

SUBMISSION TO THE PRIORITY PROJECTS STANDING ADVISORY COMMITTEE
WHITEHORSE PLANNING SCHEME AMENDMENT C245.

Introduction.

This submission is on behalf of The Combined Residents of Whitehorse Action Group (CROWAG) Blackburn Village Residents Group Inc. (BVRG). Whitehorse Active Transport Action Group WATAG.

CROWAG is a non-political, peak organisation in Whitehorse. It advocates for the entire community and its well-being. BVRG, since its formation in 1987 has aimed to ensure that the interests of local residents are recognised in planning issues affecting Blackburn. WATAG is an association of people with an interest in achieving improved health and environmental sustainability in the Whitehorse region.

We thank the panel for the opportunity to make a submission on the proposed draft planning amendment C245whse. The amendment seeks to insert a new Incorporated Document into the Whitehorse Planning Scheme titled Box Hill Central North Master Plan (BHCN). The amendment allows the 1.85Ha Site to be used and developed in accordance with the BHCN with 7 towers, consisting of 1777 apartments, 83,203 sq m commercial office space and 4,280 sq m retail space.

The planning amendment is sponsored by Vicinity and not supported by City of Whitehorse.



Figure 1. Proposed development under the Planning Amendment C245.

Objections were lodged in September 2021 for WH/2021/466, 476, 597 – proposed development of lot 4 and 5 on Main Street Box Hill. Included as Attachment 1 and 2. The grounds of our objection for the C245 Planning Amendment are the same as for our original objections.

Our statement of grounds:

- Integration with Future infrastructure.
- Loading Bay link.
- Lifts to Main Street and street level Amenity.
- Cycle Parking
- Connectivity
- Strategic Cycle Network
- Affordable Housing.
- Natural Ventilation.
- Alternative Energy.
- Wind impacts.
- EV charging.
- Overshadowing

We represent the views of our members and others who use and will live in and near Box Hill, who visit Box Hill for a range of services and who would be expected to continue to use those services. We also represent those who cycle to or through central Box Hill or will live in Box Hill Central and travel from Box Hill for work, education, recreation, health or other reasons.

Why this Amendment?

We ask how the proposed amendment, that seeks to carve out special rights for a retail precinct owner, for a significant portion of the Box Hill central area, meets the wider planning outcomes expected for Melbourne's proposed 2nd CBD.

We believe that the application for the planning amendment C245 is a symptom of the almost intractable planning problems that Box Hill presents.

We suggest that Box Hill's future would be best served by an independent planning body, working closely with Whitehorse Council and taking account of the vision of all stakeholders needs for Box Hill. The planning body should be given carriage of developing a Central Box Hill Structure Plan and coordinating its implementation. Developer led renewal projects often end in less-than-optimal outcomes.

The Revitalising Central Dandenong initiative through Development Victoria serves as a reasonable model. The program spans 2006 to 2030. While Box Hill is not in need of revitalising because of decline, it is in need of a management structure that can bring about the major changes needed and bring stakeholders together to solve the infrastructure issues and implement a development plan in line with community expectations.

See Research Briefing on this project - [Central Dandenong: Australia's comeback city?](#) Lessons about revitalisation for diverse places.

Our Position.

We detail below the issues that we believe makes the proposed planning amendment premature at best. We submit that the SAC report should make recommendations to the Minister for Planning, that prioritises the development of a Structure Plan that seeks lasting positive community outcomes for the development of central Box Hill taking account of all the constraints. Accordingly, the amendment should be set aside.

Substantive issues.

The proposed Master Plan seeks special rights for a portion of Box Hill Central that will perpetuate the piecemeal approach to development in Box Hill that has been characteristic in recent decades. It will leave the unconnected loose threads for others to resolve. From the community perspective we ask how the master plan will integrate with the wider strategic outcomes expected in Box Hill. We use the analogy that the amendment deals with only one piece of the puzzle where all pieces are required to complete the picture. All of central Box Hill needs to be considered holistically and strategically.

The inextricably linked pieces of the jigsaw required to complete the picture are:

- **The Suburban Rail Link (SRL)** is already changing the shape of Box Hill and is itself developing a Structure Plan for Box Hill which will likely have overlaps and conflicts with the proposed master plan and amendment.
- **The future rail/bus interchange requirements** - the poor suburban train and bus interchange service and associated infrastructure has been the subject of a number of reviews. In the community's mind a 'fit for purpose' interchange plan that integrates with the SRL project must be the starting point for a Box Hill Master Plan or Structure Plan. The panel, in its 2017 report on Amendment C175 (a failed attempt for a Box Hill Structure Plan) stated on Page 8. *'The Panel is concerned that the Amendment may limit the redevelopment potential of the Interchange and concludes that the relationship between the requirements of the Transport Integration Act and the Amendment warrant further consideration.'*
- **Finalisation of a City of Whitehorse Structure Plan for Box Hill.** The 2007 structure plan is essentially redundant and there have been a number of attempts to land a new one. The Minister for Planning didn't authorise the 2021 Amendment C228 due to the Suburban Rail Loop (SRL) project and the future SRL Precinct Structure Planning (PSP). It would seem the same issues apply equally to this C245 amendment.
- **Inclusion of the Central South Vicinity site in the Master Plan?** The omission of the southern component of the Vicinity site in its master plan is puzzling. In all likelihood, the southern site will be the subject of planning applications within the timeframe of the proposed 10-year master plan for the northern site. It should be clear how the current amendment would fit with the southern site.

- **Providing housing options that meet the growing need for social and affordable housing.** Residential development in Box Hill is not meeting the objectives of Plan Melbourne by way of providing a mix of dwelling types. Residential towers must provide for a mix of ages, family types and include a larger proportion of social and affordable housing. Social, community and physical needs must also be incorporated in design. Additional public open spaces with infrastructure suitable for the young and old and day care facilities and a Box Hill primary school in a walkable distance must be part of a Box Hill Structure Plan.
- **Transport and Traffic Infrastructure** – how well does the amendment align to the [Integrated Transport Strategy](#), The planning amendment master plan fails to satisfactorily demonstrate implications of:

 - **Traffic congestion** and parking impacts due to future increased demand generated by whole of Box Hill development.
 - Significant increase in traffic flow north and south generated by the Norh East Link project once completed.
 - **Proposed Thurston Street overpass.** The extension of Nelson Road to the future Thurston Street bridge is proposed as a narrow canyon. An active street frontage and landscaping is required to make this future gateway welcoming. The master plan development currently turns its back on the future linkage.
 - **Nelson Road** becomes the major entry and exit point for all of the northern development between Elgar Road and Station Street. It also is the primary cycling corridor N/S and will connect to the future shared path provided by the SRL development. Dedicated protected cycle lanes must be included along Nelson Road from the Thurston Street overpass.
 - **Poor service for Cyclists** - Why is such an unsafe poor, service for cyclists proposed on roadways. At the very minimum, for the number of bicycles anticipated in a redeveloped Box Hill, protected cycle lanes must be a requirement of new roadway development. Just counting Lot 4, Lot 5 (retail) and the SRL bicycle parking, approximately 1200 spaces are available. Cycling demand during the 2 hours of the morning peak, when car parking demand, and road conflict, is also higher makes for unsafe cycling. To maximise the benefits of cycling, infrastructure needs to cater for the 60% of interested but concerned cyclists.

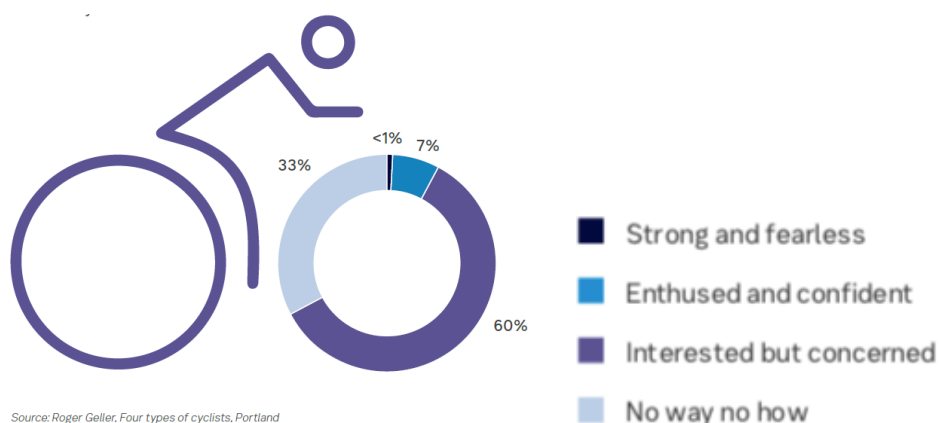
Avoid Accidents - 49% of cyclist road deaths in Victoria occur in 60km/h zones or less. In the 10 years, Feb 2013 to Feb 2023 [TAC statistics](#) show that in Melbourne, 3517 cyclists were hospitalised from road accidents. For new developments of infrastructure seeking to meet the next 30 years of cycling demand, the safest solutions must be prioritised. Guidance from the best international cycling cities should be considered.

- **Aligning with Victorian Cycling Strategy 2018-28** Will the proposed master plan align with strategic approaches and goals set out in the Victorian Cycling Strategy?

The Strategy has a fundamental objective to increase cycling as a transportation mode for commuter or education trips up to 45 minutes, from home to work or education, or local shorter trips to the station, shops or schools. Its key aims are:

- **a safer system**
 - The strong message from community consultations was that safety (both real and perceived), is the most important determinant of whether people cycle.
- **provide a consistent lower stress cycling experience.**
 - Cyclists' biggest concern is traffic stress (the potential or actual stress arising from the interactions with motor vehicles)
 - Cyclists can also be stressed by other factors including hills and delays

People make their choice to cycle based on the highest level of traffic stress that they expect to encounter on a particular route. If the stress is too high, many people (particularly the interested but concerned) will decide not to cycle on a route.



Source: Roger Geller, Four types of cyclists, Portland

Figure 2. Cycling attitudes and behaviours.

Underpinning the Victorian Cycling Strategy is the concept that *'people can be grouped into four types according to their cycling attitudes or behaviours'*.

1. **Strong and fearless** - cycle regardless of road conditions (<1%) ready to mix with traffic.
2. **Enthused and confident** - already riding (7%), but they could ride more.
3. **Interested but concerned** - (60%), varying age and cycling ability, are put off by the need to ride close to motor vehicles and pedestrians, especially on higher-speed, higher-volume roads or where conflicts are more likely. The highest priority group to encourage by investment in safer and lower stress infrastructure.
4. **No way no how** (33%) will not cycle because they can't or have no interest.

- **Will the primary routes of the principal bicycle network be kept open** - north/south and east/west, during the development phase and before a possible Thurston Street overpass is constructed. What is the maximum acceptable interruption to a primary cycling route. Would we accept loss of an arterial road for a similar time?

