

Chapter Six

Freeways

This book discusses the history of Melbourne's roads and streets in the 19th and 20th century. Significant freeway development has and is occurring in the current (21st) century but is not covered in any significant way in this book. It is a story for others to tell at some later time. A freeway is basically a road without intersections and the term *free* relates to the potential for free traffic flow in a traffic engineering sense.¹ As many freeways are also toll ways and are not free in an everyday sense, the term *freeway* is gradually being replaced the term *motorway*.

6.1 Freeway planning

By world standards, Melbourne's freeway system is neither extensive nor comprehensive. This is partly compensated for by an arterial road system that is relatively extensive and effective, providing good levels of service. The good arterial road system is largely a consequence of far-sighted planning by the Country Roads Board (CRB) in advance of Melbourne's metropolitan expansion, as discussed in Sub-chapter 3.5.

(a) From 1929 to 1969

The background to Melbourne's planning system was discussed in Sub-chapter 3.5. Within the overall planning discipline, the metropolitan freeway network was based in significant part on the concepts and reservations in the Town Plan of 1929, on subsequent work leading to the 1954 MMBW Melbourne Metropolitan Planning Scheme and Town Plan (MMBW 1953), and on the 1969 Melbourne Transport Plan.

This transport planning heritage is something of a façade. Many of Melbourne's freeways follow reservations established for electricity transmission easements, rather than for transport. The easements were created by the State Electricity Commission, which had been formed in 1919 and led with vigour by John Monash.² His new Commission with exceptional foresight created wide reservations to distribute and provide power from power stations in the Latrobe Valley far to the east, to an assumed much-expanded city. The opportunity to use these reservations for roads was first recognised in the 1929 Town Plan.³ Examples of freeways in transmission easements are West Gate Freeway (route GL8), Western Ring Rd (route RR) and EastLink.

The freeways also used the creek and river valleys left "vacant" by planning laws prohibiting building construction in flood-prone areas. Examples are Tullamarine Freeway (route MM8) and Moonee Ponds Creek, Eastern Freeway (route TW13) and the Yarra River and Koonung Creek, and Monash Freeway and the Yarra River (route DN11) and Gardiners Creek (route DN12). This highly debatable use of the waterway valleys was at least foreshadowed in the 1929 Town Plan – p224 for Moonee Ponds Creek, p221 for Koonung Creek, and p219 for Gardiners Creek. For example, p219 speaks of the Gardiner Valley Parkway as a "continuous strip of reserves" along Gardiners Creek and adds - almost as an aside - that "incorporated in this scheme is ... a main road between the City and Oakleigh."

Thus, much of the land used for Melbourne's freeways had been preserved as electricity transmission easements or as flood-prone creek and river valleys. Subsequently, freeway construction has required relatively little demolition of domestic and commercial property. This was politically advantageous. The routes with the biggest housing "takes" were the Tullamarine, Monash, Eastern and West Gate Freeways.

Whilst it is commonplace to regard the Metropolitan Town Planning Commission's proposals that led to the 1929 Town Plan as visionary, most were unfortunately too visionary to lead to their ready implementation. The lesson was not learnt and in 1954 Melbourne again had a road plan that was too grandiose, too inappropriate and too expensive to be readily implemented - for instance, it proposed some 460 km of largely unattainable freeways. For

reasons that will become apparent below, only one of these - the first stage of the South Eastern Freeway (route DN11) - was created during the currency of the 1954 plan.

On the other hand, one of the technical problems with the early freeway plans is that the 40 m wide reservation that they provided was far too narrow for a modern freeway. Indeed, Sub-chapter 3.3(a) had shown that the common maximum road reservation used in planning had been 3 chain (20 m). Freeway reservations less than 70 m are rarely effective and 100 m is recommended.⁴ This caused problems, for instance, on the Western Ring Road (route RR) where the reservation was insufficient for the Calder Freeway interchange and near Nicholson Pde in Sunshine West where the route had to be moved 2 km west to Fitzgerald Rd. More width and less length would have rendered the proposals far more useful.

Elsewhere the concept of roads with limited access rights from adjoining land frontages had been introduced post-2nd World War with some success in NSW and New Zealand. It avoided the need to provide land for service roads.

In some ways, the absence of local implementation of freeway schemes was a pity, but in many ways it was a great fortune as it saved the city and its green spaces from the worst excesses of the initial freeway age. Consider some examples of the 1954 Plan's proposals:

- * the incredible Route 6 (it became route F6 in the 1969 Plan) was a north-south bypass which consumed the Darebin Creek valley downstream of Grimshaw St and the Yarra valley at Alphington. "Incredible" because it not merely destroyed two valleys but because it also used the one-chain wide Grange Rd through Fairfield, the Outer Circle rail reservation, Poath Rd and Warrigal Rd. It was abandoned by Rupert Hamer in 1976.⁵
- * Route 30 (F2) would have consumed the Merri Creek valley for a freeway. The portion north of Eastern Freeway survived Hamer's cuts and remained in the CRB's 1974 "plan of intentions". However, Hamer abandoned the portion south of Bell St in 1976.
- * Route F18 in the 1969 Plan would have occupied the Yarra Valley between Ivanhoe and Bulleen – it was abandoned by Hamer in 1973.⁶
- * Route 21 (F9) in the 1954 plan left Monash Freeway to engulf the Back Creek valley in Glen Iris on its way to a route parallel to Burwood Hwy – it was abandoned by Hamer in 1973.
- * Route 31 would have destroyed Woreek Creek (a Back Creek tributary) that flows through South Surrey Park. The ultimate travesty, however, was Route 32 along the left bank of the Yarra River from Linlithgow Ave to Punt Rd, which would have destroyed much of the riverside component of the Royal Botanical Gardens. It did not progress to formal planning.

As a portent for the future, in 1963 the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works (MMBW) announced the eastern section of an inner ring road along Clarendon St and Jolimont Tce, taking – inter alia – eight Ha of the Fitzroy Gardens. The proposal had not been part of the 1954 Plan, which had had an alternative route along Spring St. There was a strong public protest and the scheme was torpedoed by the Government later that year.⁷

In 1965 the Government announced a 10-year program of freeway building. For reasons described in Sub-chapter 3.3 and because much of the work was in the Melbourne metropolitan area, most of the initial freeway building was to be undertaken by the MMBW rather than by the CRB. Writing in 1972 Robert Lee⁸ - a leading MMBW planner - perceptively noted:

Since 1954 the major road system has evolved with a gradual inclusion in the scheme of reservations for future freeways. These have been on an ad hoc basis and in many cases have been a prelude to construction. Thus major amendments were made for the Tullamarine Freeway (route MM8), South Eastern Freeway (route DN11), West Gate Freeway (route GL8) and the Eastern Freeway (route TW13), and for many other lengths of future freeway primarily in the outlying areas. Many of these were at the request of the CRB who saw solving of problems on the edges of the city as an extension of their traditional role. By this means early action was taken to reserve land in advance of development.

As these roads remain at the core of the Melbourne freeway system, it is well to critically examine Lee's claim that they arose outside the active freeway planning process in place at their birth. Sub-chapter 6.5 (route MM8) will confirm that the CRB began work on its portion of Tullamarine Freeway in 1962 on a route not shown in the 1954 Plan. Sub-chapter 6.8 (route DN11) will similarly confirm that the MMBW opened the first stage of the South Eastern Freeway in 1962, on a route not shown in the 1954 plan. West Gate Freeway and Eastern Freeway do appear to be on routes suggested in the 1954 Plan, so Lee's claim is not supported in those cases, although there is nothing in the Plan

to support Eastern Freeway (Sub-chapter 6.7, route TW13) being given the priority it actually received. Thus there is some, if not total, merit in Lee's claim.

