

14 APRIL 2012

Foxground and Berry bypass – North Street precinct working group

The North Street precinct working group held its third meeting on Monday 14 May 2012 at the Berry School of Arts.

Attendees:

Yolande Buchan, resident
Jenny Clapham, resident
Rick Gainford, resident
Nick Nicholls, resident
Sally Nicholls, resident
Gwen Roberts, resident
Pat Stone, resident
Lucy Cole-Edelstein, Straight Talk Facilitator
Adam Berry, RMS Project Development Manager
Ron de Rooy, RMS Project Manager
Julian Watson, RMS Environmental Manager
Carla Brookes, RMS Project Communications
Annette Beedles, RMS Graduate Engineer
Angela Malpass, AECOM Community Consultant
Claudia La Pegna, AECOM Graduate Community Consultant
David Appleby, Conybeare Morrison Urban Designer

Summary – Purpose of the meeting

Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) convened a working group of registered community members to review urban design and community issues for the North Street precinct.

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

Adam Berry, RMS Project Development Manager presented a summary of the actions from the previous meeting, with outcomes to be discussed and agreed during this working group meeting. Mr. Berry reminded the group of the issues which were raised in the *Berry bypass alignment issues report, January 2012* and asked the group to discuss the way forward.

A copy of the *Berry bypass urban design strategy – North Street precinct, draft concept design summary report (80% issue)* was handed to the working group for review and comment. RMS has requested community feedback on this document by **Friday 25 May 2012**.

Rick Gainford spoke to the working group on behalf of the Berry Alliance. Mr. Gainford advised no matter what decision was made on the bypass, north or south, the Berry Alliance and Better Options for Berry (BOBs) committee will continue to offer ongoing advice and support to community members. The Berry Alliance / BOBs are committed to a fair and transparent process which is ethical. Mr. Gainford advised the Berry Alliance has had some concerns recently in the way RMS process was heading, but recognises the success of some review processes. If at the end of the process the community believes that the process was fair, open and there was integrity in it, whatever decision is made the community needs to come back together and respect other people’s points of view.

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

Discussion	Response / action
<p>Vertical alignment near North Street</p> <p><i>RMS will include a review of lowering the vertical alignment of the highway further as part of the conditions of contract for the detail design, noting that RMS current view is that the concept design is already carrying a high level of technical risk and such a lowering may or may not be feasible.</i></p> <p>Adam Berry confirmed that RMS was committed to reviewing the lowering of the vertical alignment of the highway further in the detail design.</p>	<p>RMS will include a review of lowering the vertical alignment of the highway along North Street as part of the conditions of contract for the detail design.</p>
<p>Pedestrian and cyclist connectivity over the highway to North Street</p> <p>Adam Berry confirmed that a pedestrian bridge was not currently part of RMS’s proposal, however for the purpose of the suggested southern bypass cost review RMS will include the costing of a pedestrian bridge as a provisional item for the preferred northern alignment in the Technical Investigation Report.</p> <p>A working group member asked RMS to note that the community are very strongly in favour of a pedestrian bridge and keeping the pedestrian connectivity along North Street.</p> <p>Adam Berry advised that RMS has received feedback to the contrary, with some community members opposed to a pedestrian bridge due to the visual impact.</p>	<p>Action: RMS to include the cost of a pedestrian bridge across North Street as a provisional item for the preferred northern alignment in the Technical Investigation Report.</p>

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A working group member asked RMS to clarify how this feedback was received.

Adam Berry advised that feedback has been received through various RMS lines of communication, and not necessarily in a public forum such as the working group.

Lucy Cole-Edelstein clarified that although members of the working group support the pedestrian bridge, RMS has received opposition from other community members which needs to be noted.

A working group member asked whether this rejection was based on the designs shown as part of the last meeting. The working group member queried if the visual impact of the pedestrian bridge could be improved whether support for the pedestrian bridge would increase.

Adam Berry advised that the issues with the pedestrian bridge at North Street are visual impact and the presence of an alternative crossing point close by at Kangaroo Valley Road. RMS believes that the crossing point over Kangaroo Valley Road bridge is on a stronger pedestrian desire line than a crossing at North Street.

A working group member stated that although he agrees there will be a strong pedestrian desire across Kangaroo Valley Road bridge, there is currently a pedestrian desire line at North Street which RMS will be removing. There is not a better desire line than what the town currently has.

The working group member asked if RMS has undertaken pedestrian surveys / counts. Without this data how does the project team know which is the strongest desire line.

Adam Berry advised that although counts have not been done, RMS experience is that pedestrians will use the shortest route.

A working group member clarified that their issue is that RMS is cutting an existing pedestrian route which is used by the community to travel from Kangaroo Valley Road to the sports field and also the centre of town.

Lucy Cole-Edelstein clarified that RMS's issue is the close proximity (150 metres) to an alternative crossing point, along with the capital cost of installing

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a pedestrian bridge.

A working group member stated that RMS should also include in its evaluation the fact that pedestrians will have to cross roads to get from one desire line to the other. RMS is creating pedestrian / traffic conflict.