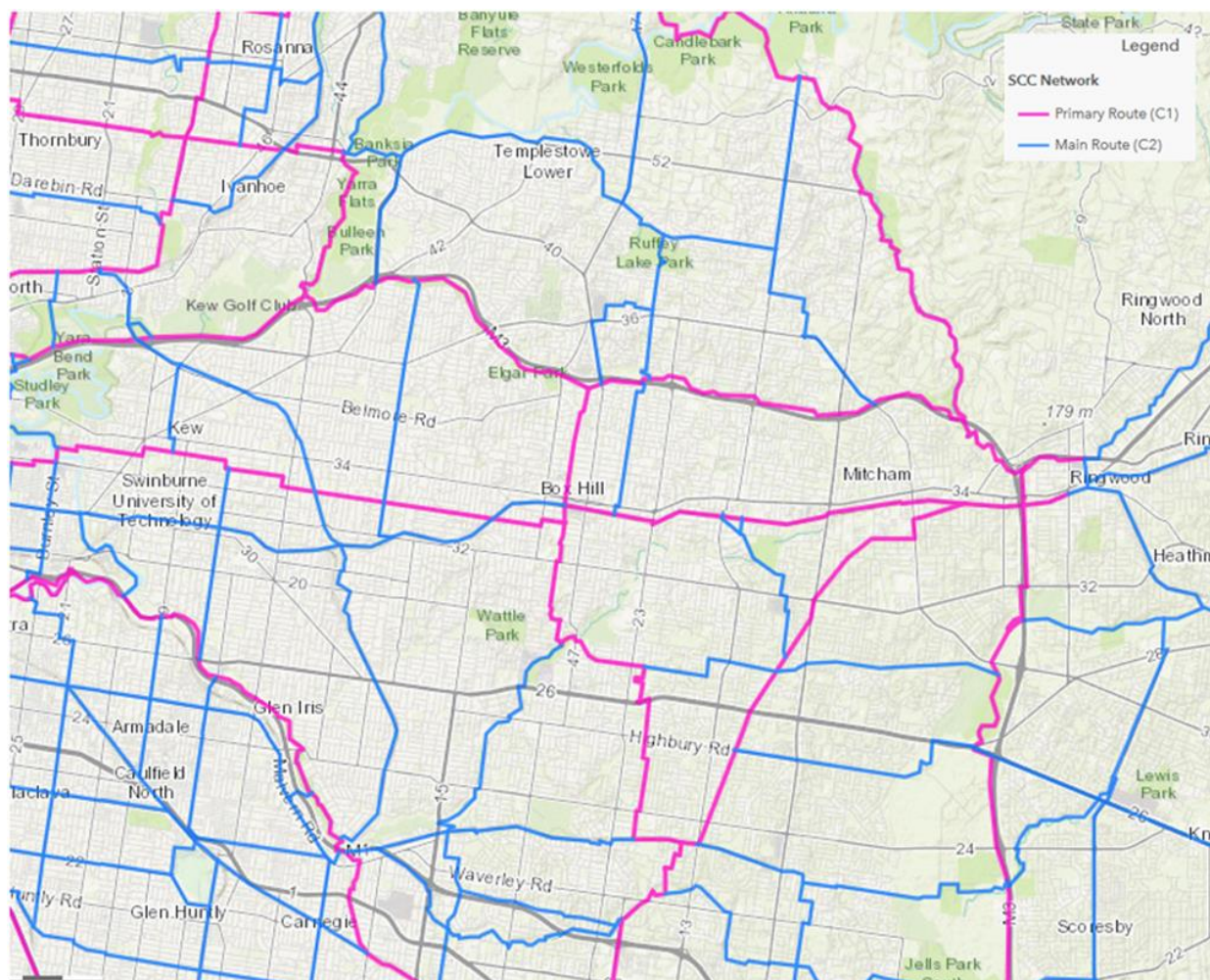


Figure 3. Overview of the Strategic Cycle Corridors through Box Hill.

- **The poor outcome for active transport** - With no commitment to a N/S Thurston Street overpass with loss of direct N/S and E/W links replaced with fragmented and unprotected alternatives is disappointing. With new development shaping the next 30-50 years, the best active transport outcomes must be achieved.

Cycling is promoted by the proponent, Council and SRL. E bikes have taken off and many alternative bike configurations are in use. Lifts from Prospect Street to Main Street need to be able to accommodate these and also bicycle parking, both external public loops and internal building parking facilities must cater for a range of configurations. Food delivery riders are the most prevalent e-bike users in central Box Hill. They are also frequent users of the loading bay bridge. They will be forced onto the more dangerous Station Street for alternative options for deliveries.



Figure 4. Will the proposed bicycle infrastructure cater for different bicycle types.

- **Amenity.** A master plan would/should make for consistency across the whole activity centre. There is an absolute need for controls to upgrade street amenity and active transport links and infrastructure from the present historic Box Hill country township layout to a contemporary, world leading layout that:
 - Replaces narrow footpaths with wide landscaped and shaded footpaths. Developments must make a public open space contribution at street level by way of setbacks from the boundary, for the social licence that allows them to build multi storey developments.
 - Box Hill needs to be planned as a walking city, where the use of cars is discouraged and carparking, where provided avoids the central area. The streets of Box Hill, the 2nd Melbourne CBD, need to be wide, landscaped, friendly and comfortable for all, including the elderly on mobility devices, children and mums with young families. Residents and visitors need to be easily able to traverse around, into and through central Box Hill to community facilities (schools, libraries, parks, recreation, transport, health, education, retail and commercial services) on foot or on various assisted motorised scooters and bicycles of different configurations.
- **Open Space.** Box Hill is in need of quality open space accessible to the growing resident population. We have advocated for the Federation Brickworks site to be acquired as offset land for loss of access to open space from the SRL and level crossing removal projects and now the Vicinity project. The SRL project will occupy the Box Hill Gardens open space for more than the next decade.

Developer contributions should be utilised for its purchase. The additional floor space being sought under the proposed amendment is 246,553 sqm (from the Traffic Report) that is 24.6 Ha. The master plan is adding less than 2000sqm of questionable open space back, for an increase in resident population according to Mr McGauran's report at para 29. *'The BHP alone will add potentially an additional 3500 to 4000 residents, up to 5560 additional workers, hundreds of customers, transiting pedestrians, and precinct visitors.'*

Other matters.

We ask:

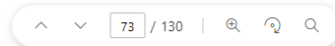
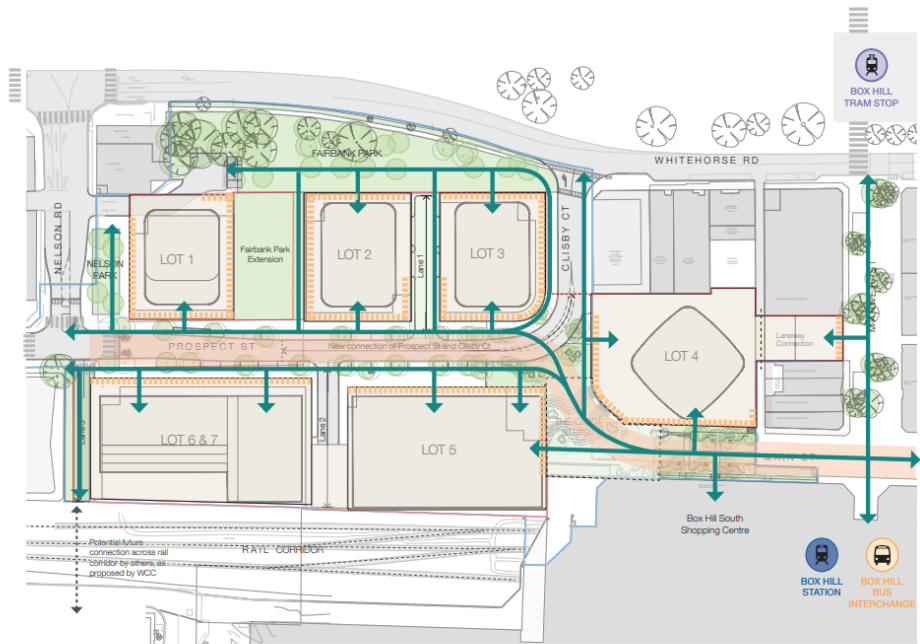
1. Why, in The Master Plan Report there is no Movement and Access diagram for cycling.

MASTERPLAN PROPOSAL 3.13 MOVEMENT AND ACCESS

PEDESTRIAN ACCESS

- / Active ground plane
- / Interface with key public realm
- / Strategic location of loading and carpark access

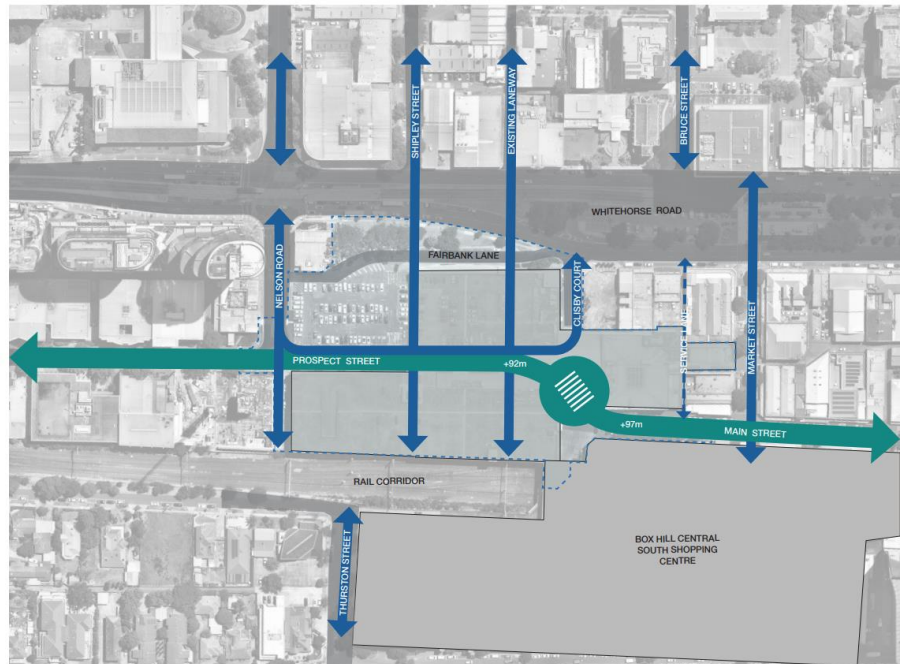
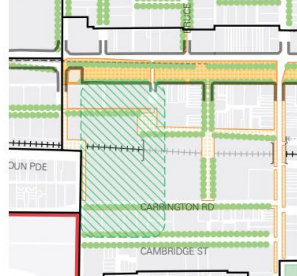
- Primary connection
- Pedestrian access
- Active frontage
- Canopy Extent
- Masterplan boundary



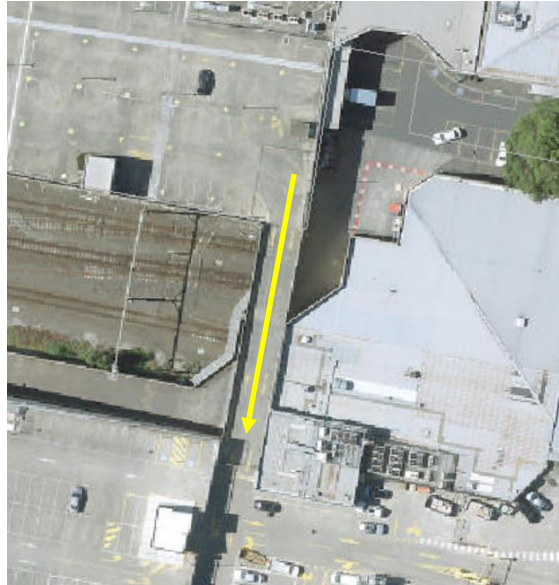
MASTERPLAN PROPOSAL 3.4 ROAD CONNECTIVITY

- / Connection to existing streets

pg 49 Draft Structure Plan (May 2020)



2. If an assessment has been made of reflected light implications into the public realm and public open space, particularly Fairbank Park.
3. What happens with the upper carpark link to south? Will pedestrian access be available.



