

## Meeting Minutes

Project:	Sapphire to Woolgoolga Upgrade Project	Reference:	<b>1093.40.GE</b>
Location:	Moonee Beach Hall, Moonee Beach	Date:	11 December 2007

Present: Apology: Copy: Name:

### SAPPHIRE TO WOOLGOOLGA SOUTHERN CFG (Sapphire to Moonee)

		✓	Vincent Brooker
✓			Peter Nuske (proxy)
✓			Jim Browne
✓			Steve Clemesha
✓			Ray Faggotter
		✓	Jill Heris
		✓	Tammy Mills-Thom
		✓	Shinichi Otani
✓			Phil Price
✓			Col South
		✓	Gary Davey
	✓		Greg Benson
		✓	Kevin Knott
✓			John Langhorn
		✓	Peter Lubans
		✓	Jeff Burrows (proxy)
		✓	Sue Neil
		✓	Leslie Meredith (proxy)
		✓	Sandy Van Veluwen
		✓	Paul Norton

### PROJECT TEAM

✓			Bob Higgins	RTA
✓			Chris Clark	RTA
✓			Adam Cameron	RTA
✓			Tim Paterson	Connell Wagner
✓			Jesse Death	Connell Wagner

✓			Lucia Coletta	Connell Wagner
✓			Tim Dean	Wilkinson Murray
	✓		Denise Wilson	ID Planning
✓			Andrew Smith	JMS Consulting
Recorded By: Lucia Coletta				Total Pages: 11
Subject: Sapphire to Woolgoolga Southern Community Focus Group Meeting No 20				

Details:

**Action By/Date:**

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Andrew Smith (AS) opened the meeting at 5.50pm.
- 1.2 Introductions were conducted around the table, for both CFG and project team members
- 1.3 AS ran through the Agenda- there were no alterations or changes

## 2. PROPOSAL DESIGN CHANGES

- 2.1 Tim Paterson (TP) explained that he would provide a brief overview of the notable changes to the proposal since the last CFG meeting. There would not be a presentation on the environmental assessment as the project team wanted to provide the members with the maximum opportunity to ask questions and/or provide comment. It has been a year since the last meeting, and there had been continual development of the project, but fundamentally, the alignment was the same as a year ago. He (TP) would go through the design on a pdf document and he could zoom in to answer specific questions. Chris Clark (CC) would then go through a drive through and flyover visualisation of the route.
- 2.2 Sapphire changes to the local access road refinement
- 2.3 Bob Higgins (BH): Tim, is the black dotted line the same property line from the Community Update?
- 2.4 TP: Correct
- 2.5 Moonee Beach Interchange- Upgrading of Hoys Road included.
- 2.6 Phil Price (PP): At this point, where is the current highway alignment?
- 2.7 TP: Under the interchange
- 2.8 CC: explained the location of the existing Moonee Beach intersection – the interchange is slightly north of existing intersection
- 2.9 John Langhorn (JL) Where is the primary school site along Hoys Road?
- 2.10 CC: On the corner of Old Bucca Road and Hoys Road
- 2.11 CC: From the southern end of the project up to the sapphire interchange at Split Solitary/ Gaudrons Road, the existing highway forms the local access road. North from the Sapphire interchange until the south Woolgoolga interchange, the existing highway forms one of the two carriageways of the highway.
- 2.12 JL: So from here, the access roads are all new roads?

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- 2.13 CC: Correct- except for Hoys Road (Graham Drive and the existing highway through Woolgoolga)
- 2.14 Peter Nuske (PN): Are the interchanges an integral part of the Proposal?
- 2.15 TP: yes, it is part of the Proposal- it is part of what the RTA are seeking planning approval for
- 2.16 Emerald Beach Interchange- changes to northbound off-ramp and property access arrangements
- 2.17 JL: dual carriageways- down from existing level of the highway?
- 2.18 TP: it is close to the existing level, but there is a slight cutting. The access road at this point is to the east of the current highway alignment.
- 2.19 Northbound off-ramp installed at Graham Drive South
- 2.20 Col South (CS): So if you are travelling north, there is an off-ramp?
- 2.21 TP: Yes- if you are travelling from Coffs Harbour to Emerald Beach you can get off the highway at this point (at northbound off-ramp south of existing Fiddaman Road intersection)
- 2.22 CS: To go north from Emerald Beach?
- 2.23 JL: Can CS get on the highway at Emerald Beach?
- 2.24 TP: No he cannot. If he wants to get onto the highway, he will have to travel up Graham Drive South and get onto the highway at that point. Alternatively, he can travel to the south Woolgoolga interchange via Graham Drive and access the highway there. If he wants to go into Woolgoolga, he travels over an overbridge of the highway, through the roundabout at Hearnes Lake Road and onto the existing highway at south Woolgoolga. There is also a southbound off-ramp at the south Woolgoolga interchange.
- 2.25 Unwins Road- changes to property access arrangements
- 2.26 Realignment of Woolgoolga Creek Road
- 2.27 Realignment of Newmans Road
- 2.28 Emergency vehicle access off Newmans Road onto the highway.
- 2.29 BH: Will there be a locked gate?
- 2.30 TP: Yes, there will be a locked gate , this access way will not be for public use
- 2.31 Changes to Arrawarra Interchange
- 2.32 JL: What will happen to the rest area near the roundabout in Woolgoolga?
- 2.33 TP: It could become a reserve- Council would also have a say as to what will happen with it.
- 2.34 BH: The proposed rest area (at the Arrawarra interchange) is to cater for both light and heavy vehicles. There is an overall plan for the entire highway, and in this area, this was the best location that was identified.
- 2.35 CS: The top end of the Proposal- is it close to where Option A would come out?