The working group member also expressed concern that RMS is giving an equal weighting to comments received from individuals who have not attended the working group meetings and therefore may not fully understand or have not had the opportunity to discuss with a group who understand what is being proposed.

Lucy Cole-Edelstein advised that it is not always possible for individuals to attend structured ongoing meetings and therefore RMS has alternative avenues for community members to provide feedback. Ms. Cole-Edelstein clarified that RMS does not apply weightings to any feedback it receives.

Adam Berry advised that RMS provides feedback received as part of the working group to the broader community by posting the meeting notes on the project website and through the project office.

A working group member suggested that community members could also speak to members of the working group.

A working group member asked RMS to clarify if comments received in the project office are recorded.

RMS advised that notes are produced summarising project office visits and issues raised.

Urban design solutions

David Appleby to revise green space diagrams to identify private property, RMS owned property and public space.

Adam Berry advised that the urban design drawings have been updated to identify privately owned properties and public space, in particular the way parts of Town Creek were shown through the town.

RMS to clarify Shoalhaven Council's view concerning parking along and adjacent to North Street bus parking at the Agricultural Showground.

RMS has spoken to Council and advised that, through feedback received from the working group, RMS is not considering including coach parking or

The RMS proposal will not include provision for coach or overflow parking for the town along North Street. RMS will however need to review the requirements for and provide parking for the Riding Club as the grounds of the club are directly impacting by the future alignment of the road.

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overflow parking facilities along North Street. Mr. Berry advised that as part of the project RMS will need to reconfigure the parking arrangements for the Riding Club.

A working group member advised that the community has put in applications for parking along North Street. There is a desire within the community to include additional street parking along North Street.

A working group member advised RMS that the issue was not just the provision of bus parking but parking overall which needs to be addressed.

A working group member advised that previous community applications have been for kerb and gutter angled parking along North Street in front of the church, adjacent to the sports field.

Noise walls

A working group member suggested Option 2 was preferred due to a reduction in reflected noise compared with the other two options.

A working group member queried why a three metre access lane for maintenance vehicles was shown in one option and not the other even though there is a statement saying maintenance access would be needed for both options.

David Appleby clarified that the current design provides provision for a total of six lanes, although only four will be initially required. Space will therefore be available in the shoulder for maintenance vehicle access. Once the highway moves to six lanes maintenance will occur during off peak periods and will require the closure of one lane.

RMS apologised that the drawings are misleading and the pavement width would be the same on both options. This is an error in the drawings.

RMS clarified that there would be no significant cost differential and cost will not be a determining factor in deciding on which option is adopted. Also the footprint required for each of the noise mitigation structures would not impact on RMS's decision.

A working group member asked RMS to clarify whether a straighter noise wall (vertical) would provide greater noise mitigation.

Adam Berry advised that noise mitigation is controlled

RMS clarified that it is currently consulting on all three options of noise wall design but had no objections to taking any of the three forward to the environmental assessment.

Cost differential between the three options will not be a deciding factor over which option is chosen as the differentials are likely to be minor.

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by the height of the structure and all three options will be built to the same height. Mr. Berry advised that all three options would provide the protection legally required.

Julian Watson clarified that all three options would be designed to give the required 'outcome for residents' as directed by project requirements.

Adam Berry clarified that the scaling of the drawings was inaccurate and the height of the truck is 3.8 metres while the noise wall will be four metres. Julian Watson advised that the wall will need to be four metres in height to capture heavy vehicle noise.

A working group member asked whether the option with the grass mound will reduce reflected noise to the north of town more effectively.

Adam Berry advised that the higher noise impact to the north of the highway will result from vehicle / pavement noise on the opposite side of the road but, when queried by a working group member, clarified that reflected noise would add to this.

Julian Watson advised that RMS understands that reflective noise is a concern of the community and as part of this project the Department of Planning has asked RMS to consider reflected noise in the environmental assessment.

A working group member advised that they had received independent advice that reflected noise will add to general highway noise and therefore noise mitigation should include the best option for reducing reflected noise. The independent advice received suggests Option 2 would be the most effective solution for reflected noise.

A working group member advised that a legitimate concern of the community is the impact of noise travelling up the valley to properties on the north side of town.

A working group member asked RMS to clarify if noise could be reduced by reducing the speed limit on the stretch of highway along North Street.

Adam Berry advised yes a reduction in speed would reduce traffic noise levels, however the design requirement of the project is a posted speed of 100km/h.

A working group member expressed concern that

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RMS noise requirements made no consideration to whether a project was rural or located in a major town / city.

A working group member asked if RMS has considered including noise walls on both sides of the highway.

Adam Berry advised that to meet the requirements of the Office of Environment and Heritage, noise mitigation is currently proposed on the town side of the highway only. Mr. Berry advised that there are different issues on the north side eg distance and number of properties.

Julian Watson advised that there are properties on the north side of town for which RMS will be required to provide noise treatment. Mr. Watson advised that RMS approach to noise walls is a reasonable / feasible approach and other noise treatment methods can be adopted for properties on the north side which fall under the requirement for RMS.