4. Will a reduced speed limit of 30km/h apply to the Prospect and Clisby Street.

Conclusion.

The Master Plan amendment C245 is focussed only on the proponents' northern site, we believe for Box Hill MAC to be a liveable centre focussed on its people a comprehensive Structure Plan is required.

We therefore submit that the SAC report should make recommendations to the Minister for Planning, that prioritises the development of a Structure Plan that seeks lasting positive community outcomes for the development of central Box Hill taking account of all the constraints. Accordingly, the amendment should be set aside.

David Morrison
28th September 2023

**Combined Residents of Whitehorse
Action Group (CROWAG) Incorporated.**

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Attachment 1. WATAG objection to Vicinity proposal.



8 September 2021

Attention: Jessie Cardamone

Planning and Building Department

City of Whitehorse

Email: Jesse.Cardamone@whitehorse.vic.gov.au

c.c. by email - Councillors, Jeff Green, Paul Hamer.

Re: Planning Applications - WH/2021/466, 476, 597 – Vicinity developments Main Street Box Hill.

The Whitehorse Active Transport Group Inc. (WATAG) wishes to lodge an objection to the above applications.

We detail our concerns below.

Background.

The purposes of WATAG are:

1. *To achieve improved health and environmental sustainability within the Whitehorse region by,*

- *Promotion of safe participation in active transport for all people – walking, cycling and mobility travel*
- *Promotion and advocacy for greater access to, and use of, public transport for all people*
- *Promotion and encouragement of safe and respectful behaviour towards other transport. when 'on the move'*

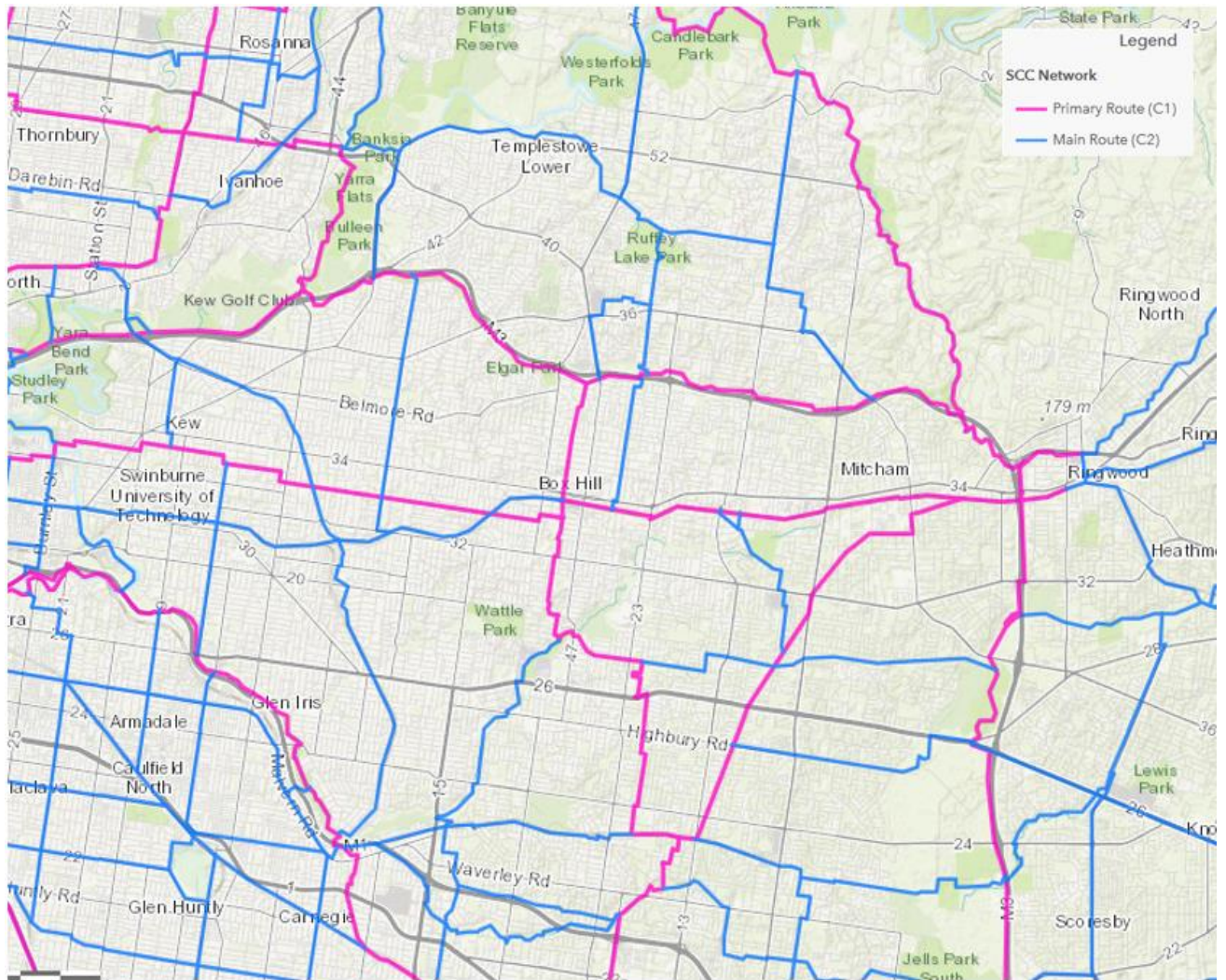
2. *Liaison with:*

- *Relevant local, state and federal governments and authorities in relation to the planning and construction of active transport infrastructure for walking, cycling, accessibility and public transport connectivity.*
- *Other like-minded groups to achieve the above outcomes.*

WATAG generally supports the redevelopment in line with what has been proposed. We support the amenity improvements for pedestrians in being able to move east/west through Box Hill North shopping centre to Prospect Street. The enhancements to amenity for the able bodied will be well received.

The public benefit contribution is acknowledged, however active transport (pedestrian and cycle) permeability north/south and east/west is degraded with the application as it stands. Box Hill is an active transport node that serves two purposes:

1. An active transport destination (cycle and pedestrian) for public transport, retail, commercial and residential.
2. An active transport node and the origin for trips, north, south, east and west. Centre residents can cycle along Strategic Cycle Network Corridor (SCC) links to workplaces (such as Doncaster, Mega Mile Blackburn, Camberwell, Burwood) and educational facilities (Swinburne and Deakin universities, Box Hill Institute, Box Hill High school) The active transport node intersects two SCC's
 - Box Hill to Ringwood trail to the east and the future Box Hill to Hawthorn trail to the west.
 - The easy ride route north to the Koonung Creek Trail and South to the Gardiners Creek Trail.



Overview of the Strategic Cycle Corridors through Box Hill.

Key issues.

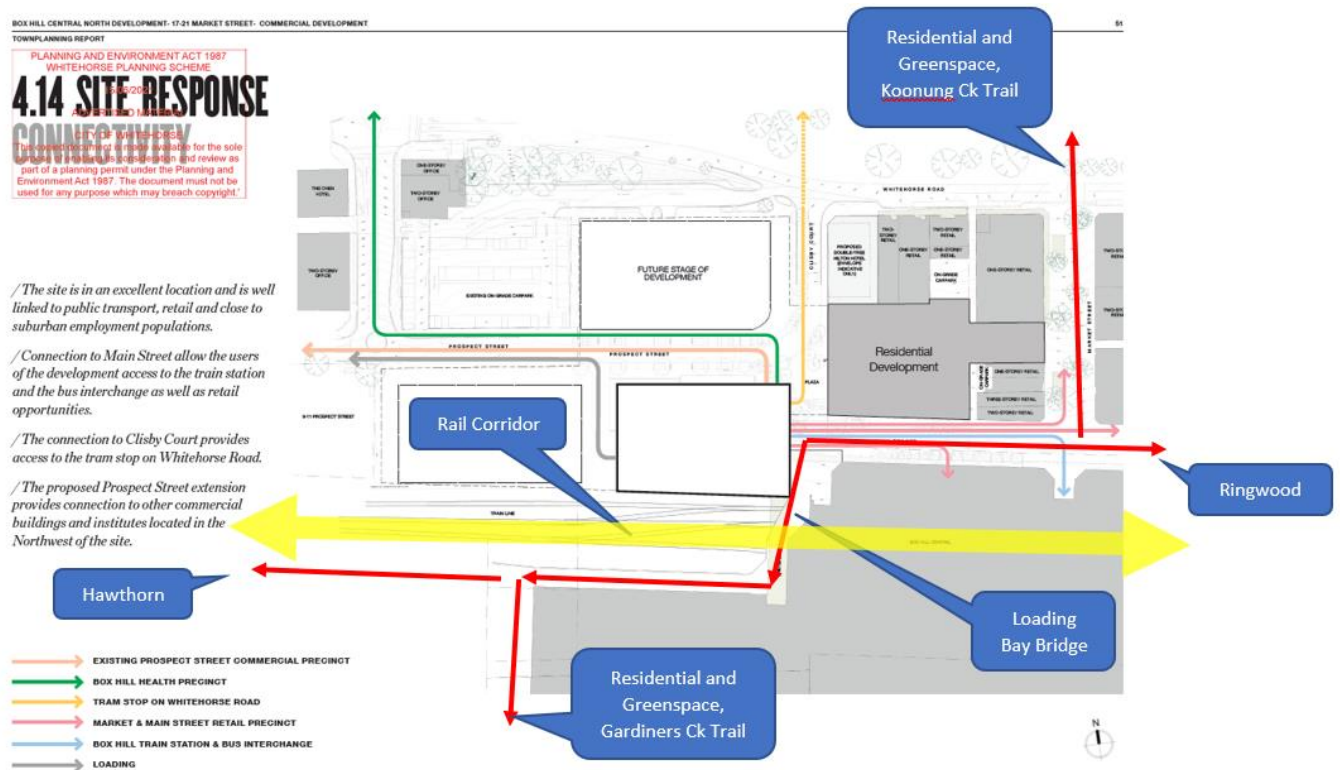
1. Loss of North/South access across the loading bay bridge. This loss directly impacts cyclists and pedestrians travelling north/south as well as those travelling east/west through central Box Hill. The loss also removes access to a significant proportion of local population to the SW of the Box Hill shopping centre.
2. There is no provision or commitment to a Thurston Street/ Nelson Road shared crossing, or its integration into the Box Hill centre.
3. The poor level of service provided to the elderly, those with mobility scooters, mums with prams (and pedestrians generally) or cyclists in negotiating the level change between Main Street and Prospect Street.
4. No acknowledgement of the strategic importance of Box Hill central as a key intersection of 2 Strategic Cycle Network corridors in the development design.

We believe each of the issues can be addressed by making sensible changes to the planning proposal or through conditions applied by Council as part of the approval process.

Discussion.

