

When the Comprehensive Impact Statement was released for comment in mid 2013, we saw the full extent of the proposed catastrophe and its impact on the community and heritage of Collingwood and Clifton Hill. As a cost saving measure badged as desirable urban renewal (read discriminatory slum clearance), the proposed tunnel was not to start on the freeway east of the railway line but rather the area of Alexandra Parade between Hoddle Street and Smith Street was to be used for works and the tunnel entrance, and a massive flyover was to be constructed over the Hoddle Street intersection. Contributory properties in heritage overlays were to be compulsorily purchased and demolished, in some cases just for temporary works, and prominent heritage Landmarks would no longer be seen. In summary the proposed **East West Link** precinct 1 was to have **adverse heritage impacts** in the following:

- Shot Tower
 - VHR H0709, Classified State Significance by National Trust B3798 & City of Yarra Landmark
- Collingwood Town Hall
 - VHR H0140, Classified State Significance by National Trust B1266, Register of National Estate, City of Yarra Landmark
- Victoria Park Football Ground
 - VHR H0075
- St John the Baptist Clifton Hill
 - Classified Regional Significance by National Trust B5014, City of Yarra Landmark
- Clifton Hill Eastern City of Yarra HO316
- Victoria Park City of Yarra HO337
- Gold Street City of Yarra HO321
- Clifton Hill Western City of Yarra HO317
- Dight's Falls
 - VHR H1522, Classified State Significance by National Trust, City of Yarra HO48
- Yarra Bend Park
- City of Yarra HO301
- Historic trees in Alexandra Parade in Draft Yarra Historical Tree Register.

The **UNNECESSARY FLYOVER** would minimize and block views of **landmark** Shot Tower, St John's Clifton Hill and Collingwood Town Hall, and iconic Victoria Park, cause visual/noise/light pollution of **East Clifton Hill HO316** where freeway impact was currently minimal because of valley, and require the destruction of Bendigo and Hotham Street houses and communities in **HO321**. Residents remaining in these streets would also face 5 years of construction and ultimately face walls instead of other heritage buildings. In **Clifton Hill West HO317** 20 houses and factories (17 contributory) would be demolished for an unnecessary **TEMPORARY DIVERSION** destroying amongst other things Wellington Street described by Allom Lovell in 1998 as "one of most intact heritage streetscapes". The remaining houses were to be left facing a wall/freeway for 5 years. What was this "urban renewal" that was to replace the heritage buildings? What damage would occur to remaining heritage houses from blasting, vibration, traffic?

Other impacts in HO317 included the following:

- Demolition of Former Box's Hair Curling Works 1880 (Provans) early industrial remnant
- Demolition of early bluestone pitched lane

- Demolition of early post office box on corner of Wellington St
- Change of relationship of Shot Tower to local environment
- Loss of historic trees in Alexandra Parade including 18 on City of Yarra Draft Significant Tree Register
- Disintegration of the community with no easy north south access
- Proximity of vent stack to Shot Tower, residential properties and Gold St Primary school.

The community swung into actions ranging from public meetings, setting up of formal and informal groups, lobbying politicians, writing submissions, presenting to East West Assessment Panel set up in October 2013 and actively protesting on the ground against works which had commenced in parallel to the work of the Assessment Panel. (If you want to learn more about the East West protests, you can see information stills for Ian Hexter's 2016 documentary Tunnel Vision on IMD [here](#) as well as a [trailer](#) on Youtube). What had also commenced in parallel was the tendering process for the Project with the aim of getting it rushed through and signed off before the 2014 State Election.

Members of the Collingwood Historical Society were involved in these actions and the Society presented to the East West Assessment Panel in April 2014 recommending that adverse heritage impact could be avoided by

- **Replacing unnecessary flyover**
- **Moving commencement of tunnel to east of railway**
- **Constructing ALL the tunnel via tunnelling not cut/cover**

This would

- Save Bendigo/Hotham St houses and community
- Remove visual blight from Shot Tower and East Clifton Hill
- Retain visibility of Collingwood Town Hall, St John's and Vic Park icons
- Save historic trees in Alexandra Parade
- Save destruction of West Clifton Hill HO
- Retain Wellington St in its entirety
- Remove stack from Shot Tower and school
- Allow people to walk, cycle, drive etc between Collingwood and Clifton Hill throughout project
- Not discriminate against Collingwood and Clifton Hill for cost-cutting
- Minimize soil contamination exposure
- Retain median reserve for Doncaster Rail.

On 30 May 2014 the report of the Heritage Assessment Panel was released recommending (amongst other things) that the eastern portal and ventilation stacks be relocated east of the Hurstbridge/South Morang Railway Line, that the proposed flyer at Hoddle should not be constructed, and the proposed temporary side-track north of Alexandra Parade should be removed. However, the tenders were let and who knows what would have happened if the Andrews' Labor Government had not won the election on 29 November 2014 and cancelled the contracts. As it is, the impact of these years is still felt in the local community, both psychologically and visually. Properties were compulsorily acquired, and people unwillingly moved out of the area. Some of these properties owned by the State Government are still

Collingwood Historical Society Walk 2021 – Attachment 4 East West Link

vacant in 2021. And the State Liberals still have the East West Link as an active part of their planning policy platform.

