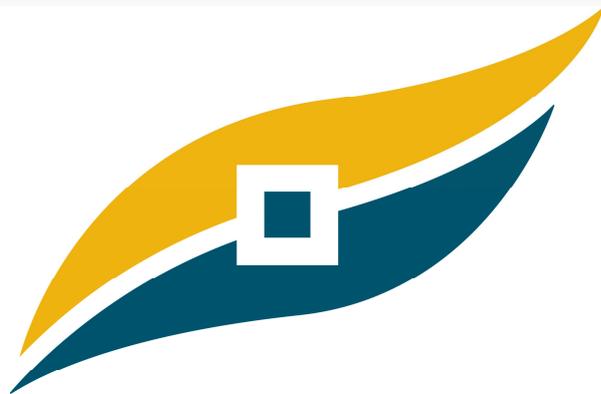


June  
2013

# Manningham City Council Submission

Doncaster Rail Study  
Phase One Recommendations Report



**MANNINGHAM**  
BALANCE OF CITY AND COUNTRY

Manningham City Council  
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## Executive Summary

The following submission has been prepared by Manningham City Council to provide URS and the State Government with a response, comments and suggestions to help guide the finalisation of the Doncaster Rail Study Phase 1 Recommendations Report (referred to hereafter as 'Draft Recommendations Report').

Manningham City Council generally supports the Report's recommendation for the Rapid Transit Option 1 (RT1) as the preferred route alignment between the Melbourne CBD and Doncaster, including the two proposed stations at Bulleen and Doncaster Park & Ride. Council also supports the alignment of the Rapid Transit Option 2 (RT2) as an alternative connection to the CBD. However Council suggests a number of changes and a review of the findings in order to provide the most ideal solution and recommendations to deliver rail to Doncaster. In particular, Council's view is that the following items need to be taken into further consideration:

- Inclusion of an extension of the line to Doncaster Hill, with a station provided at the Hill;
- Review of the cost to provide a more accurate cost-estimate;
- Inclusion of a station at Burke Road within either of the Rapid Transit options;
- Consideration of connections with tram routes 48 (North Balwyn) and 72 (Camberwell);
- Review of population and station patronage data against the 2011 Census data;
- Investigation of the grade-separation of buses at Doncaster Hill;
- Consideration of the findings of the reports by Curtin University;
- Reconsideration of the closure of Victoria Park Station;
- Inclusion of more detailed modelling in relation to cycling and pedestrians;
- Preservation of the median strip of the Eastern Freeway reservation;
- Consultation with Manningham Council and the DRLGG in the final report process for Phase 1;
- Further assessment of the capacity improvement opportunities of the Clifton Hill Group lines, to deliver rail to Doncaster and the 'de-coupling' of South Morang as a staged approach in that order; and
- A commitment to proceed with Phase 2 of the Study, focused on Doncaster Rail, with the outcomes to satisfy State Treasury Department and Infrastructure Australia criteria.

It should also be noted that Doncaster Hill will struggle to operate as a successful Principal Activities Area without achieving a 30% mode-shift to more sustainable forms of transport. This can only be achieved with an 'order-of-magnitude' improvement in public transport for the Hill, ideally through the provision of a rail station at Doncaster Hill.

With or without the provision of rail at Doncaster Hill, grade-separation of buses will be required through the Hill. Without this, it is anticipated that road-based public transport services will fail to operate successfully over the coming years due to the delay and impact, primarily to buses, caused by ongoing development and increasing traffic congestion in the activities area.

Council seeks to ensure that bipartisan support is achieved in order to realise the importance of delivering the Doncaster Rail project.

## 1. Introduction

Manningham City Council and the Doncaster Rail Local Government Group (DRLGG) are pleased to see the release of this Draft Phase 1 Recommendations Report, and wish to contribute constructively to the delivery of rail to Doncaster, and in particular to Doncaster Hill.

Council's submission provides comment on which elements of the Draft Recommendations Report are either supported or not supported, and suggests a number changes to be reviewed prior to the finalisation of the Recommendation Report, in order to ensure that rail to Doncaster and Doncaster Hill has the best opportunity to proceed.

Rail to Doncaster should be built as a matter of priority, with both the Doncaster Rail line and the decoupling of the South Morang line completed within the 15 year timeframe included in Public Transport Victoria's (PTV) *'Network Development Plan – Metropolitan Rail (2012)'*. As recent examples in Melbourne, Perth and Sydney indicate, people are willing to use public transport once it is built. In particular, the current signalling system should be replaced and upgraded with new high capacity signalling as a matter of priority to allow more trains to run on the existing network, such as on the Clifton Hill group lines.

Council would also like to thank URS, PTV and the Department of Transport for the opportunity to respond to the release of the findings of the Doncaster Rail Study Stage 1 Recommendations Report (Draft), and to thank the Department of Transport for extending the submission date to allow Council to prepare a thorough and comprehensive response to the draft recommendations.

Manningham City Council and the DRLGG look forward to the consideration of the items discussed in the following submission, and the timely progression of the final recommendations report. Council will also welcome a firm commitment by State Government to the timely commencement of Phase 2 of the Doncaster Rail Study.

## 2. Background

Manningham City Council has been advocating for the provision of rail to Doncaster for many years. Manningham is the only municipality in metropolitan Melbourne without a rail service (either light or heavy rail), which significantly disadvantages the community through the lack of adequate access to jobs, educational and health facilities and to other community and social services.

The delivery of a heavy rail link to Doncaster will improve the general accessibility to Melbourne's Central Business District (CBD) and the wider metropolitan area, and encourage a shift from private vehicle travel to public transport, in line with the many objectives of Local, State and Federal policies to achieve a more sustainable and prosperous urban environment. With Melbourne's population expected to increase by more than 1 million residents by 2031, it is imperative that ongoing investment is provided to improve the public transport network and infrastructure to ensure Melbourne maintains its competitive advantage as a liveable, sustainable and economic metropolis.

Many of Manningham's bus services utilise major arterials and freeways, such as Doncaster, Manningham, Williamsons, Thompsons and Blackburn Roads and the Eastern Freeway. Road traffic and congestion has generally increased over time as the population continues to grow and the population of the inner and middle suburbs expand. As Manningham residents rely solely on buses to provide public transport access, services are often compromised by delays on the road network, further compounded by the inability of buses to provide a maximum level of service due to their capacity limitations.

Since the opening of the EastLink Tollway in 2008, traffic on the Eastern Freeway has continued to rise. As indicated in the Draft Recommendations Report, the cost of congestion to Melbourne community and businesses is estimated at \$4.5 billion per year, with this figure expected to rise to \$6 billion by 2020. It is noted that public transport is expected to account for 20% of all trips by 2020, with public transport trips expected to double to 600,000 trips a day by 2031.

Although a program to deliver a number of designated bus lanes has been implemented within Manningham in recent years, areas such as the Doncaster Road and Williamsons Road intersection remain without dedicated bus lanes, compromising the efficiency of the wider bus network. The impact on bus services is further compounded by the lack of dedicated bus lanes along the Eastern Freeway, and outbound lanes of Victoria Parade and Hoddle Street. The impact of traffic congestion on the Eastern Freeway, the inner city road network and Lonsdale Street further compromises the efficiency of the DART and other bus services, which Manningham residents solely rely on for public transport access to the CBD and broader Melbourne.

A recent report commissioned by Council (*The Review of Parking and Traffic Management within Doncaster Hill Study Findings, GTA 2012*) suggests that without a 30% mode-shift to more sustainable forms of transport, traffic conditions in Doncaster Hill will be similar to those found in inner city activity centres across Melbourne. Given the physical constraints of the road system, a 30% mode-shift to sustainable public transport can only realistically be achieved with an 'order of magnitude' improvement to public transport infrastructure from, to and within the Hill, such as the provision of heavy rail to Doncaster Hill and the grade separation of buses through/within the Hill.

### 3. Response to Route Options

Manningham City Council generally supports URS's recommendation of the Rapid Transit Option 1 (RT1) as the preferred route alignment between the Melbourne CBD and Doncaster, on the basis that the RT1 option:

- can be delivered at a lower cost (when compared to the other options), as an extensive section of the alignment is located within the Eastern Freeway median-strip, formally reserved for the purpose of rail;
- minimises the likelihood of extensive land acquisition (further reducing cost);
- will involve minimal disruption to the amenity of the community during its operation;
- maximises opportunities for integrated land use transport planning that can utilise spare capacity on return peak hour trips;
- could be modelled on the successful Perth-Mandurah line, utilising the heavy rail line as a spine public transport route, with integrated tram and bus feeder services; and
- supports the findings contained in the report prepared by Curtin University, RMIT & ARUP entitled '*Initial Assessment of Accessibility & New Funding Opportunities for the Doncaster Rail Project*', and the companion report prepared by Infrastructure Australia's Professor Peter Newman entitled '*Doncaster Rail: what are its Prospects?*'.