(b) The 1969 Melbourne Transport Plan

Freeway building plans surfaced again in the 1969 Melbourne Transportation Plan issued by the Metropolitan Transportation Committee (Sub-chapter 3.5). The plan had been produced by a strong local team in association with a group of American "transportation" engineers, who concentrated on the surveys and the traffic flow modelling and supplied the service standards. At the time, similar plans were in the process of being imposed on many cities throughout the world. The resulting new plan for Melbourne is thought by some to have been modelled on Los Angeles.⁹ This view possibly stems from the use of similar service standards. Whatever, the 1960s were regarded as the "great freeway building period"¹⁰ in Los Angeles.

Indeed, the service standards adopted were a 50 % improvement over those then being experienced in Melbourne. The forecasts were also based on a 20 % increase in population.¹¹ Perhaps not surprisingly then, the 1969 Plan recommended some 510 km of freeways as its ultimate solution, which comprised over half the new road length proposed. Generally, the freeways were placed on a five-kilometre square grid, which was consistent with U. S. practice. The belief was that a grid would avoid the congestion associated with the centre of a radial system of freeways, dispersing users over a wider area.¹² This argument was consistent with the then-current depopulation of urban cores and outwards spread of the suburbs.

In hindsight, the Plan was unacceptable in terms of its cost (it would have meant a trebling of the then current expenditure rate on freeways¹³), the immensity of the system proposed, its effect on the environment and the urban form, and its general inappropriateness for a city like Melbourne that already had a good arterial road system. The arterial system had been modelled in the planning process, but it had not met new service expectations under the design traffic. Today, citizens are generally prepared to accept lower levels of road service in a trade-off with the urban character they desire for their city.

Figure 7-3 of the Plan shows a grid of inner-city freeways that would have destroyed much of the ring of inner suburbs from Carlton clockwise to South Richmond. The 1969 Plan put three freeways (Routes F1, F2 and F19) through Collingwood, and widened Hoddle St, Wellington St and Johnston St.¹⁴ Route F1 again threatened the Fitzroy Gardens, this time via Lansdowne St. In retrospect, it is surprising that the reaction to the Plan was not far more dramatic than it actually was. The only new route introduced by the 1969 Plan and which has survived to the present day is the Scoresby Freeway (Sub-chapter 6.10).

(c) Rupert Hamer's impact

The planners had apparently assumed that a complete reconstruction of inner Melbourne was desired. Strong community opposition to such redevelopment and to freeways in particular did develop after the release of the Plan. In 1970 Planning Minister Hamer said that current freeway plans would ruin the inner suburbs¹⁵ and in the following year he "instructed the Metropolitan Transportation Committee to review the whole plan with a view to minimising its sociological and environmental effects, and overall cost."¹⁶ In late 1971 the government placed a temporary embargo on new freeway development and asked the Joint Road Planning Group (Sub-chapter 3.5) "to substantially modify the proposed freeway network".¹⁷ The following year Hamer, concerned by the lack of action from the Joint Group,¹⁸ issued a policy directive "that freeways would not be built in inner areas where their construction would involve substantial loss of established housing and community disruption."¹⁹

In August 1972 Rupert Hamer took over as Premier of Victoria from the strongly pro-freeway Henry Bolte - Melbourne then had some 80 km of freeway in operation or under construction but 390 km in the planning pipeline. It must be said the Hamer was not anti-freeway and supported a number of freeway developments (e. g. West Gate Freeway, Eastern Freeway extension and Monash Freeway). There was also a growing recognition that the purpose of any inner-city freeways should be to allow traffic to avoid the downtown area, and not to feed more traffic into it.

In March of 1973, in the face of continued silence from the Joint Group and with an election imminent, the new Premier announced the end of all dreams of a Melbourne enmeshed in a web of freeways when he declared that the planned network had been cut in half on sociological and environmental grounds.²⁰ Route F1 that had torn north

along Lansdowne St, East Melbourne, and Smith St, Collingwood, was – with some appropriate symbolism – the first to be abandoned. The offending portions of Routes F2 and F19 were also abandoned.

From 1972-5 the national Whitlam government lent its strong support to the formal freeway opposition. For instance, in 1973 the Commonwealth Bureau of Roads was commissioned by Minister Uren to produce a report on the effect of stopping freeway construction in the Australian capital cities.²¹ The report concluded that there was little advantage in stopping the then current work. The freeways in question in Melbourne were the Eastern, Westgate, Calder, and Mulgrave. At the same time, the Bureau's general report²² recommended that National Highways should terminate "*near the boundary of the built up area of a city.*" Such a short-sighted, impractical and doomed policy is totally inconsistent with the logic that pervaded all the Bureau's other arguments and conclusions.²³

In 1976 Premier Hamer formalised his 1973 announcement by also cancelling the road reservations for routes F1, F6, F9 and F18 in the 1954 plan.²⁴ Route F2 along Merri Creek survived this round but was deleted in 1977. Of the surviving freeway plans, the Scoresby Freeway (Sub-chapter 6.10) was built in the 21st century. The Hamer cuts were wise and timely decisions, but they also left a road-planning vacuum that has not since been filled on any large and public scale. Since Hamer, road network planning has been incremental and elemental.²⁵ This perhaps reflected Melbourne's pragmatic needs.

The anti-freeway movement of the time²⁶ mirrored similar activities in other cities. It reached its zenith later in the 1970s as the CRB took over from the MMBW as the urban freeway builder (Sub-chapter 3.3) and as the first stage of Eastern Freeway (Route F19 in the 1969 Plan) neared completion under CRB control. In 1976 protestors built a symbolic wall across Alexandra Pde at the entrance to the freeway and in 1977 they blocked the freeway opening.²⁷ The major protest was not so much about the road itself, although it relied solely on the beautiful Yarra Valley for its land-take and although it had been built as a replacement for a promised rail link to Doncaster. Indeed, in the view of many including the author, the subsequent road now sits attractively within the valley and the area had not attracted people seeking quick access to the CBD. The protest in retrospect was more about the fact that the road formed an initial part of the 192 km freeway system contained in the 1969 Plan. It was easy to see the system growing to the 510 km in the 1969 Plan.²⁸

The subsequent freeway development has avoided grand plans and concentrated on completing key radial links and on an inner and outer ring road. The commitment in these new plans to various freeway proposals is noted below under the discussion of each freeway. The one grand plan has been the Melbourne City Link Project, whose key components are the Western Link (route MM9) and the Southern Link (route DN10). By connecting both to West Gate Freeway (route GL8), the Link provides both western and southern bypasses of the City.²⁹ In 1992 the Labor Government announced the scheme as a "build, own, operate, transfer (BOOT)" project and two companies were short-listed later that year. A change of government soon after resulted in an extensive review period. In late 1994 the two short listed tenderers were asked to prepare their bids to undertake the work of planning, designing, constructing and operating the City Link Project, consisting of route MM8, this route and the upgrading of route DN11 to Toorak Rd. Innovatively, the tolling had to be fully electronic, operate at highway speeds, and without restriction on vehicle location. Transurban was awarded the Concession in late 1995 and project was completed in 2002.³⁰

Fortunately for Melbourne, many of its freeways include high quality landscaping and adjoining shared pedestrian and bicycle paths, which add a more human scale to their threateningly large dimensions.

