

TRANSPORT

REGULATION

BOARD

....

ENQUIRY

Into

PUBLIC PASSENGER TRANSPORT FACILITIES

IN THE

GEELONG URBAN DISTRICT

SUPPLEMENTARY EVIDENCE IN CHIEF

GEELONG CITY COUNCIL

GEELONG & DISTRICT TOWN  
PLANNING COMMITTEE

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CITY OF GEELONG

Statement of Evidence to be submitted  
by Cr. B. E. Purnell.  
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"The Geelong City Council from 1929 until 1951 was the Licensing Authority for Urban Omnibuses and Hackney Carriages (Taxi Cabs and Private Hire Cars) in the Geelong Urban area.

In this capacity and with its close contact with local conditions, it is felt that the Council is in a position to indicate with reasonable certainty some of the problems involved with the present system of passenger transport operating here and to make suggestions for improving conditions.

This Council has also, on several occasions previously, placed its views before your Board and no doubt its ideas and opinions are well known to you.

While the Council opposed the taking away of certain local powers by the introduction of the Transport Co-Ordination Act, it nevertheless agreed and supported the idea that there should be co-ordinated control which would Ministerially cover motor vehicles, Railways and Tramways. It feels that under co-ordinated control road, tram and rail services could be utilised to greater advantage than has ever been under taken before.

Buses:

The buses operated by private enterprise have carried the greatest burden of passenger carrying here. On suburban routes they have been eminently satisfactory and can easily and conveniently cater for the suburban requirements of a large and growing city such as this.

Tramways:

The tramways have been operating at a substantial loss for many years and no extension of routes has been undertaken for over 25 years. Under agreement with the Councils in the urban area, bus routes are required to be approved by the S.E.C. before being granted and generally speaking are only permitted where they will not compete with the trams. This means that the State Electricity Commission will not permit through bus routes to operate. With buses running from North to South and East to West of the City and on other selected routes, it is felt that a great improvement in service could be given to the travelling public - probably more frequent services, less changing over to other buses and also an easing of bus terminal problems in the City area for those suburban buses. The tramway system as at present is operating at a loss, is obsolete and would need many miles of additional lines to keep up with the ever-expanding City in addition to provision of new trams. The tramway system, as it is constituted at present, cannot be considered satisfactory and is obviously hampering bus route development.



Railways:

Proposals for a railway service to run on an industrial and suburban basis were never supported by the Railways Authorities, but, surely with modern rail motors and the addition of several sidings, a satisfactory service could operate between Grovedale and Corio. Such a service could surely play its part in carrying some of the heavy industrial traffic, which has created a problem, particularly during the war years and immediately thereafter. Sidings could well be considered at Kilgour Street (Kardinia Park area), Keera Street and Telegraph Bridge, and also on the Queenscliff and Ballarat lines.

Taxis and Hire Cars:

The Council considers these services are generally satisfactory

General:

Bell Report 1948.

When the Bell Report 1948, on passenger transport in the Geelong Urban area, was placed before the Geelong City Council, the recommendations submitted by Mr. Bell were generally approved with the exception that it was considered that any authority administering the transport should be a State constituted local authority.

The recommendations, subject to minor amendments as appearing, briefly are:-

- (1) To utilise the railways for implementing the carrying of employees to Northern industries. Also a railway suburban service.
- (2) Existing obsolete tramway service to be scrapped and replaced by omnibus or trolley bus service.
- (3) Appointment of new State constituted local controlling authority.

Further suggested matters to be considered:

This Council again urges that private operators can and should be able to satisfactorily operate and this has been proved by their past record.

Should the tramways be abolished then the losses sustained year by year would be eliminated and it would not be any financial burden for the State Electricity Commission to remove the rails and repair the roadways, consequent upon such removal. Scrap value of rails would be considerable.

It is also considered that there should be continued close liaison by your Board with local authorities, particularly this Council, and that adequate provision should be made to compensate Councils for wear and tear of roadways upon bus routes."



GEELONG AND DISTRICT TOWN PLANNING COMMITTEEReport on Transport Provisions of the Geelong  
and District Town Planning Scheme.

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"1. Function of Scheme.

