



OFFICE OF THE HON. DR BRAD PETTITT MLC MEMBER FOR SOUTH METROPOLITAN

4/1 High Street, Fremantle, WA 6160

brad.pettitt@mp.wa.gov.au

(08) 9430 7755

24 February 2025

Rethink Eastlink
PO Box 149
Gidgegannup
Western Australia 6083

Dear Rethink Eastlink

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to your survey regarding the proposed EastLink WA project. The following responses are provided on behalf of The Greens (WA), and were prepared in consultation with [Chris Poulton, your Greens candidate for Swan Hills](#).

- 1. Are you for or against the building of Eastlink WA (also referred to as the Orange Route / Perth Adelaide National Highway (PANH))? Please provide a definitive answer and avoid prevaricating.**

The Greens WA are, and have long been, firmly opposed to the proposed construction of EastLink WA.

- 2. Please explain the basis of your stance and what you believe will be the impacts / outcomes if this road is built.**

The EastLink WA proposal was originally created back in the 1980's for addressing traffic issues on Great Eastern Highway through the area of Mundaring. We understand that Main Roads' own traffic data shows this project will not have a significant impact on addressing these problems in the present. The Greens (WA) expect that the project's cost and the issues and irreparable damage it would cause (as highlighted throughout this survey) would vastly outweigh the real-world benefits.

- 3. Various concerns have been raised by stakeholders / community members in regard to this road. They include but are not limited to those listed below. How would you address these concerns should the road proceed?**

Outdated concept and planning (Orange Route first proposed approximately forty years ago with no material action since that time). Is this the most appropriate solution to a perceived problem in 2025? Is it aligned with other WA major infrastructure planning such as the Kwinana outer harbour port?

This project was pursued as a stimulus project by the Labor government in 2021 and, crucially, there did not seem to be a clear list of objectives beyond the forementioned economic stimulus.

There has not been a clear and publicly accessible investigation of all options.

If the aim is to save lives, the more effective approach would be to fix and improve the current dangerous roads.

If the aim is to construct an effective East-West road for trucks, then the Norseman to Hyden to Perth route – which is currently gravel and has historically been used by truck drivers as an alternative to Great Eastern Highway – is an option. This reduces the trip each way by 100km.

The Greens (WA) strongly support investment in rail due it being the most advantageous option for addressing current freight and transport issues.

80% of the traffic between Perth and Northam consists of local movements. Do you think this concept addresses the existing issues including black spot intersections?

Our understanding is Main Roads believe this is a bypass road project, and therefore not designed for local communities between Northam and Perth (including Mundaring). Consequently, many local residents may continue to use the current roads, like Great Eastern Highway, and still be exposed to these dangers.

Furthermore, there seems to be a recent push to downgrade the existing Great Eastern Highway. Speed reductions have been implemented in areas that have recently been re-surfaced. Main Roads seem to have spent a significant effort on realignments rather than implementing upgrades from one to two lanes. For example, the section between Acacia prison and the Prison Farm has had two deaths in two years, the old section of road could have been utilised to have improve the section from one to two lanes in each direction.

Separation of townships and impacts on existing businesses that rely on through traffic.

The projects current design aims to dissect five townships. The previously mentioned Norseman to Hyden to Perth option may be a less invasive alternative for local communities.

Impacts on historical and heritage assets such as the Kep Track and Aboriginal heritage sites.

The Greens (WA) are concerned the proposed Eastlink project will have considerable and irreversible impact on the Kep track through the proposed overpasses and realignments of this community asset.

Construction of this project ought to hinge on its environmental and cultural heritage impacts. However, heritage surveys and consultation with Traditional Owners for many sections of the proposed project haven't occurred yet and will only do so once funding is confirmed for construction.

Psychosocial impacts from forced land seizure and negative impacts on landholder amenity from noise, air and visual pollution.

This project requires 171 land holders, some of which have been in this area for generations, to have land taken away from them. This is a drastic measure – especially

given there are several areas, particularly in the Northam Shire, where the existing Great Eastern Highway could be utilised and made safer at the same time, rather than a new road constructed next to it.

Destruction of highly valuable remnant vegetation in road reserves and private property further impacting endangered species (including Carnaby's Black-Cockatoos).

Numerous species and ecosystems could be placed at risk by this project, including those of the Black Cockatoo. There is no publicly available information on the environmental impact of EastLink WA on our native species populations, including the red and white tailed black cockatoos.

There are also significant areas of swamp wetland and waterways that will be filled, cleared or modified to accommodate this project.

The potential for irreparable ecological harm and lack of transparent environmental assessment is gravely concerning. The State and Federal Governments have a responsibility to protect our waterways and unique, invaluable and vulnerable native biodiversity from this type of avoidable harm.

Impact on waterways

Addressed above.

Cost. Is this additional road a justifiable use of taxpayer money?

It is our understanding this project has been based on outdated financial costings for single stretches of roads.

And as previous road projects, like the Bunbury Outer Ring Road demonstrated, budget costs can significantly blow out and this road could become even more costly.

Inefficiency of road freight transport compared to rail / sea.

The Greens (WA) want better integration of road, rail and sea freight, and a shift in the freight balance from road to rail and shipping where possible, as outlined in our [Transport Policy](#).

Safety for commuters given the likely increase in truck/trailer length, allowable speed and movements.

This proposal doesn't separate truck freight from the eastern states and local commuters. The implementation of efficient rail networks would reduce the communities' reliance on road transport.

Alternatives to the proposed Eastlink road have been raised such as:

- ***Developing effective rail networks in the area***
- ***Truck only roads for road trains.***
- ***Utilising / upgrading the Norseman / Hyden / Perth roads as the main East west corridor, reducing distances by 100 km each way and providing a southern entry closer to the proposed port.***

Would you be willing to explore alternative solutions?

The Greens (WA) believe alternative solutions to the unjustifiable EastLink WA project must be explored.

In addition to the above responses, all of The Greens (WA)'s policies are publicly available [here](#) (including our [Transport](#) and [Planning](#) policies), and our 2025 State Election platform is published [here](#) as it's announced.

After the election the Greens (WA) hope to have greater representation in the Legislative Council and we look forward to working with Rethink Eastlink to progress your campaign against the proposed EastLink WA project.

Thank you for all of your tireless work to date on this important issue.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'BPettitt', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Hon Dr Brad Pettitt MLC

Member for South Metropolitan