6.2 Route GL7 - Princes Freeway (west)

As discussed in Chapter 4.2, it had "always" been recognised that there would be an ongoing need for a major road between Melbourne and Geelong. Thus, the route is found as Route 2 in the 1929 Town Plan and Route 10 in the 1954 Plan. The 1929 Plan saw it entering Melbourne along the line of West Gate Freeway (route GL8), however the 1954 Plan provided both West Gate Freeway and an enhanced Geelong Rd to Lynchs Bridge in Flemington. The 1969 Plan reverted back to the 1929 proposal and the freeway is Route F9 in that Plan. Although the enhanced Geelong Rd option was dropped from the planning schemes, it has since been largely achieved.

Geelong Rd west of Kororoit Creek became a freeway in the post-Second World War years, when a strongly supported duplication project quietly transformed the road. The road west of Werribee had been duplicated in the

1950s, east of Werribee to the Point Cook interchange in the 1960s, and to Kororoit Creek by 1975. Later works created controlled access, i. e. freeway, conditions over the same lengths.

Sir Thomas Maltby was Minister for Public Works from 1955 to 1961. The Maltby By-pass of Werribee was constructed under the CRB's "controlled access" powers granted in the Country Roads Act of 1956 (Act 5978) defining by-pass roads (Sub-chapter 3.5). It used a reservation established for the Melbourne Outfall Sewer Reserve. At either end, the bypass connected to Geelong Rd (route GL6). It was opened in 1961 and was the first freeway built in Victoria. It included significant overpasses at Sneydes Rd and Duncans Rd. At the time it was part of the CRB's rural road network but, as suburbia extended west, it has gradually become part of the Melbourne road system. The opening of the Bypass created a continuous four-lane divided (dual carriageway) road between Brooklyn and Geelong North.

The Laverton By-pass on the existing Geelong Rd was raised to freeway standards in 1968, with the completion of the Point Cook Rd [10e] and High St / Newland St interchanges. The Kororoit Creek Rd interchange [3s] was completed in 1970.

There was little public opposition to any aspect of this project. The route is now part of Route 1 in the National route numbering system and is Route M1 (#2500) in the Victorian system.

6.3 Route GL8 – West Gate Freeway

West Gate Freeway (originally Lower Yarra Freeway) runs from the Princes Freeway / Western Ring Rd interchange at Altona North to Kings Way (route SK4) in South Melbourne. It was the second route in the 1929 Town Plan, Route 9, and part of Route 1 in the 1954 Plan, and Route F9 in the 1969 Plan. The 1969 Plan indicated that a reservation then existed for the entire length of the route. It was primarily a power line easement (Chapter 6.1a)

The section from the Western Ring Rd to the West Gate Bridge utilised the power line easement and was close to the [1s] *line* used by The Avenue and Primula Ave (route GL4). Between 1968 and 1971 the CRB built this portion together with the eastern approaches from Graham St in Port Melbourne. It included a pair of major bridges over the Newport - Sunshine Railway and Fogarty Ave.

The West Gate Bridge is a key component of the freeway. The five spans of the steel bridge form a cable-stayed continuous box-girder with spans of 112 m, 144 m, 336 m, 144 m and 112 m. The prestressed-concrete approaches have 67 m spans. The bridge was built by the Lower Yarra Crossing Authority, whose franchise ran from Williamstown Rd to Graham St. The Authority was a private enterprise Company limited by guarantee and operating under the Lower Yarra Crossing Authority Act of 1965. Work commenced in 1968 but the bridge collapsed during construction in 1970, killing 35 men. Although many things had gone wrong, the underlying causes were a design that was proving to be unbuildable, and the inadequate communication between the English designers and the Australian builders. This major technical and political tragedy has been well documented³¹ and so the story will not be repeated here. The Authority lost its charter after the collapse and the bridge was redesigned and rebuilt under the guidance of Lower Yarra Crossing Authority. The bridge finally opened in 1978 and its operation was transferred to the CRB in 1982. It was operated as a toll bridge until 1985.



Figure 6.1 The collapsed Westgate Bridge in 1970. The span shown is across the Stony Creek estuary *The Author*

Construction of the section from Graham St to Grant St in South Melbourne was recommended in the Joint Road Planning Group's report³² of April 1973. The Government referred the issue to the CRB in early 1974 for advice on solutions. Subsequently, the portion east of Montague St was shown as the F9 extension in the CRB's 1974 "plan of intentions" and 1976 "list of urgent road needs". The solution was an elevated road from east of Boundary St to east of Kings Way. It was built in two stages as two separate carriageways. The first section was the northern carriageway built in 1978-1987 and the southern carriageway was built in 1984-1988.

There was little public opposition to any aspect of this project. The freeway is part of Route M1 in the State Route numbering system (#2820).

6.4 Route RR – Western and Metropolitan Ring Roads

The Western and Metropolitan Ring Road was foreshadowed in the 1929 Town Plan³³ and shown as Route 5 in the 1954 Plan, which saw its main purpose as "facilitating the transport of stock". The reservation was largely based on the SEC's Morwell transmission line reservation from the 1920s (Chapter 6.1a). This land reservation from Thomastown to Brooklyn had encircled Melbourne as a means of distributing Latrobe Valley power to the northern and western suburbs. The widespread use of power transmission line easements and reservations for road planning was mentioned in Sub-Chapter 6.1a.

The 1929 Town Plan in its Map 4.5 shows that the power line easement was, in most areas other than Ardeer, at least 3 km radially further out than the fringe of residential development. In the 1954 plan, residential development had reached the reservation. Enhancing the land reservation to accommodate a freeway was still a relatively simple matter. However, subsequent freeway design experience has been that these power line / MMBW reservations frequently provided too little land for interchanges and for distance-based noise amelioration. Noise standards had become more severe over subsequent years.³⁴ East of Thomastown the reservation was still in open land.

The 1969 Plan showed the Ring Road as Routes F3 and F5. It noted that a reservation existed for the portion of the freeway from Steele Creek in Keilor to Greensborough. The Plan then omitted the length between the Calder

Freeway and the Western Freeway in favour of Route F5, which travelled down Steele Creek and then joined Westgate Freeway at Yarraville. No reservation existed for this southernmost portion of the plan.

In his 1973 statement³⁵ abandoning much of Melbourne's planned freeway network, Premier Hamer noted that "Increased weight is being placed on outer-ring freeways, and studies are being made of the best way to bypass the central city." Thus, the Ring Road appeared in the CRB's 1974 "plan of intentions" and in 1976 consultants were hired to study the "strategic significance" of the route. In 1977 the Outer Ring Corridor Study presented recommendations to the government favouring the Ring Road. However, the government's draft Transport Plan issued in 1978 only listed the Dalton Rd to Greensborough component as one of its "highly desirable projects". The proposal gained some renewed support in Lonie's 1980 report but in 1981 the CRB gave it the low and somewhat redundant priority of being investigated "so that appropriate road reservations can be included." See also Chapter 3.5(d) and route FP.

In 1983 the Ministry of Transport's Metropolitan Arterial Road Access Study (METRAS) included the Pascoe Vale Relief Road study, aimed at relieving the heavy truck traffic then using Pascoe Vale Rd. The study pointed to the usefulness of a Ring Road in solving the problem with truck traffic in north-western Melbourne. Consequently, the Minister announced a planning study for the Ring Road in 1985. The 1986 METRAS report only advocated the northern component of the Ring Road and suggested two short substitute legs (1E & 1F) for the western portion, and instead preferred the Western Link (route MM9). However, the entire route was subsequently supported in the State Government's 1987 report, *Shaping Melbourne's Future*, which was part of the 1987 NATROV (National Roads Strategy - Victoria) study. In 1989 the necessary planning scheme amendments were passed at State level, and at National level the route was accepted as part of the Federal Government's National Road Strategy, as it linked two National Highways (Western Hwy, route BT2, and Hume Hwy, route KS7).

