

25 JULY 2012

Foxground and Berry bypass – Kangaroo Valley Road interchange and the Victoria Street precinct

The Kangaroo Valley Road interchange and the Victoria Street precinct working group held its fifth meeting on Wednesday 25 July 2012 at the Berry Agricultural Pavilion.

Attendees:

Will Armitage, resident
Lawrie Cowell, resident
Leone Winlaw, resident
Angela Urquhart, resident
Carol Hampson, resident
Frank Dickinson, resident
Case Graap, resident
Tom Bevan, resident
Nancy Bevan, resident
Lucie Stanford, resident
Nick Birbas, resident
Therese Blunn, resident
Col Bowley, resident
David Brawn, resident
Robyn Bramley, resident
Janette Carter, resident
Jenny Clapham, resident
Bob Croker, resident
John Cullity, resident
Bryan Fishpool, Office of Gareth Ward
Megan Fitt, resident
Rick Gainford, resident
Councillor Andrew Guile, Deputy Mayor
Gareth Ward, Local Member for Kiama
Peter Kerr, resident
Trish Nicholson, resident
David Newhouse, Newhouse & Arnold solicitors (Bondi Junction)
Gwen Roberts, resident
Philip Thorniley, resident
Scott Wells, Shoalhaven City Council
Lucy Cole-Edelstein, Straight Talk Facilitator
Adam Berry, RMS Project Development Manager
Ron de Rooy, RMS Senior Project Manager
Julian Watson, RMS Environmental Manager

Carla Brookes, RMS Project Communications
Annette Beedles, RMS Graduate Engineer
Graeme Birch RMS Senior Design Manager (Roads)
Jon Williamson, AECOM Project Manager
Stuart Dalziel, AECOM Transport Planning
David Bohm, AECOM Transport Planning

Summary – Purpose of the meeting

Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) convened a working group of registered community members to recap the issues raised by the working group in the first meeting and to update the group on the Kangaroo Valley Road interchange and the Victoria Street precinct.

The session was opened and facilitated by Lucy Cole-Edelstein of Straight Talk.

Adam Berry, RMS Project Development Manager, reviewed the issues raised from the first working group meeting held on 8 March 2012 and the actions taken since then.

Adam Berry advised that the Minister for Roads and Ports, as part of the north and south bypass costing review had not endorsed the relocation of Kangaroo Valley Road interchange arrangement further south of Berry. The benefits of moving half or all of the interchange south of Berry were not considered to outweigh the associated impacts and additional cost of \$15.8 million (\$13.8 million net).

The arrangement at Kangaroo Valley Road interchange developed from a working group member's suggestion to take the ramp under the bridge and onto Kangaroo Valley Road has been incorporated into the concept design. This arrangement achieves positive benefits which were considered to outweigh the associated impacts and additional cost of \$5.2 million (\$3.2 million net).

These benefits include:

- Huntingdale Park Road remains as is, meaning two residences on Kangaroo Valley Road remain intact.
- The noise wall that would have effectively been built on top of the retaining wall facing the houses on Huntingdale Park Road is now much lower, down at the highway level.
- The Kangaroo Valley Road bridge deck is wider than originally planned and includes pedestrian walkways on both sides.
- The two Kangaroo Valley Road roundabouts have pedestrian facilities on seven of eight legs.
- The potential impacts on Mark Radium Park are minimised.
- This arrangement provides a connected green arc from Mark Radium Park to Berry sports fields.

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Mr Berry noted that a draft urban design report had been emailed to the members of the working group and hard copies were also available for the working group's review and input by Friday 3 August.

Regarding the closure of Victoria Street, Mr Berry reiterated his statement from the 16 May 2012 working group meeting that, based on the requirements of the Department of Planning and Infrastructure (DoPI) for the environmental assessment, RMS had to show Victoria Street as opened or closed in the concept design. A summary of the RMS decision for the Victoria Street issue was provided to the workshop participants. This summary compared different options against the project objectives and relevant Director General's Requirements. It was discussed that this summary may also form a useful basis for public comment during the submissions period.

Mr Berry acknowledged that there are strong opinions and feelings within the community in favour of both opening and closing Victoria Street. He said RMS would be able to deliver either option and the decision would ultimately be determined by DoPI, taking into account community submissions received during the display of the environmental assessment.

