

## Meeting Record

Project:	Sapphire to Woolgoolga Upgrade Project	Reference:
Location:	Woolgoolga Community Hall, Boundary Street, Woolgoolga	Date: 11 December 2001

Present: Apology: Copy: Name:

<b>NORTHERN CFG (Woolgoolga Area)</b>			
✓			Graham Ashton
✓			John Beales
			Mark Beard
✓			Gregory Benson
✓			Jasmer Bhatti
✓			Roslyn Dunbar-Wells
✓			Ron Gray
✓			Karrena Joass
✓			Kevin Knott
✓			Steven Moody
✓			Phillip Pearce
✓			Des Saunders
✓			Bruce Scanlon
	✓		Paramjit Sidhu
✓			John Tozer
✓			Robert Watson
<b>SOUTHERN CFG (Sapphire to Moonee)</b>			
			Keith Adams
			Rick Baker
✓			Helen Ball
	✓		Charles Barnes
✓			Vincent Brooker
✓			Steve Clemesha
✓			Ray Faggotter

	✓		Jill Heris	
✓			Andrew Huggett	
	✓		Peter Lubans	
✓			Tammy Mills-Thom	
✓			Shinichi Otani	
✓			Phil Price	
	✓		Ron Smith	
✓			Colin South	
<b>PROJECT TEAM</b>				
✓			Ken Oldfield	RTA
✓			Wes Stevenson	RTA
✓			Bob Higgins	RTA
✓			Jill Christy	RTA
✓			René Burkart	RTA
✓			Tim Paterson	Connell Wagner
✓			Rosemary Russell	Connell Wagner
	✓		Bruce Penman	Connell Wagner
✓			Andrew Smith	Pramax Communications
✓			Bill Wood	Coffs Harbour City Council
	✓		Rick Bennell	Coffs Harbour City Council
	✓		Malcolm Imrie	Department of Urban Affairs and Planning
	✓		John Finlay	Department of Urban Affairs and Planning
Recorded By: Pramax Communications				Total Pages: 10
Subject: Community Focus Group Meeting No 2 (combined meeting of 2 CFGs)				

Details:

Action By/Date:

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- Meeting opened at 5.45pm by facilitator, Andrew Smith. Checked that members had received a copy of the summary of issues raised at the Open Information Sessions. Stated that this was simply a record of what had taken place at those meetings, what the project team had heard from the community so as to help refresh people's memory for later discussion.

Note

Details:

Action By/Date:

- Last meeting for the large group. Intention to get input from everyone at the meeting. In the New Year, the group will be broken up into the two smaller groups to make it easier to consolidate the issues.

## 2. MEMBER INTRODUCTIONS

- Members who were not at the first meeting (including representatives from the RTA) introduced themselves, identifying the organisations they represented and their reasons for attending the meeting. Bob Higgins, the new Pacific Highway Office Manager and Jill Christy, the Senior Communications Adviser were present and took the opportunity to introduce themselves. Ken Oldfield announced that he was leaving the RTA and that Wes Stevenson would take on the role of Project Manager.

Refer to attendance list above

## 3. MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

- One apology (Des Saunders) had not been noted in the minutes and there had been a phone query as to whether representation should be by groups or individuals. Agreed that representation should be by groups in case a substitute person was required to attend the meetings from time to time.

After amendments, minutes then confirmed and accepted.

## 4. INFORMATION UPDATE

### Overview / relationship Sapphire to Woolgoolga and Coffs Harbour projects

- Coffs Harbour is a long-term project, about 20 years down the track. Any future Coffs Harbour bypass route would affect the overall planning for Sapphire to Woolgoolga (which is an immediate project) depending on where it rejoined the existing highway. If the inner corridor were decided on, then a different design for the stretch between Korora and Moonee would be required than if the central or outer route was selected.
- The section between Sapphire and Moonee may eventually require 6 lanes and access arrangements need to be considered. North of Moonee there are more route possibilities for the project team to consider as there are fewer topographical constraints

### Sapphire to Woolgoolga study area

- Study area boundaries and end points were determined to allow investigation of the widest range of options, including a western bypass as well as upgrading the existing highway. The northern extent was set near Arrawarra to include the most heavily trafficked section of highway with the next highest priority for upgrading as part of the Pacific Highway Upgrading Program. The actual northern extent of the upgrade will be determined by the route options developed.
- Discussion on what happens if none of the Coffs Harbour bypass routes is selected as suitable and amount of input the Sapphire to Woolgoolga CFGs need to have to the Coffs Harbour project. Need to have understanding of the approach Coffs Harbour CFG may take and to coordinate the two groups.
- Question of why the highway is being designed in chunks and wouldn't it be more practical to design the highway as a whole then build a particular section? RTA response is that this it is not practical. Some of the chunks are already in place and the gaps are being filled in. The RTA was already working on some parts of the highway to upgrade it when the 10-year program commenced. A lot of parts cannot be done in one go – the Government took a decision to do it progressively and this is now happening.

