

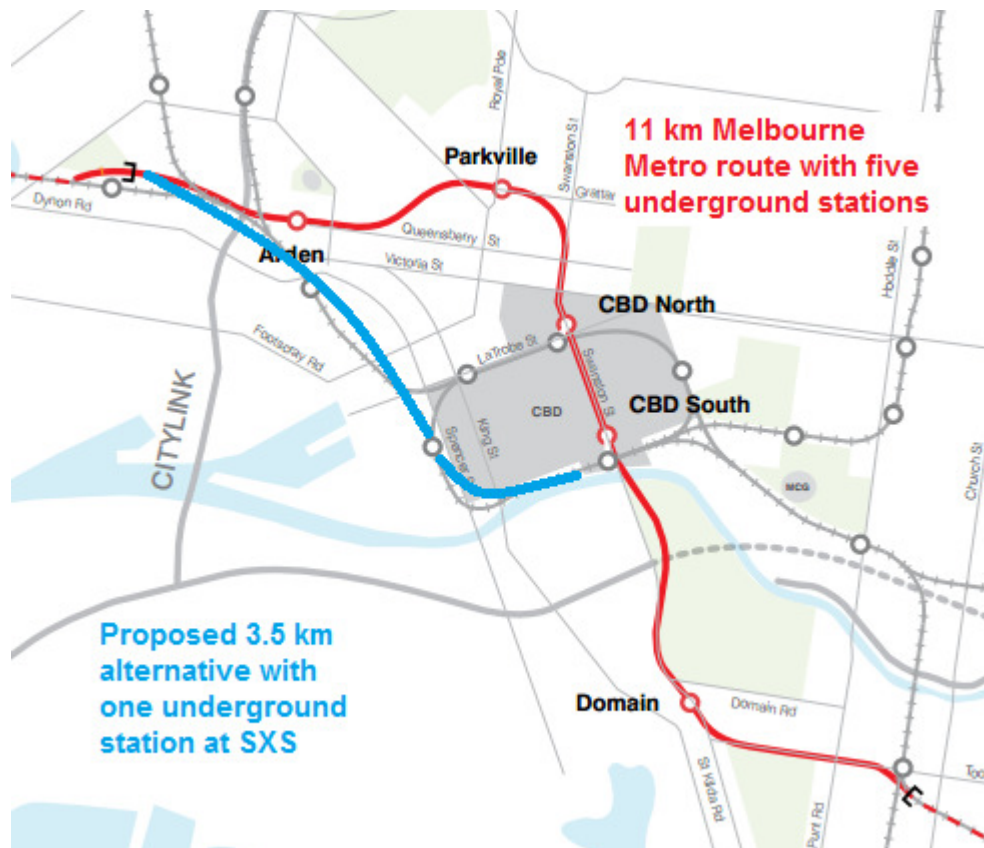
Flinders Street Metro Link

Major drawbacks of the current design

- The tunnel part is very expensive at well over \$1 billion per kilometre.
- Given that most trains running between Flinders Street and Southern Cross Stations are less than half full even in peak hour it is hard to justify this huge expense.
- For most Dandenong line passengers there will be little or no benefit.
- While this rail subway will alleviate congestion between Southern Cross and Flinders Street this can be achieved at a much lower cost.
- The system will take over a decade to complete.
- Building the 'Melbourne Metro' portal near South Yarra will severely disrupt rail services there during construction.
- Both Parkville and Domain are very well serviced by trams already while Arden is a very close to the existing North Melbourne station.

The cheaper alternative

A shorter tunnel would still remove the bottleneck at much lower cost.



The actual rail bottleneck is the six-track viaduct between Flinders Street and Southern Cross Stations.

A short 1-station Flinders Street Metro Link (shown above in blue) between Richmond and North Melbourne would remove this constraint at a much lower price than the full 5-station 9 km tunnel while still adding two extra tracks between Flinders Street and Southern Cross Stations.

Since building the underground stations is the major cost-factor with the Melbourne Metro it is likely this alternative route would cost between a quarter and a third of the Melbourne Metro price saving billions of dollars.

However, it is still dubious that even this short tunnel can be justified given there is still a great deal of room to improve services with the existing track layout.