An environmental assessment flow chart showing the process was handed out to the meeting attendees. RMS is planning to submit the environmental assessment to DoPI by September/October 2012 for an adequacy review followed by a public display in November/December 2012. Further refinements would then be considered based on submissions and community feedback before approval is sought from the Minister of Planning next year.

The following is a summary of the discussions held at the working group, responses and actions agreed to by RMS.

Discussion	Response / action
<p>Residents along Croziers Road</p> <p>A working group member asked if RMS had any representation from residents along Croziers Road, a large catchment area, about their access going south and had this been taken into consideration in evaluating the location of the Kangaroo Valley Road interchange.</p> <p>He also asked if moving the interchange further south would better facilitate southbound Crozier Road residents' access including emergency doctors who are on call and who will have to drive all the way to Berry to go south to get to the hospital.</p>	<p>Response: No, this was not considered as a factor in the costing of moving the interchange further south.</p> <p>Post meeting note: Residents from Croziers Road would only need to travel the shorter distance to the u-turn facility at Mullers Lane to travel south.</p>

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<p>Review of last working group meeting minutes</p> <p>A working group member asked when the minutes from the last meeting would be reviewed as they suggested there were errors in meeting notes. Specifically, the notes did not accurately reflect the discussion around the opening /closure of Victoria Street.</p> <p>He stated that the majority of people at the last working group agreed that Victoria Street should not be closed. The understanding was that RMS would take advice from community and Council regarding the opening/closure of Victoria Street.</p>	<p>RMS handed out notes from the last working group meeting.</p> <p>Response: Adam Berry explained that due to the requirements of DoPI, RMS had to show Victoria Street as opened or closed in the concept design for the purposes of the environmental assessment.</p> <p>RMS' intent has and continues to be to progress the environmental assessment for review by DoPI. The environmental assessment process will provide the community and Council with the opportunity to provide feedback on Victoria Street to DoPI via submissions.</p> <p>The infrastructure costs are very similar and RMS will ensure that either option can be delivered. The environmental assessment process is the mechanism for the community and Council to voice their concerns and issues and for an outcome to be determined.</p>
<p>Opening/closure of Victoria Street</p> <p>A working group member questioned why RMS did not show Victoria Street as remaining open in the concept design.</p>	<p>Meeting notes from RMS workshop conducted on 25 May 2012 were handed out to the working group.</p> <p>Response: Adam Berry responded that DoPI would not accept three options for an intersection in the environmental assessment and that the proposal had to show one option.</p> <p>RMS had heard strong views regarding Victoria Street from the working group and the community and wanted a consistent and rigorous assessment to guide the choice for the environmental assessment.</p> <p>On 25 May 2012 a structured workshop was held by RMS and three possible options for Victoria Street were examined:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Closing Victoria Street.• Keeping two-way access between Queen and Victoria streets.• Providing one-way southbound access between Queen and Victoria streets. <p>The three options were each rated against seventeen criteria taken from the Foxground and Berry bypass project objectives and relevant NSW Department of Planning and Infrastructure Director General's Requirements for the project. This is the criteria against which the Department of Planning will consider the proposal.</p>

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	<p>The rankings for the three options were close, with the closure of Victoria Street scoring marginally higher. This outcome is reflected in the concept design which was adjusted and the closure incorporated into the environmental assessment.</p> <p>Mr Berry noted that the scores for the three options were very close and the ratings very subjective. He said that different opinions will also result in different scores; weighting the criteria will result in different outcomes.</p> <p>The decision on opening/closing Victoria Street will ultimately be decided by DoPI with community and Council input via submissions during the display of the environmental assessment, not RMS. RMS is committed to delivering whatever option the DoPI determines.</p>
<p>An attendee stated that there is no confidence that the closing of Victoria Street is not the preferred RMS option. If an option had to be put into the design the logical assumption is that it should be the current arrangement i.e. showing Victoria Street open.</p> <p>A working group member said that they do not accept that the process is fair and RMS had created a division within the community by showing the closure of Victoria Street in the concept design.</p>	<p>Response: Adam Berry responded that the workshop was a documented process, so that RMS could determine which option for Victoria Street would be put forward to DoPI.</p> <p>He reiterated that the outcome, based on the scores, was very narrow. This process was conducted with no predetermined outcome but the process resulted in a slightly better score for the closure of Victoria Street.</p>
<p>Ms Cole-Edelstein commented that there was a body of support in the meeting for keeping Victoria Street open, and given the recent history of the project and the difficulties the community has gone through, could RMS help restore the community's confidence by making the decision to show Victoria Street open in the environmental assessment concept design?</p>	<p>Response: Mr Berry responded that if the concept design was changed to show Victoria Street open there would be implications for the time frame of delivering the environmental assessment as noise studies and traffic assessments would have to be redone.</p> <p>Julian Watson said that RMS was working hard to get the environmental assessment on display this calendar year. The proposal showing the closure of Victoria Street has been approved by RMS and the Minister for Roads and Ports as the proposal that would go forward for the environmental assessment.</p>
<p>Ms Cole-Edelstein commented that there was a sense of distrust being voiced and asked how RMS could provide the community with confidence in the process?</p>	<p>Mr Berry said that RMS had tried to demonstrate the transparency of the decision by giving the working group the internal record of the decision making process.</p>