Although the rationale of 'de-coupling' the South Morang line appears warranted, Council suggests that further investigation be undertaken in delivering the RT1 option, in order to explore the opportunity of unlocking further capacity on the Clifton Hill Group Line by implementing high-capacity signalling. This may facilitate a staged-approach for delivering rail to Doncaster ahead of expensive de-coupling the South Morang line.

The inner-city alignment (between the Eastern Freeway and Flagstaff Station) of the Rapid Transit Option 2 (RT2) is also supported as an alternative alignment into the inner city and CBD (including to the health and educational precinct in Parkville), due mainly to the benefits provided through a direct public transport connection between the Manningham area and the Melbourne Metro Tunnel at Parkville. However, a complementary connection to the existing Clifton Hill station should be investigated, to provide an integrated connection to the South Morang and Hurstbridge rail lines, and tram route 86 to Bundoora. There appears to be perceived benefits of the Rapid Transit Option 3 (RT3), similar to those achieved by the RT2 option; however the direct connection to Parkville and the education and health precinct from Manningham achieved by RT2, would best serve the community of Manningham, over and above the connections achieved by RT3.

Although the findings indicate that the Local Access options (both LA1 and LA2) would provide a greater level of accessibility and patronage demand than the other options presented, Manningham City Council agrees with the Draft Recommendation Report that the RT1 option provides the best overall outcome, when the construction cost (of extensive tunnelling) is factored into the proposal.

Manningham City Council does not support the Orbital Network Option, as it fails to meet the objective of providing an efficient rail service to Doncaster, and other areas/suburbs that currently lack adequate public transport, such as Bulleen and North Balwyn. Furthermore, this option fails to achieve an actual 'orbital' network, but rather provides a spur line between Doncaster and Box Hill, destinations which are currently serviced by a sufficient number of bus routes to satisfy this demand.

## 4. Summary of Limitations and Issues

Although Council supports the general findings of the Rapid Transit Option 1 (RT1) and the Rapid Transit Option 2 (RT2), Council submits that a number of changes should be made to both options, in order to enhance the opportunity to provide an adequate, efficient and integrated public transport network that delivers rail to where people live, work and visit. It is imperative that these changes are reflected in the Final Recommendations Report.

The limitations to the draft findings include:

- **It does not include a recommendation to extend the rail line to Doncaster Hill** to support a fast-growing Principal Activities Area, with the potential to achieve State-initiated planning objectives and Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) for a higher density urban development, underpinned by adequate public transport access. (The only designated 'Activity Centre Zone' in Victoria.);
- The recommendation to **terminate the RT1 and RT2 options at Doncaster Park & Ride**, a 400-space car park in the middle of *residentialia* and beside a freeway, with minimal opportunity to develop a TOD to support a rail terminus, as opposed to other rail terminuses such as Glen Waverley, Frankston and Sydenham, which are strategically located at activity centres;
- The **assumption that bus services can be provided to the Doncaster Park-and-Ride facility at 2 minute intervals** to feed peak hour trains, without any supporting analysis of how this would be achieved through a fully developed and congested Doncaster Hill;
- Questionably **low patronage assessments for Doncaster Hill**;
- The **high estimated cost**, when compared to other similar projects around Australia.
- A **lack of transparency** of how projected costs were derived;
- No recommendation for a station at **Burke Road** in either of the Rapid Transit options;
- The lack of recommendations to **connect tram routes 48 (North Balwyn) and 72 (Camberwell)** to proposed stations; and
- The findings are **too heavily focused on providing a solution for the South Morang line** – with a vast number of the recommendations relating to that project alone – detracting from the focus of providing rail to Doncaster.

These limitations are further discussed within Council's submission, and Council suggests that URS and the State Government give them earnest consideration and seek to address these limitations in the final Doncaster Rail Study Stage 1 Recommendations Report.

Council wishes to express its disappointment that the Study does not recommend that the line be extended to Doncaster Hill, and that the report findings and recommendations, at times, appear to be too heavily focused on providing solutions for the South Morang rail line, detracting from the purpose for which the study was first intended – to assess the viability of heavy rail to Doncaster.

Largely in response to State Government policy directions, Doncaster Hill is being developed as a Principal Activities Area in suburban Melbourne, characterised by dense residential development and commercial and retail establishments. The provision of an adequate integrated public transport network, which includes heavy rail, is a key to support these development initiatives and to achieve the objective of establishing a sustainable urban village.

## 5. Key Limitations of the Draft Recommendations Report

It is understood that the study scope was to investigate a heavy rail line to Doncaster. With the recommended termination of the line at Doncaster Park & Ride, the proposed rail line fails to penetrate into the heart of Doncaster and into Manningham. The draft recommendations are very heavily focused towards recommending solutions to address capacity issues of the South Morang Line. The absence of a recommendation to provide a station at Doncaster Hill undermines the study, as it then fails to adequately address the transport needs of what is the centre of residential, commercial and retail activity for the municipality and surrounding areas.

To quote from the URS study team's 'Engineering and Environmental Investigation Report' (E&EIR), a supporting document to the Draft Recommendations Report, a Doncaster Hill Station would be a *"Catalyst for the council's structure plan for Doncaster Hill"* and *"Introduces Doncaster as a destination", as well as 'Provides the gateway to the city for those living in the eastern suburbs"* (p. 52).

Further, the E&EIR categorically states (p. 50) about the Doncaster Park-and-Ride facility that the *"Doncaster Park-and-Ride major function is to collect those travelling on the Eastern Freeway from east of Doncaster"*. That is, it was not designated through the evolution of the study to serve the municipality of Manningham, yet it has been morphed into this with the stroke-of-a-pen in the final recommendations in the Draft Recommendations Report, without any apparent regard for the ramifications – just simply based on what appears to be a last minute, crude and hastily adjudged cost-benefit basis. This determination was clearly made without (i) any regard for how a terminus station at the Doncaster Hill Park-and Ride site might be physically serviced by bus and vehicle access from within Manningham, nor (ii) on the absolute need for Doncaster Hill to have a vastly improved public transport system to realise its development potential.

In addition, the Draft Recommendation Report fails to address an adequate level of transport integration along the proposed route, with only two (2) stations proposed in the Manningham area, and no consideration of tram connections to recommended station locations.

The following outlines what Council considers to be the three key limitations of the Draft Recommendation Report. Other limitations and suggestions are referred to throughout the submission.

### 5.1. No station at Doncaster Hill

**Council does not support the recommendation that the rail line should not be extended to Doncaster Hill.**

The Draft Recommendation Report bases this recommendation on two main factors, which Council does not support – the estimated patronage figures for the Doncaster Hill station, and the \$800 million to \$1 billion cost associated with the two-kilometre underground rail line between Doncaster Park & Ride and Doncaster Hill. The cost versus the expected patronage figures, would appear to be the reason for why a station at Doncaster Hill has not been recommended – a matter that needs to be addressed further, as it has clearly been heavily weighted (and Council argues, incorrectly) against the connection to the Hill.

**Council submits that the projected population figures for Doncaster Hill have been vastly under-estimated**, which in-turn has affected the data used in the transport modelling to

determine projected patronage figures. Throughout the Draft Recommendations Report, the findings generally support a station at Doncaster Hill, only to recommend that it does not extend that far in a relatively small section of the report, with very little credible or adequate justification to substantiate such a recommendation.

Council also submits that the projected \$800 million to \$1 billion cost to extend the line to Doncaster Hill, is vastly over-estimated, particularly when compared to other similar rail projects in Perth and Sydney. Although it is understood that these costs are currently only estimations, they are used to support an argument not to extend the line to Doncaster Hill. The decision also ignores the commercial benefit to Doncaster Hill and its catchment.

Throughout the feasibility study process, Manningham City Council provided URS with population and development data for Doncaster Hill, which Council understood was meant to be used to assist URS's formulation of relevant and accurate data to support their modelling. The Draft Recommendations Report inaccurately states that *“Doncaster Hill would also experience only limited growth potential (up to 250 new residents), as it is considered that much of the land use change that has commenced in this activity area will continue irrespective of a new rail connection” (pg 80).*

Apart from the fact that this statement is inaccurate, because **Doncaster Hill cannot achieve its ultimate development potential without a major, ‘order-of-magnitude’ public transport initiative**, the current 2013 population of Doncaster Hill is estimated at 1,400, and this figure is expected to increase to more than 8,300 residents by 2031, representing a 750% rise in population between 2011 and 2031, an average annual increase of 9.55 per cent. This is greater than the average annual increase of 0.64 percent for the whole of the City of Manningham. These figures do not include the proposed population of the Eastern Golf Course redevelopment (residential), which is expected to house an additional 2,820 residents by 2021. Section 3.3.2 of the Draft Recommendations Report illustrates a population growth of 0.65% per annum for the wider City of Manningham. However, the majority of population growth in Manningham will be concentrated around the Doncaster Hill activity centre and the Doncaster Road corridor. It is noted that the population density of Doncaster Hill is not represented in the population density figure contained on page 9 of the URS report.

