



# RAIL INFRASTRUCTURE ALLIANCE

## WESTERN PORTAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN AMENDMENT - SEPTEMBER 2020 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY



# ENGAGING WITH COMMUNITIES

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## INTRODUCTION

The Metro Tunnel will create a new end-to-end rail line from Sunbury to Cranbourne / Pakenham, with high capacity trains and five new underground stations.

The Rail Infrastructure Alliance (RIA), a partnership between John Holland, CPB Contractors, AECOM, Metro Trains Melbourne (MTM) and Rail Projects Victoria (RPV), is building the western entrance to the Metro Tunnel in Kensington (Western Portal).

Western tunnel entrance works commenced in accordance with RIA's Western Portal Development Plan, which was placed on public display in February and March 2019 and approved by the Minister for Planning in May 2019.

RIA's Western Portal Development Plan sets out required above-ground works to construct the western tunnel entrance and describes the response to the Urban Design Strategy (UDS) and relevant Environmental Performance Requirements, as defined in the Metro Tunnel Environmental Management Framework.

Further to the Ministerial approval of the Western Portal Development Plan in May 2019 and a minor amendment in August 2019, RIA sought to amend the Development Plan to reflect further design development and consultation outcomes. This included drafting plans and designs for a Communications Equipment Room (CER) and a Signalling Equipment Room (SER) in consultation with the Rail Systems Alliance (RSA), which commenced work on the Metro Tunnel Project after the original RIA Development Plan was approved.

Amendments to the Western Portal Development Plan focused on including additional project land at 1-39 Hobsons Road for the proposed rail services buildings (CER and SER) and associated works to deliver vital communications and signalling infrastructure for the Metro Tunnel. The amendment also included:

- Minor landscaping and design changes along Childers Street
- Addition of a small area of Childers Street, east of South Kensington station, into the Development Plan area, to provide a new access point into the rail corridor for future maintenance by the rail operator
- Flood plain management / protection alongside the rail corridor
- Editorial updates to reflect proposed amendments.

The draft RIA Western Portal Development Plan amendment was placed on public display from Monday 4 May 2020 to Friday 22 May 2020. This display period was later extended to Monday 25 May 2020 to enable community members to complete submissions after requesting additional information from the project team in the latter stages of the display period.

Feedback received during public display was considered in the finalisation of amendments to the RIA Western Portal Development Plan. An updated plan was submitted to the Minister for Planning for consideration and was approved on 6 September 2020.

## PURPOSE

This Community Engagement Summary provides a summary of the feedback received as part of the community consultation undertaken to support completion of amendments to the RIA Western Portal Development Plan.

## ENGAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

RIA delivered its community engagement activities in line with RPV's engagement framework, which can be found on the Metro Tunnel website at [metrotunnel.vic.gov.au](http://metrotunnel.vic.gov.au). This framework guides all engagement activities for the Metro Tunnel and captures the project's commitment to meaningful consultation with stakeholders and communities during the planning and delivery of the project.

The following core principles guide RIA's engagement:

- **Direct:** Direct engagement is the preferred means of communicating major issues to affected stakeholders and communities
- **Open:** Communication will be open, transparent, inclusive, accessible, accurate and consistent in its content, and will be planned, coordinated and timely in its delivery to all audiences
- **Proactive:** Proactive communications and early engagement are integral parts of all project and operational planning processes to ensure a "no surprises" approach
- **Tailored:** Messages and delivery channels must be tailored to the communication and information needs of their intended audiences.

## WESTERN PORTAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN AMENDMENT – PUBLIC DISPLAY

Draft amendments to RIA’s Western Portal Development Plan were released for public display from Monday 4 May 2020 to Monday 25 May 2020 via the Metro Tunnel website and the State Government’s Engage Victoria platform. This 16-business day public display period provided the community and stakeholders with the opportunity to view and formally comment on proposed updates to the approved plan.

The engagement approach is outlined in the table below.