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- 2.36 CC: Yes, it was around the same spot where a couple of the options would have rejoined the highway.
- 2.37 CC then prepared and showed the drive through and flyover.
- 2.38 Lucia Coletta (LC): Both the drive through and the flyover are available on the website.
- 2.39 CC: (regarding a discussion on the visualisations on the website) the size of the files are approximately 7 Mb each- but the files are a streaming video and are not downloadable.
- 2.40 JL: Would the local access road also be a low noise pavement?
- 2.41 CC: It would be an asphalt or a fine sand surface similar to the pavement to be used on the highway
- 2.42 CS: Will the speed limit be 110km/hr?
- 2.43 Ray Faggotter (RF): What would the speed limit on the access road be?
- 2.44 BH: That would be a matter for the Council to determine

### 3. ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

- 3.1 AS opened the meeting to any questions/ comments on the environmental assessment.
- 3.2 CS: On the north side of Heritage Park, there are 5 new house sites that have not been included within the noise assessment. 1 block of land was subdivided into 3 parts- they were sold 3 months ago.
- 3.3 Tim Dean (TD): It all comes down to when the houses are approved. If it is approved prior to the highway then, noise mitigation measures would have to be addressed as part of the project and it would be undertaken at the detailed design phase.
- 3.4 CS: Council is already telling the owners that they have to double-glaze the houses
- 3.5 TD: If the houses are approved after the highway has been approved, then it is the owners responsibility
- 3.6 CS: Council is telling the owners that they have to now put in double-glazing.
- 3.7 Adam Cameron (AC): Council needs to consider the current situation. The houses are being built in proximity to the existing highway. Councils along the highway are setting requirements for housing in proximity to the highway.
- 3.8 CS: I am trying to understand where the expense for noise mitigation measures lies
- 3.9 AC: In this case, the owner- they know that they are building close to the existing highway.
- 3.10 CS: They also have to provide a 50m nature strip for fauna movement at the end of the blocks (facing the highway). They want to build their house away from the highway, and it is getting close to the 50m nature strip where they can't build. People are beginning to plant trees in this area.
- 3.11 PN: So that would mean that they would have to have air conditioning because you can't open double glazed windows
- 3.12 CS: Yes and they have also specified aluminium fly screens for bushfire protection

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purposes. There seems to be a problem that the noise comes down from the hill and flows into Heritage Park.