To date, 680 apartments have been constructed, representing approximately 17% of future development in the area. Planning permits for a further 1200 apartments have been approved by Manningham Council.

The following table provides an outline of the expected population growth of Manningham, Doncaster Hill and the wider suburb of Doncaster (in which Doncaster Hill is located).

Area Name	2011	2016	2021	2026	2031	Change between 2011 to 2031	
						Number	Avg. Annual % change
<b>Doncaster Hill (precinct)</b>	980	2,732	5,155	6,676	8,371	7,391	9.55 %
<b>Doncaster (suburb)</b>	19,722	21,854	25,044	27,395	29,725	10,318	1.72%
<b>City of Manningham</b>	116,953	119,847	124,720	129,721	134,855	17,902	0.64%

Between 2011 and 2031, the number of dwellings in Doncaster Hill will increase by approximately 750% from 475 to more than 4,000 households in 2031. According to the 2011 Census, 7.6% of the residents in Doncaster Hill do not have a motor vehicle, which is greater than the 4% average for the wider City of Manningham.

Future development is also being encouraged in the residential areas located beyond the Doncaster Hill Precinct. In these areas, a Design and Development Overlay, Schedule 8 (DDO8) currently applies under the Manningham Planning Scheme, which seeks to increase residential densities and provide for a range of housing types (primarily to encourage three storey 'apartment style' developments) around activity centres and along main roads.

The estimated resident population within DDO8 areas around Doncaster Hill is estimated to rise from a population of 4,680 in 2011 to 5,800 by 2020 and to 7,111 by 2030, an expected population increase of 52% between 2011 and 2031. This further supports the need for a station at Doncaster Hill, which will capture future population in both the Doncaster Hill precinct and the surrounding DDO8 areas. A copy of the DDO8 map from the Manningham Planning Scheme is provided as Appendix A, to illustrate the areas to which future development around Doncaster Hill would apply.

Sixty-five per cent of Doncaster (suburb) households own two or more vehicles, whereas only 44% of Box Hill households own two or more vehicles; a reflection of the lack of public transport in the Manningham area when compared to an area such as Box Hill which has rail, tram and bus access.

According to the 2011 Census, 16.8% of Doncaster Hill residents take public transport to work, including 2.1% by train and 14.7% by bus. This is greater than the 10.8% for the City of Manningham. Between 2006 and 2011, method of travel to work by public transport increased by 126.8%, and 57.3% for cycling and walking (NIEIR, 2013). This indicates a greater demand for residents in Doncaster Hill who opt to take public transport as a method of travel to work.

Between 2006 and 2021, the number of people aged up to 15 in Doncaster Hill is forecast to increase by 527 (522%), representing a rise in the proportion of the population to 12.2%. The number of people aged over 65 is expected to increase by 738 (479%), representing 17.3% of the population. These two age groups collectively represent the proportion of the wider population who might not have access to a private motor vehicle, and rely on public transport to access educational, health and social services.

Between 2006 and 2011 the number of persons employed in Doncaster Hill increased by 32.6% from 5,336 to 7,073 with clothing retailing, department stores, local government administration and cafes and restaurants representing the largest industries of employment on the Hill. Thirty-six percent of persons employed within Doncaster Hill reside in Manningham, whilst the other 65% reside in other local government areas, including 11.5% in Whitehorse, 7.2% in Boroondara and 6.6% in Banyule (NIEIR, 2013).

Doncaster Hill currently has approximately 250,000 square metres of floor-space dedicated to employment generating uses, with approximately 136,000 sq m dedicated to retail uses (including Westfield Doncaster) and 59,000 sq m dedicated to office uses, including light industry and motor vehicle sales and servicing.

Much of the existing office-based activity in Doncaster Hill is characterised by small and medium enterprises serving local residents and the regional area. By 2031 commercial (office) floor-space is estimated to grow by between 5,200sqm and 46,700sqm. This sector provides the biggest opportunity for investment attraction and could be significantly impacted by the construction of a rail line to Doncaster Hill. Projected increases in retail floor-space range from 15,000 sq m to 18,800 sq m by 2031. These figures do not include the proposed Bunnings warehouse in Doncaster Hill, which was recently approved by Council and is anticipated to commence construction in late 2013.

A \$650 million redevelopment of Westfield Doncaster was completed in October 2008 doubling the gross leasable floor space to 120,000sqm. In addition to the retail mix, there are 29 office tenancies totalling 3,250sqm.

This regional shopping destination currently has 439 retailers, 5000 car spaces, nine cinema auditoriums that can seat up to 1,755 people and attracts 15.7 million visitors per year, making it the fifth largest shopping centre in Australia (by number of stores). In 2011 Westfield Doncaster recorded the highest sales of all centres in Victoria (\$812 million). Its current annual turnover (approx. \$839 million) makes Westfield Doncaster the third largest centre in Australia in terms of turnover.

It is likely that the centre will continue to expand in size and operation by 2031, in line with other growth expected throughout Doncaster Hill.

The patronage projections contained in the Draft Recommendations Report (page 63 and 79) estimate that approximately 1,283-1,293 passengers per day would board a station at Doncaster Hill (under either the Rapid Transit or Local Access options). The proposed station located at Leigh Park in Balwyn North (Local Access Option 1) is expected to achieve 934 boardings, which although lower than projected for Doncaster Hill, can still be deemed as a comparable level of patronage. However, the nature of the urban environment surrounding the two stations is vastly different. Leigh Station is surrounded by established single-dwelling residential development, with minimal scope for further densification. By contrast, Doncaster Hill is currently undergoing extensive growth in residential population (+750% to 2031), with a major shopping centre (Westfield Doncaster) and other commercial and office development surrounding the immediate area, all within walking distance to a proposed station. The surrounding residential population, visitors and staff to Westfield (15.7 million visitors per year) alone are capable of achieving a greater level of patronage for a Doncaster Hill station, than what has been modelled and anticipated in the Draft Recommendations Report.

Council acknowledge the complexities involved with building an underground rail line and station at depth below urban areas, however, with modern technology, tunnel-boring capabilities, and examples of deep urban rail tunnels in other parts of the world, it is deemed that a station at depths of ~60 metres is not an impossible task to achieve. Although significant cost is added to extend the line underground and provide a station at Doncaster Hill, it is Council's opinion that a station at this location is crucial to ensure that residents of Manningham and the eastern suburbs are provided with a well-integrated, efficient and accessible public transport system with direct connections to where they live, work and visit, as well as being crucial to the realisation of the development potential of Doncaster Hill itself.

As it will be outlined under the following section, it is suggested that a station is required at both the Doncaster Park & Ride and Doncaster Hill, to achieve the best outcome for public transport and land use integration in the area.

The failure to recommend a station at Doncaster Hill, does not meet the criteria assessment and performance measures outlined in the 'Evaluation Framework for Final Multi-Criteria Analysis' contained in URS's *Doncaster Rail Study Final Options Evaluation Report: Integrated Transport Network Planning Report* (pg 16-17). Primarily, the objectives of assessment criteria 1 (to improve transport network efficiency in Manningham) and 2 (to promote and support urban growth and productivity in Manningham) are not met. As no station is recommended for Doncaster Hill, measures assessing the compatibility with Local, State and Federal planning policy, and potential to facilitate development of activity centres and development in residential areas are not met. Council's Doncaster Hill Parking and Traffic Review (as provided), which has been supported by VicRoads, clearly demonstrates that the study team's assumption that development on Doncaster Hill will occur irrespective of rail, is flawed.

VicRoads indicates that traffic conditions and bus service performance along Doncaster Road have already been optimised, and there is no identified opportunity to improve bus service performance through at-grade road improvements.

It is recommended that URS re-evaluate the transport modelling used to determine patronage levels for a Doncaster Hill station, using the population data provided by Manningham. Council assumes that, once this has been re-evaluated against a more realistic cost model and economic benefit assessment, a station at Doncaster Hill will be deemed as a viable option.

A document containing more detailed population and household forecasts for Doncaster Hill has been provided as Appendix B and an updated map of planning permit applications on Doncaster Hill is included as Appendix C, to update the map that currently appears on page 10 of the Draft Recommendations Report.

## **5.2. Termination at Doncaster Park & Ride**

The recommendation to terminate the Doncaster Rail line at the Doncaster Park and Ride is not supported by Council. However, Council does support a station at this location.

Although Council supports a station at this location if the line was to extend to Doncaster Hill, it is envisaged that by providing a terminus at this location, and no station at Doncaster Hill, the traffic congestion caused by the generated demand of only this station, will severely undermine the efficiency and operation of this site as a suitable Park & Ride facility, placing added pressure on Doncaster Road, the Eastern Freeway off-ramps and the surrounding local road network.