Information	Online / Digital	Interactions
Letterbox drop to 2,750 dwellings around South Kensington station advising of the public display of the draft amendment. Residents received a postcard containing information about the proposed planning amendment and virtual information event held on 12 May 2020. The postcard also invited the community to participate in an online survey seeking feedback on their views.	Public display of the draft RIA Development Plan on the Metro Tunnel Project website and Engage Victoria platform, including the opportunity to complete an online survey and provide feedback, from 4 May to 25 May 2020.	Five virtual drop-in community information sessions held via Zoom on 12 May 2020. A facilitator welcomed participants to each session, which led in to presentations from the project’s planning and design teams, followed by Q&As / general discussion.
	Social media posts on Metro Tunnel Project Twitter and Facebook accounts featuring links to draft plan and the online survey, as well as time and location of community drop-in sessions.	Follow up discussions with one participant who was interested in potential parking impacts.
Public notice advertisements published in The Age and Herald Sun on Monday 4 May 2020 advising of the public display.	Metro Tunnel Project e-news subscribers received three updates (one relating to forthcoming public display, one about the virtual drop-in and a final update advising of the end of public display period and thanking the community for their contribution).	Briefings provided to Kensington Community Reference Group.

## ENGAGEMENT SNAPSHOT

The table below provides a breakdown of key interactions with the community.

<b>13</b> Submissions during public display	<b>39</b> Interactions at virtual community information sessions	<b>2,750</b> Letterbox drops to dwellings surrounding South Kensington station advising of the public display of the draft plan
<b>10</b> People reached during CRG and community group briefings	<b>1,027</b> Visits to Engage Victoria website	<b>353</b> Metro Tunnel Project webpage news item views
<b>239</b> Visits to Metro Tunnel Project's development plans webpage	<b>1,149</b> Metro Tunnel Project e-news recipients	<b>21,985</b> Social media page interactions (page impressions, reactions, comments, shares)
		<b>27,565</b> Total interactions with the community

## COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

The table below outlines a summary of the specific issues raised about the Western Portal Development Plan amendment.

Comments	Project team response
<p><b>Inclusion of area within 1-39 Hobsons Road for rail services buildings (CER/SER)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enquiry about the connection of power and cables and whether there would be potential conflict with flooding in the area</li> <li>• Concerns about potential noise associated with the buildings</li> <li>• Query about why the CER/SER buildings and location were not shown in original Development Plan</li> <li>• Requests for images of the proposed CER/SER buildings.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Underground works, including power and signalling cables are not included as part of the Development Plan. Any potential flooding impacts on the construction and laying of cables will be appropriately managed during construction</li> <li>• There will be minimal noise from the CER/SER buildings. Noise from fixed plant will be in line with the project's Environmental Performance Requirements (EPRs)</li> <li>• The CER/SER buildings are new buildings for the purposes of the Project and required significant design development by RIA and the RSA prior to confirming their size and the CER/SER compound layout. The RSA commenced work on the Metro Tunnel Project after the original Development Plan was approved</li> <li>• Artist impressions of the proposed CER/SER buildings were shown during the community information sessions.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Childers Street design updates</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concern about potential conflict between the maintenance access and the proposed bicycle route along Childers Street</li> <li>• Request for further information on how Childers Street will be used after the project is completed</li> <li>• Request for a new legacy bicycle path to be constructed along the rail corridor, where the Sunbury Line currently runs, and link with the capital trail to Docklands.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The proposed maintenance area and access point is not expected to interfere with the bicycle route along the southern side of Childers Street, as the access point functions in the same manner as a residential driveway</li> <li>• Childers Street will be reinstated at the conclusion of the project and reopened to the public with appropriate traffic calming measures and new pedestrian priority areas</li> <li>• New cycling paths outside of the project area are not considered as part of the Development Plan however this suggestion will be passed on to the relevant stakeholders.</li> </ul>

