

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

**NOTES**

**Meeting #2  
Monday 26<sup>th</sup> February 2007  
Bulahdelah School of Arts  
6.00 pm – 8.00 pm**

**Attendance**

**CLG members**

Dick Ahmling - Bulahdelah  
Peter and Yvonne Kendall - Nerong  
Progress Association  
Juergen Seil – Tea Gardens  
Myer Solomon – Bulahdelah  
Mike Keegan – Great Lakes Council

John Stellema – Bulahdelah  
Rex Filson – National Parks Association  
of NSW  
Kevin Woods – Bulahdelah  
Cliff Johnson – Port Stephens Council

**Project Team Members**

**RTA**

Dick Whibley – RTA Representative  
Alan McKinnon – Project Manager  
Ian Long – Resident Engineer

**Abigroup**

Patrick McCormack – Project Director  
Grant Fletcher – Environmental Manager  
Kerry Morrison – Community Relations  
Manager

**Other Project Team Members**

Murray Curtis – Environmental  
Management Representative

**Apologies**

Bev Manton – Karuah LALC  
Mervyn Mote – Tea Gardens

Arthur Vinnecombe – Bulahdelah

**Handouts tabled or Attachments**

Draft Charter of Operation to new members for CIG review

Item	Issue / Action	Action
<b>1.0</b>	<b>Welcome and Introductions</b> Apologies as listed above New members introduced to the group CIG #1 meeting notes accepted without change	
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Actions Arising from last meeting</b>	
2.1	Item 3.2 – Meeting charter Group agreed to postpone endorsement to enable new members to read and comment on the charter. Copies provided to new members	<b>CIG</b>
2.2	Item 6.1 – Nerong Progress Association meeting Dick Whibley from RTA, Patrick McCormack and Kerry Morrison from Abigroup attended the Nerong Progress Association meeting on Saturday afternoon 10 <sup>th</sup> February 2007 at Nerong.  Peter Kendall thanked RTA and Abigroup for attending, the presentation and answering questions.	<b>Note</b>
2.3	Item 6.2 – Public meeting at Tea Gardens  RTA and Abigroup advised that a presentation could be given to the Tea Gardens community in April. K Morrison will co-ordinate with J. Seil.	<b>Note</b>
2.4	Item 6.3 – Presentation to Karuah LALC Abigroup is yet to confirm with LALC Chairperson whether they can attend tomorrow nights meeting or a future meeting.	<b>Note</b>
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Abigroup Project Update – Patrick McCormack</b>	
3.1	<b>Design:</b> Abigroup received the RTA concept design at the commencement of the project and are now in the process of refining the design – called detailed design. Initial plans (15% drawings) are submitted to RTA for approval. Following approval the plans are developed to 85% design, and submitted to the Verifier for approval, before final design plans are completed.	
3.2	<b>Construction:</b> Establishment of the Abigroup site offices has commenced on a site south of Nerong. Power and water are expected to be connected by mid-March. A batch plant for concrete production will be established at the site in the future. The full team is expected to be on site by May 2007.  Fencing of the corridor will commence tomorrow and will be undertaken by contractors.  Clearing will start next Monday at Burdekins Gap and Waterholes. The clearing zone will be from the top of the cut to the toe of the batter to provide a clearance of about 3 m. The width of clearing will vary depending on the work required.	
<b>3.3</b>	<b>Questions</b>	
3.3.1	Where is the work starting?  Abigroup responded that it will be in two locations – Burdekins Gap and Waterholes.	
3.3.2	K Woods commented that he was contacted by Abigroup regarding the entrance to his property – Lot 14 – but there was no follow up.	<b>Abigroup</b>