It is also considered that, to end a major rail line at a car park in a location that has limited opportunity for transit oriented development, and which falls two-kilometres short of where people intend to visit, live or work (Doncaster Hill), is a poor planning outcome.

The expected patronage demand (and associated demand for car parking) generated by a Park & Ride station alone, would congest the local road network, and severely compromise the efficiency of this station to operate as a successful Park & Ride facility. This location currently

experiences congestion and over-flow of parking into local streets caused by growing demand for Park & Ride facilities in the area. This congestion has had a negative impact on the amenity of the local area. By recommending that only this station is built, the congestion caused by demand for Park & Ride, Kiss & Ride, feeder bus services, cyclists, pedestrians and general traffic congestion, will undermine the efficiency of this station and the operation of the Doncaster Rail line in its entirety.

However, this could be mitigated by terminating the line at Doncaster Hill, and by providing an additional station at Burke Road, to essentially 'spread the load' of demand, across the network.

A station at both Doncaster Park & Ride and Doncaster Hill is required to maximise the efficiency of the overall public transport and road network, and optimise the efficiency of how each of the stations could operate. With a station at both locations, the Doncaster Park & Ride Station will cater predominantly for commuters who wish to access this station by private vehicle, and utilise available car parking at this facility or be dropped off at the designated Kiss & Ride location within the Park & Ride facility. Feeder bus services could also provide a connection to the wider residential area.

The station at Doncaster Hill could cater predominantly for the 8,500-10,000 residents who will live within walking distance to the station and visitors and staff of Westfield Doncaster Shopping Centre and other commercial and office locations within the Doncaster Hill activity centre. Accessibility to a station at Doncaster Hill will be further complimented by feeder buses utilising the Doncaster Hill bus interchange, creating an integrated transport network, and encouraging further transit oriented development and economic investment in the area.

The Draft Recommendations Report recommends that the Doncaster Park & Ride station would be serviced by a number of feeder bus services, with services to Doncaster Hill expected to operate at two-minute frequencies. With added traffic congestion along Doncaster Road, induced by demand to access the only available rail station in the area, this will undermine the efficiency of bus services, and fail to achieve the minimum 2-minute frequency of bus services, as recommended.

It is further noted that currently, bus lanes along Doncaster Road end within a few hundred metres either side of the Doncaster/Williamsons/Tram/Elgar Road intersections (to a total distance of approximately 650 metres from either direction), with limited priority signalling for buses provided through the intersection. This creates a traffic bottleneck and requires buses to merge into the line of traffic, compromising the efficiency of bus services through this area.

Council is of the opinion that even without the provision of rail, significant investment is needed to grade-separate the Doncaster Road and Williamsons Road intersection to provide an alternative option for buses to navigate through the area, without compromising traffic congestion, or increasing the width of Doncaster Road through Doncaster Hill.

The Draft Recommendations Report states that *"The Doncaster Park-and-Ride station presents the least development potential in terms of urban renewal opportunities, with only a small increase of about 150 new residents likely to be added to the walkable catchment area by 2031"* (page 80). To provide this station as a terminus to a proposed heavy rail line, will not meet the objectives of State and Federal policy to increase the level of development (including TOD) within the vicinity of railway stations. However, this lack of opportunity at this location could be

off-set by the perceived benefit and stimulation to urban development that could be achieved with a station at Doncaster Hill.

### 5.3. Projected Costs

It is widely perceived by Council and the community that the projected cost of \$3-\$5 billion to deliver the section between the Clifton Hill line and Doncaster Park & Ride, with provision of only three stations at Chandler / Kew, Bulleen and Doncaster Park & Ride, is vastly over-estimated, particularly when compared to similar projects delivered in Perth and Sydney in recent years, and cost estimates contained in the recently released *High Speed Rail (HSR) Report (AECOM, 2012)*. This is further exacerbated by the additional \$800 million to \$1 billion cost quoted in the Draft Recommendations Report to construct the line between the Doncaster Park & Ride and Doncaster Hill.

The Draft Recommendations Report provides no transparency or detail of how projected costs were determined, or what assumptions were made to determine cost, therefore opportunity to review and comment on how costs were derived is constrained.

The distance of the RT1 alignment between Collingwood Station and Doncaster Hill is approximately 13 kilometres. If the cost of the extension between Doncaster Park & Ride and Doncaster Hill is added to the projected \$3-\$5 billion cost provided by URS, this equates to an approximate cost of between \$292 million to \$462 million per kilometre, partially at-grade and within twin-tunnels. The Eastern Freeway between Hoddle Street and Bulleen Road contains a wide median strip, currently reserved for the purpose of rail, which should potentially reduce the cost per-kilometre to construct rail infrastructure within this corridor.

The construction cost of the two kilometre section between Doncaster Park & Ride and Doncaster Hill, has been estimated by URS at between \$800 million to \$1 billion. Assuming this will involve the cost of two underground stations and two kilometres of twin tunnels and other associated rail infrastructure), this equates to a cost of between \$400 million to \$500 million per kilometre, which appears to be vastly over estimated when compared to similar rail tunnelling projects in Australia.

The costs per kilometre identified in the Melbourne-Sydney-Brisbane High Speed Rail report (HSR), vary significantly than the costs provided for Doncaster Rail. Table 7 of Appendix 4B of the HSR Study Phase 2 indicates that the cost of an urban bore single track tunnel (in 2012 dollars) is approximately \$148 million per kilometre (AECOM, 2012).

The 71 kilometre Southern Railway Line between Perth and Mandurah was delivered at a total cost of \$1.7 billion in 2007. This includes nine at-grade stations, two underground stations in the Perth CBD, and all other associated rail infrastructure. This equates to an average cost of \$24 million per kilometre (in 2007 dollars), of mostly an at-grade alignment.

The 12.5 kilometre entirely-underground Epping to Chatswood rail line in Northern Sydney, containing three underground stations and the redevelopment of an additional two stations, was delivered at a total cost of \$2.3 billion, equating to a cost of \$184 million per kilometre.

Table B: Summary of Costs:

Project	Cost p/km	Distance
Doncaster Rail Link, VIC	\$292 m - \$464 m	13 km
High Speed Rail (Mel-Syd-Bris)	\$148 m	~1,500 km
Perth-Mandurah, WA	\$24 m	71 km
Chatswood-Epping, NSW	\$184 m	12.5 km

Using the cost estimates provided by the HSR report, the estimated cost of the 13 kilometre rail line between Collingwood Station and Doncaster Hill should be in the order of \$2 billion. Recent geological investigations undertaken as part of the planning for the East-West tunnel would provide useful data on which to base tunnelling cost estimates.

Council acknowledges that there are inherent differences in the economic, physical and environmental characteristics of the Doncaster region and that of other similar projects in Australia. However, at almost ten times the cost of the Perth-Mandurah line (on a per-kilometre basis) and almost double that of the most recent estimates provided by the HSR report, Council suggests that a more accurate cost assessment and breakdown should be provided in the Final Recommendations Report, in order to provide a transparent and fair assessment of the assumptions made to determine the appropriate costs.

## 6. CUSP Report

In 2012, Manningham City Council, in association with the Doncaster Rail Local Government Group, commissioned a report prepared by Curtin University, RMIT & ARUP titled '*Initial Assessment of Accessibility & New Funding Opportunities for the Doncaster Rail Project*', and the companion report prepared by Infrastructure Australia's Professor Peter Newman titled '*Doncaster Rail: what are its Prospects?*' (referred to hereon as the 'CUSP reports'). The reports provide technical and substantiated justification that supports the provision of a heavy rail line to Doncaster whilst also exploring alternative funding mechanisms to deliver such a project.

Essentially, the CUSP reports support the justification of a rail alignment along the Eastern Freeway (integrated with other modes of transport) and extending underground in the inner-city, with a connection to the proposed Melbourne Metro Line at a future Parkville Station. This alignment option is emulated by the Rapid Transit Option 2, suggested in the Draft Recommendations Report, which will enable an integrated rail solution between Doncaster Hill, and the health and education precinct located in Parkville.

These reports were provided to both URS and the Department of Transport (in September 2012) for consideration and for input to the Draft Recommendations Report. Although these reports were not considered at that stage, it is now understood that the CUSP reports will be reviewed by URS and the findings taken into consideration to formulate the Final Recommendations Report.

The CUSP reports addressed four different public transport service scenarios for the Doncaster corridor. These scenarios were compared on the basis of their impact on accessibility for people travelling by public transport. This comparison was undertaken using the Spatial Network Analysis for Multimodal Urban Transport Systems (SNAMUTS) model developed by Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology University (RMIT) and Curtin University. This modelling identified that the best outcome for rail to Doncaster was achieved from a Rapid Transit option, integrated with surface connections (other modes of public transport, including tram and heavy rail).