- 3.13 AC: There will be low noise pavement for the new highway, other than through the state forest- TD perhaps you could provide an idea of how this will effect noise levels in the area
- 3.14 TD: With the low noise pavement, there will be a reduction of 5dBA in the area which will be a noticeable reduction.
- 3.15 CC: Currently, the surface of the highway is like chip seal. The low noise pavement will be similar to that which has been installed at Korora/ Sapphire.
- 3.16 CS: Will the RTA review the noise levels?
- 3.17 CC: Appendix A of the environmental assessment sets out the RTA's commitments to the project. One of those is that between 6 months and 12 months after opening of the highway, the RTA will review/ monitor noise levels
- 3.18 BH: It should be noted that in other projects, the Department of Planning have imposed this re-assessment of noise levels as a condition of approval.
- 3.19 CS: Who is responsible for the noise mitigation measures in new housing?
- 3.20 BH: Well an example at Brunswick Head, there was one person who built after the project approval and well into the construction period argued that the RTA should provide some mitigation measures. But it comes down to who came first?
- 3.21 CS: Council has appeared to take care of that issue through the measures including double- glazing of houses close to the highway.
- 3.22 BH: It is the same problem along the entire highway.
- 3.23 CC: The guidelines which the RTA use to assess traffic noise impacts are also relevant for home owners near highways as to how to noise-proof their houses.
- 3.24 CS: It would be worthwhile to look before you build then
- 3.25 JL: There is some concern that with the increase in traffic on Hoys Road, this will translate to an increase in use of Old Bucca Road. Assume it would be the same with Graham Drive.
- 3.26 CC: He understands the concern. Modelling indicates that the most of the traffic would be along Bucca Road.
- 3.27 JL: Old Bucca Road is a terrible road
- 3.28 CC: He would imagine that people might try to go along it once, but wouldn't imagine that they would do it repeatedly due to the road conditions.
- 3.29 JL: It is a concern with the bad road conditions and people potentially speeding
- 3.30 TP: Council could introduce controls including speed control devices
- 3.31 JL: But if the RTA has caused a change to the road use...
- 3.32 TP: The RTA's objective is to make the local access road more attractive (other than Old Bucca Road). Bucca road is already a regional road standard.
- 3.33 CC: Hoys road is a two way road which will make travelling along it more attractive

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- 3.34 JB: He would like to say what a great job the project team has done. They have made most people happy- which he is sure is hard to do. But he did have one concern- the intersection with the local access road at the southern end of the project (Campbell Close). At the current intersection with the highway and the Sapphire Apartments, there are currently 500 entries during the school holidays. With the Pelican Beach Resort re-development and potentially Nautilus as well, there will be a considerable traffic load on that local access road at this point. If you look along the highway, up and down the alignment, there are no other intersections like the ones here- they are 2 bad intersections. Has sat at the entry to Sapphire Apartments for 10 minutes to try and make a right hand turn onto the highway. With two streams of traffic, it won't make it a lot better. It is a disaster waiting to happen- can see that there may be future pressure for traffic lights at this point. Believes that Campbell Close residents get a raw deal and that there could be a better solution. Agrees that there needs to be access and entry at this point, but believes that with the slope of the land and the topography, there could be something better done. There could be a crossing under the highway north of Campbell Close or cross over of the highway at the point south of Campbell Close where there is a slight rise to eliminate the need for a right hand turn.
- 3.35 JL: Is it true that the RTA is considering traffic lights at the Big Banana/ Diggers Beach?
- 3.36 CC: This wasn't part of this project, but he understood that investigations were being undertaken for a range of possible options.
- 3.37 JL: From here (Big Banana) to the Nautilus there are intersections just like that
- 3.38 JB: looking at the traffic situation and the building of the highway to accommodate local and through traffic. With the bypass of Coffs Harbour going to join to this one- they come to this area with seagull intersections- then a straight run. Opal Cove and Nautilus denigrates the design. Can't see why there can't be a crossover or underpass at this location. Shouldn't be that much more expensive. Topography lends itself to one of those options.
- 3.39 BH: Lets step back and look at the big picture- this is the same situation that is affecting other sections of the highway and that is the connection points to other projects. There is a move towards Class M highway between Hexham and the Queensland border. That is four lanes with a wide median that could provide for future expansion to six lanes. The local access road connection is dependant upon timing and staging. RTA can live with the proposed intersection arrangement until a Class M connection to the Coffs Harbour Bypass is provided. Investigations are ongoing to develop a masterplan to connect it (the Sapphire to Woolgoolga upgrade) into the Class M Coffs Harbour Bypass. Bridges are not cheap- there has been an increase in costs of concrete, steel and labour in the last 18 months. There are also higher priorities. At at-grade intersections there is pressure to put in grade-separated interchanges- the concerns are valid. In the long term, the intersection is proposed to be closed and connected.
- 3.40 JB: at the Campbell Close cut- what is the difference between filling the cut and putting in an underbridge?
- 3.41 BH: The bridges along this stretch of highway, some individual bridges are up to \$20M each.
- 3.42 CC: At this point, the highway accommodates 18 000 vehicles a day- to build an underpass would mean that it would have to be built while the highway was in

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operation- which would mean that the traffic would have to be transferred to one lane while works are being undertaken. Can't build it without disruption to highway traffic.