	Abigroup responded that there could have been one of two reasons – 1. Contact for introduction or 2. Fencing work. Abigroup will follow up.	
3.3.3	What will happen to the cleared timber?  Abigroup responded that a contractor will clear the timber and sell the saleable timber and wood chip the rest.	
3.3.4	Query as to why the trees have numbers?  Abigroup responded that there are 246 habitat trees, and each has been numbered prior to clearing as part of the process to protect wildlife. An ecologist has mapped the area for weeds and habitat trees. Clearing will include all trees except the habitat trees which will be treated differently to allow native animals to relocate, or be caught and relocated. The habitat trees will be left for 24 hours then lowered, check for animals by the animal rescue people, who then give the all clear to remove the tree.	
3.3.5	Did RTA give Abigroup the concept design only?  Abigroup responded that the RTA concept design presented in the EIS is used as the basis for developing the detailed design plans.	
3.3.6	Is there any flexibility for access? Request for details.  Abigroup responded that all the details of the works are developed including access, drainage, landscaping, etc. The 85% plans showing access will be provided at the next meeting.	<b>Abigroup</b>
3.3.7	Concerns about access to property - 9147 Pacific Highway – visitors have problems with access. Abigroup will provide plans at the next meeting.	<b>Abigroup</b>
3.3.8	RTA (DW) commented that RTA is applying the same philosophy along the highway to reduce right turns on the highway to improve safety. U-turn bays or short service roads are being provided to make all accesses safe. At major intersections, a sea-gull intersection will be constructed which allows drivers to cross one set of lanes and wait before merging into the traffic in the other lanes. A sea-gull intersection has been constructed at The Rock at Karuah.  Whimbrel Drive at Nerong will have a sea gull intersection, in addition to the bus turning circle.  Merge lanes at Nerong will be 610 m long. The open grade road surface, to reduce traffic noise, will be 800 m long.  All landowners along the highway will be advised of changed driveway arrangements.	
<b>3.4</b>	<b>Abigroup community liaison</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Abigroup and RTA meeting with two Busways representatives on 9<sup>th</sup> February to discuss the new intersection arrangements at Nerong. Busways agreed that they would use the new turning circle at Whimbrel Drive.</li> <li>- Abigroup and RTA meeting with Nerong Progress Association on 10<sup>th</sup> February.</li> </ul>	
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Presentation – Construction Environmental Management Plan – Grant Fletcher</b>	
4.1	Murray Curtis, EMR from ERM. Murray is responsible for ensuring that	

	the Dept of Planning (DoP) Conditions of Approval (CoA) are met, certifying the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), providing 6-monthly reports to DOP, liaison with Government Authorities, and other tasks. Murray is independent from RTA and Abigroup.	<b>Note</b>
4.2	Abigroup has prepared the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) for the K2B project. It took 5 months to prepare and consists of 11 sub-plans covering all aspects of environmental management including flora and fauna, soil and water, noise and vibration, traffic management, heritage management, etc. The plans say how the project will be carried out to protect the environment. The sub-plans were submitted to the various government agencies for approval and comment prior to being submitted to DoP. Approval to commence substantial construction was given by DoP on Friday 23 February 2007.	<b>Note</b>
	All issues raised in the EIS have been addressed in the CEMP including the green-thighed frog, habitat trees, etc. Abigroup are designing around these and many other matters to minimise impacts.	
<b>5.0</b>	<b>General discussion</b>	
5.1	When will there be a site inspection? Abigroup responded – possibly could be undertaken in about 2 month's time.	<b>Abigroup</b>
5.2	Rex Filson requested a site inspection prior to clearing. Grant Fletcher will liaise with Rex.	<b>Note</b>
5.3	How many bridges will be built? Abigroup responded that there will be seven (7) sets of twin bridges.	
5.4	Request that J. Seil send information to K Morrison to vet prior to publication in NOTA. Agreed.	<b>Note</b>
5.5	Query about the construction sequence. Abigroup responded that the southbound lanes will be constructed first then the northbound lanes.	
5.6	What is the speed limit on the new road? Abigroup responded that the speed limit is 100 km/hr. RTA advised that the design speed is 110km/hr to enable the limit to be lifted in the future, subject to a satisfactory safety audit.	
5.7	Will speed be reduced during clearing? Abigroup responded that there will be 3 sections where the speed will be reduced to 80 km/hr and intermittent stoppages during tree felling, to ensure the safety of all traffic.	
5.8	Will there be closures during the School holidays? Abigroup responded that a road occupancy licence is required which prohibits road closures during peak holiday periods.  RTA advised that the first and last days of the holidays and long weekends are particularly important.	
5.9	P. Kendall requested that a guarantee be provided that bus companies will turn into Nerong. RTA/Abigroup advised that there will be no room for buses to stop on the northbound side of the highway to drop passengers so they will need to turn into Whimbrel Drive. The design of the intersection and changed road grade will ensure that buses can re-enter the traffic safely using the 610 m lane.	