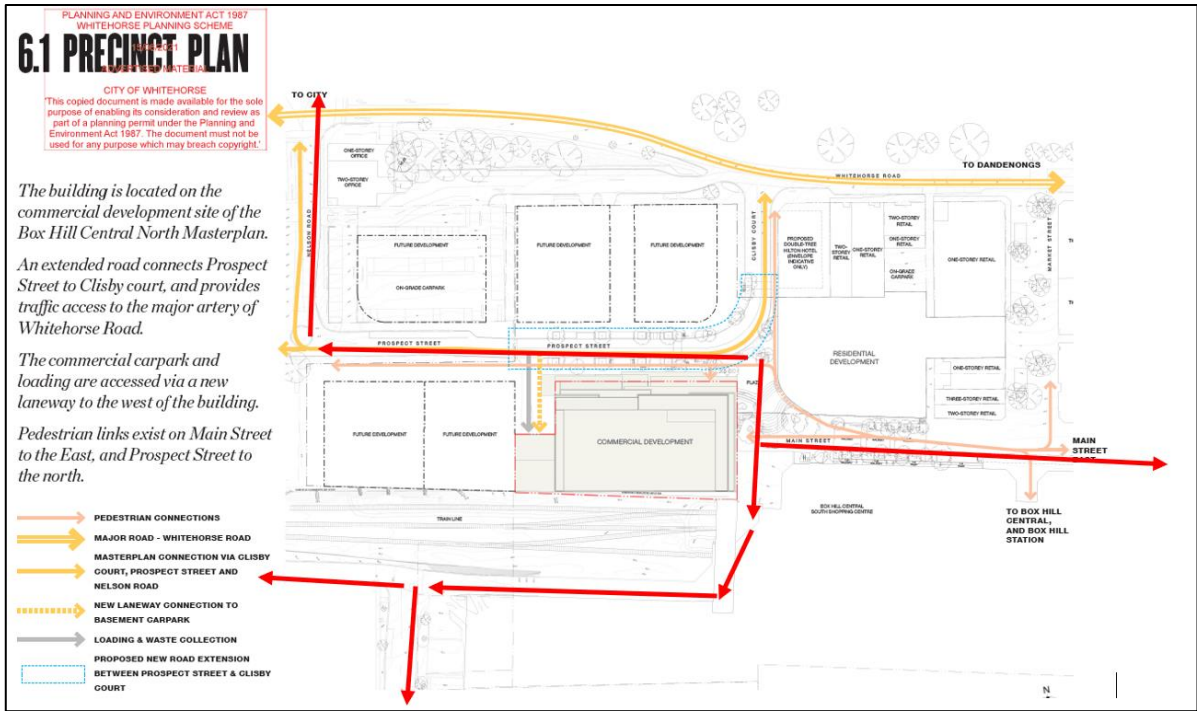
Below we expand on the four issues of concern. We use screen capture from the documents that make up this planning application.

1. Loss of North/South access across the loading bay bridge.

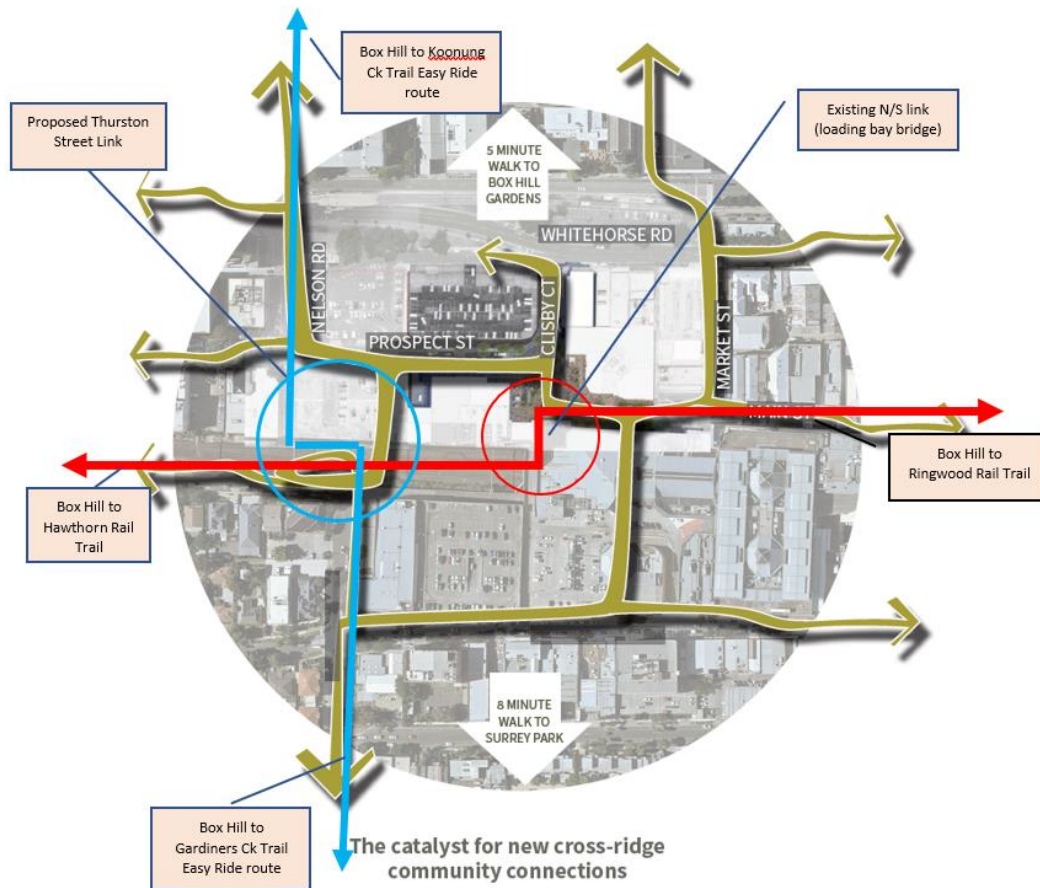


The Site Response has omitted the existing N/S Active Transport connections (red arrows) that the loading bay bridge currently supports. Local residential connections to sporting and open space precincts lost:

- North - Box Hill Gardens and Hagenauer Reserve from residents living south of the railway line.
- South - Surrey Park, which includes Aqualink swimming and sporting complex, sporting ovals and Surrey Dive passive recreation areas to residents living north of the railway line.

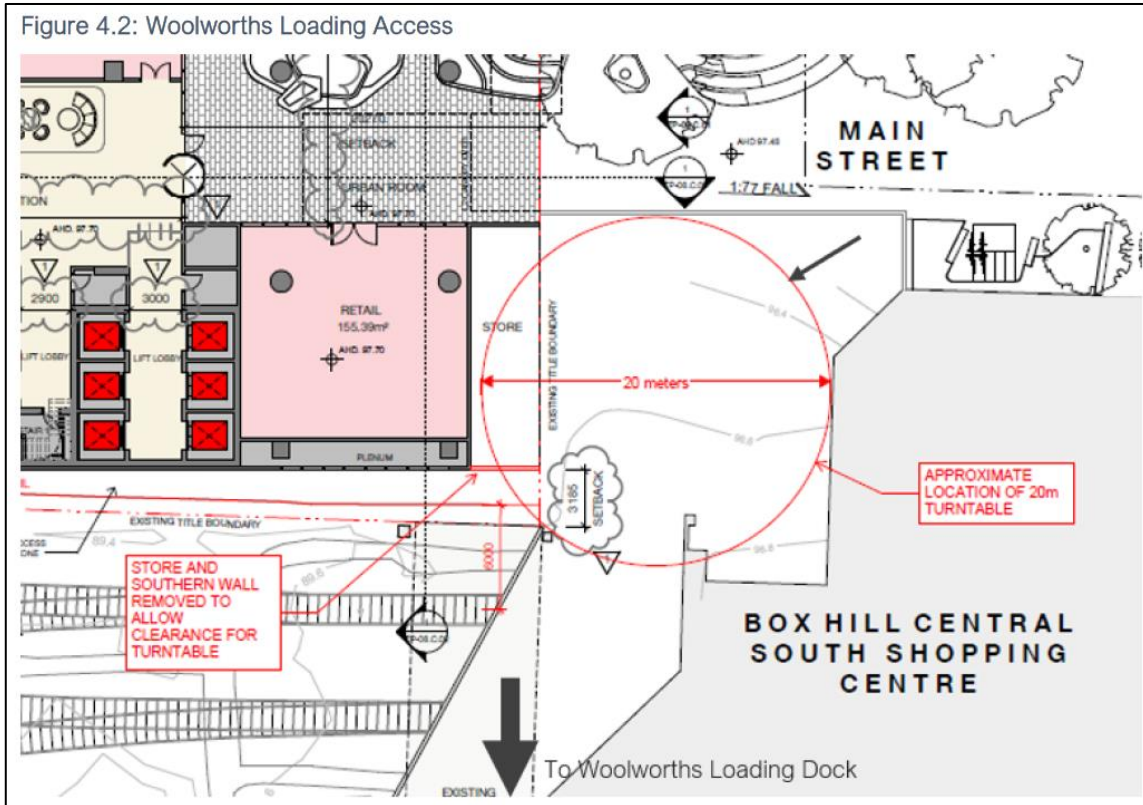


The Precinct Plan has not included the existing Strategic Cycling Corridors Network into its plans (Red arrows).



Strategic Cycling Corridors (Red and Blue) in concept, strategy and master plan documents, omitted.

Figure 4.2: Woolworths Loading Access



Loading Bay turntable resulting in closure of loading bay bridge to cyclists and pedestrians.

The modified loading area will be physically separated from the new Main Street pedestrian connection by a screen which will be integrated into the canopy structure. With the existing loading bay connection lost and no commitment to a Thurston Street crossing, there will be no north/south or east/west Strategic Cycle Corridors at Box Hill.

We suggest some options to maintain the Active Transport linkages across the loading bay bridge at least until a better alternative is provided at Thurston Street, these could be incorporated into the existing works.

The GTA Consultants Traffic report 1 page 37 states 'The commercial building will be revised to ensure there is sufficient space for the installation of the turntable (Australian Turntable Company, Model HT17.5). In particular, the storage area on the ground floor and the end-of-trip facilities on the lower ground mezzanine floor will be reconfigured.' With works required to accommodate the turntable, the additional works to maintain an active transport link would be minor. Options could include:

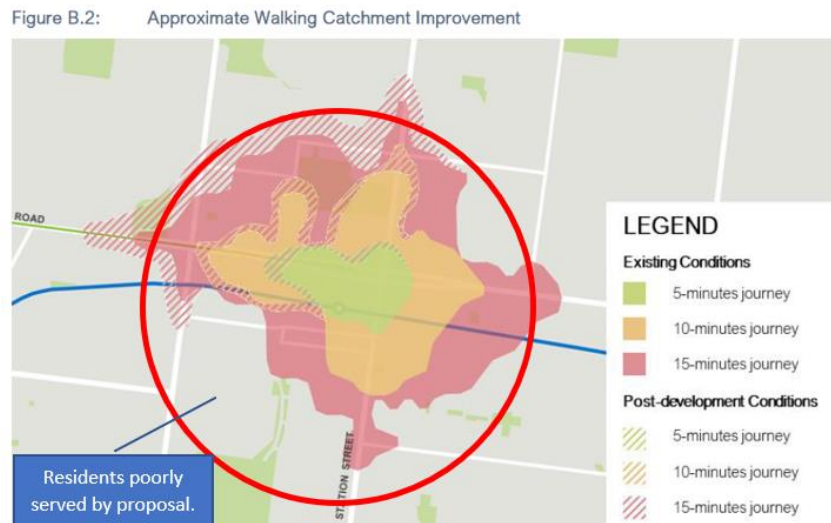
¹ V181268 // 18/08/2020 Transport Impact Assessment // Issue: F Box Hill Central North Development – Public Realm

- Truck movements per day to the loading bay will be very few, the space provided for the turntable could be optimised to allow a protected corridor for pedestrians and cyclists around the turntable and onto the bridge beyond.
- An alternative option is an electronic gated system that allows access, when the turntable is not in use and a lock out gate when it is in use, similar to rail crossings. The turntable surface is not raised and would be easily crossed.

