

Jun 26, 2017

The Hon Richard Wynne MP  
Minister for planning  
Level 16, 8 Nicholson Street  
East Melbourne VIC 3002

Richard.wynne@parliament.vic.gov.au

Dear Mr Wynne

My family and I would like to express our deep concern over the selected/planned route (Option1) of the expansion of the Western Highway between Buangor and Ararat.

I have recently inspected the site and have seen first hand the preparatory works for the project and I simply do not understand the justification for what seems to be such an extreme waste of public funds.

Given there is an alternative route which with good faith design can have significantly less impact on the environment and the possible cultural heritage of the area whilst still respecting the safety objectives of the project, I believe that this project can be completed at a significantly lower cost and a faster construction time.

Can you please explain the reasons why Option 1 is still preferred? As planned, it is \$65 Million more expensive than necessary, it cuts a dramatic swathe through existing farming land, destroys heritage listed trees, interferes with the existing natural water courses, destroys possible indigenous heritage sites and grossly impacts on the natural environment. All of these consequences can be substantially avoided.

We support the alternative Northern route based on comprehensive and independent evaluation and request that the decision to proceed with Option 1 is reassessed including the additional information that was not part of the original 2012 evaluation.

We respectfully seek your response to these concerns and that serious consideration is given to the less destructive and significantly cheaper alternative.

Yours sincerely

David Bates

On Behalf of:  
David, Michèle and Persephone Bates d'Arbella