overshadowing impacts to private open spaces, public infrastructure areas and pinch points.
  - iii. Evidence of meeting public lighting standards along the shared use paths.
  - iv. Evidence that the noise, air quality and other environmental concerns of residents have been addressed.
- g. Increase the tree canopy replacement rate for every tree removed within the City of Whitehorse.
- h. Council to continue to work with the Victorian Government to refine the designs and incorporate the changes outlined in the submission.
- i. NELP to work with Council and the Whitehorse community to fully minimise the impacts on the community.
- j. NELP to commit to implementing the legacy projects outlined in the submission that will contribute to mitigating the open space impacts.

### CONTACT DETAILS FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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## Appendix A - Whitehorse City Council Land Gain & Loss Assessment.

Reference: *The Whitehorse City Council Land Gain & Loss Assessment demonstrates the impacts of the reduced public open space areas, as a result of the North East Link project and freeway widening in the Tram Road to Springvale Road Package of works. Particularly large losses are shown in the Junction Road Reserve and Eram Park areas.*

Refer to the maps on the following pages

**Map 1** shows the areas from Tram Road / Station Street going east along the project area and includes the Eram Park precinct, Koonung Creek Reserve precinct and project corridor.

**Map 2** shows the Junction Road Reserve precinct and project corridor up to Springvale Road.



Reference: The Whitehorse City Council Land Gain & Loss Assessment demonstrates the impacts of the reduced public open space areas, as a result of the North East Link Project and freeway widening in the Tram to Springvale Road Package of works. Particularly large losses are shown in the Junction Road Reserve and Eram Park areas.



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