- 3.43 JB: Would have thought that it would be built while the new highway was in construction, then swap the lanes to make the connection.
- 3.44 CC: An elevation difference of approximately 8m between the highway and the local access road would be required to put in an underpass, but at this location it is only 2-3 metres. We understand your concern, but that option was looked at previously in some detail.
- 3.45 JB: He had just looked at the design and thought that it looked odd compared to the standard of the rest of the highway.
- 3.46 TP: When the Class M connection to the south is provided- the intersection will close and the access road would continue south.
- 3.47 BH: Look at the RTA website- there are numerous examples of temporary connections, like Arrawarra. A long term scheme for the highway has been developed over the past 3-5 years. I understand your concern, but this is purely an interim solution.
- 3.48 CS: You have done what I always wanted- to get the school buses off the highway and onto the local access road. Are there any provisions for bus stops along the access road?
- 3.49 CC: Yes, they are visible on the flyover visualisation. At road junctions, there are provisions for bus bays. Also, with the overbridges at Smiths Road and Killara Avenue, when Council completes the missing link between Heritage Park and Avocado Heights- the school bus route could go through Heritage Park
- 3.50 JL: On Bucca Road, there are times where there are six buses in a row waiting for children
- 3.51 CS: It will be better with the local access road
- 3.52 CC: RTA is aware that the end of Bucca is a de-facto bus interchange
- 3.53 JL: Is there a high school planned at Moonee? Because I heard that Woolgoolga is accommodating double the number of students it was intended for.
- 3.54 TP: In the Moonee Beach DCP, there is only a provision for a primary school
- 3.55 JL: 6 buses along the length of Bucca Road where it joins the highway and you have the people in cars dropping children off and they go everywhere.
- 3.56 CS: Even worse when they are picking them up from school
- 3.57 BH: There is the space available for bus bays, but the actual layout would be decided during the detailed design phase
- 3.58 CS: I read through the environmental assessment and didn't see anything on schoolbuses
- 3.59 Jesse Death (JD): It is in Section 7.5.8
- 3.60 JL: I told my children that their children will be able to go to Sandy Beach school without accessing the highway- they were ecstatic.
- 3.61 Meeting adjourned for dinner 7.05pm

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- 3.62 Meeting re-convened at 7.40pm
- 3.63 JL: The design has included everything that I have asked for. When is it going to happen? When will property resumptions begin?
- 3.64 AS: Perhaps this would be a good time to go through the flowchart
- 3.65 CC: this is the flowchart of the environmental assessment. Display finishes on 15 February 2008- to enable people to write in with submissions, and to give them 30 days outside of the school holiday period. At the end of the exhibition period, the Department of Planning forwards the submissions to the RTA for comment. This could take a couple of months, depending on the number of submissions.
- 3.66 BH: We also accept positive submissions
- 3.67 CC: The RTA will respond to the issues raised in the submissions
- 3.68 JL: Timeframe?
- 3.69 CC: Included in the few months mentioned above.
- 3.70 CC: If there are significant changes to the proposal arising from the submissions, a preferred project report would be prepared. Department of Planning assesses the proposal and prepares a report for the Director-General. Then the Minister for planning decides whether the proposal should be approved, rejected or approved with conditions. If approved with conditions, the conditions are for both the construction and operation phases of the Proposal. The Chief Executive officer of the RTA will then decide whether to proceed with the project. At this point, property acquisitions would occur and the detailed design of the project begin
- 3.71 CS: Timeframe for this?
- 3.72 BH: The funding of the project comes from the Australian and NSW government. All up \$1.3 billion has been committed to the highway upgrade over the 3 year period to June 2009. This is to be divided among a number of projects. Money up to June 2009 has been committed already. So construction would not occur until after that date.
- 3.73 JL: So there is not enough money for the project to be built in a timely fashion?
- 3.74 BH: The (new Australian) labour government has highlighted this project as a priority project. But negotiations will still occur between the Australian and NSW governments in regards to future funding for AusLink2 which will come onboard after June 2009
- 3.75 JL: Just wanted certainty that the project will be going ahead
- 3.76 BH: Sorry- thought that you wanted a timeframe for construction. It will possibly take 6 months for approval- hoping to get that in mid 2008. The process however is in the control of Department of Planning.
- 3.77 JL: Well this meeting should tell you that you are getting positive feedback
- 3.78 BH: Mid to late 2008 is indicative only for project approval
- 3.79 JL: So construction to begin in 2009?
- 3.80 BH: RTA would be positioning for construction to begin in 2009, but negotiations would still be ongoing between Australian and NSW governments for funding. RTA

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have the keys in the door, so to speak, on this project