Comments	Project team response
<p><b>Potential car parking impacts</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concern about reduced commuter car parking when Childers Street is reinstated</li> <li>• Concern about potential impact of Childers Street rail maintenance point east of South Kensington station on parking between Childers and Tennyson streets and request for clarity on the number of car parking spaces east of the station</li> <li>• Query about vehicle drop-off and turn around areas near station entrance</li> <li>• Request for temporary offset car parking at 1-39 Hobsons Road to be provided as permanent public car parking.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The most recent Development Plan does not consider any further change to the 82 spaces proposed between Kensington Road and South Kensington station in the previously approved Development Plan</li> <li>• A minimum of 87 car parking spaces will be provided along Childers Street, including the 82 commuter spaces to the west of South Kensington station and a minimum of five spaces on the northern side of Childers Street to the east of South Kensington station</li> <li>• RIA has sought to minimise loss of parking where possible, while balancing the new infrastructure for the Metro Tunnel Project with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved landscaping opportunities</li> <li>• Safe access for cyclists and pedestrians</li> <li>• Diversity of parking (Disability Discrimination Act)</li> <li>• Creation of station forecourt area and Ormond Street public space</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The Development Plan amendment focused on changes to parking between South Kensington station and Tennyson Street to allow for a vehicular access point to the rail corridor</li> <li>• A drop off area for South Kensington station cannot be provided as there is no turnaround area for vehicles at that location</li> <li>• The temporary offset car park and land at 1-39 Hobsons Road will be returned to the landowner, the Victorian Government at the conclusion of the project. The landowner will be responsible for the future use or sale of the land.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Drainage response and floodplain management</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flooding around the South Kensington station entrance and along Childers Street is a key issue</li> <li>• Request for Metro Tunnel Project to fix precinct's historical flooding issues as part of Western Portal works</li> <li>• Request for further information about floodplain management and the planned swale within the rail embankment south of 1-39 Hobsons Road.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The proposed floodplain management solution will ensure there is no increase in flooding as a result of the Metro Tunnel Project, however the works will not address historical flooding issues across Kensington</li> <li>• Historical flooding issues in Kensington are outside of the Metro Tunnel scope of works and are not considered as part of the Development Plan</li> <li>• The proposed flood management solution within the rail embankment is ongoing and subject to detailed design in consultation with key stakeholders. The Development Plan refines the indicative area for the solution and notes that a swale will be provided. The depth of the proposed swale varies across its length but is typically 300mm deep and 600mm at its deepest point. The water storage capacity of the swale will offset the same volume lost at the floodplain from the work at the Western Portal. The swale will consist of top soil and grass, with a stormwater pit located at the low point of the swale connected into the drainage system, which discharges directly to the Maribyrnong River.</li> </ul>

Additional comments	Project team response
<p><b>Floodwall creative design response</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concern raised regarding the change in the floodwall design from a textured design to a creative response.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The project team has finalised a creative design brief with a design curator to deliver a creative treatment to the floodwall</li> <li>The project has established a design committee to shortlist and select a designer. The selected designer will commence design development and will work closely with the committee to finalise the creative design response</li> <li>Design is expected to be finalised by late 2020.</li> </ul>
<p><b>South Kensington station</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Requests for South Kensington station upgrade.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A station upgrade is outside the scope of RIA works.</li> </ul>



## PREVIOUS ENGAGEMENT

Prior to the current amendment, RIA actively engaged with stakeholders and the community regarding approval of the original Western Portal Development Plan in late 2018 and early 2019.

As part of this engagement process, RIA implemented a pre-engagement program in Kensington between October 2018 and February 2019 prior to formal display and consultation on the Western Portal Development Plan. Pre-engagement included community pop up information events, workshops and community briefings.

This provided the opportunity to seek and test ideas to inform preparation of design concepts, seek early feedback on key community interests and concerns, outline which design elements are fixed and why, prior to the display period.

The original Development Plan was released for public display from 4 February 2019 to 22 February 2019 via the Metro Tunnel website. This 15-business day public display period provided the community and stakeholders with the opportunity to formally comment on the Development Plan.

Targeted consultation with key stakeholders was completed for the minor amendment in September 2019.