	RTA advised that, if necessary, discussions would be held with future bus companies (when they have changed hands) regarding the use of the bus turning circle at the Nerong intersection. RTA is talking to bus companies along the full length of the highway regarding the highway upgrading program and its impact on bus services.	
5.10	P. Kendall expressed concern that the public phone would be removed for the bus turning circle. Abigroup responded that the public phone would be retained in its current location if possible or if it needed to be moved, Abigroup would liaise with Telstra to relocate the phone.	<b>Note</b>
5.11	Will there be emergency phones along the highway? RTA/Abigroup responded that there would be emergency phones along the highway.	
5.12	P. Kendall requested that discussions be held with Country Link. Abigroup responded that this would occur.	<b>Abigroup</b>
5.13	Concern about the grade of the ramp. Abigroup responded that plans would be tabled at the next meeting. Note: the grade of the ramp and length of the acceleration lane is taken into account as part of the design process.	<b>Abigroup</b>
5.14	P. Kendall said that discussions were held with RTA some time ago and that the plan included a pedestrian crossing.  RTA advised that originally an access was to be provided for National Parks on the western side and the bus stop was incorporated with the access. National Parks have since changed their minds and the access on the western side has been removed. In the interest of pedestrian safety, the bus stop on the western side has been removed, and all buses will turn into Nerong to pickup / drop passengers.	
5.15	P. Kendall said that a tunnel was once proposed to enable pedestrians to travel safely from the bus stop into Nerong.  RTA responded that a tunnel was considered as part of the RTA Representation report, but was not further considered as it was not cost effective. As the bus stop has been removed and replaced with the bus turning circle, pedestrian access is not required.	<b>Note</b>
5.16	P. Kendall said there are underpasses on other projects. RTA responded that they are for School children and the community who need to cross the highway on a daily basis.	
5.17	Query as to the height of the cut at Nerong and the road grades at the intersection. Abigroup responded that the information would be provided at the next meeting.	<b>Abigroup</b>
5.18	Concerns about existing and proposed noise levels. Abigroup responded that a presentation would be provided at the next meeting.  Discussion of baseline criteria, DEC (Dept of Environment and Conservation) criteria and guidelines. RTA advised that the noise criteria must be met 10 years after opening of the highway.	<b>Abigroup</b>
5.19	Query as to whether the batters will be 2 to 1? Abigroup responded that the batters would be 2 to 1.	

5.20	<p>Request that the noise barrier be extended on the eastside to the power line. Abigroup responded that noise barrier details would be provided at a future meeting.</p>	<b>Abigroup</b>
5.21	<p>Request for a drainage plan for the Nerong area.  Abigroup responded that a plan is available and would be discussed after the meeting. The philosophy for the drainage system is to capture dirty water off the roadway and treat it in sediment basins before discharge to local waterways. Clear water (water that falls outside the highway) would be diverted under the highway. The 85% drainage plan will be made available at the next meeting showing drainage layout and sedimentation basins.</p>	<b>Abigroup</b>
5.22	<p>Request that water off the top of the hill, that flows into Nerong Harbour, often with a high sediment load, be diverted, to reduce Nerong Harbour problems.  Abigroup responded that it is not part of the project to capture water from the National Park and divert it into a nearby waterway.  M. Curtis advised that it would require an environmental assessment study to change a natural waterway, as is being suggested.</p>	<b>Note</b>
5.23	<p>Concern that the vehicles associated with the construction are using Whimbrel Drive and have torn up the road, particularly at Plover Street.  Abigroup responded that the road would be repaired.</p>	<b>Note</b>
5.24	<p>Comment that the pre-construction survey contractor did not know that the survey zone was 200 m. Abigroup responded that the contractor was advised of the houses to survey, not the distance.</p>	
6.0	<p><b>Next Meeting</b>  Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2007 at 6 pm  <b>Abigroup Site Office Training Room, Nerong (changed location)</b>  Note: Site office entry is 1.5 km south of Nerong / Whimbrel Drive</p>	