Thursday, 8th December 2011

Mr. Nathan Bunt
Executive Officer
Parliament of Victoria
Spring Street
East Melbourne Vic 3002
Email: osisdc@parliament.vic.gov.au

Dear Sir,

Re: Outer Suburban Interface Services and Development Committee
Inquiry into Growing the Suburbs - Infrastructure and Business
Development in Outer Suburban Melbourne

On behalf of the Dyson Group of Companies the following submission addresses the
committee’s terms of reference and is specifically focused on the Plenty Corridor; City of
Whittlesea.

The City of Whittlesea population growth has been increasing consistently between 5 to
6% for the past 3 years and the forecast for the 20 years to 2031 is 82.3% on the current
population figure of 162,067. Currently it is the second fastest growing municipality in
Australia. To date the growth throughout the City of Whittlesea in new housing estates,
new community centres, new schools and further growth of the Westfield Plenty Valley
shopping centre has been obvious. The RACV published an article in October 2008 referring
to the Plenty Valley region road system being under pressure. Since this article was
published the State Government introduced new bus services operating
North/South via both Plenty and Yan Yean Roads and the new SmartBus which operates
East/West and also along Yan Yean Road through McDonalds Road to
Melbourne Airport. With such significant growth, today the overall main arterial road
system of this region is not adequate for more cars, and this translates into road public
transport becoming less appealing.

Road infrastructure initiatives such as bus only lanes, bus specific turning lanes and bus
only traffic signal priorities have been implemented by the Department of Transport for
the SmartBus initiative. These bus priorities can be utilised by other bus services where
applicable for a route and direction. Preferably, these infrastructure initiatives could be

1 City of Whittlesea Website – November 2011
2 Connect outer Melbourne Special Report 2008
www.racv.com.au/wps/wcm/connect/d38bc5004da9a02a7b0ff54a1b4593/2939_Connect+OM_complete.pdf?MOD=AJPERES
implemented throughout the City of Whittlesea and adjoining councils to entice the traveling public from their cars. Attachment A contains a list of nominated roads and intersections Dysons believe are in need of priority measures being taken before the confidence of current passengers is lost. These measures would also assist in gaining new bus travellers.

The extension of the Epping Rail Line to Plenty Valley shopping centre, once complete and operating around April 2012, will create even greater traffic issues in the area. Dysons operate many services to/from Plenty Valley hub and recommend bus priority measures (as mentioned above) within this surrounding area be implemented to assist in reducing the road congestion that is and will continue to create unsafe situations for other road users including cyclists and pedestrians.

It has been reported that the existing reserves for future train transport from the Plenty Valley hub (South Morang to Mernda) and tram transport from Bundoora (RMIT to South Morang) are not going to be constructed within the next 20 years. Dyson’s recommend that there needs to be a public transport study concentrating in the Plenty Valley corridor which would quickly identify the short and long term requirements for the main arterial roads. Examples can be taken from the success of the new SmartBus Victorian Government initiative which was recently established and was operating within a very short time frame. Dysons understand the original SmartBus planning team remains employed within the Department of Transport and would be of great assistance to conduct further studies.

As the major road public transport provider over many decades to the Whittlesea region we find most of the road system continues to be as it was originally designed and is no longer capable of meeting today’s traffic flows and ever increasing vehicle capacity. In summary, this whole region requires a priority review on current bus measures with the view of significantly improving traffic flows.

I take this opportunity to thank the Outer Suburban Interface Services and Development Committee for the opportunity to table this submission.

Yours sincerely

[Signature]

Lance Deacon
Joint Managing Director

Attachment A: Dysons nominated ‘Bus Priority’ roads requiring attention.
Dysons nominated 'Bus Priority' roads requiring attention.

Dysons have over the years through the Department of Transport, Vic Roads and Bus Association of Victoria and the City of Whittlesea at various times sort support, canvassed idea's to improve the reliability and improve network coverage within the City of Whittlesea.

It has been difficult to have the Public Transport prioritised within the region with the competing factors winning out, generally low density transportation getting a greater proportion of the road space available, as an example on Plenty Road 1.8m of road pavement is reserved for a bicycle lane that has a low occupancy or capacity to carry people, when an additional 1m of road space could provide for a bus lane or even a T3 lane thus maximizing the capacity of the road space and allowing multi passenger movements (2 or more in car & buses can be up to 72 passengers per trip in the same road space as a bicycle lane + 1m) and take advantage of significant travel time improvements.

