

9 April 2018

Legislative Council Committee Office
18-32 Parliament Place
West Perth WA 6005
ATTN: Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs

RE: Petition No. 052 - Murdoch Drive Connection Project

Dear Hon Matthew Swinbourn,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission supporting our petition that opposes the current design of the Murdoch Drive Connection project. We have not taken this complaint to the Parliamentary Commissioner for Administrative Investigations.

The Murdoch Drive Connection Project's approved concept plan announced by the State Government in January 2018 is vastly different than the plan presented to the community in August 2017. The 'approved' plan reduces the community's access to local roads and provides limited access to the Murdoch Drive Connection when completed.

As the project's most directly impacted residential stakeholders, we should have been consulted throughout the planning process.

West Australians deserve better planning and consultation for large infrastructure projects. We cannot allow this type of project to proceed with such disregard for the community.

Background

The Murdoch Chase community is located at Murdoch Drive and Farrington Road in the City of Cockburn. There are more than 200 houses and approximately 800 residents. Allendale Entrance is the single entry/exit road for the neighbourhood.

Murdoch Drive is the primary access route for our residents to access the Murdoch Park-and-Ride/Bus and train station, primary and secondary schools, Murdoch University/TAFE, Fiona Stanley and St. John of God Murdoch hospitals, and local shopping centres.

The Murdoch Drive Connection project's concept plan removes our direct northbound access to Murdoch Drive, requiring us to travel west onto Farrington Road and south onto Bibra Drive, increasing the distance to Fiona Stanley hospital from 1.4 kilometers to 3.8 kilometers. Residents also expect a significant increase in travel times, particularly during peak hour traffic.

Further, residents wanting to travel eastbound on Roe Highway must continue to access the highway via Farrington Road/Karel Avenue as there will be no local access to the new road. Returning home, residents travelling westbound on Roe Highway must also use Karel Avenue/Farrington Road as there is no convenient access off the Murdoch Drive Connection. In other words, despite being in close proximity to the new road, it is virtually unusable for local Murdoch Chase residents. Leeming residents also see the concept plan as a missed opportunity to provide congestion relief on Farrington Rd that will continue to be used for local access to and from Roe Highway.

Consultation summary

Two plans for the Murdoch Drive Connection project were released publically last year in May (announcement date) and August, neither of which removed our direct access to Murdoch Drive. Residents attended the August information session and were comfortable with the option shown. While residents were assured we would have the opportunity to provide feedback on the final plan, no such opportunity occurred.

The Murdoch Chase community, now officially the Murdoch Chase Resident's Association, has consulted with relevant stakeholders to speak out against the road design. Stakeholders have agreed that Murdoch Chase residents 'should have been consulted' but there is a belief that the road design is complete and no changes will be made.

Throughout our community and stakeholder engagement, it has become obvious that the current road design holds little support in the community with most residents in Murdoch Chase and Leeming opposing the design. Many residents in Bibra Lake have also indicated dissatisfaction with the current design. The City of Melville has formally opposed the road design, noteworthy in that the road terminates in their city limits.

It should be noted that the Murdoch Chase residents are active in our engagement for this project. The community has now secured two seats on the project's Community Reference Group (CRG) and will have representatives attend the meetings moving forward.

The Murdoch Chase community is committed to making the Murdoch Drive Connection a key access route into the quickly developing Health and Knowledge Precinct at the Murdoch Activity Centre. We simply want to be part of it – not excluded as a result of poor road design.

Residents are ready to consult to develop a plan that improves northbound access to Murdoch Drive and enables better access to the completed road.

Sincerely,



Ben Reid