2. No provision or commitment to a Thurston Street/ Nelson Road shared crossing, or its integration into Box Hill central.

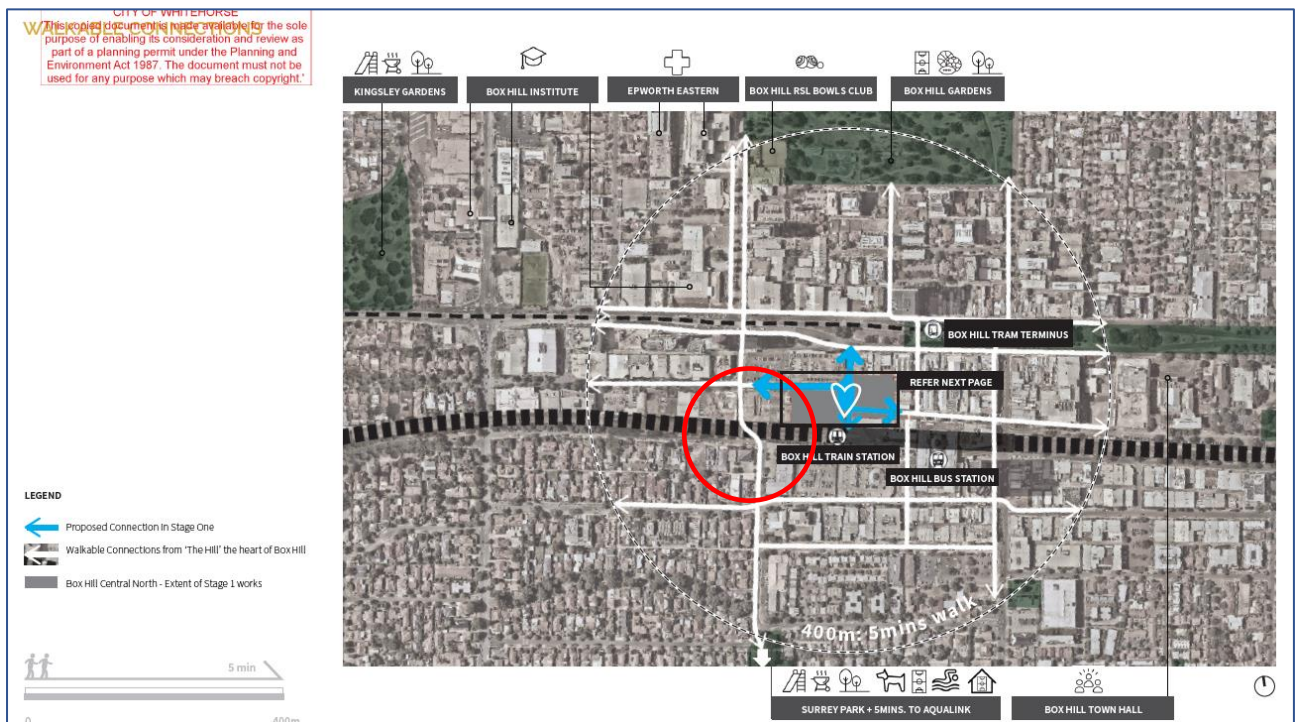
The lack of a Master Plan for the whole of the Vicinity site and the absence of a relevant Box Hill Structure Plan makes it difficult to place the current proposal into the broader context. The 2007 Structure plan is hopelessly outdated. Also works in the next few years will commence for the Suburban Rail Loop station.

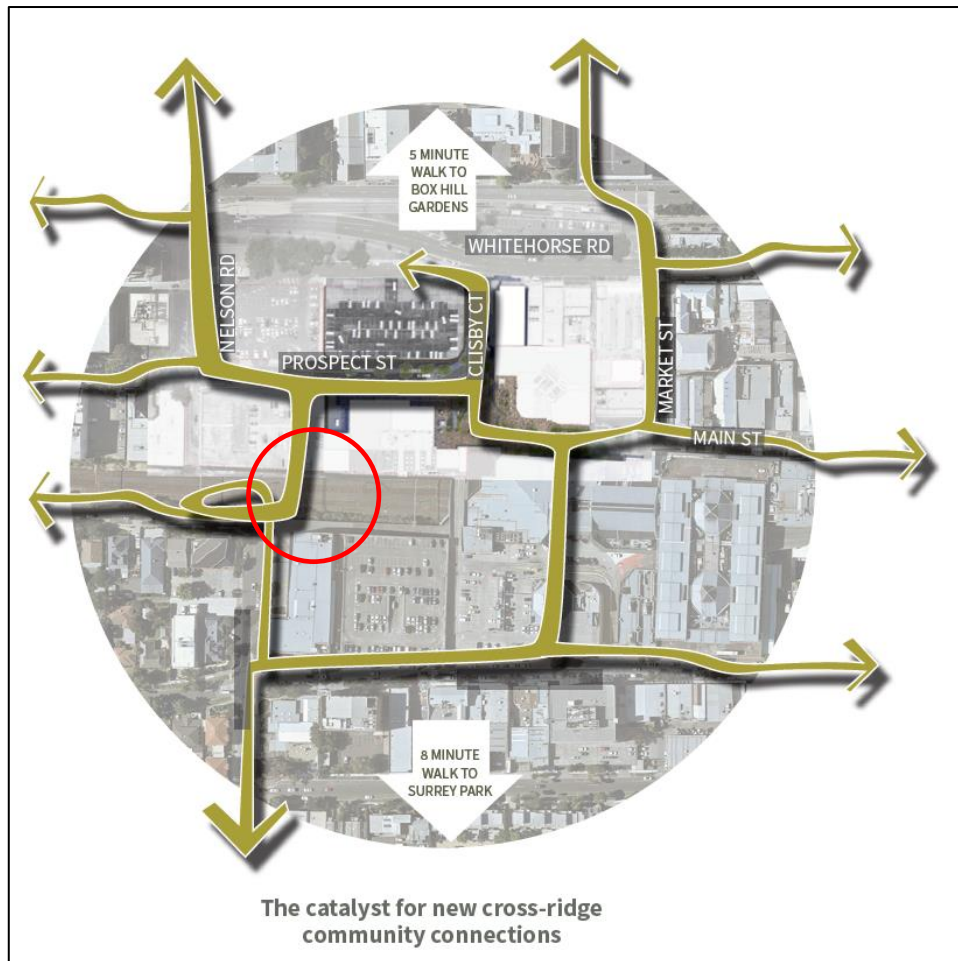
Vicinity has an opportunity/obligation to engage with Council and State government agencies to embed a future Thurston Street linkage into its current plans. The planning application documentation in different places references a Thurston Street link however the implication is that its “somebody else’s responsibility’ and only vague references and images are included. A Thurston Street link would be an asset to Vicinity, residents to the southwest, residents of Box Hill central and the community more broadly.





A Thurston Street link will allow for much safer and easier pedestrian access to the Box Hill shopping centre from the southwest.





Lines on an image is not a commitment - A walkable connection? A catalyst for new connections? The Thurston Street connection needs to be a committed, tangible project.

Notes from meetings that relate to Thurston Street overpass are instructive and disappointing.

Meeting minutes dated 28 Jan 2020.

3.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ability to facilitate a future pedestrian link to be investigated as part of the Masterplan works between Nelson Street and Thurston Street 	VCX
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Action VCX². What is the outcome of the investigation?

4.3 – Implement Strategic Cycling Corridors in Box Hill	This action refers to the wider Box Hill area (outside of the subject site).
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No commitment to integrating SCC even though two corridors intersect at Vicinity sites in Box Hill.

² GTA Traffic Report page 59 - Meeting Minutes: Box Hill North – Stage 1 Development ID: 200128_V181261_GTA Meeting Minutes (Final).docx

4.1 – Construct physically separated paths	Prospect Street is not a primary cycling corridor. However, sharrows are proposed along the carriageway which will provide a connection to the future cycling facilities along Nelson Road which will connect to the wider area and also the future pedestrian / cycle bridge over the railway line (should that be provided). The proposed Loop Road provides a low speed vehicle environment which is expected to be shared with cyclists.
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In file note 4.1 reference is made to a future Thurston Street link³ *‘(should it be provided)’*.

This file note also justifies not using safer separated bicycle/car lanes in the proposed extension of Prospect Street because *‘Prospect Street is not a primary cycling corridor’*. The proposal however will see the closure of the loading bay bridge that will redirect the Ringwood to Hawthorne strategic cycling corridor along Prospect Street. It is short sighted that the development proposal has not integrated the designated Strategic Cycling Corridors into the redevelopment project - Ringwood to Hawthorn corridor or Koonung to Gardiners Creek corridor.

What other transport infrastructure is proposed to drive the mode shift?

The construction of the Suburban Rail Loop project will significantly increase the public transport catchment of the Box Hill Metropolitan Activity Centre by linking it via heavy rail with the Frankston, Cranbourne, Glen Waverly, Hurstbridge, Mernda and Craigieburn rail lines within an estimated 30-minute train travel journey.

This will result in “more people (being) closer to jobs” and “more high productivity jobs (being provided) outside the CBD”; refer to extract from Suburban Rail Loop Strategic Assessment in Figure A3. The net result will be that the public transport catchments discussed in Attachment A will notably increase with the completion of this project. This will undoubtedly make public transport a more convenient mode of transport for residents, staff and visitors of the development.

From the Traffic Analysis,⁴ answering the above question regarding modal shift, the Thurston Street overpass has not even been considered. Surely the overpass, linking Thurston Street to Nelson Road, should be included if it is being contemplated. This linkage alone will do more to improve pedestrian access and allow more cyclists to transit to and through Box Hill more safely and easily than anything else proposed in the current applications.

It is critical that a commitment by key stakeholders, to a Thurston Street overpass, is agreed, with preliminary concept design work completed, to determine the constraints the overpass might make on the existing or future planning proposals.