Below are some examples of suggestions that Dysons have offered over the years and would deliver reliable Public Transport thus reducing the pressure on road infrastructure by reducing in excess of 500 car trips per hour along our routes if the bus trip would take less time then a car trip.

564 – Epping Station to RMIT

a) Removal of existing speed humps and introduction of more bus friendly speed humps along Henderson Rd and Woolnough Dr, Epping
b) Introduction of no standing zones along Woolnough Dr, Epping
c) Replacement of roundabout at Bowman Dr/Childs Rd with traffic lights (long delays)
d) Widening of intersection of Prince of Wales Ave & Childs Rd and introduction of one more right turning lane for the buses heading to Epping
e) Redesign of traffic management and intersection improvement works required urgently at intersection of Prince of Wales Av & Pindari Ave (not bus friendly at all)
f) Introduction of 'Clearway Zones' in Childs Rd in front of St. Francis P.S. as this service gets delayed due to the cars being parked during school times. (both directions)
g) Redesign of roundabout at Roycroft Av & Grenda Dr (not bus friendly at all in both directions)
h) Introduction of bus turning lane at McKimmies Rd & Plenty Rd, Mill Park (a must)
i) Introduction of B priority light at Plenty Rd/Clements Dr, Mill Park (a must)
566 – Lalor Shops to Northland S.C

a) Introduction of traffic lights at Station St / Childs Rd – Lalor
b) Introduction of bus turning lane at intersection of Childs Rd / Plenty Rd
   ▪ Or at least introduction of left slip lane at this intersection, for traffic turning
     left into Plenty Rd, heading north, as this would free left lane and minimise
     delays for 566 buses at this intersection.
c) Introduction of bus lane between Childs Road/Plenty Rd in both directions would
   definitely help with running times and reliability of this service.
d) Removal of indented bus stops at Bundoora Shops (both directions)
e) Introduction of bus priority lane/B lights at Grimshaw St / Greensborough HWY
   (both directions)
f) Introduction of slip lane at cnr. Greenwood Dr & Plenty Rd
g) Introduction of bus lanes along Plenty Rd in both directions
h) Introduction of bus turning lane from Boulderwood Pde into Plenty Rd
i) Change traffic lights timings at Tyler St and Albert St, Reservoir

562 – Greensborough to Whittlesea

a) Introduction of bus exit/turning lane on Metropolitan Ring Rd at Plenty Rd off
   ramp
b) Introduction of bus lanes along Plenty Rd would significantly improve running
   times on this service. The lanes should be introduced as far as Centenary Dr, Mill
   Park (both directions).
c) Introduction of bus ‘jump lanes’ at the following intersections;
   a. Plenty Rd & McDonalds Rd, Sth. Morang
   b. Plenty Rd & The Lakes Blvd,
   c. Plenty Rd & Hawkstove Pde,
   d. Introduction of traffic lights at cnr. Shotters Rd & Bridge Inn Rd
d) Intersection specific changes to assist travel times
   ▪ Exit lanes to/from Plenty Valley shopping centre.
     o McDonalds Road East/West directions.
     o Bush Boulevard East/West directions.
   ▪ Right hand turning bus lane Southbound from Plenty Road into McDonalds
     Road
   ▪ Left hand turning bus lane Northbound from McDonalds Road into Plenty
     Road
   ▪ Right hand turn Southbound from Plenty Road into Bush Boulevard
- Left hand turning bus lane Northbound from Bush Boulevard into Plenty Road.
- Left hand turning bus lane Northbound from Plenty Road into Childs Road.
- Right hand turn from McKimmies into Plenty Road
- Right hand turn from Childs into Plenty Road
- The replacement of the roundabout at Childs & Dalton Rd with traffic lights.
- Traffic lights installed at Station St & Childs Rd
- Traffic lights installed at Childs Rd and Bowman Ave
- Bus Lane from Clements Drive to Childs Rd and then onto McDonalds Rd along Plenty Rd (Northbound)
- Bus Lane from McDonalds Rd to Janefield Dve along Plenty Rd (Southbound)
- Queue jump B- Lights at Plenty & McDonalds Rd
- Queue jump B- Lights at Plenty & Childs Rd