Possible Flinders Street portals

Cutting and pasting an image of the existing Frankston line city-loop portal near Richmond Station to this area near Flinders Street Station it would seem likely that a rail subway portal entrance could be built where the rear of the Banana Alley vaults and a rough Metro Trains car park is now.

There is almost twice as much space available as is used for the rail portals near Richmond station.

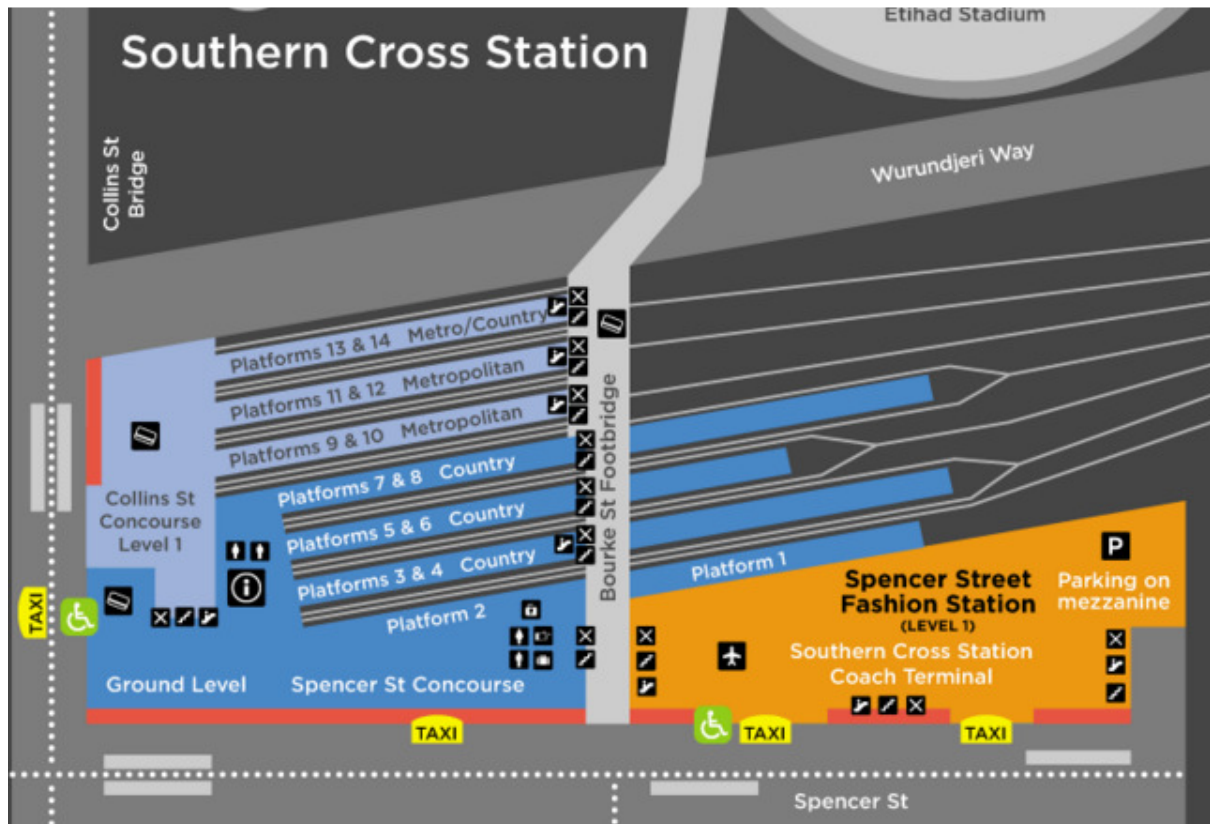


This would remove the rear of the Banana Alley vaults, an unsealed Metro Trains car park and the old signal box but pedestrian access along the north bank of the Yarra would be retained.

If the above was not feasible then other sites between Richmond and Flinders Street should be examined.

Southern Cross platforms

At Southern Cross an underground station could be built as a cut-and-cover where the large platform 2, 3 and 4 are now.



North Melbourne connection

The new underground rail could connect to the Werribee, Craigieburn or Upfield line as desired by utilising railway or low-grade industrial land for the two portals.