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<p>A community member said that if it is decided after the environmental assessment display to leave Victoria Street open then RMS would still have to do additional work so why not change the concept design now to show Victoria Street open?</p>	<p>Response: Mr Berry replied that to change the Victoria Street option now would create a delay in the environmental assessment as additional noise and traffic studies would have to be undertaken.</p> <p>There is time allocated in the first half of next year to make changes to the design and the project based on the submissions and conditions of project approval by DoPI.</p>
<p>A member of the working group stated that at previous meetings the working group had been told that the Council and community will decide whether to open or close Victoria Street. RMS has pre-empted the process. RMS has caused enormous division within the community and now made it worse. RMS needs to reverse their decision and change the concept design to show Victoria Street open.</p> <p>Ms Cole-Edelstein summarised the discussion and asked RMS if they could change the concept design for the purposes of the environmental assessment and show Victoria Street open.</p> <p>Also, if that can be done, given that not all the community wants Victoria Street open, how will that be managed with the larger community?</p>	<p>Action: RMS will internally discuss the implications of changing the concept design to show Victoria Street open and will provide an answer to the working group by Friday 27 July.</p> <p><i>Post meeting note: An email was sent to the working group on Friday 27 July 2012 explaining that the RMS project team was seeking advice from various internal and external stakeholders and analysing the potential timeframe impacts of changing the design back to keeping Victoria Street open for the purposes of the environmental assessment.</i></p> <p><i>The RMS project team advises that to further change the concept design at this stage would potentially result in a three month delay to the display of the environmental assessment. The delays would be mostly due to the required update to the design plans and impact specialist reports such as traffic, noise, flora and fauna. Also community consultation would need to be done to include a decision process for the three Victoria Street design options.</i></p> <p><i>The RMS project team have advised DoPI of the community interest and close technical nature of the Victoria Street closure issue.</i></p>
<p>A member of the working group said that the traffic assessments presented at the Berry Alliance community forum showed that the total closure of Victoria Street will triple traffic going through Edward Street and George streets. For partial closure, traffic would double. The “improved road safety” rankings were questioned and Mr Berry was asked if this was in fact “improved road safety”.</p>	<p>Response: Mr Berry responded that the minutes had been provided to everyone for transparency and for the working group to understand the basis for the rankings for the closure versus non-closure of Victoria Street. They also provide the community with necessary information to raise questions or concerns in the submission process in the language and criteria that DoPI will use in assessing submissions</p> <p>RMS has chosen an option (the closure of Victoria</p>