- Discussion on traffic volumes on highway and criteria used to decide that the Coffs Harbour by-pass may never be needed or at least not for 15-20 years.
- RTA explained how amount of around \$283 million set aside for the Sapphire to Woolgoolga section was arrived at as the project hadn't yet been defined. It is an indicative estimate calculated by the length of the road based on the cost of similar completed works. An approximate figure needs to be put in the forward budget to flag the future need for funding of that order. The figure would be adjusted as the project is further developed.

## Project development process.

- *Hydraulics.* This is being looked at to understand the physical dynamics so we can respond to catchment areas and waterways. Studies have already started and more information will be brought to the group in due course.
- *Terrain.* Terrain models allow engineering aspects to be investigated and we hope to have something for the next meeting. Only the existing highway has been looked at so far, not further west.
- *Utilities.* We are starting to get information on power, pipelines, telecommunications and other services so we can plan for their placement. Some of it will be underground but costing needs to be done in that area.
- *Cost estimate.* Not ready to do this until corridor options have been identified. Need to develop a profile of the ground in the area, physical constraints need to be considered.

## Highway design terminology

- Terminology which will be used throughout the project development explained to group. Illustrations of typical cross-section shown for different terrain types and what width of road needed to support dual carriageway for 4 or 6 lanes, depending on the terrain.
- Also discussed the need to provide local service roads and how this would have an effect on the width of the highway at that particular section because of the terrain.
- The project will provide a dual carriageway – a divided road is safer than an undivided one. The design of the road is directly related to the travel speed and the design standard for the Pacific Highway is 110kph. This does not mean that the highway will be signed for 110kph limit. Speed restrictions also depend on other factors like side access by other roads, crests and curves, and a comfort zone has to be factored in.
- Aerial shots of the Ballina by-pass shown, to illustrate how highway design for service roads and grade-separated interchanges worked.

## Status of current investigations

- Group advised there were a number of studies currently under way. Traffic surveys were conducted in the area today and these are vital to understand the daily traffic patterns between residential areas and other points along the highway. The results would show whether there was a need for grade-separated intersections, the transport function of the highway and the current and future traffic patterns.
- They are 12-hour surveys where people were placed at entrances and exits to the highway to see how much traffic used that route and how much of it was through traffic. This allows the road to be designed to respond to movement patterns in that area. The traffic numbers would be analysed and then translated into something meaningful to be presented at the next meeting.

- Figures on peak holiday traffic are available from RTA permanent counting station and today's survey is not about maximum traffic volumes, just typical patterns on an average day.
- The last 40 years of traffic figures will also be considered as part of the traffic study. It is anticipated that the Pacific Highway Upgrading Program has resulted in additional traffic movements along the coast and this will be considered in the growth predictions. Some traffic will be diverted from the New England Highway but it is not expected to be significant. The type of trucks being used has also changed, with smaller numbers of larger trucks (such as B-doubles) replacing higher numbers of semi-trailers.
- Information will be given to both the Sapphire to Woolgoolga and the Coffs Harbour CFGs about each project. Anyone wanting to be a member of the Coffs Harbour CFG needs to nominate now, however they might find being on two groups very difficult and time-consuming. We will bring the relevant issues of each section of the study area into the other section as some of the information will be critical to the other group.

## 5. KEY ISSUES

- Comments taken at public meetings showed there were some fundamental issues that needed to be addressed. These were what the community really wanted out of the new road and they need to be identified now so they can be dealt with in advance of the final planning. A CFG is now being formed in the Coffs Harbour section for these reasons.
- The meeting divided into groups of 6 to discuss the key issues and then present their main concerns to the meeting. Points needed to be concise and would be noted at the meeting and then presented to the project team.
- Key points recorded were:
  1. Ease of access
  2. Economic impact – tourism
  3. Environmental
  4. Safety
  5. Noise
  6. Visual impact
  7. Property/urban development
  8. Traffic efficiency
  9. Separating local and through traffic
  10. Effect on property values
  11. Access – pedestrians and bicycles
  12. Access points for the local population
  13. Impact on daily usage by construction of the highway or by-pass
  14. Micro economic impact
  15. Wildlife impact
  16. Zoo
  17. Bus bays for pick-ups
  18. Service roads
  19. Lighting – turn outs and turn ons
  20. Heritage issues – including Aboriginal
  21. Congestion – growth patterns of the community through time
  22. Lifestyle
  23. Agricultural land loss
  24. Future urban planning implications
  25. Advantages and disadvantages of possible highway relocation or upgrade
  26. Possibility of doing a minimal upgrade ie. doing nothing
  27. Rest areas and breakdown lanes

- 28. Adequate compensation for loss of properties – some people will miss out
- 29. Allowance for western expansion to avoid division
- 30. Access routes cutting through properties – compensation
- 31. Impact on resumption of properties along the highway for an upgrade – including access routes
- These issues would need to be consolidated further if they were to be the building blocks on which the future of the highway would depend. Project team had already taken on board many of these issues.