The SNAMUTS modelling identifies that there is currently a significant gap in public transport access to vast areas of Balwyn North, Doncaster, Bulleen and Ivanhoe. Access to these areas can be improved by the provision of a heavy rail line along the Eastern Freeway to Doncaster, with bus and tram 'surface connections'. Using the SNAMUTS model, the key findings of this report suggests that the best outcome for Doncaster rail is to provide a station at Burke Road and extend both tram routes 48 (North Balwyn) and 72 (Camberwell) to connect to the Doncaster rail line. This model of integration has proved particularly successful with the Northern and Southern Rail Lines in Perth. It should also be noted that the modelling assumed a station at Doncaster Hill, as this would underpin the successful operation of an integrated Doncaster Rail transport network.

The CUSP reports also assessed new funding opportunities for the Doncaster Rail project. The reports theorise that investment in public transport will create increased accessibility for the catchments that it serves, and that this increased accessibility in-turn increases real estate values through increased willingness to pay for the proximity access to the new infrastructure. This value uplift can be hypothecated by value capturing some or all increments in accessibility gains (such as increases in property values) attributable to public sector actions. In the case of the Doncaster Rail project, the provision of transportation infrastructure is recouped by the public sector for public purposes.

In essence, value capture provides a means to monetise a project's economic and financial benefits as cash returns that may either be captured and contributed, or recognised and attributed towards project costs. This is achieved by 'ring-fencing' and hypothecating some of this increased land-based tax revenue into a fund to help pay for the project. It is crucial to understand that this is not a new tax but simply recognition of the increased land value if the infrastructure is built. If it is not built, then land value does not increase (at a similar rate).

In an environment of fiscal constraint, it is important to assess and understand value capture options that may be available to support major transport projects such as the Doncaster rail project, and to enable an understanding of the true value created and possible returns to government available which may offset a portion of the cost of the project. Further explanation of these mechanisms are contained in sections 9 and 10 of the report *Initial Assessment of Accessibility & New Funding Opportunities for the Doncaster Rail Project*. The report presents a new kind of funding opportunity for the Doncaster Rail project with the suggested creation of a coordinated 'Doncaster Value Capture Revenue Fund' to collect the revenue from different funding mechanisms into one fund to be used to defray the cost of the infrastructure investment.

These reports are contained as Appendix D, and should be considered by URS and the State Government, particularly in regards to determining the cost to deliver Doncaster Rail, and options for how to fund the project.

## 7. 2011 Census Data

It is understood that the data used by URS in its investigations was the most current available at the time (Census 2006), and data from the 2011 Census was not available to URS or its consultants during the feasibility assessment process.

Significant changes in transport use, employment data and residential data will have occurred in the five years since that data was collected, and to ensure that a more accurate assessment is undertaken, refreshing the patronage numbers in light of newly released 2011 Census transport data is considered vital to the credibility of the feasibility study.

Furthermore, the nature of urban development surrounding the Doncaster Hill area has changed significantly since 2006, and a review of current Census (2011) data is required, to reflect a true and accurate study of the potential for providing rail to Doncaster, and Doncaster Hill in particular.

Data and population forecasts specific to Doncaster Hill has been included within this submission, for perusal by the consultants in refreshing their review of patronage estimates. It is suggested that this and other current data is used when finalising the Doncaster Rail Study Stage 1 Recommendations Report.

## 8. Doncaster Hill Parking and Traffic Management Review 2011 (Manningham City Council)

In 2011, Council commissioned microsimulation modelling of the Doncaster Hill road network, primarily to assess the impact to traffic and parking in the area, generated by the increasing level of development and urban density on the Hill. This assessment (undertaken by GTA Consultants) was intended to:

- Forecast future traffic volumes and assess the future performance of the road network, based on partial (50%) and full (100%) build out of Doncaster Hill;
- Recommend feasible measures to address future traffic needs; and
- Forecast public transport performance in future years through the modelling work.

As the preferred alignment and impacts of any future heavy rail infrastructure were unknown at the time of GTA's review, it was not possible to make specific allowance for its impacts, as part of the modelling work undertaken in 2011. GTA however did note that the heavy rail project could maximise mode shift for Doncaster Hill, but that further work would be required to quantify this aspect, once the rail alignment and other details are known.

*The Review of Parking and Traffic Management within Doncaster Hill Study Findings* report (GTA, 2012), is included as Appendix E.

### 8.1. Summary of Findings

The Study found that without a 30% mode-shift to more sustainable forms of transport (primarily mass heavy-rail), traffic conditions in the area will be similar to those found in inner city activity centres across Melbourne. This will significantly undermine the efficiency of the local bus network, which will be solely relied on to deliver commuters to the Doncaster Park & Ride station, should no rail station be located at Doncaster Hill, as currently recommended in the Draft Recommendations Report.

A 30% mode-shift to sustainable public transport can realistically only be achieved with the provision of a heavy rail station at Doncaster Hill and/or grade separation of buses through the Hill, as outlined in Section 9.7 of this submission.

A comparison of the current number of vehicle trips through the road network and the trips forecast to be generated by the new developments indicates that the forecast trips will represent approximately one third of the current number of trips. This increase represents a very significant increase in traffic for the road network.

The results of the modelling indicate that at full build out of Doncaster Hill in the PM peak, road network capacity issues arise. Average traffic speeds reduced and average delays increase significantly. For eastbound traffic on Doncaster Road in the PM peak, the average delay through Doncaster Hill increases 45% to over 8 minutes, subject to the implementation of Manningham's Development Contribution Plan traffic improvements including the installation of two new sets of traffic signals.

Council is currently in the process of investigating and developing a Doncaster Hill Mode Shift Plan, to assist the Doncaster Hill community, to maximise the achievement of transport mode shift.

The findings and recommendations of this Doncaster Hill Traffic and Parking Study have particular relevance to the outcomes outlined in the Draft Recommendations Report, particularly with regard to the recommendation to not extend the rail line to Doncaster Hill, and to not locate a station on the Hill.

## **8.2. Impact on Bus Services**

Public transport at full build out of Doncaster Hill in the PM peak experiences longer average delays than currently occurs under existing conditions, assuming the current proportion of utilisation of sustainable transport modes, despite the completion of the DCP traffic improvements. The modelling indicates a 70% increase in the average delay to bus services in the PM peak at full build out of Doncaster Hill.

It is noted that continuity of dedicated bus lanes along Doncaster and Williamsons Roads has not been achieved to date. The results of the modelling generally indicate that the road network is sufficient to maintain acceptable performance of public transport in the AM peak at full build out of Doncaster Hill. In the PM peak however, the average delay for public transport services increases and will result in decreased performance through the area, due to extensive queuing in turn lanes, impacting other lanes. If a 30% mode shift to sustainable transport modes can be achieved, bus service performance results which are comparable with existing bus service performance standards can be achieved. An efficient and attractive public transport system is critical to the achievement of the targeted transport mode shift.

Actions which require consideration in order to facilitate the desired transport mode shift include advocacy to continue to improve public transport services, including but not limited to the achievement of continuity of bus lanes to ensure service efficiency. There is however limited opportunity to mitigate the impacts of increased traffic in Doncaster Hill by undertaking at grade road infrastructure improvements, due to land availability constraints. Previous advice from VicRoads indicates that traffic conditions and bus service performance along Doncaster Road have already been optimised and there is no identified opportunity to improve bus service performance through at-grade road improvements. A key recommendation of the Study is for Council to advocate to the State Government for investigation into the feasibility of improving the connectivity of bus lanes, including grade separation and other infrastructure for bus movements, through Doncaster Hill.

## 9. Route Alignment and Network Connectivity

As outlined earlier, Council supports the Rapid Transit Option 1 along the Eastern Freeway as the preferred alignment, including the two proposed stations at Bulleen and Doncaster Park & Ride as recommended in the Draft Recommendations Report.

In relation to the connection to the CBD, Council supports both the RT1 option with a connection to the Clifton Hill line (perhaps as the first phase of a staged approach), and the RT2 option with a connection between the Eastern Freeway and Flagstaff, via Parkville and Fitzroy (as phase 2 of a staged approach). Council supports the RT1 option on the basis that the option:

- can be delivered at a lower cost (when compared to a number of other options) as an extensive section of the alignment is located within the Eastern Freeway median-strip, formally reserved for the purpose of rail;
- Minimises the likelihood of extensive land acquisition (further reducing cost);
- will involve minimal disruption to amenity of the community during its operation (and construction);
- could be modelled on the successful Perth-Mandurah line, utilising the heavy rail line as a spine public transport route, with tram and bus feeder services; and
- a connection to the existing Clifton Hill line can be achieved with the implementation of high-capacity signalling, as outlined in PTV's *Network Development Plan – Metropolitan Rail*.

