

Meeting statement

The Berry bypass community review group held its fourth discussion on 13 October 2011.

Member for Kiama Gareth Ward attended the meeting and clarified the goal of the NSW Government and the purpose of the group. He thanked the group for their commitment to making sure the RTA delivers the best Berry bypass possible. He affirmed that he was committed to building the bypass along the preferred route to the north of town. He reminded the group that there would be impacts from the bypass, and this group's aim is to mitigate these as best we can.

It was agreed the group was facing several key project problems:

- the amenity of North Street.
- flooding and management along the alignment north of North Street.
- the visual impact and amenity of the highway at Woodhill Mountain Road.
- the current design and aesthetics of the Berry Bridge.
- noise management and resident impacts, possible shadowing impacts from the noise walls and how to manage noise from bridge deck joints for which we had actions to investigate, an understanding of some consequences and some of the mitigation measures.

The group considered each problem area and the RTA presented on the actions requested from previous discussions.

Problem 1: The amenity of North Street.

The RTA at the suggestion of members of the group, has begun exploring the design of a lowered highway where it runs north of North Street. This would have implications during flood times and a mitigation measure would be to reroute Town Creek. The lowering of the highway would decrease the height of the noise walls on the southern side of the highway.

This was considered a viable option and further investigations will be made.

The RTA investigated moving the alignment further to the north on the other side of Bundewallah Creek. This design would require the construction of bridge or viaduct structures to cross over the Bundewallah Creek floodplain. It would create more property severance issues on rural properties. The rough strategic cost estimate is \$130 million over the current cost of \$170 million

(totalling \$300 million). This option around the north of Berry is not considered economically viable.

Problem 2: Flooding and management along the alignment north of North Street.

The RTA confirmed ongoing discussions with Shoalhaven City Council about flood mitigation and management in this area. Council had attended a site visit with group members on 28 September. The rerouting of Town Creek was discussed and the suggestion to move the swale through farming property. This is considered a viable alternative with more investigations needed. Discussions with Council and property owners will be ongoing.

Problem 3: The visual impact and amenity of the highway at Woodhill Mountain Road.

The RTA has been working with members of the group on design alternatives to reduce the visual impact and amenity of the highway at Woodhill Mountain Road.

To date these have examined how to lower the bridge with a deeper cutting into the ridge.

One option could lower the height of the bridge by about 10 metres at the eastern end. The consequences would be a large environmental impact with the cutting into the mountain and managing the 540,000m³ of surplus soil. How to resolve the excess soil was debated, with some to be used on the proposed adjacent Bomaderry to Berry upgrade. The RTA agreed more detail was required and this needed to be looked at harder. There was also discussion around how to reduce the amount of spoil excavated.

The strategic cost estimate for this option is \$250million, 80 million over the current cost of \$170 million for this section. This is mostly due to the expenses associated with the spoil.

Ideas on how to reduce the cost will continue to be discussed and investigated. The RTA will:

- work closely with community members on further options in this area.
- provide the group with more detail on cost assumptions.

- list and investigate management options for excess spoil.

Problem 4: The current design and aesthetics of the Berry Bridge.

The bridge proportions and how an urban design approach could improve the proposed structures was briefly discussed. It was agreed that the group was not ready for this detail and that urban design in relation to the bridge be parked for a future discussion.

Problem 5, 6 & 7: Noise management and resident impacts, possible shadowing impacts from the noise walls and how to manage noise from bridge deck joints.

The group viewed a 3D animation showing the lowered highway and the shadowing that would be generated over the shortest day in winter. Shadows from the proposed noise wall began to impact some properties on North St about 15 minutes before the sun dipped below the escarpment.

An action has been to examine the technology behind:

- bridge deck joints and
- the type of road surface to assess how noise can be reduced.

The RTA committed to addressing these items in the detailed design with the aim of reducing noise.

Study area

The group discussed financial feasibility of options. The group largely accepted the bypass needs to be economically viable and understood that the project competes on a state wide level for funding. Social impacts, environmental impacts and financial feasibility are often a trade off.

The group at large advocated for a focus on the current alignment and the design options available generally along and in the vicinity of this alignment. This was noted by the local member. Future meetings will work to improve design/alignment.

This will involve continuing with two discussions:

- a focus on the bridge to improve its aesthetics and design. The aim to lower the bridge and reduce its impacts has not yet been achieved.

- a focus on reducing the impact of the highway on the north Berry precinct and examining appropriate landscape and urban designs for this newly created space.

Meeting notes and the presentations are on the community review group documents page on RTA website www.rta.nsw.gov.au/fbb

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Placed by the RTA on behalf of the community review group

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