

Glenn and Barbara Ford
“ Colglenn “
625 Holden Rd
DIGGERS REST VIC 3427

21st September 2009
Mr Steve Dunn
Director Policy and Strategy
Growth Areas Authority
PO Box 1166
CARLTON VIC 3053

Dear Mr Dunn,

**DELIVERING MELBOURNE’S NEWEST SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES
ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS FOR OUTER METROPOLITAN RING / E6 TRANSPORT
CORRIDOR ROCKBANK AND PLUMPTON AREAS.**

. We are primary producers currently broad acre farming our 320 hectares in the Green Wedge Zone. The location of our land affected by the OMR route CS5 in the Caroline Springs Corridor, Shire of Melton:
Allotments 803-850 & 753-801 Plumpton Rd and 625-689 Holden Rd in Plumpton.
Melways reference map 353 H2 (dot on map marks “ Colglenn”)

We submitted for the first time in July 2009 after the Government released the OMR/E6 report which had recommended a realignment from route CS1, Caroline Springs Corridor , to CS5.

Please accept our submission in relation to the following proposals covered in area 4 and 3 on Figure 1 – Map of OMR/E6 Transport Corridor showing original alignment as displayed in June and optional alignment and access restoration changes currently under consideration .

AREA 4 figure 2 – map of OMR / E6 transport corridor showing Plumpton Road Deviation and three access restoration roads being considered at Plumpton.

Plumpton Rd Deviation Area 4

1. Plumpton Rd realignment to the east where it crosses the proposed OMR to reduce the impact on a **dry stone wall** .

Vicroads has been unable to give us any detailed information on how much of the Plumpton Dry Stone Wall would be saved by realigning Plumpton Rd. Their reply to our email asking this question was “ This study is reserving land and is not examining to this extent. Option B was developed to provide a modified alignment of Plumpton Rd that will avoid , as far as is practical , impact on the wall.” It is difficult to submit on this proposal without this basic detail. Vicroads will resolve such questions later in the detailed design phase.

The Shire of Melton Heritage Planning Department has not been consulted by any Government Department to research data on the Plumpton Dry Stone Wall. Sera Jane Peters is the heritage planning officer with whom this information can be sourced. Luke Shannon,

the General Manager Planning and Development, has submitted on behalf of the Shire of Melton in support of preserving the Plumpton Wall and has enclosed a copy of the citation for the Plumpton Wall as outlined in the Dry Stone Wall Study done by Jim Holdsworth, Raelene Marshall, David Maloney, Sera Jane Peters (2009).

From our calculations based on the information supplied, the OMR proposed alignment will still have a significant impact on the best part of the Wall. We estimate almost half of the Wall will be destroyed . It will dissect the Wall and remove the remainder from the good visual access it currently has from travellers on Plumpton Rd. Its historic value will be greatly diminished.

In reference to our July submission we highlighted that the Plumpton dry stone wall was omitted from the Cultural Heritage report done by Vicroads for route CS5. At that stage we were unaware the Shire of Melton had undertaken a study on the dry stone walls of the Melton Shire. This Study proves it has historical significance and should be preserved. Due to the omission from the Vicroads report public awareness was limited. It will be too late for the community to protest the destruction of the wall in 10 years time.

A brief outline of the importance of the Plumpton Dry Stone Wall to our Cultural Heritage:

- The Plumpton Dry Stone Wall was built between 1854 and 1885
- It is one of the largest intact remnants of a Clarke boundary wall in Melton Shire
- One of a diminishing number of all dry stone walls
- The Plumpton Wall is aesthetically significant and is situated on one of the few Nth Sth roads of the Shire with good visual access to travellers
- It is scientifically significant as it demonstrates the volcanic origin of the landscape
- It is socially significant. It has the potential to educate the community in regard to wall construction techniques, 19th century rural settlement patterns, pastoral management and a way of life on Melbourne's Western Plains.

Considering Vicroads have route CS4 as another option, as listed on map B1- 13 Caroline Springs Corridor Options page 61 of the Outer Metropolitan Ring/E6 Transport Corridor Planning Assessment Report, it is possible technically to move the OMR East to preserve a piece of Australian Cultural History in the Plumpton Dry Stone Wall.

2. A new access road running south from Holden Road providing access to properties which would otherwise be land-locked by the OMR/E6 Transport Corridor.

Vicroads could not give us any specific details at this stage. They stated our questions would be resolved later in the detail design phase.

It is therefore difficult to respond to the proposed access road in any detail. We did write to Vicroads requesting a meeting to discuss our July submission but we received no response.

Access would be required to the allotments affected if sold before or after the construction of the proposed OMR.

Should our farm remain intact a road constructed through the middle of the farm would be impractical. Vicroads have stated that construction of the access road is expected to occur in conjunction with the construction of the OMR. Vicroads could not tell us what type of road would be constructed eg sealed ?

We would like the opportunity to meet Vicroads on site to evaluate the best option.

3. A connecting road from Holden Rd to Plumpton Rd east and south of previously displayed option.

Due to the closure of Holden Rd at the Melbourne Bendigo rail line there has been no consideration given to residents for the increase in kilometres to access services. A trip to the local Post Office at Diggers Rest will go from a 5 km trip via Calder Freeway to at least 20 km trip via Holden , Plumpton Rd.

Access to the freeway should be via Calder Park Drive and a bridge over the OMR on Holden Rd. The surrounding rural areas from Toolern Vale to Bacchus Marsh access the Calder Freeway via Holden Rd. The loss of access to the Calder Freeway is a disadvantage to the whole Diggers Rest area.

4. Access Rd Nth Keilor Melton Rd to land locked property.

We would object strongly if access for this property was to be through our farm off the Holden Rd access rd .

AREA 3 Deviation of the OMR to avoid the Deanside Wetlands

We made reference to this in our July submission. It should be a concern to the community when the OMR /E6 proposal has been put forward for adoption when an obvious area such as the Deanside Wetland should have been avoided in the first place.

We would agree that this Wetland should not be affected by the OMR/E6 proposal.

Summary

We spoke with Clive Mottram , Vicroads at the Rockbank information session. We debated shifting the OMR to avoid the Plumpton Dry Stone Wall and the few rural homes in its path. The only reason he gave for not moving the OMR route CS5 was it gave a better development outcome. Should it be at the expense of a Cultural Heritage Asset?

There seems to be a planning bias favouring developers. Clive Mottram told us at our first information session that the OMR CS1 was shifted West to CS5 to accommodate a couple of larger land holder developers . We have suggested realigning the OMR with CS4. This route travels east of Plumpton Rd . On the north side of the Keilor Melton Rd CS4 travels through 2 landholders instead of 9, goes through large vacant parcels of land, (land not in the UGB because of the Melbourne Airport Overlay, also close to the high voltage transmission lines.) This block is under the control of a well known developer. South of the Keilor Melton Rd all land both sides is UGB.

We believe it is possible for Vicroads to realign the OMR to preserve the Plumpton Dry Stone Wall , save the family homes to be left in a Green Wedge Zone and keep infrastructure for urban growth collective , not blight more land that has future development potential. We do not believe a minor change to the route of the OMR will be detrimental to the development outcome of the UGB because the area investigation was **11524 ha** , the minimum required is **4080 ha** . Most of the realignment will go through land not in the UGB.

You have the power to balance planning outcomes for a better community development. Before you make a decision we believe there should be a meeting with the Melton Shire Council and on sight .

Yours faithfully,

Glenn and Barbara Ford