



Geelong Branch

Reforming Geelong's South-Eastern Routes

August 2007

The PTUA believes that all route changes should be made according to agreed principles through a proper process of community consultation. The routes outlined are only suggestions, based on the principles set out below.

Current Situation

- There are 12 different urban bus routes running to the eastern and south-eastern suburbs (including ten to Breakwater and Whittington), which create a confusingly complex service pattern.
- Individual routes run infrequently (although if combined, they could provide a reasonable service).
- Long one way loops (such as through St Albans Park and Whittington) mean that some passengers must sit through a long detour to get to their destination. Loops are also confusing when it comes to making a return journey in the opposite direction.
- Anecdotal reports suggest patronage on the Bender's Newcomb service is poor.
- It is difficult for passengers to get from St Albans to Newcomb on public transport, or from the northern parts of Newcomb to the Bellarine Hwy.
- Bus companies are careful not to encroach on each other's service areas, but this restricts the network options available.

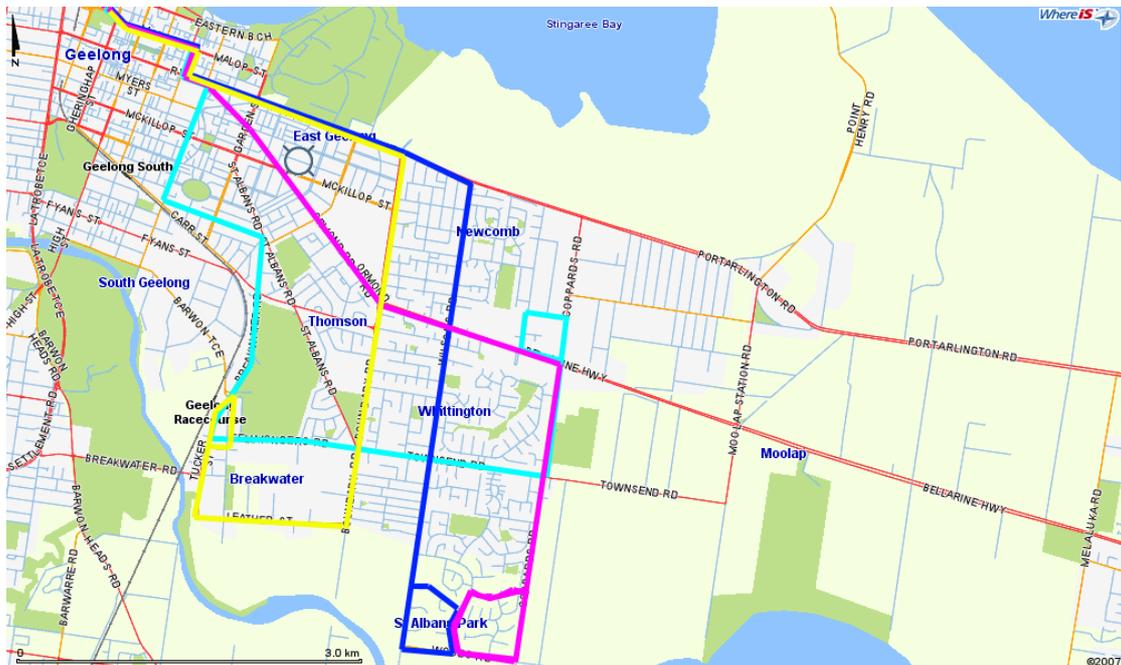
Principles for New Routes

- Services should be concentrated to a few direct routes, to maximise service frequency and simplify service patterns. This is especially important for attracting new users.
- All routes should serve at least one major destination, such as the city centre, Geelong railway station or a major shopping centre.
- A single bus route cannot link all possible destinations. Routes should be structured so that transfers are simple to make, even though they can only happen to a significant extent if services run every 10 minutes or so.
- To make transfers easy where major routes intersect, bus stops should be located close to intersections to minimise walking distances.
- Routes should avoid long detours and loops that make bus travel unnecessarily slow and waste bus service time. Therefore, routes should generally form a straight line or an 'L' shape. If detours are unavoidable, they should come only at the end of the route.

