



Media release

The Hon Matthew Guy MLC

Minister for Planning

Saturday 29 October 2011

Independent report on Labor's shabby consultation over the Geelong Ring Road Section 4C

Planning Minister Matthew Guy has endorsed and made public the findings of an independent review of the previous Labor Government's proposed alignment of Section [4C of the Geelong Ring Road](#).

"The Independent Advisory Committee has found weaknesses in the community consultation, which could have been undertaken earlier and more effectively," Mr Guy said.

In embarrassing findings for the previous Labor Government, the Independent Committee expressed their belief that 4C was unlikely to fulfil the regional role of a strategic link between the Geelong Bypass and Torquay.

"In reflecting upon the use of the proposed road, the Independent Committee believed it could fulfil the role of a local or sub-regional road only," Mr Guy said.

"In relation to the proposed alignment of the road, the Independent Committee found while there were faults in the process, they did not constitute a significant failure and that it should now proceed in the proposed location.

"These independent findings lead me to the conclusion the proposed alignment of Section 4C is the preferred location, but that it should not be the eventual freeway Labor planned it to be.

"I am satisfied the independent review of the planning and consultation process has been far-reaching and I have no hesitation in making the Advisory Committee report public in the interests of transparency.

"The people of Greater Geelong can rest assured this decision has been both methodical and carefully considered."

Further advice received from the Department of Transport and VicRoads concludes the previous Labor Government significantly underestimated the cost of land acquisition for the proposed alignment, resulting in a \$10 million cost blow out.

"This is another appalling example of Labor's dodgy accounting, poor consultation and ill-considered projects that have an underlying impact on the taxpayer," Transport Minister Terry Mulder said.

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“Little wonder local residents were concerned with the previous government’s consultation and constant spruiking that the continuation of a major freeway was to be built behind them.”

The report shows that Section 4C will be more like other urban roads in Geelong, rather than the misleading label of Geelong Ring Road.

Traffic projections for Section 4C are of 15,000 vehicles per day in 2040, which would then see it more like Barrabool Road (23,000 vehicles per day) and Pioneer Road (23,000 vehicles per day).

The Independent Committee heard from local residents, Greater Geelong City and Surf Coast Shire councils, VicRoads, Department of Transport, Department of Planning and Community Development and the developers of Armstrong Creek.

Mr Guy sincerely thanked all the parties which played a role in informing the advice of the Independent Committee on the community, environmental, social and economic considerations related to this important arterial road alignment.

The Advisory Committee made a number of other recommendations calling for greater consideration of pedestrian and bicycle movements, noise attenuation, landscape treatment, and protection of native vegetation.

“I am advised VicRoads has already committed to integrating the recommendations into the project plan for Section 4C,” Mr Guy said.

The Advisory Committee also recommended investigations into two further significant arterial road projects in the area which will inform future roads policy in the area.

Transport Minister Terry Mulder said that now a decision has been made, VicRoads could get on with the job of delivering what will be an integral part the Armstrong Creek Urban Growth Area.

“We will be consulting with landowners and adjacent communities to ensure their expectations are incorporated into the final design before the process of land acquisition and construction commences,” Mr Mulder said.

The Advisory Committee received a total of 87 written submissions.

The report can be viewed at www.dpcd.vic.gov.au/planning/panelsandcommittees

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