However, Council would like the following matters to be addressed in order to enhance the outcome of a heavy rail connection to Doncaster Hill:

### 9.1. Poor Integration into the Public Transport Network

Although the Draft Recommendations Report assesses the feasibility of a heavy rail connection between the CBD and Doncaster, it fails to take into consideration, or make recommendations as to how the heavy rail line would integrate with other forms of public transport services. In particular the Report fails to:

- recommend a station at Doncaster Hill - a major transport hub;
- integrate with tram routes 48 (Balwyn North) and 72 (Camberwell), by failure to recommend an extension of these tram routes to meet proposed stations at Doncaster Park & Ride, and the suggested station at Burke Road;
- provide a station at Burke Road;
- explain how feeder bus services will achieve 2 minute frequencies along already congested Doncaster Road;
- address connectivity to Clifton Hill station on the RT2 option; and
- detail the arrangements of the suggested bus link to East Ivanhoe.

The proposed location of a station near Flagstaff Garden and Franklin Street on the RT2 and RT3 options, would be located some distance away from the existing Flagstaff Station on the City Loop. It is understood that these stations will be located a 5-minute walk from Flagstaff Station. A closer location (or direct integration) with existing City Loop stations should be further

investigated in order to minimise the transfer penalty for commuters who seek to interchange between the Doncaster rail line and other metropolitan rail services.

The report *Initial Assessment of Accessibility & New Funding Opportunities for the Doncaster Rail Project (CUSP, 2012)*, confirms that the best outcome for Doncaster rail is achieved from a Rapid Transit option, integrated with surface connections (other modes of public transport, including tram and heavy rail). Using the Spatial Network Analysis for Multimodal Urban Transport Systems (SNAMUTS) model, the key findings of this report suggests that the best outcome for Doncaster rail is to provide a station at Burke Road and extend both tram routes 48 (North Balwyn) and 72 (Camberwell) to connect to the Doncaster rail line. This model of integration has proved particularly successful with the Northern and Southern Rail Lines in Perth.

Other matters relating to integration into the public transport network are further detailed and discussed below:

## **9.2. Route 48 Tram (Balwyn North)**

An extension of the route 48 tram (Balwyn North) from the current terminus at Balwyn and Doncaster Road to the Doncaster Park & Ride should be considered.

Manningham Council suggests that the Final Recommendations Report should investigate the impact and importance of providing a connection between route 48 to the Doncaster Park & Ride station and recommend that the route 48 tram is extended to cater for this purpose. This will provide an integrated connection between the two modes of transport, maximising accessibility between the Doncaster Rail line, and destinations in Balwyn North, Kew, Hawthorn and Richmond, achieving accessibility outcomes identified in the Local Access options.

It appears that the modelling undertaken by URS and associated consultants, did not take into consideration a direct link between tram route 48 and the Doncaster Park & Ride Station and appears to be modelled as conditions currently exist. The Draft Recommendations Report suggests a 28% decline in patronage of tram route 48 by the Rapid Transit options and a 66-77% decline in the Local Access options. However, Council suggests that this should be re-modelled with an extension to Doncaster Park & Ride considered in order to illustrate a more accurate determination of patronage levels to Doncaster Rail, once integration with the proposed Doncaster Park & Ride station has been considered.

## **9.3. Route 72 Tram (Camberwell)**

An extension of the route 72 tram (Camberwell), from the current terminus at Burke and Cotham Roads to Ivanhoe, via the Burke Road / Eastern Freeway overpass should be considered, along with the provision of a rail station at Burke Road on the Rapid Transit options. This will provide for an integrated public transport connection, traversing both an east-west heavy rail service, and north-south light rail service.

Council suggests that the assessment for the Final Recommendations Report should be re-modelled with tram route 72 and a Burke Road station considered in order to illustrate a more accurate determination of patronage levels, once integration with the proposed Doncaster Rail line has been considered.

## 9.4. Station Options

The RT1 option recommends three stations between the inner city and Doncaster. However, as mentioned earlier, Council submits that two more stations should be considered at Doncaster Hill and Burke Road in order to ensure that the Doncaster Rail line can operate as an efficient element of an integrated public transport network. Without consideration of these two (2) additional stations, and the potential closure of Victoria Park and Rushall Stations, this will result in a net gain of only one station for the entire rail network which is considered a poor planning outcome for the future of rail on the metropolitan network.

### 9.4.1. Doncaster Hill

As stated earlier, under 'Key Limitations', it is recommended that URS re-evaluate the transport modelling used to determine patronage levels for a Doncaster Hill station, using the current population data provided by Manningham within this submission. Council assumes that once this has been re-evaluated against more a realistic cost model, a station at Doncaster Hill will be deemed to be a viable option. Council submits that a station at Doncaster Hill is crucial, to achieve the best service outcome for rail to Doncaster, and for integration between transport and land use.

### 9.4.2. Doncaster Park & Ride

As discussed earlier under 'Key Limitations', Council supports a station at Doncaster Park & Ride, and would generally support intensifying the Park & Ride facility. However, a thorough assessment and an integrated land use and transport study of the site and surrounding area will be required to determine the best use of the site as a Park & Ride and transit oriented development.

### 9.4.3. Bulleen

Council supports the recommendation for a station in the vicinity of Bulleen/Thompsons Road, along the RT1 alignment, complimented by adequate feeder bus services.

This station will cater for the surrounding residential population, Marcellin College and users of other community and sporting facilities such as Carey Sports Complex, Trinity Grammar School Sporting Complex, Belle Vue Primary School and Boroondara Tennis Centre.

Council would generally support the provision of Park & Ride facilities in the area, however, the location of any associated Park & Ride facilities will need to be further explored, as to not impact on the amenity of the area, or compromise the highly sensitive environmental surroundings of this location, including the Koonung Creek and surrounding reserves.

Council suggests that an alternative station arrangement and rail alignment should be explored for this locality. The provision of a Bulleen Station within the existing median of the Eastern Freeway should be investigated, along with investigating the option to continue the rail line along the centre median of the Freeway in the direction of the Doncaster Road exit. The Eastern Freeway should be widened to utilise the existing reserve along the northern fringe of the Freeway in order to accommodate the continuation of the rail line along the centre median. This would reduce the need to tunnel the railway line between either sides of the Bulleen Road overpass. It is understood that this arrangement was

undertaken along certain sections of the Kwinana Freeway in Perth to accommodate the Southern Railway Line to Mandurah, reducing the level of tunnelling required, and thus reducing cost.

#### 9.4.4. Burke Road

Although this does not appear as a recommendation in the Draft Recommendations Report, Council suggests that a station in the vicinity of Burke Road should be considered on the RT1/RT2 alignment options.

A station at this location, with an extension of tram route 72 (Camberwell), will provide for an integrated public transport connection, traversing both an east-west heavy rail service, and north-south light rail service. Accessibility to the station could be further maximised with the provision of feeder bus services (as indicated by URS with their recommendation for a bus service to Ivanhoe East for example). This will achieve the objectives of achieving an integrated public transport network.

A station at Burke Road is further supported by comments which appear in the Draft Recommendations Report which state that *“the study team feels that there would be merit in introducing a new bus service in Ivanhoe East along Lower Heidelberg Road. This new route could service a larger catchment north of the proposed Bulleen Road station, which could have the potential to support a greater level of bus/train transfer”* (p. 64). This could be achieved with a station at Burke Road.

However Council considers that an integrated public transport network cannot be achieved with a bus route alone, and will require the provision of a station at Burke Road to facilitate transport connections with the route 72 tram service to Camberwell and Ivanhoe, and local bus service connections.

The absence of a station at Burke Road, and the recommendation to not proceed with a station at Doncaster Hill results in fewer overall stations along the RT1/RT2 alignment, resulting in further congestion and demand for access to the only two other stations in the Manningham/Boroondara region – Bulleen and Doncaster Park & Ride.

A station at this location is also supported by the findings of the SNAMUTS modelling contained in the reports by Curtin University (2012).

It is suggested that this is taken into consideration when re-evaluating the feasibility study and transport modelling to formulate the final recommendation.

#### 9.4.5. Kew / Chandler Hwy

The impact on traffic congestion at this location will need to be further investigated, as currently, the area experiences significant congestion during both peak and non-peak periods, particularly for north-south access across the Yarra, and east-bound access to the Eastern Freeway. This will have a negative impact on the efficiency of feeder bus services accessing a station at this location.

Any new travel demand in the area generated by a railway station and associated Park & Ride and Kiss & Ride facilities, will need to be addressed through either the duplication of

the Chandler Highway bridge over the Yarra River, or improved traffic arrangements for access between the Eastern Freeway, Chandler Highway and Princess Street.

#### 9.4.6. Victoria Park

It is noted that the RT1 option will result in the removal of Victoria Park Station. This station is located adjacent to Johnston Street, currently providing east-west bus connections to the health and educational precincts in Parkville and Carlton. The removal of this station from the RT1 option will eliminate this connection, and require rail passengers to take a longer journey through the Clifton Hill line and City Loop, increasing overall journey times.