The function of the town planning scheme in regard to transport is to make the necessary reservations of land for future transport needs, so that these can be met as they arise without expensive resumption of developed land and buildings. All such reservations must be made in correct relationship with the present and future use of adjoining land as established by the zoning provisions of the planning scheme.

2. Relation with Transport Authorities.

The collaboration of transport authorities in deciding the location and extent of reservations for transport purposes is essential. A Town Planning Authority is not in a position to resolve the possibly conflicting claims of different transport systems, and it is highly desirable that the advice of some co-ordinating transport authority should be available. This has not been possible in Geelong. Lacking such recourse, the advice and assistance of Transport Authorities such as the Country Roads Board, Victorian Railways Department, the Civil Aviation Department and the State Electricity Commission has been sought, insofar as their respective transport interests are concerned.

An attempt has been made to co-ordinate the land-use requirements of these authorities and of the municipalities, on the basis of the authorities' own plans, so far as they are disclosed, and the considered needs of local traffic.

This has resulted in the incorporation in the planning scheme of a series of reservations, as follows:-

1. Reservations for railway purposes.
2. Reservations for main roads and highways.
3. Reservations for internal traffic roads and parking areas.

No reservation has been made for airport purposes, as it is considered that the closeness of Geelong to the major airport at Essendon is such that provision is not justified.

Reservations for railway purposes follow, so far as is known, the Department's future plans, and include an area for marshalling yards at North Geelong and provision for increasing the radius of the loop at Separation Street. Apart from such reservations, evidence was given on behalf of the Town Planning Committee before the Committee on electrification, on the desirability of developing an electric suburban train service in Geelong, using existing lines and establishing new stations.



This proposal, if carried out, would materially affect the internal transport system, requiring buses to act as lateral feeders to a spinal railway line.

Reservations for new highways, main roads and widenings have been thoroughly discussed with the Country Roads Board and in general appear to be satisfactory to the Board as provisions for the future. The Board's own proposals have been incorporated in the plan, and protection has been afforded to the routes of new roads by the use of the Committee's interim development power.

Internal traffic roads and widenings have been designed in the light of local knowledge and of such traffic surveys as have been undertaken. These proposals will need further consideration when the future development of road transport within Geelong is clarified. At present, this is not at all clear. The future of the tramway system, the possibility of local electric railway services, and of trolley-buses, and the future organization of bus transport systems are all matters which may materially affect the need for improvements in the present road system.

In the circumstances, internal road proposals for widenings, diversions, new roads, etc., are limited to those which arise from present conditions. This need not delay the implementation of the planning scheme, but points to the need for further consideration of the internal road system as part of any general examination and re-organization of transport within Geelong. Any new planning requirements arising thus can be incorporated in a future amending planning scheme.

3. Information available:

It has not been financially practicable to make a complete study of traffic conditions in Geelong and District. The major problems, however, have been studied in some detail, viz:-

1. Main Road Traffic Census

The flow of traffic to and from Geelong by the highways and main roads was studied by an origin and destination survey conducted in 1948 by the Planning Committee with the assistance of the Country Roads Board and Police Department. The results of this survey have been used in formulating main road proposals and are available for use by any transport authority interested.

2. Workers Transport Questionnaire

This was conducted in August 1948 with the co-operation of the northern industries and the Geelong Trades Hall. A questionnaire was circulated to all workers in the Norlane - North Shore area, with the intention of eliciting the main lines of desired transport to and from work. A 62% response was received to this questionnaire, and the information was collated and used in formulating proposals for internal road improvements. This information is also available for study.

The consultants have also had the opportunity of examining and commenting upon the Traffic Report made in 1949 by Mr. H. H. Bell Jnr.



4. Transport problems in Geelong.

The major problems related to road traffic which have been recognised are as follows:-

(a) Norlane.