3 GTA Traffic Report page 84 - Meeting Minutes: Box Hill North – Stage 1 Development ID: 200128_V181261_GTA Meeting Minutes (Final).docx

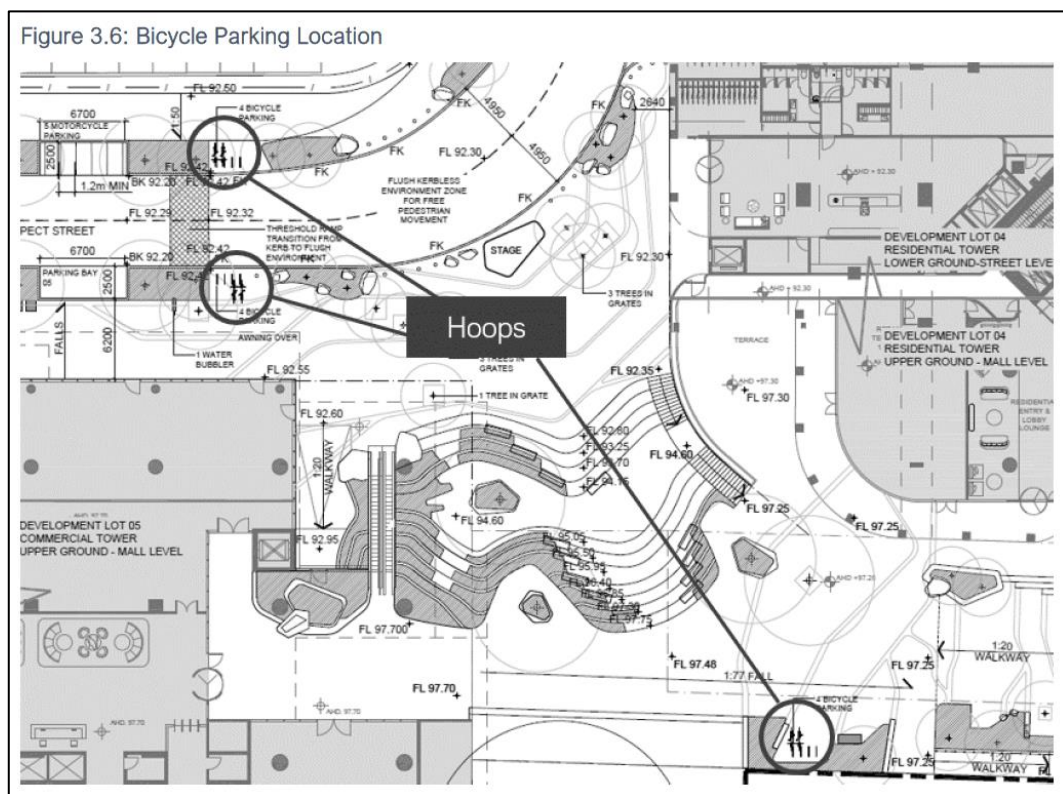
4 GTA Traffic Report page 115 - ID: 200820-V181261-RFI Letter Response.docx

3. Poor level of service provided to the elderly, those with mobility scooters, mums with prams, pedestrians more generally or cyclists in negotiating the level change between Main Street and Prospect Street.

The proposed plans have the following deficiencies relating to accessibility and active transport, particularly in the change in level between Main Street and Prospect Street.

Public Bicycle Parking.

There is inconsistency in the planning documents as to how many external hoops are provided⁵. The plans show three sets of 4⁶ and one set of 5 at NW corner of commercial building⁷. Reference is made elsewhere to 10 and 15 hoops. WATAG encourages more public hoops because of the proposed use of the steps area as a community hub.



Bicycle Parking Commercial Building.

⁵ Traffic Report Page 120 - V181266 // 04/02/2021 Transport Impact Assessment // Issue: H Box Hill Central North – Residential Development

⁶ Traffic Report Page 62 - V181268 // 18/08/2020 Transport Impact Assessment // Issue: F Box Hill Central North Development – Public Realm

⁷ Green Travel Plan Page 112 -V181267 // 02/02/2021 Green Travel Plan // Issue: E Box Hill Central North – Commercial Development

There are 56 public parking racks within the commercial building. Will these spaces be freely available for public use 24/7 or will some form of restricted access apply? This is an important question because 15 (or 10 or 17) external hoops for casual bicycle use is inadequate for the community hub destination that is proposed. Local cycling organisations often have 25 members in a group and will pass through Box Hill on their trips. If sufficient infrastructure is available, they will make Box Hill a meeting place for lunch and coffee stops.

7.2 – Improve public end-of-trip facility provision	The proposal includes the provision of excellent visitor bicycle parking spaces throughout the public domain space. A total of 76 spaces is proposed which greatly exceeds the Statutory Requirement.
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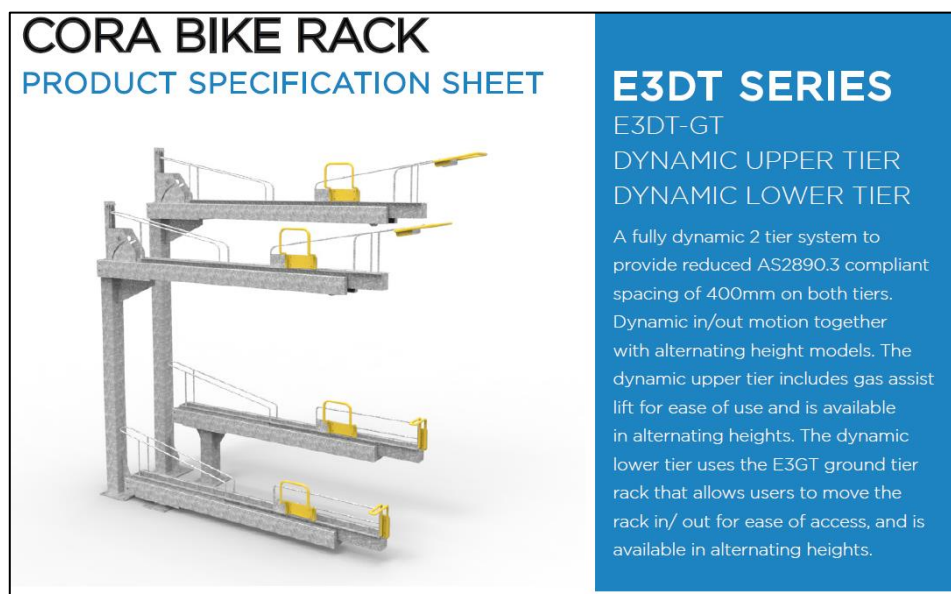
Bicycle Parking Residential Tower.

396 parking racks will be provided for residents of the residential towers. The Green Travel Plan⁸ already anticipates they will be underutilised. If that is the case surplus spaces should be available to other office workers or commuters. This could be through a secure pass system and could attract a nominal fee. The bicycle parking infrastructure should be optimised to reduce car dependence.

Action	Timing
Monitor how much the facilities provided are being used. If there are facilities which are under-utilized , then consider ways to promo them to residents	Annually and ongoing

Bicycle Parking Racks.

The generous provision of parking racks is welcome, however there is an assumption that all cyclists will have a standard bike. Parking provision for non-standard bikes is needed, including heavier E bikes, tandems, bikes that include a tag along trailer, trikes used commercially such as those used for food delivery etc.



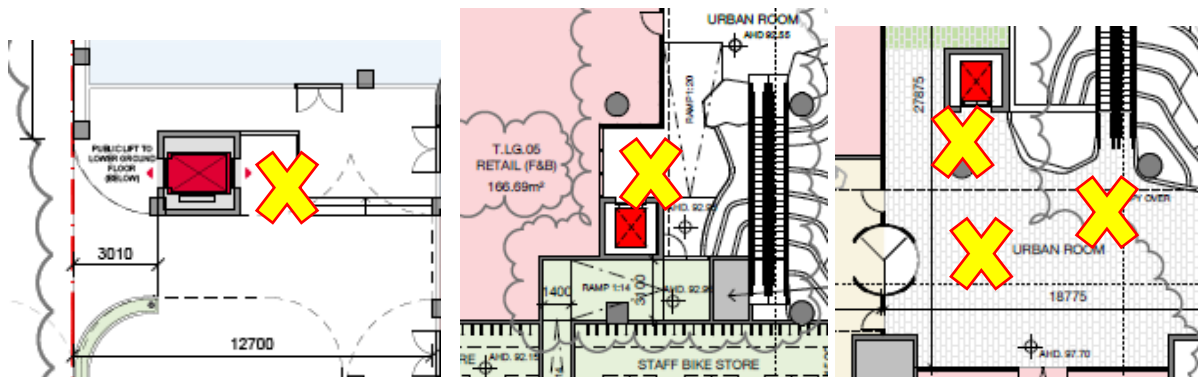
⁸ Green Travel Plan page 83 - V181267 // 02/02/2021 Green Travel Plan // Issue: H Box Hill Central North Development –Residential Development

Lift Design

The proposed lifts are inadequate in size for the anticipated number and type of users. The urban zone waiting space is constrained for the expected bicycle usage. The lifts must be equivalent in size to those in large shopping centres, at COSCO or Melbourne Airport carparks, which accommodate a number of people with large shopping trolleys or travel luggage. Waiting space in the urban zone must be generous. The stairs must be configured to enable a bicycle to be wheeled along a ramped edge.

The images below, from the plans (residential P7, Commercial P6&8) show inadequate lift size and conflict areas in the Urban Zones of the external public lifts:

1. Residential tower lift with less than 3m space in the waiting area for people and bicycles to access the lift doors via a 90 degree turn.
2. Commercial - The Prospect Street entrance – small waiting area space and conflict between lift users making two 90 degree turns to and from the lift doors mixing with people accessing cycle parking facility.
3. Commercial - Main Street entrance conflict paths for users moving to and from lift, escalator and office door entry.



Artist impression – Commercial lower and upper Urban Zone space without cyclists.



Lift usage.

The trip generation for both new buildings suggest 129 bicycles per peak hour (Commercial) and 50 bicycles per hour for the residential, as well as a significant number of pedestrians. This is additional to the background trips generated by other business and residential towers in Box Hill that will increase over time. It is reasonable to assume that half of the bicycle trips (80) will need to utilise the lifts to access Main Street to travel East (from residential) and half will be arriving to the area for work (bike storage is at Prospect Street level). This means about 40 cyclists per hour will be queued up to use each lift each peak hour. A conventional lift could hold 2 standard bikes with riders and a few pedestrians. Able bodied pedestrians will use the stairs. People with accessibility problems will need to use the lifts - this could include people with disability scooters, wheelchairs, prams, older people, non-standard bicycles etc.

It can be assumed that the lifts for this key Metropolitan Activity Centre focus point, ('the 2nd CBD' in Melbourne) will be in place for the next 30 plus years. As such, the lifts on the plans will be grossly inadequate to cope with Box Hill's projected population increase and increase in its commercial, educational and medical activity and the enhancement of the precinct as a communal hub. Therefore, the anticipated usage of the lifts between Main Street and Prospect Street has been grossly under-estimated in WATAG's view. If the lifts are in the public realm, then they must accommodate the estimated trips for from all sources.

⁹ Traffic report Commercial Building

Mode		Target Mode Split	Peak Hour Person Trips by Mode
Walking		5%	65 persons
Bicycle		10%	129 persons
Public Transport	Train	50%	648 persons
	Tram	5%	65 persons
	Bus	20%	259 persons

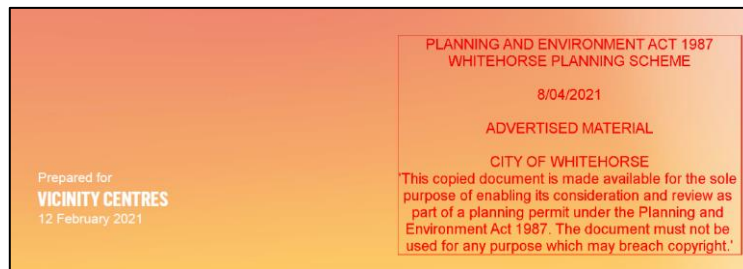
¹⁰Traffic Report Residential Building.