Work commenced in 1989 on the Hume Hwy to Tullamarine Freeway section and it opened in 1993. The first carriageway from Greensborough to Plenty Rd opened in 1994; dual carriageways were constructed to Dalton Rd in 1996, to Merri Creek in 1999, to the Hume Hwy in 1992, to Pascoe Vale Rd in 1993, to Tullamarine Freeway in 1992, to Calder Freeway in 1997, to Keilor Park Drive in 1996, to the Western Hwy (including the E. J. Whitten Bridge over the Maribyrnong River, Figure 6.2) in 1995, to Fitzgerald Rd in 1995, to Boundary Rd in 1996, and to Princes Freeway (west) in 1996. Major interchanges were constructed with the Hume, Tullamarine and Princes West Freeways and with the Western Hwy.



Figure 6.2 The E J Whitten bridge over the Maribyrnong River at completion in 1995 *VicRoads Annual Report, p4*

There was little public opposition to the project, as constructed. There had been concern with an earlier version of the route that followed the narrow power line reservation through Ardeer. This section was bypassed by a

westerly “bulge” using open space to the west of Fitzgerald Rd, taking the route in this area from the [8w] to the [9w] *section line*. (The lop-sided nature of Melbourne’s development can be seen by realising that the [8e] *line* was at Warrigal Rd.)

The route is Route M80 in the Metropolitan Route numbering system and is called Western Ring Road (#2900) west of Sydney Rd and Metropolitan Ring Rd (#2880) east of Sydney Rd.

6.5 Route MM6 / route MM8 / route MM9 – the Tullamarine corridor

MM6 - Calder Freeway

The development of the Calder Hwy was discussed in the context of route MM5 to Sunbury and Bendigo (Sub-Chapter 4.4). Much of the relevant freeway work involved the upgrading of the existing Calder Hwy and Keilor Rd to freeway standards. The major problems were associated with the crossing of the region’s deep creek and river valleys.

The city end of the Calder Freeway at Niddrie was opened in 1972, to Erebus St in 1974, to St Albans Rd in Keilor in 1982. The four-span steel and reinforced concrete bridges over Maribyrnong River, opened in 1980 and 1982, were the sixth bridge set in that area (see discussion of route MM5). Planning for the route between Keilor and Diggers Rest was completed in 1980. The freeway bypassed Keilor in 1984, reaching Oakbank Rd in the same year. There was little public opposition to any aspect of this project.

The Calder Freeway which now formally starts at Bulla Rd is part of Route 79 in the National Route numbering system and M79 in the State system (#2530).

MM8 – Tullamarine Freeway

Tullamarine Freeway was foreshadowed as Routes 13 & 14 in the 1954 Plan and Route F14 in the 1969 Plan.

The freeway between Flemington Bridge Railway Station and Bell St was part of Route F14 and was built by the MMBW in the late 1960s using the Moonee Ponds Creek valley. It was an old-style freeway which did little or nothing to enhance the valley and turned parts of the Moonee Ponds Creek into concrete-lined drain. This component of the route was later subsumed by the construction of City Link (see route MM9 below)

The next stage in the project had two objectives. First, the freeway had to be extended to serve the current Essendon Airport and future Melbourne Airport. Both the 1954 and 1969 Plans had proposed taking the F14 freeway to the east of Essendon Airport (near Mascoma St, rather than to the west along the old Lancefield Rd from Keilor Rd to the old Bulla Rd (route MM7). However, the 1940s decision to expand Essendon Airport to the west took the old Lancefield Rd along its western boundary out of service. This saw the creation at the time of a new north-south Lancefield Rd alignment (on the [4w] *line*) near the line of Matthews Ave with a westerly link to the Calder Hwy (route MM6), including land for the interchange with the Calder Freeway.³⁶ This presented an opportunity to develop the freeway along the western side of the airport and it is shown as part of Route 3 in the 1954 Plan. In planning retrospect, a combination of the sequence of Routes 13, 14, 4, 13 and 3 in the 1954 Plan foreshadowed the entire as-built facility. The 1969 Plan, however, pushed the freeway well west as Route F5 along the current route of the Ring Road (route RR) and relied on the eastern route (F14) to service Essendon Airport. The CRB’s 1974 “plan of intentions” added the Essendon Airport interchange on the western option.

The second objective of the second stage of Tullamarine Freeway was to link the western end of Bell St (route EW4) to the Calder Hwy in Niddrie. The initial attraction of this new route in the post-war years was that it would provide a circumferential route from the north-eastern suburbs to the north-western ones. As Bell St was not on a *section line*, there were no roads aligning with it on the right bank of Moonee Ponds Creek and, further west, the non-cardinal orientation of Bulla Rd and Keilor Rd meant that there were no east-west roads at all. At the time, most of today’s Essendon airport was a suburban subdivision. For example, the current isolated First Ave was then part of a

sequence of streets ending near English St at Seventh Ave. As a result, this part of the project was probably Melbourne's largest freeway-led destruction of housing sites.

The CRB was designing this east - west freeway length in 1947, undoubtedly in response to a decision earlier in the 1940s to expand Essendon Airport to the west.³⁷ These events add further mystery to the contrary outcome foreshadowed in the 1969 Plan. The proposal for this portion of the freeway became Route 13 in the 1954 Plan and Route F4 in the 1969 Plan. The portion between Bell St and Kerferd St was built in 1968-69 by the CRB as the Strathmore Bypass under its 1956 By-pass roads legislation. Its prime original purpose was to link Bell St and the northern suburbs to Essendon, the Calder Hwy and Victoria's west. The Bell St / Tullamarine Freeway connection was Victoria's first three level intersection and was completed in 1970. It includes six separate bridges. The highest and longest was the Bell St ramp. The Bypass also involved diverting Moonee Ponds Creek to a new alignment alongside the railway line.

A "freeway" interchange between the new Lancefield Rd and the Calder Hwy was constructed in stages between 1962 and 1972. The two ramps from the north - south leg to the western end of the east - west leg were completed in 1964. The route length from Kerferd St to the Essendon Airport entrance at English St was built as Lancefield Rd in 1970, the east-west Calder Freeway connection was taken under the two 1964 ramps in 1972, and the length adjacent to the western boundary of Essendon airport was completed to freeway standards in 1979. Until then, this length had operated at arterial road standards as Lancefield Rd. Despite this, the "freeway" from Flemington Rd to Essendon Airport was opened in 1970. The Essendon Airport access at English St was added in 1976.

The route was always intended to service both airports. Henry Bolte, who was Premier from 1955 to 1972, was a strong supporter of the freeway, which he saw as a "gateway to Melbourne". The CRB began land acquisition for the route between Essendon Airport and the proposed Melbourne Airport in 1962 under its 1956 By-pass roads legislation. Work on this portion of Tullamarine Freeway began in 1964 and opened in 1968.

There was little public opposition to the freeway aspects of the project. Lancefield Rd in Essendon was proclaimed a State Hwy in 1960. Tullamarine Freeway (#2810) is part of Route M2 in the National Route numbering system and also includes parts of Route 43 in the Metropolitan Route Numbering System.