- (i) The Princes Highway passes through an area rapidly developing as a residential suburb, through which is the only access to the major industrial area of North Shore. Thus heavy through traffic is mixed with local traffic and impeded by cross-traffic both vehicular and pedestrian. A bypass is needed.
- (ii) No adequate communication exists between the Princes Highway and the Midland Highway, except where they join in Geelong West. Industrial heavy transport generated at North Shore and general main-road traffic desiring to divert to the Midland Highway must either go through the bottleneck at the junction of Bell Parade through to the Telegraph Bridge, or pursue a devious route through back roads. A link is needed here.
- (iii) The group of large industries sited at North Shore, which employ mostly male labour, generate a large volume of traffic including buses, private cars, motor cycles and cycles, with a peak load between 4 and 5 p.m. along the Melbourne Road between North Shore Road and Glenleith Avenue. This coincides with Princes Highway main-road traffic and causes considerable congestion. A good alternative route to West Geelong would divert a large part of this traffic, as brought out by the questionnaire.
- (iv) Access from the Princes Highway to the North Shore industries passes through the residential area of Norlane. An alternative route is needed, in the north from the Princes Highway and in the south from the Melbourne Road in the vicinity of Separation Street Bridge.

(b) Central Geelong.

Main road traffic using the Princes Highway passes through the central shopping area and also branches to the Bellarine Peninsula. All through traffic from the Western District, including heavy coal trucks and petrol wagons, etc., must pass through the central business area, unless it makes an undesirable detour through residential streets. This traffic should be by-passed.

(c) Belmont.

- (i) The present Princes Highway passes through the main shopping centre, and traffic problems are aggravated by a steep hill and a tramline. The Belmont by-pass proposed by the Country Roads Board will ameliorate this position, but will itself be eventually overtaken by development.



- (ii) There is no adequate link between the Princes Highway south of Geelong and the Bellarine Peninsula. While the main road traffic in this direction may be small, a further justification for a road link is given by the potential importance of the Breakwater area for large-scale industry, and the corresponding importance of Belmont as a residential feeder to this area. At present, the only crossing of the Barwon River between Moorabool Street and the river mouth is a ford at Breakwater, approached by an unmade road below flood level.

### 5. Road Proposals.

Arising out of the recognition and study of the problems outlined above, proposals have been made for reservations as shown on the attached map to be incorporated in the planning scheme. They are tabulated below with a brief statement of purpose. Full details of siting, widths, etc., can only be obtained from the large-scale planning scheme maps and the appendices to the proposed ordinance. These can be made available if necessary.

| <u>Ref. on<br/>Map</u> | <u>Proposed Road</u>                 | <u>Purpose</u>   |
|------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| A.                     | Geelong By-pass<br>(Princes Highway) | A future proposal for a complete by-pass for the Princes Highway which will act as an "urban fence" limiting expansion of Geelong on the west. Future development beyond this limit is envisaged in the form of satellite suburbs separated from the urban area by a "green belt" of agricultural land which the by-pass will traverse. The building of this road may be 20-30 years distant.  |
| B.                     | North-south Road                     | A proposal for the amelioration of present through-traffic problems, considered possible of attainment in the fairly near future. It will divert through traffic from the central area, partly through land at present undeveloped and partly through a wide street (Latrobe Terrace) which is virtually a boundary between the residential western suburbs and the industrial and commercial city area. It has one serious problem of implementation requiring inter-authority co-ordination. The engine sheds at Geelong West are planned to be moved to North Geelong at some indefinite future date. Their site is necessary for this road to pass at low level under the difficult Church Street - Telegraph Bridge area, and this seems to be a sound case for the planning of one authority - the Railways Department - to be brought forward at an earlier date than would otherwise be necessary, in the interests of road traffic. |

This does not seem probable unless co-ordination can be achieved at higher Governmental levels.



C. Midland Highway  
widening of  
inner end.

This road will also be a valuable alternative road for workers' transport and other internal traffic between Norlane and the western and southern suburbs, avoiding the bottlenecks and congestion of the present route. It has therefore a permanent value for local traffic in addition to its function as a temporary substitute for a full by-pass of the Princes Highway.

The traffic survey of 1948 showed conclusively that more than 90% of traffic entering or leaving Geelong by the Midland Highway passed through Church Street to Pakington Street and Telegraph Bridge. This inner section now forms a bottleneck, the remainder of the Highway having been widened. The proposed widening has been approved by the Country Roads Board. Its full advantage will depend on the construction of the north-south road, to which it connects.