A working group member expressed his concern that although residents do not experience noise impacts now, RMS is allowed to increased noise, as long as it is under the requirement, without providing any compensation.

A working group member stated that RMS has chosen to put the upgrade through the town and should therefore do more than the standard. The working group member expressed concern that the project team was not trying hard enough to influence RMS to accept this.

RMS clarified that all final decisions for the project, including the suggested southern bypass review, will be made by the Minister for Roads and Ports (State Government) not the RMS or the project team.

A working group member clarified that prior to the Minister's decision there is another review stage – Department of Planning. DoP has a set of guidelines which RMS is required to address.

Noise

RMS to investigate why there are minor noise spills along the North Street noise wall.

Adam Berry advised that the noise spills shown on the drawing is a function of the noise modelling

Action: RMS to discuss with AECOM the provision of a tool, at the environmental assessment display, which can demonstrate current and future predicted noise differences at locations along the study area.

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software which is spaced at 20 metre increments. RMS can confirm that this is a graphic computer model interface issue and the noise wall will stop noise as modelled.

RMS to investigate providing noise data for 55 dBA and below.

Julian Watson advised that RMS does not currently have noise data below 55 dBA mapped, but is investigating providing a tool as part of the environmental assessment which will demonstrate current noise and future predicted noise at locations within the study area.

Heritage items

RMS to advertise in the local media for an expression of interest for the relocation of the house.

RMS clarified that it will start the process of advertising for an expression of interest for relocating the house following the decision on the suggested southern bypass cost review. This action would only be applicable if the RMS is to progress with the northern option.

A working group member asked whether RMS will include the relocation of the house on the critical issues register.

Adam Berry advised that it is difficult to quantify the cost of relocation.

Ron de Rooy advised that RMS has received interest, however the interested party does not at this stage have a location to which the property can be relocated.

Action: RMS to include the relocation of the property on North Street on the critical issues register.

RMS clarified that it will advertise for an expression of interest for relocating the house. This will commence following the Minister's decision on the suggested southern bypass review.

Air quality

RMS to provide the working group with a summary of the air quality assessment results.

Julian Watson advised that air quality is not one of the Director General requirements but RMS understands its importance to local residents so is planning on producing a separate report as part of the environmental assessment. Mr. Watson advised that air quality limits are set around long term exposure.

A working group member asked if the report would identify areas of concern / where a higher impact is

RMS clarified that it would be producing an air quality assessment report as part of the environmental assessment.

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predicted.

A working group member queried as RMS is moving the highway next to the sporting field surely asthma issues are not to do with long term exposure they are to do with the amount of the exposure (air quality). Has the RMS factored in increased traffic volumes into its study and when will this data be made available.

RMS clarified yes, and this data will be included as part of the report at the environmental assessment.

Berry bypass urban design strategy – North Street precinct, draft concept design summary report (80% issue)

A copy of the report was handed out to each working group attendee.

A working group member queried the accuracy of the measurements used in the urban design presentation to illustrate the distance pedestrians would need to walk, following the upgrade, from Kangaroo Valley Road via either the Kangaroo Valley Road bridge or a suggested pedestrian crossing at North Street. The working group member is concerned the walk over Kangaroo Valley Road bridge will take longer than RMS is suggesting.

A working group member asked RMS to clarify whether George Street would be connected to North Street.

Adam Berry clarified that RMS is not proposing to connect George Street to North Street.

A working group member queried whether the negative feedback RMS has received from the community in relation to the pedestrian bridge at North Street is based on the RMS designs presented at the last working group meeting. The working group member queried whether an alternative arrangement would have a visual improvement particularly if screening was also provided. This may be more acceptable to the community.

A working group member asked RMS to clarify that the highway will be four lanes wide, with provision for six lanes before the wire barrier and the gutter plus a lane beside the ha ha wall for maintenance access.

Adam Berry advised that this is correct with the

A copy of the *Berry bypass urban design strategy – North Street precinct, draft concept design summary report (80% issue)* has been uploaded onto the project website.

RMS has requested community feedback on this document by Friday 25 May 2012.

An alternative suggestion for the proposed pedestrian bridge at North Street was received during the working group meeting.

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exception of the maintenance lane. The upgrade will include a three metre shoulder which will be used for maintenance. (Post meeting clarification, the additional width for the ultimate third lane and the three metre wide shoulder will provide adequate width for maintenance until the additional lanes are constructed).

Following the provision of six lanes then RMS will need to close one of the lanes to undertake maintenance activities. (Post meeting clarification, the three metre shoulder alone may not provide adequate width for maintenance, hence the need for the closure of the adjacent lane to meet work place safety requirements).

RMS advised that a wire barrier may not be required.

Working group process

The working group agreed that the group's work was concluded and no further working group meetings will be held. RMS agreed to include an update of outstanding actions on the project website and will hold further community consultation on an as needs basis.

Action: RMS to provide the working group with e-mail updates on the status of outstanding actions from the working group. All outcomes will be posted on the project website.