MM9 – Western Link

The route from Tullamarine Freeway (route MM8) to West Gate Freeway (route GL8) is along an alignment first proposed as Route 29 in the 1954 Plan and continued as Route F14 in the 1969 Plan. However, to the south, Route F14 followed the line of Footscray Rd, rather than the final City Link route. The 1954 Route 29 was closer to the final route, but it did not go further south than Footscray Rd (route WT7).

The first specific proposals were outlined in an MMBW preliminary planning report in 1974³⁸ and were supported in Lonie's 1980 report. The 1980-1 CRB Annual Report (p15) lists the route (to Montague St) as number 17 describing it as an area being investigated "so that appropriate road reservations can be" made. The route was a key recommendation in the 1987 NATROV study and in the 1994 Linking Melbourne report.

The western part of the City Link project upgraded Tullamarine Freeway (route MM8) from Flemington Bridge Railway Station north to the city side of Bulla Rd. It also created a new road from Flemington Bridge Railway Station south to the West Gate Freeway (route DN10). This new road follows the Moonee Ponds Creek and Upfield rail line to Footscray Rd. Its route south of Footscray Rd (route WT7) was largely dictated by a desire to leave the Docklands area unencumbered by a major road and its large interchanges, dictating an interchange with West Gate Freeway at Graham St, rather than at Montague St. Work commenced in 1996 and the road was opened in 1999.

There was strong public opposition to the project based on the tolling of a previously un-tolled road, increased local traffic, increased noise and pollution, property acquisition and the size of the associated noise barriers. As a toll road, it is best called a motorway, rather than a freeway. It is part of Route M2 in the National Route numbering system and also includes parts of Route 43 in the Metropolitan Route Numbering System.

6.6 Route PL10 – Greensborough Bypass

The prime purpose of the Greensborough Bypass was to remove north-south through traffic from the main street of Greensborough. The Greensborough Bypass freeway did not appear in pre-1960 road plans. For example, in the 1954 Plan, Route 18 - which would have become the bypass - did not extend further north than Lower Plenty Rd (route PL6). A reservation for the road first appeared in the 1962 Melbourne Metropolitan Planning Scheme and showed as parts of Routes F18 and F5 in the 1969 Plan. The northern extension of Greensborough Rd was added to the Planning Scheme in 1970, but it was embroiled in the debate over the completion of the “Outer Ring Road” (sub-Chapter 3.5(d)). Possible construction was first announced in the CRB’s 1974 “plan of intentions” and confirmed in its 1976 “list of urgent road needs”. In 1981 it was on the CRB list of “major projects currently being investigated for construction in the future”.

Stage 1 of the Greensborough Bypass at the current eastern end of the Metropolitan Ring Road (route RR) was opened in 1984, stage 2 with a single carriageway from Grimshaw St to Diamond Creek Rd in 1988 and a dual carriageway in 1989. A major steel bridge over Plenty River with a total length of 178 m was completed in 1988. At the time, the 1989 the duplication of Greensborough Hwy from Yallambie Rd to Grimshaw St was considered a “freeway” part of the Bypass project. Further work is discussed in Chapter 6.10 (route FP).

There was some public opposition to the project, mainly in the context of a general anti-freeway sentiment in the area. The Bypass is part of Route 46 in the Metropolitan Route Numbering System. In the intervening years no government was persuaded to complete the Outer Ring Road reservation and construction of the missing link from 2020 required specific planning interventions.

6.7 Route TW13 – Eastern Freeway

The core needed addressed by the Eastern Freeway was that there was no rail link or direct road link between the City and the Doncaster area. The Eastern Freeway was not part of the 1929 Town Plan, with the corridor planned to be serviced instead by the upgrading of the Doncaster Rd (route TW10) and Canterbury Rd (route CT1). The route first appeared as Route 19 in the MMBW 1954 Town Plan, commencing at the city end from an intermediate ring road (Route 2) based on Alexandra Pde and Hoddle St. It then ran along its current route to Deep Creek Rd in Ringwood, where it joined an upgraded Wonga Rd. The first planning studies for the route were in 1959, leading to the establishment of a planning reservation for the route in the same year. It became Route F19 in the 1969 Plan, and it finished at a proposed Ringwood Bypass and at the northern end of the Scoresby Freeway (Route F35). The need for a bypass of Ringwood was first formally signalled by a 1968 Capital City Roads Needs Survey.

At the city end, Route F19 ran through the north of inner Melbourne along Alexandra Pde to Wellington St, slashed through Fitzroy and Carlton to the corner of Lygon St and Queensberry St, and then paralleled Queensberry St in a route slightly to its north to connect to the Western Link (Route F14). This inner-city travesty was deleted by Hamer’s 1973 announcement (Sub-chapter 6.1). From the interchanges shown in the 1969 Plan’s Figure 7-3, there is nothing to charitably suggest that the inner Route F19 and its F1 and F2 associates (Sub-chapter 6.1) were intended as tunnels. Figure 7-8 nevertheless indicates that there were no existing planning reservations for these inner portions of Routes F1, F2 and F19!

The route east of Hoddle St was covered in an amendment to the 1968 Planning Scheme (Sub-chapter 3.5) that was put on exhibition in 1969 and approved in 1970. There is nothing in the Plan to suggest why this route was given the priority that it received over other routes (although internally the CRB in 1970 was seeing it as a “logical development more beneficial to Ringwood - Mitcham than other alternatives”³⁹). Nevertheless, in 1973 Premier Hamer endorsed it to proceed specifically to Bulleen Rd (route TW6) and by implication to Ringwood.

Following government processes discussed in Chapters 3.5 and 6.1, the project was taken over by the CRB in 1974, and the Freeway’s extension from Bulleen Rd to Doncaster Rd (route TW10) was confirmed in the CRB’s 1974 “plan of intentions” and 1976 “list of urgent road needs”. In 1976 the government accepted the findings of an Eastern Corridor Study that recommended immediate extension to Doncaster Rd and long-term extension to and bypass of Ringwood.⁴⁰ Thus, the government’s Draft Transport Plan issued in 1978 listed the arterial road extension to

Doncaster Rd as one of its “highly desirable projects” but put the freeway to Ringwood into the “beyond five years” category. By 1981 it was on the CRB list of “major projects currently being investigated for construction in the future”.

There was then a period of considerable public debate and conflicting reviews. For example, in 1985 the Road Construction Authority undertook an Eastern Corridor Road Action study (ECORD) which found in favour of the route. In 1987 a major Environmental Effects Statement was issued for the extension to and bypass of Ringwood. Some of the public concern during this period was over the perceived loss of local amenity, and some over the concept of building a radial urban freeway. In 1990 the extension to Springvale Rd (route NS9) was recommended by an Independent Panel. The further extension from there to Ringwood had been supported in the 1987 NATROV study, was given planning approval in 1992, became action item 9 in the 1994 Linking Melbourne plan, and priority item #3 in the 1996 Transporting Melbourne report. In 2000, the government announced that the scheme would commence, and include a long tunnel to protect the valley of Mullum Mullum Creek.

The Freeway from the Hoddle St / Alexandra Pde corner to Bulleen Rd was commenced in 1971 under the MMBW as an early implementation of the 1969 Plan. The work was completed to Bulleen Rd in 1977 and included major bridges over Merri Creek and the Yarra, large cuttings through Yarra Bend Park and Kew North, realignment of the Yarra between Kew and Alphington, and major interchanges and associated bridges at Kew (route TW9) and Balwyn North (route NS4), and major overpasses at Yarra Bend Rd, Yarra Blvd, Belford Rd and Camberwell Public Golf Course (Figure 6.3).