## 6. PROJECT OBJECTIVES

- Preliminary project objectives presented and discussion/comment invited from the group (see **Appendix A**)
- Following list of fundamental objectives evolved:
  - Maximise environmental benefits
  - Minimise adverse environmental impacts (natural and social)
  - Consider ESD principles
  - Incorporate best environmental practice
- List of key issues was scrutinised and matched up against the list of objectives to check that all issues were being addressed by the project objectives (see **Appendix B**)

## 7. CONSTRAINTS

- A series of detailed maps showing typical constraints in the area was presented to the meeting. Questions from the group were taken as they arose.

## 8. OTHER ISSUES

- Other issues which should be included at the next meeting:
  - The question of RSVP – agreed that if any members could not attend the meeting or meetings, Pramax Communications should be contacted direct.
  - Media releases – important to keep the community advised of what was happening on the project and what went on at CFGs. The local media has agreed to run a series to keep the community informed. Was pointed out the some people do not receive 'The Advocate' – would another local paper be able to carry the story?
  - Could also be some confusion about the two different focus groups and it was important that people were aware there would be different groups for the north and south of the Sapphire to Woolgoolga section and one for the Coffs Harbour section.
  - Important also for the community to know that work was progressing on the project.

## 9. NEXT CFG MEETING(S)

- Proposed agenda for next meeting outlined.
- Possible meeting dates were discussed. Agreed that it was too early to make definite date(s) at this stage.
- Membership of the CFGs needed to be defined before any more meetings could take place and the project team had to be available for each meeting.
- The dates would be set in the New Year and the meetings would probably be in early February and would start at 5.45pm.
- Members would be provided with a summary of the previous meetings so that everyone would be up to date on developments.

RTA/CW to prepare for next meeting

## 9. CLOSE OF MEETING

- Andrew Smith thanked group for attendance and closed the meeting at 8.45pm.

**Next Meeting:** February 2002 – date to be determined

## APPENDIX A

### Presentation notes – Tim Paterson, CONNELL WAGNER

#### 1. CONSTRAINTS

Geotechnical and soils  
Natural environment  
Property, land use and development  
Future land use  
Hydrology, flooding and drainage  
Heritage - Aboriginal and non-indigenous

#### 2. PROJECT OBJECTIVES

##### Environmental Outcomes

Maximise environmental benefits  
Minimise adverse environmental impacts (natural and social environment)  
Consider ESD principles  
Incorporate best environmental practice

##### Road Safety Outcomes

Reduce accident rates  
Ensure compatibility with adjacent sections of Highway  
Increase safe overtaking opportunities  
Eliminate vehicle / pedestrian conflict  
Control access  
Separate through and local traffic  
Predicted increase in traffic volumes

##### Cost Outcomes

Increase transport efficiency  
Reduce travel times  
Reduce freight transport costs  
Support economic development - tourism and agriculture  
Value for money

##### Standard of Road

Design speed  
Dual carriageway  
Improved alignment  
Controlled access to highway  
Maintain property access

## APPENDIX B

<b>KEY ISSUES</b>	<b>MATCH WITH PROJECT OBJECTIVES</b>
Ease of access	✓
Economic impact	✓
Environmental	✓
Safety	✓
Noise	✓
Visual amenity	✓
Property/urban development	✓
Traffic efficiency	✓
Separate local/through	✓
Property impact	✗
Pedestrian/cyclist access	✓
Number of access points	✓
Construction impacts – minimum time	✗
Microclimate impact (bananas)	✓
Wildlife	✓
Coffs Harbour Zoo	✓
School bus – bus pickup bay	✓
Serving needs of local community – emergency vehicles	✓
Lighting – access points	✗
Aboriginal heritage	✗
Tourism impacts	✓
Congestion → population growth	✓
Lifestyle	✓
Loss of agricultural land	✗
Future urban/regional Planning implications	✓
Positive/Negative aspects of possible relocation/upgrade	
Doing minimal option	✓
Rest area/breakdown lanes	✓
Adequate compensation/acquisition	
Allowance for western expansion – avoid community severance	✗
Property impacts from upgrade existing alignment	✓