It is suggested that this recommendation be reviewed in order to determine the impact to accessibility caused by the loss of this station from the public transport network.

### 9.5. Doncaster Area Rapid Transit (DART)

As illustrated in the Draft Recommendations Report, it is understood that bus patronage on the four DART services has increased by 47% on weekdays, 212% on Saturdays and 146% on Sundays, illustrating the growing demand for public transport in the area. The physical number of weekday trips undertaken on public transport is estimated to double to 600,000 by 2031 across Melbourne, with demand for trips to the Melbourne CBD expected to increase from 48% to 66% of all trips by 2031.

The *Doncaster Rail Study Final Options Evaluation Report: Integrated Transport Network Planning Report* (pg 22) states that DART patronage is expected to double between 2011 and 2031. With the four routes now carrying in excess of 3 million passengers per year, the above figures illustrate significant demand for public transport in the Manningham region; a demand for which supply will not be able to be achieved without the provision of heavy rail.

The Draft Recommendations Report states that the current average journey time of DART services between Doncaster and the CBD is 35 minutes. However in the morning peak, this journey time increases to an average of 51 minutes from Doncaster Hill to King/Lonsdale Streets in the CBD (as reflected in the current PTV time table), reflecting the time delays that are occurred to road-based public transport such as buses, attributed to by traffic congestion at peak times (when these services are carrying the majority of their daily load). These delays can often be further exacerbated by delays caused by motorists' misuse of bus lanes and the need for buses to negotiate their way through traffic exiting the Eastern Freeway at the Chandler Highway in Kew.

Although the current DART system has been successful since its implementation, the increasing level of traffic congestion throughout Melbourne, and its susceptibility to road disruptions, will continue to pose a threat to the reliability and efficiency of road-based public transport services. Therefore, it is imperative that alternative forms of public transport, such as rail, are delivered to provide alternative modes of transport for Melbourne's commuters.

It is understood that once rail to Doncaster is delivered, the DART routes will be reconfigured to provide feeder bus services to proposed rail stations. Council seeks to ensure that any changes to the DART network, maintain or improve the current standards of efficiency, frequency and accessibility, in order to ensure that the feeder bus services remain an attractive public transport option for commuters.

## 9.6. Grade Separation (Bus & Pedestrian) at Doncaster Hill

In order to achieve the recommended two-minute frequency of buses through Doncaster Hill, grade separation of bus lanes (and pedestrians) through Doncaster Hill, and grade separation of a new bus interchange to service the development of Doncaster Hill, is required. Grade separation through Doncaster Hill will be required **with or without** the provision of a heavy rail station at Doncaster Hill.

Given the competing demands for limited road space and the need to review the location of the bus interchange within Doncaster Hill, an opportunity exists to establish a new, grade separated state-of-the-art bus interchange at or near the intersection of Doncaster and Tram Roads. Such a facility would address the lack of continuity of on-road bus lanes, address the current delays to bus services arising from the need to divert bus services through the Westfield Doncaster interchange, centrally locate the interchange within the Principal Activities Area to maximise pedestrian access, establish safe and attractive pedestrian linkages under (or over) arterial roads, and allow the reallocation of traffic signal phases to better manage future traffic volume increases through key Doncaster Hill intersections.

If a station is located in Doncaster Hill, a new bus interchange would likely be required and could be designed to complement any future rail station. This action is consistent with government policy to increase the uptake of sustainable transport modes, reduce road congestion, improve community health and address the adverse environmental impacts associated with continued dependence on private motor vehicles and to increase the density of residential development in and around activity areas.

Further, given the limited available road space to achieve the 'order of magnitude' improvement required through Doncaster Hill, it would appear that any solution will rely on grade separating buses (and potentially pedestrians) from cars. This should be taken into consideration in the Final Recommendations Report.

## 9.7. PTV Network Development Plan – Metropolitan Rail

Council is pleased to see that rail to Doncaster has been considered in PTV's Network Development Plan for the future of Melbourne's Rail Network. Council urges the State Government to build rail to Doncaster as a matter of priority, with both the Doncaster Rail line and the de-coupling of the South Morang line implemented within the 15 year timeframe outlined in PTV's Plan.

Council acknowledges that high-capacity signalling is required on the entire rail network in order to maximise the level of capacity that can be achieved on the existing network. Delivery of high-capacity signalling on the Clifton Hill line may result in the Doncaster Rail line being delivered prior to the de-coupling of the South Morang line, by increasing the number of trains that can operate on the Clifton Hill line between Collingwood and Flinders Street.

## 9.8. De-Coupling of South Morang

Council suggests that further analysis be undertaken to assess the viability of delivering rail to Doncaster through a staged approach – by implementing high capacity signalling to increase capacity on the Clifton Hill line to cater for demand generated by a Doncaster Rail line, prior to the removal of South Morang trains from the Clifton Hill line. This will ensure that rail to

Doncaster can be delivered and operating, while any long-term construction to de-couple the South Morang line is undertaken. It is noted that the implementation of high-capacity signalling is also a key objective of PTV's *Network Development Plan*, to unlock capacity on existing rail lines.

The argument presented for decoupling appear to be based on an assumption of projected demand along the South Morang line being met prior to the latent and already existing demand in Manningham, Boroondara and the wider eastern suburbs being addressed. Council considers that the findings of the Draft Recommendations Report are too heavily focused on providing a solution for the South Morang line as evidenced by the vast number of the recommendations which relate to that project alone – thereby detracting from the focus of providing rail to Doncaster.

### 9.9.Cycling

Council notes that there only appears to be a minimal level of reference in the report of the potential for cyclists to make use of the proposed train route, and that the patronage numbers do not reflect the much wider distance that cyclists may travel to and from a station. This is particularly of note around the Balwyn North, Bulleen, Box Hill North and Doncaster catchments. There are extensive cycling paths alongside the freeway which would allow residents of Box Hill North to access the proposed Doncaster Rail stations.

It is considered that this underestimation of overall potential patronage should be corrected in the Final Recommendations Report.

### 9.10. Pedestrian Analysis

The Draft Recommendations Report assumes a station walking catchment of 800 metres. Research based on VISTA data indicates that 800 metres is the 50th percentile (SKM, 2009) and the remaining half walk in excess of 800 metres. It appears that transport modelled data has underestimated the walk-up catchments of the stations under each theme.

It is understood that the proposed walk-up catchment for the train line was a conservatively short 800m. This considerably underestimates the distance many people will walk to use public transport (it is noted that the median distance is 1.8km). This will dramatically alter the catchment area and potential number of patrons, particularly around Doncaster Hill and Burke Road.

The absence of a station at Burke Road to attract passengers from the nearby suburbs of Kew and Ivanhoe is therefore important. If one of the considerations in the proposed timing of the construction is growth in passenger numbers, creating only three stations (and with only two of these being located in the new Manningham catchment – the Chandler Highway station in fact perhaps could be considered an alternative to existing Fairfield and Alphington stations) will result in at a minimum a perception of crowding not seen along other services in Melbourne, and this may be what is experienced.

This is particularly short-sighted when the much higher than forecast growth for the Perth rail system is considered. Failing to provide enough stations, while assisting in keeping travel times down, will result in a built-in failure mechanism, as passengers become dissatisfied with the service.

### **9.11. Connection to Ringwood**

Council acknowledges that Stage 1 of the Doncaster Rail Study was to investigate the prospect of heavy rail to Doncaster. However, it is suggested that consideration be given to investigating (at perhaps a high level of the current feasibility study), provision of a rail connection to Ringwood, connecting with the Lilydale and Belgrave lines at Ringwood Station.

This would provide an integrated transport connection between the eastern suburbs and the inner, northern and western suburbs of Melbourne, and shift the current nature of Melbourne's rail network from a radial service, to a Metro-style service, in line with PTV's objectives for the future of Melbourne's rail network.

## **10. Land Use**

### **10.1. Metropolitan Planning Strategy**

The Metropolitan Planning Strategy, which is currently being developed, will help guide Melbourne's growth and change over the next 30-40 years. It will give communities, businesses and local government the confidence, flexibility and certainty needed to make informed decisions about their future. The Strategy's objectives for transport accessibility, economic growth, environmental protection and infrastructure and services to support growth, can be achieved with the provision of heavy rail to Doncaster. The following outlines the correlation between the principles that guide the Strategy and the objectives which rail to Doncaster seeks to achieve.

One of the key issues for Manningham, is the provision of appropriate infrastructure (with an emphasis on public transport infrastructure), which is fundamental to ensuring the success of the Metropolitan Planning Strategy. There is a significant focus on the Central City and employment clusters, however, significant improvements to public transport infrastructure (either through new infrastructure, such as Doncaster Rail, or provision of more efficient bus services and associated infrastructure) is essential to the success of Doncaster Hill and the ongoing viability of Manningham's activity centres which will continue to be the focus of local job creation.

