

Chamber of Commerce
Lilydale.

Subject:- Discussion of C.R.B. plan for reconstruction of Main St. Lilydale.

The Chamber has over the years been greatly concerned with the Main St. of our town - its problems, its services and facilities, access to, and the environment.

Some years ago at a meeting at which the then CRB Divisional Engineer and North Riding Councillors were present, it was made quite plain that parking etc. was a local problem and the main concern of the CRB was a passage through the town with as few interruptions as possible with due regard to safety.

At a more recent meeting with the Minister (Mr. Hunt) and a CRB representative, it was pointed out that the current thinking was that towns be by-passed by highway traffic, and this is borne out by highway constructions such as the Werribee by-pass and the Bacchus Marsh by-pass.

At the last meeting of the Chamber of Commerce held on July 7th the large number of people present were strongly opposed to the upgrading of the highway through the town.

Whilst anyone giving serious thought to the matter will agree that with the increased traffic problems today, something has to be done particularly with respect to the signalization of the Anderson St. intersection and installation of boom gates at the railway crossing, it is our firm belief that the proposed alteration to the Main St. by providing a four lane highway through the centre of the town will completely destroy all that the ratepayers of this shire, hold most important to them in the township of Lilydale, and we object to the proposal for the following reasons:

1. The charm and character of Lilydale, particularly by the loss of trees, and the centre plantations will be completely destroyed.
2. The ability of the Chamber and its members to give service to the people of the district with reasonable access available from all directions will be severely limited.
3. The value of commercial properties in the area involved will undoubtedly fall, with resulted loss of trading revenue and rate revenue to the shire.
4. It goes against the whole planning principles of the Town and Country Planning Act 1961, as set out in the Statement of Planning Policy No. 5 1971, and also the Shire of Lillydale with respect to the planned development of the township.

We know that Meldrum and Partners, Town Planning experts employed by the council at considerable expense to the ratepayers, to study the planned development of the Shopping Centre of Lilydale, have advised the eventual closure of the Main St. between Clarke and Castella Streets to form a shopping Mall, and the construction of a highway by-pass along Melba Avenue. A four lane highway through the Main St. is completely contrary to these experts recommendations.

5. The township will be divided into two distinct areas with very difficult access between, particularly for the movement of school children, shoppers and the elderly.

If it comes to a choice of one of two alternatives - either the highway through the town or nothing at all, then nothing at all is by far a better alternative, than to the destruction of Lilydale, because you can rest assured that once we have a four lane highway constructed through the town, a by-pass will drop to the lowest priority.

However it is suggested that the alternative of by passing the town to the North via Edwards Rd., Coldstream West Rd. Victoria Rd. or even Black Springs Rd. and also to the South along Melba Avenue and Old Gippsland Rd., should be thoroughly investigated and instituted.

At this meeting tonight, the total opposition and strong protest of the people of Lilydale will be registered to both the council and the Country Roads Board, and this is evidenced by the fact that in just one week, over 2000 signatures have been collected on a petition drawn up in protest.

It is our intention to set up an action committee to collect as much information and support from all local bodies and ratepayers as possible and to present such information to the local members of parliament, and to the council and to the CRB, to ensure that the proposed plan is not put into effect, and that a by pass road for Maroondah Highway is constructed.

It is moved

- (a) That the principles of opposition to the proposed Highway plan, as set out in the accompanying circular by the Chamber of Commerce, be adopted by the meeting, and that this opposition be conveyed to the full council and to the Country Roads Board.
- and (b) That an Action Committee be formed tonight to further collect information and support to this opposition and present such information to a meeting of the full council, to the local members of Parliament and to the Country Roads Board.
- (c) That the council be asked to reconsider its decision to approve the proposed plan of upgrading the highway through the town.

LILYDALE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE