

Meeting Notes

Project:	Sapphire to Woolgoolga Upgrade Project	Reference:	1093.40.GE
Location:	Woolgoolga Community Hall, Boundary Street, Woolgoolga	Date:	20 March 2002

Present: Apology: Copy: Name:

NORTHERN CFG (Woolgoolga Area)			
✓			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
PROJECT TEAM			
✓			Wes Stevenson RTA
	✓		Bob Higgins RTA
		✓	Jill Christy RTA
	✓		René Burkart RTA
✓			Tim Paterson Connell Wagner

✓			Rosemary Russell	Connell Wagner
		✓	Bruce Penman	Connell Wagner
✓			Barry Hancock	Connell Wagner
✓			Andrew Smith	Pramax Communications
	✓		Bill Wood	Coffs Harbour City Council
	✓		Rick Bennell	Coffs Harbour City Council
	✓		George Stulle	Coffs Harbour City Council
	✓		Malcolm Imrie	PlanningNSW
	✓		John Finlay	PlanningNSW
	✓		Jo Gardner	PlanningNSW
Recorded By: Pramax Communications				Total Pages: 6
Subject: Community Focus Group Meeting No 4 (Woolgoolga area)				

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1. INTRODUCTION

Meeting opened at 5.55pm. Andrew Smith welcomed everyone to the meeting. The purpose of this meeting is to look at some corridor options. Would try to spend a shorter amount of time on delivery of presentations and maximum amount of time for discussion about corridor options.

It was noted that *The Advertiser* newspaper on Monday stated that Option B was requested by the CFG. This was refuted by the group. Andrew pointed out that the group must be aware that articles in the newspaper are not always accurate and do not necessarily reflect the information being discussed in CFG meetings. This highlights the need for all CFG members to be careful regarding any information releases.

2. NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The notes of the meeting were accepted with the following amendments:

- Attendance sheet inaccurate to be checked.

Steve Moody asked for the following amendments:

- Page 5, Under 4,000 series. Fourth bullet point – change “some” to “many” – CFG members felt that the map did not go far enough west
- Page 6, first bullet point. Under 2,000 series “some” to be changed to “most”
- Page 6, sixth bullet point. Clarify that the “Far West” corridor Tim Paterson was talking about was the Orara Valley corridor.
- Also specifically raised the issue of the need to look at life of development plans. Highway plan for 20 years not in sync with Council's urban strategy plans. Should be urging for longer-term plan – in 30 years time they will run out of space with urban development. Tim Paterson replied that CHCC traffic modelling goes to 2021.
- Also raised authenticity and accuracy of land use. There are significant areas west of the highway showing the zoning to be Rural 1(a) where they are actually rural living. It looks like the corridors go through agricultural land when they are actually going

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through 5 - 10 acre homes. Tim Paterson responded that the corridors were only candidate options at present and there had been no evaluation yet.

3. MATTERS ARISING

- Brief discussion about confidentiality of some of the information tabled at these meetings.
- Working papers were displayed and the CFG invited to look at them. These are available to view at Toormina and Woolgoolga Libraries, Coffs Harbour Council and the RTA. These papers will be on the Internet site tomorrow. (These papers mainly relate to the Coffs Harbour bypass) CFG to contact Andrew Smith with any requests for information from the working papers.
- There are public forums being run next week where people can come along and find out more about the project. There is no official presentation but there will be four of the project team at each meeting to answer questions.
- There is currently a mail-out to all affected property owners along the highway within a buffer of about 250 metres around each corridor. This equates to approximately 3,000 brochures.
- Greg Benson tabled for the RTA a response to a community questionnaire that he put out.

4. CORRIDOR ANNOUNCEMENT

- Tim Paterson showed an overhead in response to a request from the last meeting regarding information relating to statutory framework issues. Attach overhead: Statutory Framework for Major Infrastructure Projects in NSW.
- Discussion regarding building through the State Forest. There were not any ongoing costs that the project team is aware of. There are certainly a whole range of compensatory and approval processes to go through. There is a formal procedure to be followed and preferably it is done by agreement. Even if State Forests approves of a corridor through forestry land, an Act of Parliament is required to go ahead. RTA – if we show that it is the best route and the Minister agrees, we all work for the same Government and the different Ministers try to come to an agreement. It is not impossible. For example, Parramatta Train Link got approval to go through Lane Cove National Park.
- The Land Acquisition Act does not apply to the State Forest. When acquiring public property it is done by negotiation and generally preferred that an agreement is reached. If not, there is a process for resumption of the land. RTA speaker on land acquisition process to come to next CFG meeting.
- Greg Benson made a request for information on Land Acquisition.