- Except at the end of routes, where buses must turn around, services should run along streets in both directions, so that it is convenient and easy to make a return journey. This also means that large loops are avoided.
- Parallel bus routes through urban areas should be approximately 800m apart, allowing for a maximum 400 metre walk to the closest one, which at 5km/h walking speed would take less than 5 minutes.
- Buses should avoid using side streets and stay on main roads where they can travel faster and more directly, providing that passengers can still be within 400-500 metres walk of the route.
- Generally, substitute transport services should be provided for passengers who can't walk (or roll) up to 400m, rather than re-routing public transport.
- Bus routes should be basically stable and yet be able to cope with new developments, which in this case could include the re-opening of the Breakwater/Racecourse station, a bus connection to Belmont, or a major upgrade of bus frequency.
- New pedestrian islands and crossings should be a priority for places where bus passengers will need to cross busy roads to access services.
- Bus stops should be located as close as possible to these crossings and major residential cross-streets to maximise route catchments.

These principles are applied in the following route options.

Preferred Route Option 1



This is our preferred option, which includes four routes. This is seven fewer than the current total and one less than the current five 'main' routes, which include the three main Breakwater/Whittington routes, the East Geelong route and the Newcomb route.

The four new services running directly along Boundary, Wilsons and Coppards Roads will provide a simpler, quicker, more useful, and less wasteful network, which is also capable of serving north-south trips within the eastern suburbs. The routes also allow east-west trips along the Bellarine Highway, Townsend/Fellmongers Roads, and (to some extent) Ryrie Street and Portarlington Roads.

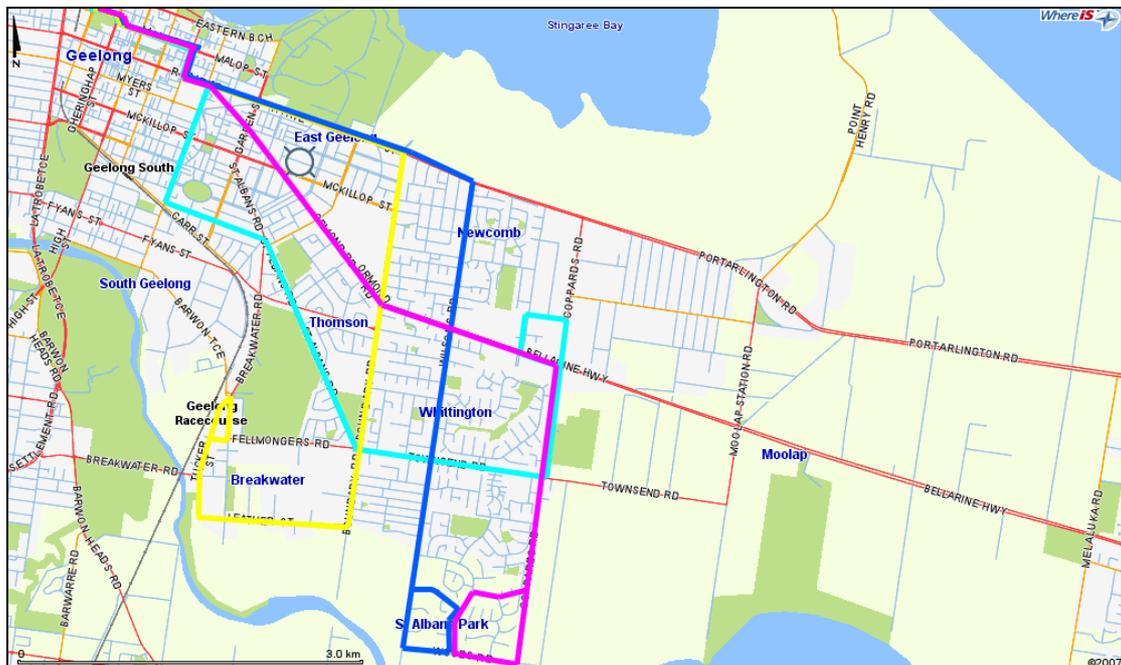
Almost all residents will still be within a 400-500 metre walk of a bus route. While Boundary Road is closer to Wilsons Road than the efficient 'ideal' of 800 metres, it is probably still worth serving.

The end of the Breakwater/Townsend Road route (aqua) has been extended to the Bellarine Highway, even though it duplicates another route for a short distance in order to give its passengers better access to the retail strip. Ideally, this would be removed, but it recognises that relatively low bus frequencies could make transfers to Wilsons Road or Coppards Road services inconvenient.

In line with current arrangements, we presume that Bender's would run the Wilsons Road route (as a replacement for the Newcomb service) and McHarry's would run the remainder.

If the Breakwater/Racecourse station was re-opened, the bus routes could stay the same, or be adapted to form a network similar to *Option 2*.

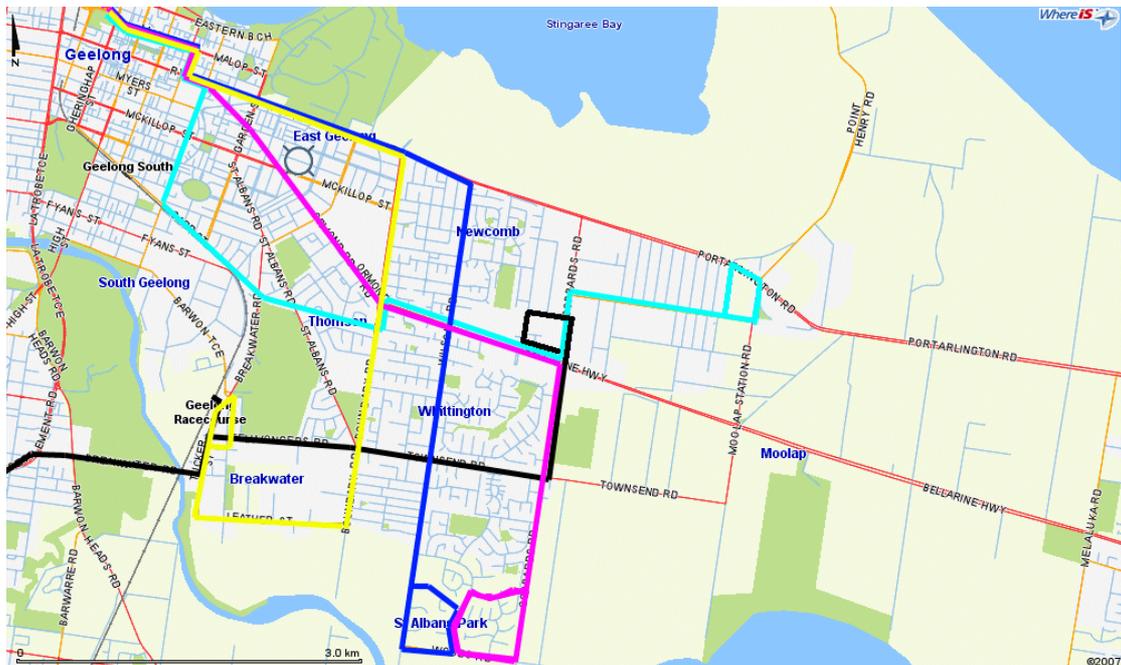
Preferred Route Option 2



This is our second preferred option. It is the same as *Option 1*, except that Townsend Road services (aqua) are routed via St Albans Road. This provides a more direct connection to Townsend Road and better serves residential areas along the existing St Albans Road bus route.