D. Belmont By-pass.

This is already in process of being carried out by the C.R.B., with the intention of diverting heavy highway traffic from High St., Belmont. It will be effective for this purpose, but unfortunately development has overtaken it already, and it does not seem practicable to hold development north of this line. When the frontage becomes built-up, which is considered to be only a matter of time, it will no longer be a by-pass, but a main road running through a residential area. For this reason 'E' below has been proposed.

E. Southern By-pass.

This road, running in a low-lying creek valley will act as an effective stop to outward development in Belmont. It will link the proposed Geelong By-pass on the west with the present Princes Highway, thence crossing the river to Breakwater and connecting to the Bellarine Highway. It will also serve in conjunction with the Barwon Heads Road as a by-pass to Belmont for heavy main road traffic routed to central Geelong.

The communication between Belmont and Breakwater has considerable potential importance as an internal traffic road. Breakwater has great possibilities for industrial development and at least one very large overseas industry is likely to be established there. Belmont is ideally sited as a workers' suburb serving the Breakwater industrial area, provided that good road access is available. The proposed road provides this in addition to its function as a link between the Princes Highway and the Bellarine Peninsula.



F. Northern By-pass.

This proposed new road links the industrial and residential area of Norlane with the Midland Highway. At present it is necessary to travel via the congested inner sections of Melbourne Road, Telegraph Bridge and Church Street, or to take a circuitous route via back roads.

The main function of this road is to serve as an access for heavy road transport generated at Norlane to the Midland Highway. In addition it will give a more direct route for Princes Highway traffic diverting toward Ballarat. Its route passes through practically undeveloped land.

G. North Shore  
Industrial Road.

The purpose of this road is to give direct access from the Princes Highway to the North Shore industrial area without passing through the residential suburb of Norlane. Similarly it gives access to the Melbourne Road south of Separation Street Bridge, and will thus serve as a collecting route for traffic originating at North Shore and with destination either Melbourne or Geelong.

The southern section of this road, passing round the inner boundary of Corio Quay, is already under construction. It will form a very useful diversion of one section of workers' daily traffic from North Shore, thus relieving the Princes Highway north of Separation Street. Together with the northern section of the North-South Road, which is comparatively easy to achieve, it will go far to solve this particular problem.

H. Corio Terrace  
extensions.

It is recognized that a considerable proportion of main road traffic will be generated by Geelong itself, and, further, that traffic from Melbourne to the Bellarine Peninsula will have to pass through Geelong.

It is therefore proposed that Corio Terrace shall be developed as a through traffic road in connection with the proposed North-South road. This would give a direct route to the Peninsula without passing through the central shopping area. It would also, together with Latrobe Terrace, Yarra and Myers Street, form an inner ring system which might, for example, be used for local bus routes, instead of bringing them through the congested central area. Such a ring system would also give a reasonably clear avenue of approach for commercial traffic to any part of the central area, particularly if protected by zoning regulations from the traffic-generating uses of the central commercial area.



This connection involves two major reservations, one for an extension through an existing blighted residential area to the east, and an enlarged subway below the railway to the west. The latter is by far the more difficult problem, as the proposed road connection would, like the existing one, be crossed at grade by the spur line to Cunningham Pier. This line at present is used mainly for the transport of coal from the wharf and wool to and from the wool stores nearby. The coal wharf is, we understand, to be moved to North Shore, and there is a recognizable trend for wool stores to move out to cheaper suburban locations. It would seem, therefore, that this spur line has a limited useful life. While this proposition is not, therefore, immediately practicable, it is considered that it should be kept in mind as a long-range plan.

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The above are the major road proposals. There are others of a minor nature which do not appear to require special consideration in a report of this nature.

6. In conclusion, it is reiterated that the present planning scheme cannot fully solve the problems of local traffic, in the lack of any firm plan for the future development of transport services. Such a plan should, for example, take into consideration the capacity of existing roads for bus transport, eliminating buses from narrow residential streets wherever possible. Conversely, town planning powers can be used for the widening of inadequate routes, the provision of necessary road links, and, most importantly, for the protection of suburban transport routes from heterogeneous commercial or industrial frontage development.

The co-ordination of these two fields of planning is therefore greatly to be desired, and it is hoped that out of the present enquiry will arise some organization for transport planning which will link up with land-use planning to the future benefit of Geelong."

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