Figure 6.3 Fine lines of the Burke Rd bridge over the Eastern Freeway, looking east.

In line with the change in urban road responsibilities (Chapters 3.5 and 6.1), the route was extended by VicRoads to Doncaster Rd (route TW10) in 1982, and to Springvale Rd (route NS9) in 1997. This stage features four significant pedestrian footbridges. The Ringwood Bypass was completed in 1997. The Alexandra Pde entrance to the Freeway was upgraded by VicRoads in 1995.

In 1992 and 1993 Melbourne’s first significant transit lane and high occupancy vehicle lane was introduced on the inbound western end of the facility, giving exclusive use to transport vehicles and vehicles with more than one occupant.

As discussed in Sub-chapter 6.1, there had been considerable public opposition to the freeway, largely on matters of principle linked to over-catering for the car, and sometimes to the effect of the road on the river and creek valleys and on air pollution. A considerable attention to environmental issues during design and construction has softened these last criticisms and the work between Doncaster Rd and Springvale Rd won the national urban design award of the Australian Institute of Architects in 1998. Air pollution levels were less than expected.

Eastern Freeway (#2830) is Route M83 in the Metropolitan Route numbering system. The Ringwood Bypass is Route 62 in the Metropolitan Route numbering system.

6.8 Route DN10 / route DN11 / route DN12 / route DN13 – the Monash Freeway corridor

DN10 – the Southern Link (West Gate Freeway to Punt Rd)

Melbourne's last 20th century freeway addition was the privately financed and operated City Link system that provides an electronically-tolled, L-shaped link to the south and west of the city. It comprises two sections, the Southern and Western Links, which were foreshadowed as items 4 and 6 in the 1994 Linking Melbourne plan. The Western Link has been discussed above as route MM9.

The Southern Link upgrades the inner portion of the old South Eastern Freeway (route DN11) and connects it to the West Gate Freeway (route GL8) via two long tunnels. This link was suggested as the second and eighteenth routes in the 1929 Town Plan and its prime purpose was then and still is to provide a southern bypass of the city – a need that was specifically recognised in the 1929 Town Plan.⁴¹ The outbound carriageway corresponds closely to route F9 in the 1969 Plan, which is discussed under route DN11. The inbound carriageway follows the course of route DN11.

The western connection of the Southern Link from the West Gate Freeway (route GL8) at Sturt St to Punt Rd (route NS1) has had a varied planning history. The 1929 Town Plan (p65) links its road from the west (Route 2) with a widened arterial road between City Rd and the Yarra River and joining Alexandra Ave at its eastern end (Route 18). The 1954 Plan had a similar proposal but moved its bypass route further south to utilise the current West Gate route located on and then over Grant St. The 1969 Plan – as noted above – dropped Alexandra Ave and favoured a new route F9 beginning on the right bank of the Yarra at Swan St bridge.

These routes had tunnels under the Kings Domain Gardens. The first formal mention of a tunnel solution beyond Alexandra Ave appears to have been in Lonie's 1980 report,⁴² which refers to two submissions – from the Melbourne City Council and from the West Gate Bridge Authority – arguing for a tunnel connection. As a consequence, Lonie recommended that the eastern end of the West Gate Freeway be designed so that it could function as a future tunnel entrance. The recommendation was adopted (see route GL8). However, Tom Russell (past CRB CEO) recalled seeing tunnel proposals in as early as the late 1960s.

The route was a key recommendation in the 1987 NATROV study and in the 1994 Linking Melbourne report. When VicRoads called for private sector involvement in 1992, the route was suggested as a tunnel between the east end of West Gate Freeway (route GL8) and the west end of the South Eastern Freeway (route DN11) at Hoddle St. The tunnels each accommodate three lanes of traffic. Work commenced in 1996 and the inbound route consisting of a riverside route from Burnley to just west of Punt Rd and then the 1.6 km Domain Tunnel from Punt Rd to Grant St opened in early 2000 and the outbound route consisting of the 3.8 km Burnley Tunnel from Sturt St to Burnley St opened in late 2000. Major engineering problems associated with water pressures were encountered during the construction of the deep Burnley tunnel. A summary of the work involved is available.⁴³ As a toll road, it is best called a motorway, rather than a freeway.

There was little public opposition to this section of the Link, other than fears that it would increase local air pollution.

DN11 - the old South Eastern Freeway (Punt Rd to Warrigal Rd)

The 1929 Town Plan (p219) speaks of the Gardiner Valley Parkway as a “*continuous strip of reserves*” along Gardiners Creek. It then adds that “*incorporated in this scheme is ...a main road between the City and Oakleigh.*” In the Plan, this road was Route 18 from Punt Rd along the Yarra River and then along Gardiners Creek to East Malvern Railway Station. There it cut across near Hyslop Pde to join a developed Princes Hwy East (route DN3&4) as Route 19. Reservations for much the same route were defined in the 1954 Plan as Route 22 and then Route 23 to Dandenong, except that the cut-across between the routes was from the current route at Warrigal Rd to Princes Hwy East at

Atkinson St in Oakleigh. At its western end, Route 22 extended to the Swan St bridge and a connection to an inner ring road (Route 1). The MMBW 1954 Town Plan perceptively said that Route 22/23 was “*one of the most essential of the future roads*”.⁴⁴

Melbourne’s first freeway, the modestly designed South Eastern Freeway from Morshead Overpass (named after General Leslie Morshead, who had distinguished himself in both World Wars) over Punt Rd to MacRobertson Bridge (route CT7) opened in 1962 and was consistent with the timing and style of similar developments overseas.⁴⁵ It is sometimes claimed that it was the sole direct freeway output of the 1954 Plan. The project arose as a consequence of the MMBW receiving metropolitan road responsibilities in 1956 (Sub-chapter 3.1). Until that time, no single agency had had the power and resources needed to construct an urban freeway. When the freeway project was publicised in 1958, the MMBW said that it would provide “*a clear run of four lanes*”, could be built “*with only minor encroachment on private property*”⁴⁶ and was intended to relieve local congestion in Alexandra Ave. After it opened, despite positive immediate benefits, traffic conditions in the area generally worsened.

Curiously, the 1969 Plan does not even deign to show the new freeway, perhaps seeing its congestion as unsolvable. It does include a route F9 that – west of MacRobertson Bridge - followed a parallel course much closer to Swan St. A spur at the bridge did connect the existing freeway to F9. Before Warrigal Rd, F9 began to head east towards Ferntree Gully (and, later, Healesville). However, at this point it also connected with a route F6 that ran along Gardiners Creek and connected to today’s Monash Freeway.

Stage 2 of the South Eastern Freeway to Toorak Rd (route CT7) was announced in 1965. It generally followed the Gardiners Creek alignment and created great public debate over the use of the valley, until a compromise route was negotiated.⁴⁷ The Stage was opened in 1969. It included a major new bridge over the Yarra River. Its control was transferred from MMBW to CRB July 1974.

Hamer’s 1973 statement abandoning many of Melbourne’s planned freeways made no mention – positive or negative - of an easterly extension of this freeway beyond Toorak Rd.⁴⁸ However, just one month after the statement, the Joint Road Planning Group submitted a recommendation supporting an extension to Warrigal Rd (Sub-chapter 6.1, route NS7). This led to a particularly bitter and sustained reaction⁴⁹ from the local community. Nevertheless, after receiving a supporting report from the CRB, in 1974 Hamer signalled his government’s intention to construct the link. There were further protests and in 1975 the Minister of Transport announced an investigation into the need for the route but, due to other pressures, the study format was not released until late 1976.⁵⁰ The CRB’s 1976 “list of urgent road needs” merely referred to the “Malvern investigation corridor”. Finally, in 1977 the government established a Gardiners Creek corridor study to conduct a multidisciplinary review which later in the same year proposed a six-lane freeway parallel to the Glen Waverley railway line.

