



David M. Davis, M.P.
Member for Southern Metropolitan Region
Shadow Minister for Planning
Shadow Minister for Local Government
Shadow Minister for Equality

Dr Tim Smith
Executive Director
Heritage Victoria
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Dear Dr Smith,

**Application for Heritage Permit – P25649
To Undertake Tree Removal and Other Works – St Kilda Road**

I write on behalf of a great many affected constituents to lodge an objection to the above application by the Melbourne Metro Rail Authority on the following grounds:

- The Project works will involve the destruction of a major section of the iconic and heritage-listed St Kilda Road.
- The described works are stated to be necessary for the proposed construction of Domain Station.
- The final design, location and construction method of Domain Station has not yet been determined.
- It is pre-emptive in the extreme to undertake early works involving the simultaneous destruction of more than 100 mature trees prior to the final design and construction method being determined.
- The length of the road which will be scarred is extensive and the time it will take to fully restore the heritage value of the boulevard – in relation to the trees – will be at least 30 to 40 years.
- There are alternative design and construction techniques that would involve far less impact on the road, commuters, residents, trees and those who just come to experience the area.

The path of destruction proposed by these early works had not been previously disclosed to the public prior to four small signs appearing along the road on 30 November, 2016. No reference whatsoever was made to the permit application at a public meeting I attended on 30 November, 2016 called by MMRA to discuss the proposed early works. It is submitted that the public notice of the application and the time period of response and manifestly inadequate.

It is premature to remove trees when decisions on the Environment Effects Statement and final design have not been made. Options for a deep tunnel should be considered ahead of any decision to undertake an open cut/cut and fill option which would be much more destructive of the heritage boulevard and more disruptive to traffic and the local community.

The Andrews Labor Government should release information on the cost of alternative construction methods for Domain station. For some of our most important heritage assets, including the stunning boulevards, the government should be completing a proper process and tunnelling under St Kilda Road rather than a massive and destructive open-cut approach.

Once again the Andrews Labor Government has not undertaken genuine consultation with the local community, traders and commuters. In a similar way to the Government's behaviour on key level crossing removals, particularly the Skyrail, consultations have been inadequate, incomplete and directed towards what appears to be a predetermined outcome desired by the Andrews Labor Government.

In this context I ask that Heritage Victoria take a special care to ensure that full community awareness is achieved and that opportunities to preserve significant aspects of Victoria's heritage are not squandered.

Given the significance to the people of Victoria of the Shrine, the magnificent boulevard of trees and the Boer War Memorial, every reasonable step to protect this heritage should be taken.

My constituents are of the view that wanton destruction of this magnificent tree-lined boulevard prior to the finalisation of design, location and construction method cannot be tolerated and this permit application should be refused.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'David Davis', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the left.

The Hon David Davis MP
Member for Southern Metropolitan Region

14 December 2016