Mode		Target Mode Split	Peak Hour Person Trips by Mode
Walking		5%	25 person trips
Bicycle		10%	50 person trips
	Train	50%	251 person trips

⁹ GTA Traffic Report page 48 - V181267 // 04/02/2021 Transport Impact Assessment // Issue: G Box Hill Central North – Commercial Development

¹⁰ GTA Traffic Report page 120 - V181266 // 04/02/2021 Transport Impact Assessment // Issue: H Box Hill Central North – Residential Development

4. No acknowledgement of the strategic importance of Box Hill central as a key intersection of Two Strategic Cycle Network corridors in the development design.



Project Plans were submitted by the applicant to Council in April 2021. A review into the Strategic Cycle Network¹¹ was completed by Department of Transport in December 2020. The traffic report doesn't address the updated Strategic Cycling Corridors detailed in the following map.

¹¹ <https://transport.vic.gov.au/getting-around/walking-and-cycling/strategic-cycling-corridors>

You can view the updated SCC network by clicking on the interactive map below.

For further information, download the [Strategic Cycling Corridor-2020 overview](#) and [FAQs](#).

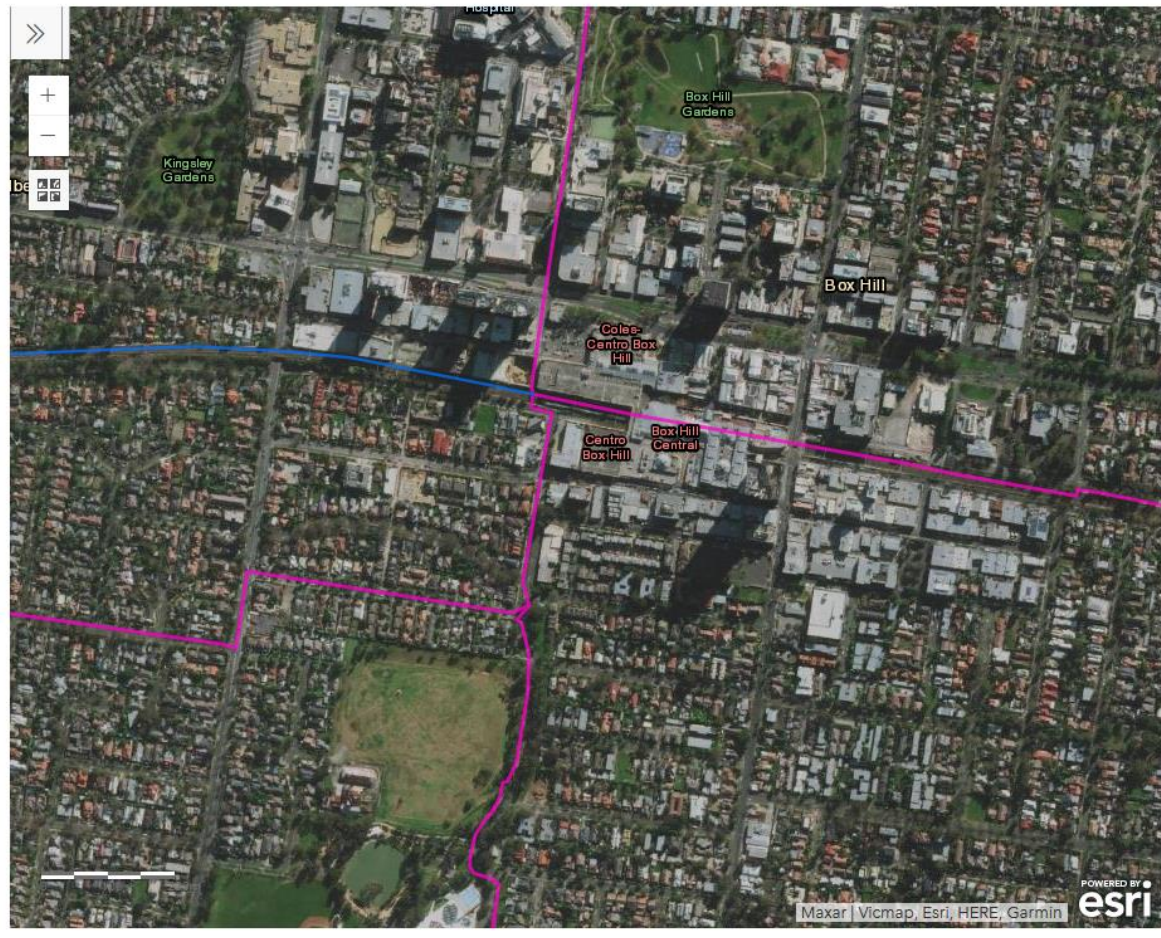
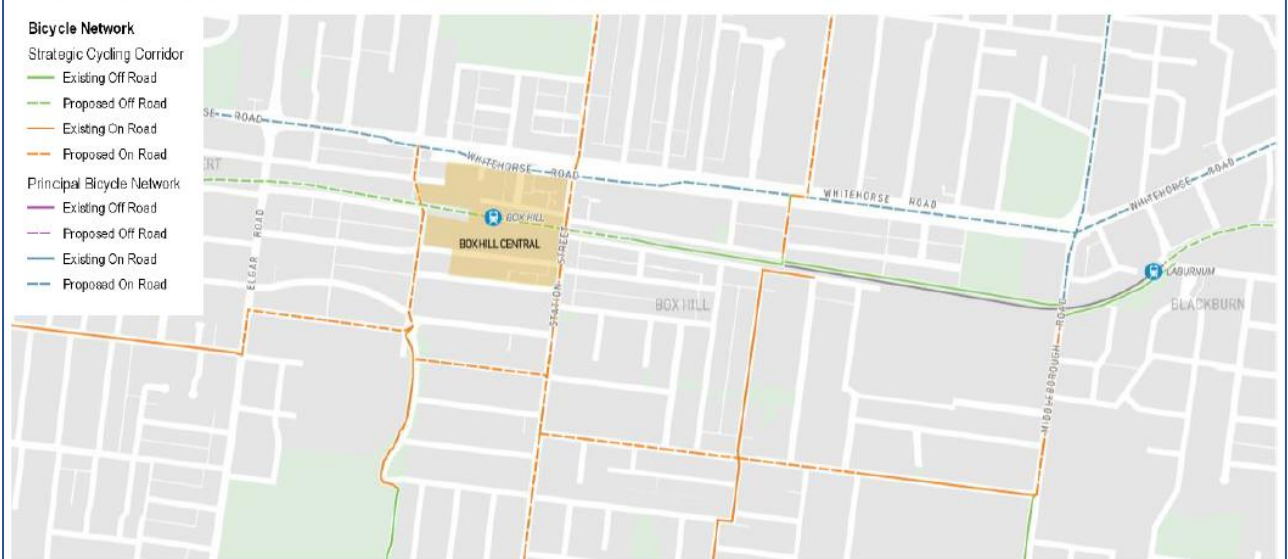


Figure 2.5: Strategic Cycling Corridors and Principal Bicycle Network



It is noted that there is currently limited cycling infrastructure around Box Hill, particularly north-south routes. However, there are future plans to upgrade the existing facilities as part of the Strategic Cycling Corridor and Principal Bicycle Network plans as shown in the above figure.

The Principal Bicycle Network (PBN) is a network of on and off-road cycling corridors that have been identified to support cycling for transport and access to major destinations in metropolitan Melbourne. The PBN was reviewed and updated in 2012 by VicRoads and all local Councils.

The Strategic Cycle Corridor (SCC) network was first developed in 2015 as an initiative to direct state funding into a smaller ‘spinal’ subset of the Principal Bicycle Network (PBN). With the release of the Victorian Cycling Strategy 2018-28, the criteria for SCC alignment, network coverage and facility type changed from when SCCs were first identified.

Five¹² key principles underpin the SCC network. These are:

1. **Destination focused:** supports continuous cycling routes linking up significant destinations across suburbs and municipalities
2. **Safe:** encourages greater cycling for transport through the provision of safer, lower stress cycle environments.
3. **Direct:** provides cyclists with better travel time routes, often this is the shortest and most direct route.
4. **Connected:** SCCs are supported and strengthened by municipal and local cycling links that provide for end-to-end cycling trips.
5. **Integrated:** SCCs are integrated with broader transport network and are located on transport routes where cycling is a priority.

12 <https://transport.vic.gov.au/getting-around/walking-and-cycling/strategic-cycling-corridors>

In WATAG's view there is little provided in the plans to address the principles that underpin SCC Networks except for the provision of parking spaces for bicycles at both the commercial and residential building, 17 parking loops in the public space and the installation of sharrows on the new section of Prospect Street.

The proposed development removes the existing 'at level' continuity between the rail trail to the east and west, to existing routes, or to the future Hawthorn rail trail, by closing the loading bay access. The proposed alternatives will be less integrated, less safe and higher stress with increased travel times.

The unsafe options for cyclists traveling east to west through Box Hill in the future will be:

- A combination of any of Station Street, Whitehorse Road, Carrington Street or Elgar Road (not cycle friendly).
- Main Street and through the shopping centre to Carrington Street.
- Main Street, use of the undersized lift with time delays, Prospect Street, Elgar Road.

By closing the loading bay bridge for the north to south link, access is only available either along Station Street, Elgar Road, or Market Street through the shopping centre, with the same degraded outcomes as detailed above.

The issues detailed above can be avoided by maintaining a link across the loading bay bridge at least until the Thurston Street connection is completed. Any costs associated with this concession would be very minor in the scale of the development. This could be a condition of permit.

Even if access to the loading bay bridge is restricted temporarily, the project is not likely to be complete much before 2030.

Conclusion.

WATAG urges that the following changes be implemented before planning approval, or be conditions of a planning permit approval.

1. That the loading bay bridge remain open for active transport connection.
2. That a commitment to build the Thurston Street/ Nelson Road shared crossing is locked in,
3. That the level of service, by way of suitable lift sizes, more generous Urban Zone space near lifts, a ramp adjacent to stairs so that bicycles can be walked, and guaranteed access to more casual bicycle parking, is provided around the Main Street and Prospect Street steps.
4. That the strategic importance of Box Hill Central, as a key intersection of 2 Strategic Cycle Network corridors, is incorporated into the development design. (Adopting 1 and 2 and 3 above)

Yours sincerely
David Morrison
For WATAG Committee.

Attachment 2. BVRG objection to Vicinity proposal.



BLACKBURN VILLAGE RESIDENTS GROUP INC.

Protecting the distinctive features of Blackburn since 1987

Email: bvrg@ymail.com

Post: PO Box 406, Blackburn. 3130

Phone: 9894 2531

October 4, 2021

Attention: Jessie Cardamone

Planning and Building Department

City of Whitehorse

Email: Jesse.Cardamone@whitehorse.vic.gov.au

c.c. by email - Councillors.