The government in 1978 adopted the corridor study’s general recommendation supporting the proposed road but asked for further study of the alignment. Its Draft Transport Plan issued later that year proposed a route but put the project in the “beyond five years” category. The link was next supported by Lonie’s 1980 report and by 1981 it was on the CRB list of “major projects currently being investigated for construction in the future”. An unpublished government review was undertaken in 1982.

Whilst local opposition remained strong, there was a widespread desire for action. As a compromise, the new Labor government announced in 1983 that the link would be built as an arterial road link - i. e. with separate carriageways but with signal-controlled intersections. Thus, political correctness was achieved whilst behind the scene the designers ensured that the arterial could later be converted to a freeway. The work commenced in 1984 and the project opened in stages until final completion in 1988.

When it opened in 1994 the Warrigal Rd interchange replaced a major at-grade intersection and thus completed the linking of Mulgrave Freeway (route DN12) and South Eastern Freeway. Demand on the arterial link soon exceeded capacity. Consequently, the removal of the signal-controlled intersections and the addition of extra lanes was action item 11 in the 1994 Linking Melbourne plan. The work commenced soon after and was completed in 1997.

The final solution was much as the road professionals had originally advocated. Was this merely because their persistence had outlasted the community’s? In reviewing the planning process on this project, Ken Ogden commented⁵¹ “*When should governments call a halt to the planning process and announce a firm decision?*”

In work completed in 2000, the City Link Project upgraded the route to provide an extra in-bound lane and new outbound lanes serving traffic from Punt Rd. The Burnley Tunnel (see route DN10) provided new outbound capacity to Burnley St.

It must be said that, as with most of Melbourne's freeways, the reservation from Huntingdale Rd inwards was created and protected, not by transport planners, but by the foresight of Monash and his SEC engineers when they established the metropolitan electricity transmission line system.

The operating route was originally called F80 but is now known as M1 in the State route numbering system. In June 1999 the name was changed from the South Eastern Freeway west of Toorak Rd and from the South Eastern Arterial from Toorak Rd to Warrigal Rd to Monash Freeway (#2000).

DN12 - the old Mulgrave Freeway (Warrigal Rd to beyond Dandenong)

The early planning history of today's Monash Freeway was given at the beginning of the discussion of route DN11. It was seen to rely on an upgrading of Dandenong Rd (route DN4) east of Oakleigh. The 1969 Plan abandoned these upgrading proposals and provided a new route F14 along the path of today's freeway from Warrigal Rd to east of Dandenong. A land reservation already existed for the entire route as a consequence of pre-urban planning activity by the CRB (Sub-chapter 3.5) - activity that was contrary to the MMBW's 1954 Plan. The CRB in turn had utilised an early SEC transmission line reservation, although the first kilometre of the route east of Warrigal Rd used and obliterated a creek known as Sandy Creek. The 1986 METRAS study confirmed the importance of the route and extended it as far east as Hampton Park.

For the Dandenong part of the route, a CRB publication in 1963 commented that "a ring road system around Dandenong is in an advanced stage of planning" and in 1964 the CRB first reported buying land for the route through the rural outskirts of Dandenong. The immediate motivation was to bypass Dandenong, which was considered to be a point of major congestion on Princes Hwy East.

In 1969, and at the same time as it first appeared in an official Plan, the CRB began work on the route between Stud Rd (route NS10) and Princes Hwy East. The work was done under the Bypass legislation and comprised the Mulgrave By-pass from Stud Rd to Laurel Ave and the Eumemmerring By-pass from there to Princes Hwy East. This stage was completed in 1972, to Springvale Rd in 1973, to Blackburn Rd in 1976, to Forster Rd in 1977, to Huntingdale Rd in 1979, and to Warrigal Rd in 1981, completing the freeway. In 1978 Scotchmans Creek in Mt Waverley was taken under the freeway in a major 4-cell culvert.

There was little public opposition to the route. The operating route was originally called F80 but is now known as M1 in the State route numbering system. In 1999 the name was changed from Mulgrave Freeway to Monash Freeway (#2000). Monash Freeway officially finishes at the Princes Hwy interchange at Berwick.

DN13 - the South Gippsland Freeway

The South Gippsland Freeway branches off the Monash Freeway (route DN12) at Eumemmerring Creek in Doveton and heads south to meet the South Gippsland Hwy at Hampton Park. It was Route F38 in the 1969 Plan, which noted that the land for the freeway was within an existing reservation. The freeway between Monash Freeway and Hampton Park was completed in 1977.

It is a State Hwy (#2310) and is labelled M420 in the State route numbering system.

6.9 Route SK6 - Mornington Peninsula Freeway corridor

The current Mornington Peninsula Freeway route north of Frankston was outside the scope of the 1929 Town Plan. It was discussed in the 1949/50 CRB Annual report (p36), which noted that road improvements on the alignment

and the necessary land acquisition had “been carried out for some time.” This had included widening the existing Wells Rd reservation from one chain to two chain.

The Mornington Peninsula Freeway (#2600) was foreshadowed as Route 26 in the 1954 Plan - although the final route from Springvale Rd (route NS11) was closer to the Dingley Freeway proposal - and as Route F6 in the 1969 Plan. A Frankston Freeway is also shown as route F35. The length north of Frankston was confirmed in the CRB’s 1974 “plan of intentions” and 1976 “list of urgent road needs”.

The route started as a south-eastern extension of Boundary Rd (route NS7) into Wells Rd at Mordialloc, beginning to provide a southern alternative to the heavily over-used Nepean Hwy (route SK3). The reservation for the Freeway extended as far north as Heatherton Rd / Kingston Rd [8n] and the planned route of the then-proposed Dingley Freeway. However, all work in the 20th century had been east of Springvale Rd (route NS9) at Edithvale and the built freeway ran from Springvale Rd to Beach St in Frankston. Somewhat confusingly, VicRoads used Frankston Freeway as the name for the southern portion of the route from the proposed EastLink interchange to Beach St, preserving the name Mornington Peninsula Freeway for then unbuilt section parallel to McClelland Rd. The whole freeway route is now called the Mornington Peninsula Freeway and extends as far south as Jetty Rd in Rosebud.

The route from Edithvale to Frankston originally existed as Wells Rd. Working from the south to the north, a second carriageway was opened in Seaford between the Frankston - Dandenong Rd (or Dandenong Valley Hwy) and Klauer St in 1971, to Armstrongs Rd in 1973, to Eel Race Drain in 1976, and to Springvale Rd in 1980.

The first stage of the Frankston part of the freeway began as the Frankston Bypass Road under the CRB’s Bypass legislation (Sub-chapter 3.5). The diagonal route between Frankston - Dandenong Rd and Beach St took advantage of a track established by the area’s first settlers. An interchange was provided at Beach St in 1963. South of Beach St, the McMahons Rd portion east of the Frankston city centre was substantially widened. The new road was opened in 1961 as a single two-way carriageway connecting Frankston - Dandenong Rd to the then Moorooduc Hwy (now the Frankston-Flinders Rd) near Millard St, thus allowing Mornington Peninsula traffic to by-pass the Frankston city centre. North of Eastlink it is Route M11 and south of Eastlink it is Route M3 in the State Route numbering system.

