

**Karuah to Bulahdelah Sections 2 & 3 Upgrade Project
Community Interest Group**

NOTES

**Meeting #1
Monday 11th December 2006
Bulahdelah School of Arts
6.00 pm – 8.00 pm**

Please note – change of meeting date - Monday 26th February (not 20th) at 6 pm

Attendance

CLG members

Myer Solomon – Bulahdelah
Juergen Seil – Tea Gardens
Bev Manton – Karuah LALC
Peter and Yvonne Kendall, - Nerong
Progress Association
Mike Keegan – Great Lakes Council

Dick Ahmling - Bulahdelah
Arthur Vinnecombe – Bulahdelah
Kevin Woods - Bulahdelah
Mervyn Mote – Tea Gardens

Project Team Members

RTA

Dick Whibley – RTA Representative
Alan McKinnon – Project Manager
Bob Higgins – General Manager, Pac
Hwy
Ian Long – Resident Engineer

Abigroup

Patrick McCormack – Project Director
Grant Fletcher – Environmental Manager
Steve Aldis - Foreman

Stuart Bowden – EDAW Landscape &
Urban Design Consultant
Frank Ciancio - EDAW Landscape &
Urban Design Consultant

Other Project Team Members

T Phillips for Murray Curtis –
Environmental Management
Representative

Kerry Morrison – Facilitator

Apologies

None

Handouts tabled - Attachments

Draft Charter of Operation for CIG review
Urban Design and Landscaping Plans

Item	Issue / Action	Action by
1	Welcome and Introductions All members introduced themselves and described the location and interests and/or role in the project.	
2	Welcome by RTA – Dick Whibley Dick Whibley outlined the process since the EIS was approved. He commented that the project was to be built in accordance with the Minister for Planning Conditions of Approval (CoA). The design had been refined to reduce the footprint. The EIS is the same as for the Karuah to Bulahdelah Section 1 (KB1). The purpose of the project is to improve safety and travel times, and reduce fatalities.	
3	Community Interest Group – Kerry Morrison	
3.1	Outlined the purpose of the interest group – to provide the opportunity for input from local community members, with the project team sharing and discussing information about the design and construction of the project.	
3.2	Outline of the meeting charter of operation. CIG members requested to review and comment at the next meeting.	CIG
3.3	Meeting notes and agendas will be provided for all meetings. Items for discussion can be added – please contact Kerry Morrison.	Note
3.4	Other community involvement activities will enable all community members to understand the project progress. These will include advertisements in local newspapers, letterbox drops, roadside signage and meetings with other groups.	
3.5	Questions	
3.5.1	Query regarding seed collection. Abigroup responded that the Hunter land Management Group has been contracted for seed collection and are starting this week. They are based in Maitland and have experience in the area.	
4	Abigroup introduction to the project – Patrick McCormack	
4.1	Abigroup is a company that builds road and has many years of experience in road construction for RTA. Projects have included Westlink M7, M2 Motorway, F3 Freeway Wakefield to Wallsend, Raymond Terrace, Brunswick to Yelgun, Yelgun to Chinderah and Bonville is underway.	
4.2	The project comprises: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 23 km of road construction • It commences approximately 1 km south of Viney Creek Road West and ends approximately 1 km south of Booral Road near Bulahdelah, largely paralleling the existing highway. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The road construction methodology is largely to build the new carriageway, switch the traffic to the new road, then build the second half. • Construction involves the relocation of services, moving fences, and seed collection activities • Earthworks activities include moving material, construction drainage, bridges, and paving. During future meetings more information will be provided on these activities • Earthworks will also include blasting in some locations. Geotechnical investigations have identified 3 main areas, and several smaller areas. The main areas are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Burdekins Gap ○ North and south of Nerong ○ Waterholes • A company with expertise in blasting will be involved in the planning and design of the blasting and more information will be provided at future meetings. • A site office will be located in the area. Six (6) locations were identified and one area will be selected. • Water required for construction purposes is being investigated. This includes consultation with the Department of Natural Resources. Options area being investigated including dams, bore water, water from Nerong Lake, and capturing water from the site office rooves. • RTA contract was signed in September 2006 and the project is expected to be completed by October 2009. 	
4.3	<p>Current activities are predominantly investigations work and design. Detailed surveys are being undertaken, services locations are being identified, and other existing features that need to be considered for the design and construction. Seed collection will be completed prior to the commencement of construction.</p> <p>One of the key activities is Department of Planning (DoP) sign-off of the construction management plans, as required in the CoA. Abigroup are hoping for sign-off at the end of January 2007. Clearing would commence after DoP sign-off.</p> <p>The key challenges are traffic management during construction and maintaining access for local residents.</p>	
4.5	Questions	
4.5.1	<p>Does the new road follow the existing road all the way? Abigroup responded that the new road predominantly follows the existing road except at Burdekins Gap. The curve around the mountain will be cut out and the road will take a straighter line.</p>	
4.5.2	<p>Concern about the Nerong intersection. Abigroup responded that the existing intersection is between two hills. These will be levelled out. Further information will be provided. RTA commented that the levels will be similar to those shown in the EIS.</p>	
4.5.3	Comment that the hill is a fault line and query as to how this will	