It does, however, remove a direct connection to Breakwater and the Racecourse (and the potential Breakwater station) from Townsend Road, and means that all passengers travelling to Breakwater or to the Racecourse must detour via Boundary Road and Leather Street.

Option 3



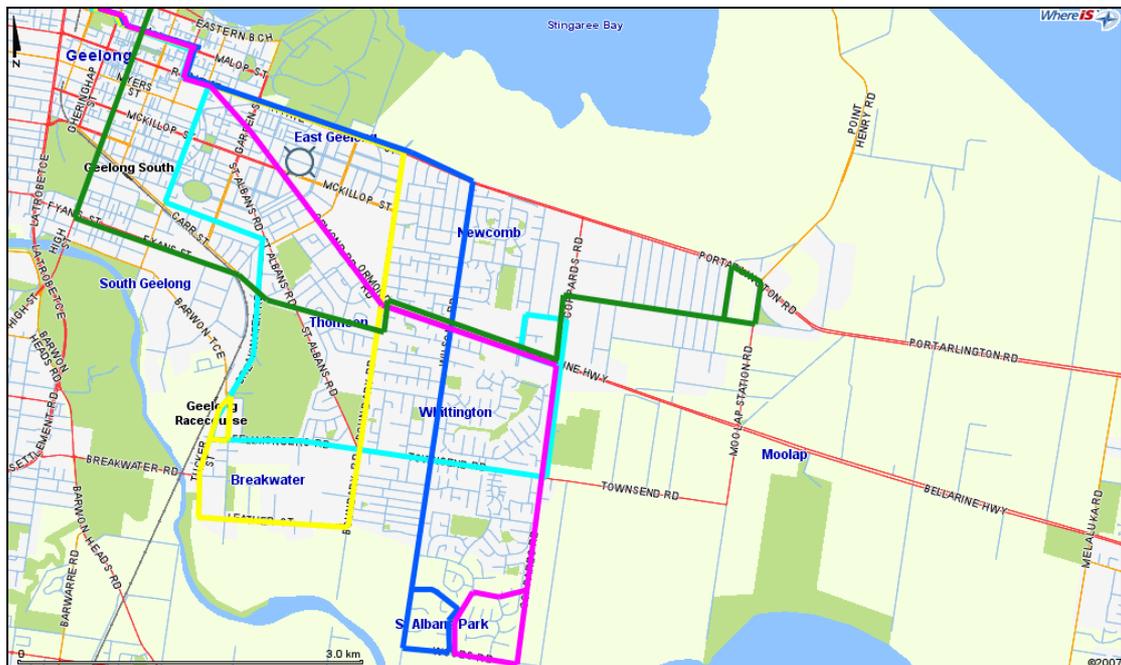
This network option could be applied if the Breakwater/Racecourse station was re-opened and provided with a frequent train service that could be used for travel within Geelong.

The Breakwater route has been split. The service along Townsend Road feeds the station and connects across the river to Belmont, while the South Geelong section of the route now provides a direct connection to the Bellarine Hwy shops. It also shows a possible connection to the Moolap industrial estate, which at present is only served by infrequent buses along Portarlington Road.

The South Geelong route is also shown with services re-routed away from Verner Street into Carr Street, to provide a service closer to the industrial estate south of Fyans Street. This is also an alternative route section for the Breakwater/Townsend route (aqua) shown in *Option 1*.

As there is one extra route, this would require additional resources compared to *Option 1*. Therefore it is not our preferred option. The first priority for additional resources should be to improve service frequency on main routes, towards "forget the timetable" standards of approximately every ten minutes.

Option 4



An additional route along Fyans Street in South Geelong could serve the light industrial area in South Geelong more effectively. It could also allow transfers to routes that serve the south-western suburbs.

As with *Option 3*, however, it would require additional resources compared to *Options 1 and 2*. It is therefore not recommended at this stage.

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