Public transport underpins all nine principles identified within the Metropolitan Planning Strategy Discussion Paper (released in 2012), but primarily Principle 3 (Social and economic participation). Improved public transport through the provision of a Doncaster Rail link between the city and Doncaster and beyond would provide public transport access for a large portion of the population to education, health and jobs in the inner city. As well as the significant benefit to Manningham, a rail link from the city to Doncaster and beyond will provide a benefit to the entire eastern region when considered as part of an integrated public transport network with feeder bus and tram services.

Manningham Council's planning for Doncaster Hill pre-dates the introduction of Melbourne 2030 and aims to provide a framework for the coordinated and successful development of Doncaster Hill, as a 21st Century Sustainable Urban Village, as the regional focus for a diversity of high-density residential living, retail, office, community and entertainment activities. Doncaster Hill (PAA), together with The Pines (MAC) and Manningham's nine Neighbourhood Activity Centres largely form the basis of Manningham's growth strategy and are detailed in

Manningham's Residential Strategy (2012). To achieve a 'globally connected and competitive city' (Principle 2), the Metropolitan Planning Strategy needs to continue the existing policy of directing infill housing and medium density/high density housing development to locations within and nearby activity centres, which are also generally supported by sustainable transport options. This policy direction would contribute to the success of achieving 'a 20 minute city' (an objective of the Strategy).

Provision of adequate public transport and accessibility is a key component of building social connections and providing educational opportunities to encourage social participation (Principle 3). Goal 3.1 of the Manningham City Council's Generation 2030 Community Plan seeks to achieve, *'the provision of an integrated and efficient public transport network providing affordable, well connected and alternative forms of travel'*. This will be achieved by improved transport infrastructure, extending the hours of public transport and co-ordinating the different modes of transport, so that the bus network links with the train service and tram services etc. Manningham currently relies solely on a bus network, and is supportive of alternative transport services, including Doncaster Rail infrastructure and active travel plans to promote walking and cycling.

The Doncaster Hill Activities Area, central to Manningham's strategy to accommodate population growth and future business activity would greatly benefit from a rail link to the Central City. Further, a continuation of the Doncaster Rail line from Victoria Park to Parkville (RT2), would create a valuable public transport link to this 'health and knowledge' centre of Melbourne. The project also provides potential for integrated land use and transport solutions with multiple benefits for the eastern Region. This would achieve the objectives of a 'polycentric city linked to regional cities' (Principle 6) of the Metropolitan Planning Strategy.

## 10.2. Preserving the Freeway Rail Alignment

Council seeks to ensure that the median-strip of the Eastern Freeway is preserved for a future rail alignment, as it was first designed to achieve in the 1970s. Council request that a recommendation be included in the Final Recommendations Report to undertake the necessary planning and approvals to secure the land reservation of the Eastern Freeway.

It is recognised that feasibility studies, and any associated planning and environmental approvals required in the process to deliver rail infrastructure along the Rapid Transit Option corridor, could take several years or decades to accomplish. In the meantime, there is the real threat that the median-strip and land reservation could be acquired for other purposes, such as future widening of the Eastern Freeway or appropriation for the East-West road link.

## 11. East-West Road Link

It is recognised that the route alignment of the Rapid Transit options has been forced to adapt to the proposed East-West road link, potentially adding even more cost to the project scope for Doncaster Rail. This is particularly evident on the section between Chandler Highway and Hoddle Street, where the rail alignment has been forced to exit the freeway median reserve, to avoid conflicting with proposed East-West link tunnel portals and new tollway lanes. Arguably, the cost for this should be accrued to the road project, not the rail project. This would further enhance the cost benefit ratio of the rail project.

It is noted that transport modelling of the East-West link was not included in the Draft Recommendations Report. This fails to illustrate the impact on traffic demand and congestion when both the Doncaster rail line and East-West link are considered, as well as the impact each project will have on the other.

It is recommended that assessment towards the final recommendation for Doncaster Rail should include a review of the likely impact caused by the East-West link proposal.

## **12. Phase 2 of the Doncaster Rail Study**

Council is keen to ensure that Phase 2 of the Doncaster Rail Study, does not become heavily focused on assessing and providing a solution to the South Morang capacity constraint issue, and maintains its focus on assessing the best outcome for heavy rail to Doncaster.

Council also seeks to ensure that the State Government reaffirm its commitment to deliver Phase 2 of the Doncaster Rail Study within the 2013/14 financial year.

It is understood that Phase 2 of the Study will involved a further detailed assessment of the final selected alignment, and determine the funding, timing and staging of the project. Council seeks to ensure that the Study includes sufficient detail to satisfy the requirements of the State Treasury Department and Infrastructure Australia.

Council suggests that Phase 2 will also need to investigate and assess the cost of a 'do-nothing' approach if a rail line to Doncaster is not built and as station is not provided on the Hill, particularly the impact to the future economic prosperity of Doncaster Hill from the impact of increasing traffic congestion and the lack of adequate public transport access to local businesses and residents on the Hill.

Council's key concern will be to see the addition of a rail connection to the fast growing Doncaster Hill Principal Activities Area, when the final Phase 1 Recommendations Report is release later this year. Doncaster Hill requires whole of government support in order to ensure that it meets its objective as an exemplar transit oriented development.

## **13. Consultation with the DRLGG**

The DRLGG would like to thank URS and the State Government for consulting with the Group during the early stages of the Multi-Criteria Assessment (MCA) phases undertaken by URS. This was to ensure that Local Government had the opportunity to review likely outcomes, and assess any gaps and opportunities from the perspective of Local Government.

However, the DRLGG and Local Government were not involved or consulted in the final MCA, thereby missing an opportunity to inform URS and State Government of any missed opportunities, which would have assisted URS in assessing the viability of the final selected alignments and station locations.

The DRLGG and Manningham Council request that URS and the State Government include them in any consultation with regard to finalising the Final Recommendations Report in future.

## Summary

Manningham City Council's submission is made for consideration by URS and the State Government in finalising the Doncaster Rail Study Phase 1 Recommendations Report.

Manningham City Council generally supports the Report's recommendation for the Rapid Transit Option 1 (RT1) as the preferred route alignment between the Melbourne CBD and Doncaster, including the two proposed stations at Bulleen and Doncaster Park & Ride. In addition, Council also supports the Rapid Transit Option 2 (RT2) as an alternative alignment into the CBD. However Council would like to ensure that the aforementioned concerns and suggestions within this submission are taken into consideration in the Final Recommendations Report, in order to provide the most ideal solution and recommendations to deliver rail to Doncaster.

In summary, Council's major concerns are:

- Inclusion of an extension of the line to Doncaster Hill, with a station provided at the Hill;
- Review of the cost to provide a more accurate cost-estimate;
- Inclusion of a station at Burke Road within either of the Rapid Transit options;
- Consideration of connections with tram routes 48 (North Balwyn) and 72 (Camberwell);
- Review of population and station patronage data against the 2011 Census data;
- Investigation of the grade-separation of buses at Doncaster Hill;
- Consideration of the findings of the reports by Curtin University;
- Reconsideration of the closure of Victoria Park Station;
- Inclusion of more detailed modelling in relation to cycling and pedestrians;
- Preservation of the median strip of the Eastern Freeway reservation;
- Consultation with Manningham Council and the DRLGG in the final report process for Phase 1;
- Further assessment of the capacity improvement opportunities of the Clifton Hill Group lines, to deliver rail to Doncaster and the 'de-coupling' of South Morang as a staged approach in that order; and
- A commitment to proceed with Phase 2 of the Study, focused on Doncaster Rail, with the outcomes to satisfy State Treasury Department and Infrastructure Australia criteria.

In addition, Council is looking for bipartisan commitment to completing the Doncaster Rail Line within the 15 year time frame contained within the PTV's *'Network Development Plan – Metropolitan Rail (2012)'*.

Manningham City Council wishes to thank URS, PTV and the Department of Transport for the opportunity to respond to the release of the findings of the Doncaster Rail Study Phase 1 Recommendations Report (Draft) and looks forward to the receipt of the Final Recommendations Report, addressing the suggestions included within this submission.

## **Appendices**

### **Appendix A – Manningham Planning Scheme DD08 Map**

## **Appendix B – Doncaster Hill Population and Household Forecasts (City of Manningham)**

**Appendix C – Revised Doncaster Hill Planning Permit Map (February 2013)**

***Appendix D – ‘Initial Assessment of Accessibility & New Funding Opportunities for the Doncaster Rail Project’, and ‘Doncaster Rail: what are its Prospects?’ Reports***

***Appendix E – ‘The Review of Parking and Traffic Management within  
Doncaster Hill Study Findings Report (GTA, 2012)’***