	be addressed due to problems in other local areas. RTA responded that there is an inspection regime by RTA which is less than every 3 years. The contact includes a 10 year maintenance period however the concrete pavement is designed for 40 years. Settlement time is allowed for however the length of settlement allowed for has to be based on economies of scale.	
4.5.4	AV expressed concern about the fault line through his property. RTA responded that the Americans design for faults and cracks as the circumstances are different, namely earthquakes.	
4.5.5	Request for a public meeting in Tea Gardens to outline the project. Abigroup responded that a presentation will be provided when further information is available.	Note
4.5.6	Discussion about the Myall Way intersection and its status. RTA responded that the intersection is not part of this project and is a matter for discussion in other forums.	
4.5.7	Query as to whether all meetings will be held in Bulahdelah. Abigroup responded that it is proposed to move the meetings to the site office when it is ready.	Note
4.5.8	Request that a presentation be given to the Nerong Progress Associations. Abigroup responded that a presentation will be provided when further information is available.	
5	Landscape & Urban Design Presentation Stuart Bowden and Frank Ciancio, EDAW	
5.1	Landscape and urban design for the project is based on the EIS, visual constraints, existing plants for regeneration and revegetation, RTA best practise guidelines for management and maintenance, and the RTA vision of the Pacific Highway. Parameters are set for selection of plant species and how people will view the road as they drive.	
	The ERM EIS identified 3 major areas or characteristic landscapes which were closed forest, open forest and open pasture. These were used in the analysis of the area, along with 3 key viewing distances – foreground, filtered and extended views. The plans respond to the existing landscaped character/conditions and existing views.	
5.2	Landscape Concept plans were developed to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate with the surrounding area • Provide a safe driving environment • Reduce the visual impact of the road • Complement adjoining areas with appropriate landscape treatment through seeding and planting. <p>Seven (7) planting types were selected to respond to the surrounding areas</p> <p>Specific plants have been selected for the 2 rest areas, bridges,</p>	

	<p>waterlines, and fauna underpass.</p> <p>All disturbed areas will be revegetated.</p> <p>Cut batters will be 2 in 1 and embankments 2 in 1 or 4 in 1, with the exception of Burdekins Gap.</p> <p>Medians will be revegetated with a native grass mix or a native grass and shrub mix.</p> <p>Major intersections, such as Whimbrel Drive will include highlight plants.</p>	
5.3	Questions	
5.3.1	<p>Where there are cuttings, will the water disperse, as some parts of the road flood.</p> <p>Abigroup responded that the road is designed to take water away so there will be no flooding on the new road.</p>	
5.3.2	<p>Median planting – will it screen the glare from oncoming cars?</p> <p>EDAW responded that the shrubs will screen the glare.</p>	
5.3.3	<p>Will the grass species stop wallabies?</p> <p>Abigroup responded that DEC (Department of Environment and Conservation) National Parks section, have reviewed the species mix and some were removed.</p>	
5.3.4	<p>Will the road be fenced for its length?</p> <p>Abigroup responded that it will be fenced for it's entire length (except intersections), but only sections nominated and agreed previously with National parks will have fauna fencing erected.</p>	
5.3.5	<p>Query about the medians becoming a fire hazard if trees are retained for sugar glider (since corrected to squirrel glider) movements.</p> <p>RTA responded that the medians will be 12 m wide and only planted with small frangible trees - that will bend/break on impact by errant vehicles. The EIS did not identify squirrel gliders as an issue and there are no requirements in conditions of approval to cater for them on this section of the highway.</p>	
6	General Discussion	
6.1	Request that a presentation be given to be Nerong Progress Association at their next meeting on Saturday 10 th February 2007.	Abigroup/ RTA
6.2	Request that a public meeting be held in Tea Gardens. Organisers would require 4 weeks notice and an article could be included in the local paper "The Nota".	Abigroup/ RTA
6.3	Request for a presentation to Karuah LALC at their February meeting.	Abigroup/ RTA
6.3	Discussion of a preferred meeting night – agreed 3 rd Tuesday of	Note

	the month.	
6.4	<p>Discussion about bus company use of the Nerong turn-off and whether bus companies will turn into Nerong or continue to stop on the side of the road. RTA/Abigroup responded that there new intersection will be a seagull intersection. Discussions will be held with bus companies.</p> <p>Plan of intersection layout will be made available at a future meeting for discussion.</p>	Abigroup
7	<p>Next Meeting – amended from discussion at meeting to:</p> <p>Date: Monday 26th February 2007 Time: 6 pm Venue: Bulahdelah School of Arts, Crawford St, Bulahdelah</p>	