Planning began south of Frankston in 1961. The two ends of the freeway at Beach St in Frankston and Mt Martha were linked by Moorooduc Hwy, a dual carriageway road with at-grade intersections. The first carriageway from Moorooduc Rd in Mt Martha to Nepean Hwy (route SK2) was opened in 1988 and the second carriageway in 1994; the first carriageway to Nepean Hwy in Dromana opened in 1984 and the second carriageway in 1986; to Mary St in 1972; to McCulloch St in 1971; to Beverley Rd; and to Jetty Rd in Rosebud in 1973. None of this segment was to full freeway standards.

There has been little public opposition to these routes.

In the 21st century VicRoads developed the Mornington Peninsula Freeway which begins at the intersection of the Frankston Freeway and the Eastlink motorway and provides a new route south to Jetty Rd in Rosebud. It is Route M11 in the State Route numbering system.

6.10 Route FP – Future pieces of the network

The physically-obvious missing links in the year 2000 freeway system were the Dingley Freeway (see routes SK6 and DN7), the eastern and northern links of the Metropolitan Ring Road (route RR), and a connection north of inner Melbourne from the western end of Eastern Freeway (route TW13) to the Western Link (route MM8 or route MM9). From a strategic transport planning perspective, many considered that the eastern link of the Ring Road would have the greatest priority, followed by the Eastern Freeway -Western Link connection.

The outer Eastern Ring Rd reservation (Scoresby Corridor) was beyond the scope of the 1929 Town Plan and was not in the 1954 Plan as it is mostly east of the area covered by that Plan, which not extend further east than Dandenong Creek. Furthermore, it was not suggested at either Ringwood or Dandenong, which were in the planning area. When the CRB took an active interest in its development, it initially became the Scoresby Bypass, for reasons

outlined in Sub-chapter 6.1 above. The route is in the 1969 Plan as Route F35 and the CRB began detailed studies in 1970. Thus, it was in CRB's 1974 "plan of intentions" and on its 1976 "list of urgent road needs". However, it is not given any status in the draft 1978 Transport Plan. The proposed route ran in an established reservation from the north end of the Frankston Freeway (route SK6) at Carrum Downs to the east end of Eastern Freeway (route TW13) at Ringwood. It was priority item #4 in the 1996 Transporting Melbourne report. {It was subsequently built in the 21st century as part of EastLink.}

A controversial missing route was the northern link between the north end of the proposed Scoresby Freeway at Ringwood and the east end the Western Ring Rd (route RR) at Greensborough. The 1929 Town Plan did not extend beyond Mitcham or Watsonia and therefore offered no planning guidance on this subject. Similarly, the 1954 Plan did not contemplate a major road so far from the City. The 1969 Plan takes travellers from Scoresby Freeway along Eastern Freeway to a Route F7 that somewhat parallels Blackburn Rd (route NS8) and the heads a little west to use the Diamond Creek valley to pass through Eltham and then meet an easterly extension of the Western Ring Rd near Ryans Rd. Not surprisingly, Hamer in 1973 abandoned the entire F7 route. The planners had also put some store in the F18 route that travelled from Eastern Freeway up the Yarra River valley and along Greensborough Rd, but it was also axed by Hamer. Other options that had been considered used the Plenty River valley. Indeed, Route F18 had been a late inclusion added when Route F7 moved east to the Diamond Creek valley and increased the spacing between Routes F6 (along Darebin Creek, Sub-chapter 6.1) and F7.⁵²

In 1977 the government's Road Planning Liaison group recognised that this section of the Ring Rd was "environmentally sensitive"⁵³ and the government announced that it would proceed with a study to determine the most appropriate route between Ringwood and Greensborough. In 1979 the Outer Ring (Diamond Creek to Ringwood) Study favoured an arterial road rather than a freeway solution and recommended that land should be reserved for the connection through Eltham. In 1982 the CRB in its Annual Report (p42) stated "In 1981 the government of the day decided that it would not be appropriate to reserve land...for the Outer Ring Road (between Ryans Rd and Springvale Rd)." In the 1996 Transporting Melbourne report it remains a shaded area on the map with the footnote "uses existing transport links for the foreseeable future". Approval was recently given for a route from Greensborough south through Rosanna and Bulleen to join the Eastern Freeway at Bulleen Rd.

Under a Liberal Government extensive plans were developed and contracts let for a link between western end of the Eastern Freeway (route TW13) and the Tullamarine Freeway (route MM8) in Carlton, providing a northern bypass of the city. In 2014 the work was stopped and the contracts voided by a newly elected Labour government.

The Dandenong Bypass built during the construction of EastLink has been extended at both ends and now runs from the South Gippsland Hwy (route DN13) to the Dingley Bypass (route DN7), another new freeway which terminates at an eastern extension of South Rd (route EW1). Recent works include the Mordialloc Freeway which links the Dingley Bypass to the Mornington Peninsula Freeway (route SK6) at Springvale Rd (route NS9) and a link between the Westgate Freeway (route GL8) and Footscray Rd (route WT7) which will provide an alternative to the Westgate Bridge and service the northern parts of the city.

Notes for Chapter 6

¹ Lay 2009, Chapter 17

² Serle 1982, p 15

³ Metropolitan TPC 1929, p65

⁴ Lay 2009, Section 6.2.5

⁵ Hamer 1976

⁶ Hamer 1973

⁷ Dingle & Rasmussen 1991, p251-5

⁸ Lee 1972, p8

⁹ D. Berry, private communication. N. S. Guerin disputes this view, saying the sources were wider.

¹⁰ Finch 1992, p264

¹¹ Delaney 1977, p7

¹² Delaney 1970, p11

¹³ Lee 1972, p15

¹⁴ Hibbins 1997, p60

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- ¹⁵ Dingle and Rasmussen 1991, p317
¹⁶ Hamer 1972, p2
¹⁷ loc cit
¹⁸ loc cit
¹⁹ loc cit
²⁰ Hamer 1973
²¹ Commonwealth 1973b.
²² Commonwealth 1973a, p77, Clause 7.23
²³ e. g. see Lay 1988, p40
²⁴ Hamer 1976
²⁵ Ogden 1985, p10
²⁶ Anderson 1994, Chp 11
²⁷ Hibbins 1997, p60
²⁸ MTC 1969, p3-48.
²⁹ Tagaza 2002
³⁰ loc cit
³¹ Report 1971 and Barber 1973
³² Ogden 1985, p10
³³ Map facing p62 of the Town Plan of 1929.
³⁴ Lay 2009, Chapter 32
³⁵ Hamer 1973, p3
³⁶ Darwin 1946 & 1950, p14
³⁷ Dempster 1947, p14
³⁸ VicRoads 1989
³⁹ W. Saggars, private communication.
⁴⁰ CRB 1976, p4-5
⁴¹ Metropolitan TPC 1929, p64
⁴² Lonie 1980, p12,52&58
⁴³ Tagaza, E. 2002
⁴⁴ MMBW 1953, p100
⁴⁵ Lay 1992, p321
⁴⁶ Dingle & Rasmussen 1991, p244
⁴⁷ loc cit, p255-6
⁴⁸ Ogden 1985, p9
⁴⁹ Strahan 1994, p10
⁵⁰ Ogden 1985, p11
⁵¹ loc cit
⁵² W. Saggars, private communication
⁵³ Underwood 1980, p38