Re: Planning Applications - WH/2021/466, 476, 597 and WH2021/304 – Vicinity developments Main Street Box Hill.

The Blackburn Village Residents' Group Inc. (BVRG) wishes to lodge an objection to the above applications.

The Applications.

The proposed developments, constructing a large 51 storey residential Tower, a 27 level Commercial building and public realm works involves demolishing existing buildings realigning Prospect Street, opening up Main Street to Prospect Street and closing off the existing railway bridge link (north/south) at the loading bay.

A fourth application redevelopment of the building at the corner of Carrington and Thurston Street, which is a small part of 1 Main Street, proposes the addition of 2 levels to the existing reconfigured building. A deficiency of the application is that there is no concept plan of the future development of the overall site at 1 Main Street.

Background.

Box Hill is undergoing major change, many new residential towers and commercial buildings are in the pipeline and education and health precincts are expanding. Box Hill MAC is being called the second Melbourne CBD.

Developments planned and approved will increase the resident population and bring additional workers, students, and shoppers to the centre. The additional population will add to pressure on public amenity at street level. Box Hill MAC has narrow footpaths cluttered by street furniture and signage. Central Box Hill is bisected by the Ringwood to Melbourne railway line. Like a river the railway line is a barrier to movement to and from either side. Whitehorse Road and Station Street are also major barriers to street level movement.

New developments must contribute to better street level amenity, each application must be assessed, not only on its own merits but, in the context of its contribution to the amenity for the whole centre. To do otherwise will constrain street level amenity to the status quo which is inadequate for current use and certainly is not 'fit for purpose' for a doubling of numbers of resident/commercial/other uses expected over the next 30 or more years. The community expects no less, in exchange for windfall gains in yield that developers enjoy from the over generous high-rise approvals.

For a realistic assessment of the planning applications, they need to be assessed against a Vicinity master plan (which has not been made publicly available) which fits within a broader Box Hill MAC master plan or urban design framework. It is regrettable that Council has been unable to progress a new structure plan to replace the outdated 2007 Structure Plan that is now resulting in piecemeal development assessment. The integration of major Vicinity developments with other Box Hill projects and policies must be also considered. These include the Suburban Rail Loop (SRL), which will cede planning oversight to the SRL project for a 1.6km radius from the proposed station, the Box Hill Integrated Transport Strategy, and the existing Box Hill Structure Plan.

Key aspects of the Box Hill Structure Plan 2007 are:

- 1.4.P Pedestrian and bicycle movements**
- 4.2.C Improve connectivity of the pedestrian network**
- 4.3.A Provide secure parking and amenities for cyclists**
- 4.3.B Create a local network of bicycle routes**

The Main Issues BVRG has with the proposal are:

Integration with Future infrastructure.

Analysis of pedestrian volume impacts and provision of services that provide amenity at street level take little or no account of the future configuration changes in volume increases resulting from the Suburban Rail Loop station, reconfiguration of the transport interchange and the designated east/west and North South Strategic Cycle corridors intersecting at the Vicinity site.

Loading Bay link.

The loss of access through the loading bay pedestrian/cycle north/south connection without a commitment to replacing connectivity between north and south of the railway line.

Lifts to Main Street and street level Amenity.

Inadequate consideration of accessibility when proposing 2 small lifts with confined access spaces. The disabled, elderly with walkers or mobility carts, mums with prams will jostle for space in the lifts with commuter, recreational and retail (delivery) cyclists. Lifts must be larger and 'fit for purpose.'

The wider footpaths proposed for the extension of Prospect Street and street activation is welcome however it is disappointing that Vicinity hasn't made a contribution at street level by way of a setback from boundary that would have further improved the street level amenity for each development.

Cycle Parking provided

We support the greater provision of bicycle parking at both the residential tower and commercial tower on Main/Prospect Streets (approx. 1 space for @ 100m of floor space). We wonder why the redevelopment at 1 Main Street does not include a comparable contribution to bike parking (1approx 1 space for @144sqm).

Connectivity

The Proposed developments miss opportunities for greater connectivity. The Main Street Prospect Street link replaces the existing link through the northern shopping centre, it consists of a 6-metre level change that funnels a greater number of people through. Permeability through the residential tower or the office building could have easily provided

alternative links to adjoining streets. The 1 Main Street redevelopment makes no provision for internal connectivity with the future redeveloped remainder of the 1 Main Street Site.

Strategic Cycle Network

The planning applications ignore the policy objectives of the Strategic Cycle Network. The strategic importance of Box Hill Central and the Vicinity sites in particular, as a key intersection of 2 Strategic Cycle Network corridors must be reflected in the proposed site redevelopments.

Affordable Housing.

The applicant acknowledges the importance of affordable housing but as there is no requirement to provide it, has elected not to. The applicant's view that the provision of public benefit works contributions (most required under the planning scheme) negates the need for affordable housing. The applicant appears to accept that the public benefit works provided to the homeless who will be sleeping rough are an acceptable trade off.

Natural Ventilation.

With ventilation a key factor in COVID 19 transmission, ventilation in apartments and office spaces must be to a higher standard. It is likely that building standards soon will require ventilation standards to be upgraded. The current ventilation standard requires a minimum of 40% of apartments to achieve cross flow ventilation. The Vicinity proposal only exceeds the minimum by 4%. Hardly adequate given the scientific knowledge we now have about the importance of good ventilation in reducing air borne virus transmission.

Alternative Energy.

Hi-rise developments offer roof space for PV arrays. The Sustainability Management Plan for the Vicinity apartment tower indicates that *'A solar PV array system of minimum 5.5 kW total capacity will be provided.'* A 5.5kW system is what powers the average home. There are 366 apartments proposed. The contribution to greenhouse gas reduction is less than token. Each apartment will have split system air conditioning. Northern facing apartments will be operating cooling systems to reduce heat from unshaded windows. Double glazing doesn't reduce heating from direct sunlight. 5.5kW would provide 15w of power per apartment if operating to specification. 15w equates to one low powered light globe. This contribution is grossly inadequate. The commercial building has a 150kW system. The building at 1 Main Street has no PV proposed, despite a large available roof area. Solar panels have 2 benefits, they produce [power and they shade the roof reducing the heat island effect.

Wind impacts.

The wind analysis identified acceptable but not ideal impacts. The analysis appears to be on the conditions expected in the Melbourne CBD and based on data collected from the Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) site at Essendon. The upstream terrain of the CBD is very different to that of Box Hill. The flat Basalt Plains and Port Phillip Bay surrounding the CBD are very different from the rolling hills and the Dandenong Ranges that impact Box Hill. BoM wind data expressed in wind roses for Essendon and Viewbank (the closest BoM wind data site to Box Hill) show big differences in the prevailing wind direction and average wind speed.

The wind analysis doesn't appear to take account of the impact of funnelling between towers or the downstream impacts of wind turbulence on nearby residential areas from high rise towers.

Rose of Wind direction versus Wind speed in km/h (01 Apr 1939 to 11 Aug 2021)

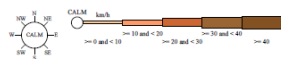
Custom times selected, refer to attached note for details

ESSENDON AIRPORT

Site No: 086038 • Opened Jan 1929 • 081 Open • Latitude: -37.7275° • Longitude: 144.9660° • Elevation 78 m

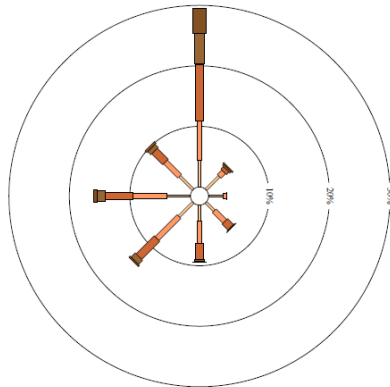
An asterisk (*) indicates that calm is less than 0.5%.

Other important info about this analysis is available in the accompanying notes.



9 am
18567 Total Observations

Calm 7%



Rose of Wind direction versus Wind speed in km/h (01 Apr 1939 to 11 Aug 2021)

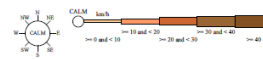
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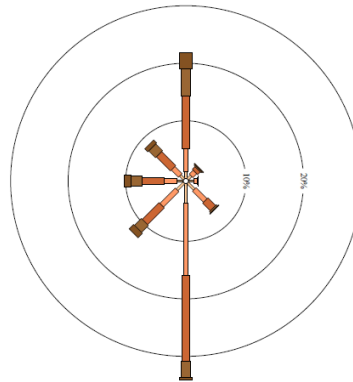
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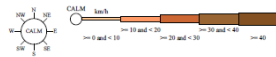


3 pm
18374 Total Observations

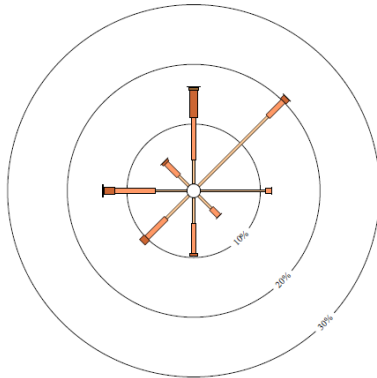
Calm 2%



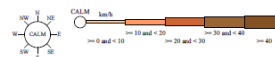
Rose of Wind direction versus Wind speed in km/h (01 Dec 1999 to 11 Aug 2021)
 Custom times selected, refer to attached note for details
VIEWBANK
 Site No: 286268 • Opened Dec 1999 • 051 Open • Latitude: -37.7428° • Longitude: 145.2872° • Elevation 66 m
 An asterisk (*) indicates that calm is less than 0.5%.
 Other important info about this analysis is available in the accompanying notes.



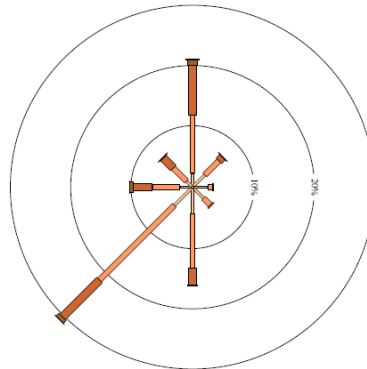
9 am
 7895 Total Observations
 Calm 6%



Rose of Wind direction versus Wind speed in km/h (01 Dec 1999 to 11 Aug 2021)
 Custom times selected, refer to attached note for details
VIEWBANK
 Site No: 286268 • Opened Dec 1999 • 051 Open • Latitude: -37.7428° • Longitude: 145.2872° • Elevation 66 m
 An asterisk (*) indicates that calm is less than 0.5%.
 Other important info about this analysis is available in the accompanying notes.



3 pm
 7892 Total Observations
 Calm 1%



EV charging.

Only 5% of apartment's car spaces will be provided with an EV charging facility. Some Scandinavian and European countries have reached 50% of their car fleet EV's, others including the US is aiming to reach that level by 2030. Australia is on the cusp of making a significant change, growth will be exponential. 5% provision for a building that will be completed not much before 2030 is insufficient.

Overshadowing.

While acknowledging there is existing shading of main street the proposal to activate a street that is in almost constant shade will hardly be attractive except in the warmest months.

Conclusion.

The issues highlighted above must be part of the consideration process for the Vicinity planning applications.

Yours Sincerely

Michael Taafe

President Blackburn Village Residents Group Inc.

