

SUBMISSION

23 July 2010

To whom it may Concern,

We are writing as the owners and residents including tenants of 178-186 Buckley Street Footscray, in relation to the Regional Rail Link (RRL) proposal.

We are notionally supportive of the upgrade to public transport services and are aware that some houses and businesses are unavoidably affected when such an upgrade takes place, however we are very concerned about the effect the RRL implementation will directly have on all of us and our community throughout the process and into the future.

We are a cluster of five houses nearest to West Footscray station (at the end of the row). We have been informed by two representatives of The Rail Authority that it is possible we will be *only partially acquired*, meaning our backyards will be bought but our houses remain, with trains running past our back doors and windows. Furthermore, examination of the map (sent 8 August) reflect this intention by RRL authority to run the boundary through our properties with some actually impacting on the buildings. We do not wish our houses, to “be saved” and remain behind as the “West Footscray Station Island”.

As a result, we have genuine concerns as the potential “stranded island” of individuals left behind that both during and after the process there will be a number of factors that will affect us. They include:

1. Access to our properties during the day and in particular when works are being undertaken at night (including emergency transport for those of us whom may need an ambulance)
2. Serious sleep deprivation for all the works over a prolonged period as the works are to be undertaken at night
3. Access to our local public transport options to reduce our carbon footprint
4. Lack of planning and care that may occur during demolition of houses that may potentially have asbestos and other “nasty” chemicals that will become airborne
5. Dust and other debris in and on our homes and furniture
6. Noise, vibration and pollutants during the process
7. Lack of parking for our own vehicles near our homes as the

“workers” take up our usual car spaces because of “priority” given to workers for

As a result of the above factors, we believe the process of building and laying the lines will significantly affect our health and well being during this period and therefore potentially impact, for those whom work, on the ability to remain healthy and participate and be productive workers in our community will be take away from us (if we are sleep deprived or sick). We also do not know what the short and long term effects are for us of the pollutants during and after construction.

After construction, we believe our pets, children and ourselves will not be able to live a healthy and happy life due to vibration, the noise as trains travel far faster than their current speed through the area and we will have no back yard. What about the Aussie dream!

Some of us have been in our homes for 65 years, some of us for only a year. Some of us run businesses from home; others rent. We are a little community of individuals and families who have come together to inform you that under no circumstances do we wish to be partially acquired or live with trains shunting past our doorstep at greater speeds and in greater numbers. Also, why are these trains to be diesel not electric seems to fly in the face of the state and federal government commitment to our environment.

We all know that property in Footscray will continue to appreciate as it is only 5kms from the CBD and with all of the exciting, planned upgrades on their way. We bought here because of the area’s “community feel”. The houses were affordable. The area was vibrant, close to public transport and bursting with potential and have already integrated ourselves into our community. Some of us are past working age, others bought our properties as a nest egg for the future and others have been sitting on it quietly for years knowing that Footscray was meant to be something special in the future. Some of us are relatively new to the area, but also love it already, as we are only two minutes walk to Seddon village with all its cute cafes, restaurants and amenities and an easy stroll into Footscray itself. We also live here due to our own commitment to our environment and to reduce our own impact.

Clearly the extension of the lines in this current plan would be a massive detraction, not only financially, on the future selling of any of these four properties, but would greatly impact on the quality of life we have all created here in Footscray. We can only imagine how hideous the noise and air pollution will be in the construction of these new lines and the

impact this will have on all of our health. Can you imagine living and working under these conditions? Or, for that matter, an elderly couple with existing health concerns? Would this happen in South Yarra or Toorak – NOT LIKELY!

In short we would all prefer not to move at all as we love the area, but having seen the proposed regional route and its proximity to our houses, we need it to be acknowledged that we **do not want to see our properties partially acquired** as this would result in loss of business, an extreme devaluation of all our properties and quality of life for us all. We also **do not wish to remain** in our properties if the proposed route goes ahead, as this will be both unbearable and unsustainable.

We seek to have our concerns about the effects of the RRL addressed. In addition, the appalling manner in which we have been treated is inexcusable and we seek commitment to providing us with appropriate and open disclosure principles applied to inform us of plans as a matter of urgency (not on government timelines) and a clearer outline of the process from here.

We wish this letter to be made publicly available and waive any privacy in relation to its accessibility to concerned members of the public or media.

Please feel free to contact any of us if you have any feedback or queries.

Yours in Concern,

The Residents of 178-186 Buckley Street, Footscray