- 3.81 CS: What are the odds that when you get the submissions- you will change the alignment and go west?
- 3.82 BH: Won't comment on the odds, but if you look at past projects with the exception of the Tintenbar to Ewingsdale and Warrell Creek projects, there are few locations where the RTA has deviated from the alignment shown in the environmental assessment.
- 3.83 CC: There will be some comments/ criticisms- but the RTA has looked at a lot of route options and design options. Hopefully that will be enough to respond to those criticisms
- 3.84 JL: That provides a lot more certainty of it going ahead now
- 3.85 BH: In the community update, a benefit cost analysis was updated looking at the route options and it re-affirms the RTA's position that the coastal route is the correct alignment
- 3.86 JL: Will the construction be staged?
- 3.87 BH: Depends on the funding flows- the project has been designed to be able to be constructed in separate sections- such as doing the grade separated interchanges first. But it comes down to priorities and funding
- 3.88 SC: What stage would the access roads be constructed?
- 3.89 BH: Would like to construct it all at once, but the design has the flexibility for it to be built in sections.
- 3.90 CC: RTA don't want to overly dictate to the construction contractor how to build the project as we want to benefit from their expertise, efficiencies and any technical advances. Construction would take the form of constructing one new carriageway, then shifting the traffic to it to complete the second carriageway.
- 3.91 JL: What would the timeframe be for the whole project?
- 3.92 BH: Three plus years, but is only indicative. On Coopernook to Herons Creek (33km long) an agreement has been signed to get it open by December 2009- that is 2 years from now. We can put a squeeze on construction, but have to be careful that that doesn't increase construction costs.
- 3.93 JL: So it would be open in December 2011
- 3.94 BH: No- I didn't say that. I don't want the timeframe to be mis-interpreted. The timeframes given are only parameters, and they are dependant on a number of factors like funding and project approval.
- 3.95 BH: what is the feedback from the communities that you represent?
- 3.96 CS: Everyone wants you to get on with it.
- 3.97 JL: Well not everyone

#### 4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

- 4.1 AS: Minutes from the November 2006 CFG meeting- any changes or comments?
- 4.2 CFG accepted Minutes of November 2006 meeting

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4.3 JL: Flora and fauna in the environmental assessment- a property owner has the Rusty Plum growing on his property

4.4 CC: RTA has to translocate a few- did he want any more?

4.5 JL: People at Woolgoolga- Land Care were looking for additional Rusty Plum plants

**Contact Land Care in regards to translocation sites of Rusty Plum**

4.6 CC: For the CFG member's information, the environmental assessment identified a number of flora and fauna species that are threatened or endangered under Commonwealth legislation. While the RTA considers that there is a minimal impact on these species, we have made a precautionary referral to the Department of Environment and Water Resources to ask for confirmation of the impact.

4.7 Steve Clemesha (SC): In the environmental assessment, it mentions that the marsdenia longiloba is rare- it isn't- it is more common than other species of marsdenia. Rusty Plum is also common in Bruxner Park area. It also mentions that the Typhonium specie is only distinguished by the flowers- it isn't, it is also identified by the leaves

4.8 TP: Should send up our ecologist.

**Project ecologist to get in contact with SC**

#### 4. WHATS NEXT

5.1 AS: CC-what is the next activity for the CFG members?

5.2 CC: Next activity and possibly the last activity will be when the RTA forwards the submissions report to the Department of Planning.

5.3 AS: Will there be a CFG during construction- the same CFG?

5.4 CC: The current CFGs will finish their roles at project approval stage. Through the construction period, there will be community liaison group set up.

5.5 JB: Spoke to TD about the noise walls around Sapphire apartments- there is a spike in the noise contours- partially due to the topography and the building design. However, he would like it to be investigated during the design for the noise wall detailing.

**Look at noise wall design in relation to the spike in noise contour around the Sapphire Apartments**

5.6 BH: This, the release of the environmental assessment, is a major milestone. During the construction phase, the RTA will take on board the community comments raised. But there is still a long way to go. I would like to thank all of you for your contribution to the project- it has been a productive group

5.7 TP: Like to re-iterate those sentiments, the contributions from this CFG has had influences on the design and contributed significantly to the Proposal.

5.8 CC: Would also like to echo those sentiments- the working sessions have been invaluable- there have been some great ideas. While we have not been able to include everything everyone wanted, they have looked at all the comments. Thank you for your perseverance.

5.9 AC: Would also like to thank everyone- it has been a very productive CFG.

#### MEETING CLOSE

Meeting closed at 8.20pm

**Next Meeting: Submissions Report to Department of Planning**

<b>Summary of Meeting's Actions</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Contact Land Care in regards to translocation sites of Rusty Plum (<i>Item Number 4.5</i>)</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Project Ecologist to get in contact with SC (<i>Item Number 4.8</i>)</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Look at noise wall design in relation to the spike in noise contour around the Sapphire Apartments (<i>Item Number 5.5</i>)</li></ul>