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	<p>Street) in order to progress the environmental assessment process. RMS is not wedded to this option and understands that many community members are concerned about this issue and opposed to the closing of Victoria Street.</p>
<p>A meeting member stated that misrepresentations were made to the community regarding Council's position on Victoria Street.</p>	<p>Response: Mr Berry responded that, from memory, when the access options were displayed in 2008 the options showed the cul de sac of Victoria Street and two options that left Victoria Street open.</p> <p><i>Post meeting correction: All the southern interchange options displayed in October 2008 showed a cul de sac at the western end of Victoria Street.</i></p> <p>As a result of the value management workshop held in 2009 the closure of Victoria Street was not selected.</p> <p><i>Post meeting correction: The Access Value Management Workshop Report, February 2009 recommended further detailed investigation and design for option B8 which showed a single lane on-load ramp from Queen Street with Victoria Street closed.</i></p> <p><i>One conclusion was 'The impact on Mark Radium Park remains a sensitive issue'.</i></p> <p><i>A suggestion for further investigation was 'Modifications to B8 that addresses Mark Radium Park impacts (eg commence the southbound on-load ramp further to the south than presently shown).</i></p> <p><i>Addendum 2 (June 2009) to the Preferred Option Report October 2008, shows Victoria Street open to two-way traffic, a one-way connection from Queen Street and the on-load ramp commencing south of Victoria Street as part of the Berry Preferred Access Arrangement.</i></p> <p><i>Clause 3.2.2 of the report states 'The southbound on-ramp B8 was shifted to the south of Victoria Street with a one-lane connection from Queen Street. This achieved the aim of minimising direct impact on Mark Radium Park and allowed access to the Park to be retained via Queen Street.'</i></p>

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	<p>The Council and RMS are always in conversation about the network and Council's change of position does not affect (ie is not binding on) RMS.</p>
<p>Back in January there was a meeting with RMS representatives and a number of residents regarding Victoria Street. Not all the community knew about this meeting. How was it called?</p>	<p>Response: When RMS calls a community meeting it is advertised to the whole community. If members of the community request a meeting then RMS is happy to meet with them.</p> <p>When members of the community meet with RMS their views are not taken as representing the entire community. RMS wants to hear all opinions and is always available to meet with members of the community.</p>
<p>A member of the working group stated that the forum to discuss Victoria Street organised by Berry Alliance, and which RMS agreed to attend, was held on 14 June. The meeting notes RMS handed out this evening with the decision to close Victoria Street are dated 23 May and announced 12 June or 13 June. Was it coincidental that the announcement was made two days before the forum?</p>	<p>Response: Ron de Rooy responded that this information was needed for the northern and southern bypass announcement. Also, RMS was not expecting the community forum to provide RMS with a direction on the opening/closure of Victoria Street, as clearly there was not agreement within the community. RMS also had to keep the process moving forward.</p> <p>There was a volume of work to be done at that time and it may have been possible to make the announcement earlier. The timing of the announcement was purely coincidental.</p>
<p>Why were the RMS meeting notes from the 23 May not provided to the working group members prior to tonight so that attendees could come prepared to comment on them?</p>	<p>Response: RMS provided the meeting notes so that the community has information to help them in their submissions on Victoria Street in the terms that DoPI will use when they consider the environmental assessment.</p>
<p>Scott Wells from Shoalhaven Council stated that one of the reasons Council supported the proposal to keep Victoria Street open is because the two-way proposal has least impacts on Mark Radium Park. He stated that he could not understand why the RMS meeting notes 23 May say that the one-way option would have the least impacts on the Park.</p>	<p>Response: RMS noted that under the RMS design standards one-way shows a lower impact to the footprint of the Park than two-way.</p> <p>Council's current formal position does not indicate a preference for any access design related to Victoria Street and Mark Radium Park.</p>
<p>An attendee asked if the working group could convey their comments by early next week on the scores provided in RMS' meeting notes for RMS to take into consideration.</p>	<p>Response: The environmental assessment will contain a separate chapter on community consultation and it will include the strong community views on the Victoria Street issue.</p> <p>Once the environmental assessment is submitted and displayed the community can provide their</p>

