

“ATTENTION: DIRECTOR, INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS”

Application name: CHERRYBROOK STATION - ROBERT ROAD INVOLVEMENT

APPLICATION NUMBER SS1-5100

ISSUES I WISH TO RAISE TO BE ADDRESSED: property value, safety and health .

My concerns for the Robert Road involvement in the Cherrybrook Station, or Franklin Road Station as it has been known for some years, include the safety and health needs of the residents of Robert Road, as the boundary of the construction has moved. However my greatest concern is the risk that my property will be devalued as a result of the construction zone across the road from my home.

The increased traffic proposed around the construction zone is detrimental to the safety of the residents of Robert Road, particularly those close to Castle Hill Road. Robert Road is a narrow road, struggling to accommodate the traffic flow at times that is already present. With a number of battle-axe blocks on the street, parking for residents in their own driveway is limited, as such, many residents park on the street. The intention to run buses along Robert Road is absurd, as the road will not be able to accommodate this. County Drive and Franklin Road already accommodate several bus routes and it would be more effective to utilise these roads, as that was the intention of these roads during their own development.

The noise expected throughout the duration of the construction, and the resulting noise from the railway line, is of a health concern particularly as the work is to progress on a 24 hour basis.

My major concern, which I wish to be addressed and answered satisfactorily, is the property value of my house decreasing due to the construction. It is expected that the value of the house would increase, given the limited number of villas on the available market, if the northwest rail link site had not moved to Robert Road and the street remains as it is, a quiet residential street, today.

When I purchased my property, the conveyance report indicated that there was a proposed railway underground with a station at Franklin Street. It is only over the last 8 weeks this has grown to now involve Robert Road, which will have a significant impact on the value of properties directly affected by the construction and alterations to the nature of the road.

As I am approaching 60 years of age, I need to consider my retirement and as I lost my superannuation during the global financial crisis, the need to obtain the best selling price for my house, in order to pay off my mortgage and purchase another dwelling, is my priority. The expectation to achieve the best price in order to reduce the amount I may potentially owe has been hindered by the move of the Cherrybrook station. I am concerned that the selling price will be handicapped by the construction site. I will not get the selling price that I would have expected had there been no railway construction, noise, dirt, increased traffic and inevitable delays to the completion date. I am not in a position to sell prior to construction and as such am left feeling that the major works will have a detrimental impact on ‘look and feel’ of the property when I am required to sell.

Further I am concerned that the Rail Link, which, as reported heavily in the media, has no funding and will be left in limbo for years to come. I am concerned the area will become a “white elephant” which no one will want to live beside. I have found that even the northwest rail link advisory staff have sympathetically suggested that I would have difficulty selling my property during construction.

It is expected that homes directly impacted by construction, especially those located above the tunnel, are provided with a building inspection and report to ensure that any damage to property foundations are compensated for by the NWRL and Department of Transport. At present, my home

has no damage and should it be affected in such a way, this will further impact on my ability to sell my home at a reasonable price.

I have had advice from Real Estate Agents in the area who have reported that it is entirely possible that the railway will have a negative impact on property values close to the Robert Road, Franklin Street area.

Furthermore, I had my house valued at a time when Robert Road residents were of the opinion that the 'underground rail line' was in fact an underground rail line and Cherrybrook station was several meters under the surface. It has since been revealed, in a manner that has upset and angered many residents, that Cherrybrook station will be an open-air station. The resulting impact of this means that the station will be visible, noise will increase and many potential home buyers will view this as a negative as a once leafy street will now look onto a train station. At the time of valuation, my selling price was on the consideration that the station would be underground and the topography of the block would be very different, hopefully back to the leafy surrounding that is known for this area. Unfortunately, this revelation will now impact directly on the estimations I have received and this will impact on my situation in a negative way.

Residents at the Castle Hill Road entry point of Robert Road have already experienced the detrimental effect construction has had on the road. The construction of the childcare centre had a significant impact on the resident with large trucks parked across driveways and machinery stored in the street for days. The 'look' of a major construction site will immediately decrease the value of the property and the likelihood of the street being viewed in the quiet manner in which it is today will be less.

With the station now being 'open-air' it is expected that the ground surface available for parking will be less and cars parking in Robert Road to access the station is expected. As residents of Robert Road, we are in the best position to advise of the impact this will have on the street. This is a consultative process, and it is expected that transparent communication be a priority. It was concerning to learn about the open-air station from the head of construction at an information session, rather than the Community Liaison Officers only 2 weeks before the close date for submissions, as this changes the impact the station will have on residents directly opposite it.

I look forward to your response.

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***I DO NOT WISH MY NAME AND ADDRESS TO BE MADE AVAILABLE ON THE PROPONENT OR
DEPARTMENT'S WEBSITE***