Flood wall treatment and the South Kensington station entrance and forecourt design were of greatest interest to submitters, followed by the proposed design of Childers Street. Respondents also noted the importance of landscaping, parking, cycling and pedestrian access and safety, requested upgrades to South Kensington station and an integrated design that could provide a future connection with the Maribyrnong River.

The project team's approach to design and management of these elements through the completion of the original Development Plan and detailed design is provided below.

### **Childers Street and station entrance**

The community was supportive of parking reinstatement and use of planter spaces along Childers Street, particularly in relation

to landscaping along Childers Street and the interface between the station, JJ Holland Park and Ormond Street.

In response, the design of the station entrance has been adjusted, with a focus on soft, rather than hard landscaping (e.g. more plants and fewer hard surfaces where possible). The Western Portal precinct has been designed to maximise landscape opportunities and canopy tree planting.

Childers Street will be reopened to all traffic at the completion of the project and will be wide enough to allow two trucks to pass. The street will be shared by bikes and cars, with shared lane marking to indicate this. The project team will reinstate 82 commuter car parks to the west of South Kensington station, with planter spaces installed to soften the appearance of the flood wall. A kiss and ride zone was considered however not included due to space constraints and to avoid encouraging U-turns on Childers Street following passenger drop offs.

### **Flood wall treatment**

The community has shown a keen interest in the flood wall treatment, in particular, seeking anti-graffiti treatments and a greening of the wall or other methods to make it interesting to look at.

To 'green' the area in front of the wall, additional landscaping has been included along the southern side of Childers Street to help filter views towards the flood wall and minimise urban heat capture within the precinct. The wall will have an anti-graffiti treatment applied. RIA, in consultation with Rail Projects Victoria, has also identified a significant opportunity to undertake a separate creative design process for the Childers Street floodwall.

### **New public open space at 135 Ormond Street**

Kensington residents have supported the proposed public space at 135 Ormond Street once the area is no longer required for construction purposes. The design of the redeveloped 135 Ormond Street area has focused on soft, rather than hard, landscaping and has sought to maximise landscape opportunities and canopy tree planting.

### **Requests for South Kensington station upgrade**

A station upgrade is outside the scope of RIA works.

## ONGOING ENGAGEMENT

In addition to consultation undertaken with the community, RIA has undertaken extensive stakeholder consultation to guide preparation of the Western Portal Development Plan and draft amendments to the Development Plan prior to and following the public display and submission process. This involved consultation with the Metro Tunnel Development Plan Review Committee (DPRC) and the Metro Tunnel Urban Design and Architecture Advisory Panel (UDAAP). RIA has also sought feedback from Local Government, service providers and stakeholder groups.

As part of the design process, RIA will continue to engage with key stakeholders including:

- City of Melbourne
- Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP)
- Department of Transport (DoT), including Transport for Victoria (TfV) and VicRoads
- Department of Treasury and Finance (DTF)
- Environment Protection Authority (EPA)
- Heritage Victoria (HV)
- Melbourne Water
- Metro Tunnel Project Development Plan Review Committee (DPRC)
- Metro Tunnel Urban Design and Architectural Advice Panel (UDAAP) including the Office of the Victorian Government Architect (OVGA)
- Public Transport Victoria
- Traffic and Transport Working Group
- VicTrack
- Metro Trains Melbourne (MTM)
- Kensington Community Reference Group, and
- Our interface delivery partners, Cross Yarra Partnership (CYP) and Rail Systems Alliance (RSA).

# NEXT STEPS

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The Minister for Planning approved the amended RIA Western Portal Development Plan on 6 September 2020.


RIA is continuing to progress through the design process for the Western Portal precinct. The project team will continue to engage with the local community on design solutions and will seek feedback where possible throughout this process.

The project team will also continue to engage with its key project and government stakeholders, including the City of Melbourne, as detailed designs are finalised.

## More information

To find out more about the Metro Tunnel Project:

 [metrotunnel.vic.gov.au](http://metrotunnel.vic.gov.au)

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