



No Sky Rail: Frankston Line

Press Release 2

Community Open Day

Sunday 17th February 2016

10am to 3pm

Edithvale Lifesaving Club



Open Day Focus

The “No Sky Rail: Frankston Line” community group are having their first Community Open Day this Sunday at the Edithvale Lifesaving Club from 10am to 3pm.

The group will showcase a range of counter arguments to show that that the Level Crossings along the Frankston railway line can be removed by putting them “in-ground”.

Contrary to the incorrect assertions from the Level Crossing Removal Authority (LXRA), the water table is not a significant issue. In fact, readily available water table data shows that in many areas along the Frankston Line the water table is up to 12 meters below ground level, well below the six metre average depth of a railway cutting.

Furthermore, the group’s engineering team are gathering data that shows that the sandy soil conditions are no obstacle to building an in-ground cutting below ground to take the railway crossings below road level.

The group have also conducted an in-depth survey of academic evidence to show that an elevated railway bridge (“Sky Rail”) will have severe health impacts for communities right along the railway line.

This Sunday’s Community Open Day is the “No Sky Rail: Frankston Line” community group’s first response to the LXRA’s false assertions that there is no option other than to build a Sky Rail along the Frankston Railway Line.

Engineering

Our engineering team have been reviewing the LXRA’s mountain of obstacles to putting the railway crossing below the road via an in-ground¹ method. We are systematically working through these issues and debunking them.

“We believe that the items raised by LXRA as barriers to construction have been unnecessarily overstated,” said group Engineering spokesperson Anthea Williams.

“Sandy soils and the alleged high water table can be dealt with simply and within typical construction techniques,” Ms Williams said.

¹ We are not advocating a tunnel or a trench. Rather an in-ground cutting similar to many common structures, such as in-ground pools, or basements below buildings.



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“In fact modern construction techniques can make a below ground option easier and therefore cheaper,” Ms Williams continued.

“The elevated rail bridge approach will require a significant structure and foundations,” she said. “it is therefore not clear to us why the government is touting this as a much cheaper approach.”

Furthermore, the elevated rail bridge will noticeably increase noise levels at properties behind Station St and Nepean Hwy, currently filtered through houses and vegetation. “The in-ground option would substantially decrease noise levels at all locations,” Ms Williams said.

Health

One of the most overlooked aspects of the Sky Rail proposal is the impact it will have on the health of local residents.

Aside from the visual pollution that an elevated railway bridge will bring, the Sky Rail will spread noise, dust and diesel contaminants across surrounding suburbs.

Group Health spokesperson, Patricia Schwerdtle said that the Sky Rail will increase noise and vibration, reduce natural light and increase air pollution. All of these factors negatively impact health and wellbeing.

“There is strong evidence in the scientific literature that links these negative impacts with increased rates of diabetes, cardiovascular disease, asthma, anxiety and depression,” Ms Schwerdtle said.

“We have written an open letter detailing these issues,” Ms Schwerdtle said. “We are seeking the endorsement of health professionals along the railway line so we can spread the message about the negative health impacts the Sky Rail will have on local residents.”

“We want the government to commission an independent health impact assessment to fully and properly examine the health impacts a Sky Rail will have on the Bayside suburbs.”

“Until that is done, we are urging all stakeholders to elect a ‘rail under’ option for the removal of all level crossings on the Frankston line,” Ms Schwerdtle concluded.

Background

The “No Sky Rail: Frankston Line” community group was formed in February this year in response to the government’s rash and poorly consulted announcement to build a Sky Rail along the Dandenong Line. Local residents along the Frankston Line quickly realised that the level crossing in their neighbourhoods could suffer the same fate. They banded together to form the “No Sky Rail: Frankston Line” community group which has since become incorporated under the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 as “SAY NO TO SKY RAIL INCORPORATED” (Association Number: A0095202N).



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The group is non-political and does not allow any party to influence its aims or agenda. Group members “leave their politics at the door” and unite with one common cause: to ensure that a Sky Rail is never allowed to destroy the amenity and character of the Bayside suburbs.

The group is just that: a group. It has a strong and united committee of 15 people who are supported by a band of over 50 dedicated volunteers. The group runs a Facebook page with almost 1,000 followers and has a website that has been visited by thousands. URLs for both can be found at the bottom of this release.

The group is also very community focussed with members from all walks of life and from suburbs all along the Frankston line.

The group has actively picketed the recent LXRA Community Consultation Sessions where it documented overwhelming community opposition to the Sky Rail proposal. Group members have individually and collectively interacted with the LXRA and have come to the conclusion that the Community Consultation sessions were little more than a public relations exercise to “tick the box” that the public were consulted.

For more information about the group, please contact the groups’ spokespersons listed below.

“No Sky Rail: Frankston Line” spokespeople

Engineering	Anthea Williams	0439 375 063
	Sean Wise	0438 357 141
Health	Patricia Schwerdtle	0402 697 530
Events	Serge Kraskov	0419 870 434
Media	Willem Popp	0410 205 007