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	submissions on Victoria Street to DoPI
<p>Kangaroo Valley Road interchange</p> <p>Will there be noise barriers near the pond in Mark Radium Park?</p>	<p>Response: No, as the Park acts as a buffer for noise for houses near the Park.</p>
<p>If a two-way street remains between the Queen Street roundabout and Victoria Street, would that be the current road?</p>	<p>Response: No but it would be close to the position of the current road. It would impact slightly on Mark Radium Park, approximately 3.5 metres.</p> <p>The options RMS looked at were two-way or one-way and still have Victoria Street open with a left-in, left-out arrangement. This keeps the impact to one lane versus two lanes.</p>
<p>In terms of the on-ramp, what are the speed limits?</p>	<p>Response: The speed near the Park would be 50 km/h to 80 km/h and then 100 km/h south of Victoria Street</p>
<p>Will the on-ramp be ascending, descending or flat?</p>	<p>Response: It will be descending coming off the bridge at Kangaroo Valley Road down past the Park, and at grade level around Victoria Street.</p>
<p>Why is the on-ramp less than the standard size, for example, the size of the Kiama off-ramps?</p>	<p>Response: The Kiama ramps have been designed to RMS standards. They are wider than usual to accommodate the 'swept path' of vehicles and to provide adequate sight distance where tight radius curves have been included.</p> <p>All the ramps for this project will be designed to Austroads standards.</p>
<p>Why can't the on-ramp start south of Victoria Street?</p>	<p>Response: The ramp must fit into the design of the upgraded highway.</p>
<p>Where does Victoria Street become a local street and not part of the highway?</p>	<p>Response: Should a link between Queen and Victoria streets be constructed, the entrance to Victoria Street will be built to Austroads standards and for convenience and ease of maintenance may be maintained as an asset by RMS. This would be determined during any handover process.</p>
<p>Mark Radium Park</p> <p>A request was made by a working group member for a copy of the drawing for Mark Radium Park. It was noted that the Park is important to the community. Memorial trees are planted there for the founder of</p>	<p>Response: Mr Berry responded that there is no impact on the arboretum. About a dozen smaller trees would be impacted.</p>

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<p>Landcare. RMS was asked how much of the Park will be impacted, particularly around by the arboretum and by the duck pond?</p>	
<p>RMS was asked if there will there be a fence between the on-ramp and the Park.</p>	<p>Response: Yes, there will be fencing.</p>
<p>There was discussion around the width of the one-way and two-way on-ramps southbound from the Kangaroo Valley Road roundabout.</p>	<p>Response: The one-way ramp would have approximately the same footprint as the current road and would be approximately 5.5 metres wide. The two-way arrangement would be approximately 8 metres wide – 3 metres in each direction plus a 2 metre shoulder either side.</p>
<p>In order to help the community make informed decisions, can RMS prepare designs to show visual representations of the project impacts including the three options for the closure of Victoria Street?</p>	<p>Response: Yes, these will be available as part of the public display of the environmental assessment. Various members of the project team will also be available to discuss these with the community. RMS also agreed to make them available now to assist community members in the preparation of submissions for the environmental assessment process.</p>
<p>Future working group meetings RMS was asked when the next working group meeting would be held to further discuss the Kangaroo Valley Road interchange and, in particular, the opening/closure of Victoria Street.</p>	<p>Response: RMS has no intention at this time to reconvene this working group, this will be the last working group meeting. RMS will continue to progress the environmental assessment so it can be submitted to the Department of Planning and Infrastructure for adequacy and then go on public display later this year.</p>
<p>RMS was asked what was driving the timing for submission to DoPI and the subsequent public display?</p>	<p>Response: The local member Gareth Ward responded that the NSW Government made an election commitment of \$500 million for the upgrade of the Princes Highway between Gerringong and Bomaderry. The first stage, the construction of the Gerringong upgrade, would cost \$310 million. The remainder of the funds would go to stage two. There is a commitment to commence stage two by the end of this term of Parliament however, the environmental assessment needs to be completed to accomplish this. This community will still be able to provide comments on the project via submissions through the environmental assessment. RMS noted that in order to meet the Government's</p>

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	timelines a tight schedule must be followed.
Mr Ward was asked about the construction funding for the Foxground and Berry bypass.	Response: Mr Ward said that \$620 million would be required for construction and that the commitment had not yet been made for these funds. However, he had made a commitment to the community to get the Princes Highway upgrade completed.
Southern relocation of Kangaroo Valley Road interchange RMS was asked the status of the southern relocation of the Kangaroo Valley interchange.	Response: Adam Berry advised that the Minister for Roads and Ports, as part of the north and south bypass costing review, had not endorsed the relocation of Kangaroo Valley Road interchange arrangement further south of Berry. The benefits of moving half or all of the interchange south of Berry were not considered to outweigh the associated impacts and additional cost. This decision is included in the Minister for Roads and Ports media release.
RMS was asked about the impacts on the local roads, noise and traffic including George Street.	Response: The noise and traffic assessments have been completed and will be included in the environmental assessment.