Coffs Harbour Bypass

- Brochure outcomes: The Inner bypass for Coffs Harbour has been adopted as the only potentially viable option for a long-term future bypass. Project team now looking at specific options within that corridor and then comparing them with opportunities to upgrade the existing highway.
- Why was that bypass chosen for Coffs? Project team – there were many investigations and factors taken into consideration from biodiversity, economics, social, property, engineering, travel time safety and tourism etc; there are some very tangible benefits that can be measured.
- One CFG member stated that they thought it was a band-aid bypass around Coffs, as it comes back on to the existing highway where you will come back to a bottle neck. Project team pointed out that it went back on at Korora where it is a dual carriageway already, which will be sufficient for a long time, whereas at Sapphire to Woolgoolga the highway is not up to standard and needs upgrading. The plan for Woolgoolga is for a

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bypass or dual carriageway upgrade of the existing highway that will last for well over 20 years.

- Project team - the chosen corridor is the lowest cost option with the highest cost benefits and the higher traffic flow, whereas the western options were higher cost with no traffic benefits.
- CFG – inner route constricts more development and makes the place unattractive - ruining a whole city. Are population changes taken into consideration when doing studies?
- Project team - All changes to the highway will have some impacts on properties and towns. Coffs Harbour Council has done predictions of what population numbers and movements will be in 20 years time. For the Coffs Harbour bypass, we are looking at the feasibility of a corridor – not to build today but in 20 years time plus. This means we are making predictions for 2050. It is a big ask to say what the population of Coffs Harbour is going to be doing then.

Sapphire to Woolgoolga

- The long-term plan for Sapphire to Moonee is the existing highway corridor. There we have to develop a concept design for that part of the highway including interchanges and access roads etc.
- There will need to be an overlap of communication between the Sapphire/Moonee and Woolgoolga CFGs. Possibly we will have some combined meetings.

5. FORTHCOMING ACTIVITIES/INVESTIGATIONS

- Tim Paterson ran through some overheads – Key Influences; Suggested Assessment Criteria; Main Studies. Attach overheads to minutes.
- Technical studies will be starting soon. A range of investigations which will include drilling/boring narrow holes to gauge water tables, use of backhoes etc.
- CFG - should the public be made aware of teams being around doing studies. Do owners have a choice of whether tests are done on their property?
- Yes, owners do have a choice and if there is a problem, there is usually a way around it by using another property. Geotech people endeavor to conduct all investigations on public roads or reserves. Chances are private properties will largely be rural blocks. But all properties are tidied up and landscaping replaced.
- Connell Wagner do these investigations every day, they are very low impact and residents who may be affected will be contacted in advance.
- CFG - is it just economics that governs which bypass is chosen or are public desires taken into consideration? It feels like we are going against public desires and just basing decisions on economics.
- Tim Paterson – it is not just a dollar consideration, there are many issues and it varies from place to place.
- Quantm program was used to generate the spaghetti lines on maps shown at the last meeting and together with all the other information gathered at that meeting, we came up with the corridors shown here tonight.
- It is important for the public to understand that these are very wide corridors with many choices of roads in them, they are not actually the roads.
- There is not typical distance for a bypass from the town centre. It varies considerably from town to town.
- Part of the role of the CFG is to help the project team by giving them information regarding access to the highway.

6. OTHER ISSUES

- The group spent time looking at maps and providing comments about the corridor options.
- There was some debate as to the viability of Option C with respect to ESD principles. Some CFG members felt that this option would result in huge impacts and adversely affect the community.
- A number of other comments were taken from the group. (see **Appendix**)

7. NEXT MEETING

RTA Property Manager, Mr Martin Howard, will address the next meeting of the Woolgoolga Community Focus Group.

8. CLOSE OF MEETING

Meeting closed at 8.30pm.

Next Meeting: Wednesday 22 May 2002

APPENDIX

Issues taken from the floor

CFG No.4 – WOOLGOOLGA GROUP

Woolgoolga Community Hall, Woolgoolga

20 MARCH 2002

1. Impact on tourism
2. Noise from inner corridors
→ what levels?
3. Outer corridor impacts on fewer properties
4. Will outer corridor be used sufficiently to justify it?
5. Farms dams → blue
6. Avoid division of city
7. Will blue and red corridors meet ESD principles?
8. Bucca → Newmans (existing highway) → 65 drives and access roads
→ how will this be resolved?
9. Red corridor- Impact on Rural Fire Station / farm dams / noise
10. Blue corridor – Swimming centre affected
11. Woolgoolga Creek flora reserve access affected → impact on tourism
12. Blue corridor – Topography → ridges
13. Cost benefit → inner or far western may offer better results
14. Real estate growth (boom) in and around Woolgoolga → needs to be considered
15. Natural forest boundaries limit development → both blue and red corridors may limit development already planned or potential growth areas
16. Devaluation of impacted properties in red/blue corridors
17. Varied aspirations for lifestyle requirements