



**Pacific Highway Upgrade
Brunswick Heads to Yelgun
Community Liaison Group Meeting No. 11
1 March 2006**

Attendees:

Pauline Millington
Malcolm Murray
Kathy Norley-Farmer
Robert Rosen
Sue Stirton
Tony Stupka
Colin Tarbox
Jack Taylor
Don Armstrong

Bill Gardyne (EMR – DoP Representative)

Will MacDonald (Abi)
Mark Sabolch (Abi)
Terry Paxton (Abi)
Wendy Dooley (Abi)

Peter Borrelli (RTA)
Dave Purdy (RTA)

Apologies: Paul Wallbridge (Abi), Brett Lee (BSC), Ron Holmes, Barry Hutton, Frank Mills, Patricia Warren

Item 1.0	<p>Welcome and Apologies</p> <p>Terry Paxton welcomed members to the meeting and noted there were several apologies: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Frank Mills;• Barry Hutton;• Brett Lee;• Ron Holmes;• Patricia Warren; and• Paul Wallbridge. <p>Colin Tarbox introduced visitor Don Armstrong. Colin advised that, as the representative of Lions Driver Reviver, his particular interest was in the Yelgun Rest Area and what facilities would be included. Due to some health issues and personal matters, Colin indicated he was likely to be absent from a number of meetings in the near future but was keen that his organisation maintained its presence at the forum as the Yelgun Rest Area took shape.</p> <p>Colin requested a variation from the charter that would allow Lions to</p>
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<p>1.1</p> <p>1.2</p>	<p>provide a proxy member and also an observer to enable a smooth transition of knowledge in the event that he was unable to be present at a meeting.</p> <p>There was general agreement from the group that this was acceptable. Colin introduced Don Armstrong as the Lions appointed proxy in his absence.</p> <p>Comments on Notes of Previous Meeting</p> <p>No suggested amendments to the notes were tabled and the notes were accepted, with the addition of Robert Rosen to the attendance list.</p> <p>Tonight’s Agenda</p> <p>Terry outlined the agenda for the evening, noting the key presentations would be the regular construction update followed by a presentation by the RTA’s Senior Project Manager, Peter Borrelli, on the Yelgun Rest Area layout and facilities.</p>
<p>2.0</p>	<p>Outstanding Actions From Previous Meeting</p> <p>The only outstanding action was to review and receive comments on the draft text for the historic marker planned for the Hainesville area. As this initiative was to be led by Frank Mills who was absent, it was agreed to hold this over to the next CLG meeting.</p> <p>Action – Add item to agenda for CLG Meeting No. 12.</p>
<p>3.0</p> <p>3.1</p> <p>3.2</p>	<p>Construction Update</p> <p>Abigroup Construction Manager, Will MacDonald provided the group with an overview of the project status and addressed some significant upcoming items.</p> <p>Earthworks</p> <p>Will advised the group that earthworks was now essentially complete except for the “fiddly bits” that involved tying in the local roads, relocating surcharge and other minor earthworks associated with the various retaining walls etc. To date the project team had moved approximately 1.3 million cubic metres of earth material.</p> <p>Some of the last of the earthworks included minor works left around the Yelgun Rest Area site. Even at this location the rest area itself was essentially down to the final level and the dedicated local road in the area was also approaching pavement layer level.</p> <p>Work on the modified Riverside Crescent access had also begun with minor clearing and the removal of a section of the noise wall that traversed the alignment. While some earthworks material had been deposited there already, this particular component of the project would be completed as suitable earthworks material becomes available for re-use from other nearby convenient locations.</p> <p>Fleet Status</p>

<p>3.3</p>	<p>As the earthworks phase was essentially completed, much of the fleet of major earthworks equipment had been demobilised and sent to various other projects. Key items in the remaining earthworks fleet consisted of the last two scrapers and a D11 Dozer.</p> <p>The earthworks program had always been targeted at reaching this stage prior to the wet season and that had been successfully achieved.</p> <p>Bridges</p> <p>Will explained that with the bulk earthworks now practically complete the key focus would now be on bridges. The bridges are on the critical path, meaning that if we are to achieve the target completion dates we must ensure these items, particularly those on the local Service Road, are progressed as soon as possible.</p> <p>While the wet weather had meant some delays the project team was committed to the original strategy of minimising impacts by delivering the project in the shortest possible time. To that end, night bridge works had been continuing on the Brunswick River Bridge. Although there were only a few weeks of steel fixing left on the piers, it was likely more night bridge works would be required when the form travellers were in place.</p> <p>Will explained that the project team currently had 13 bridges under construction with a range of construction styles. These included a number of bridges (STP Access Road, Bonanza Drive and the Yelgun Interchange flyover bridges) which utilised duraduct piles. Basically this process used lightweight metal tubing as formwork for cast-in-situ piles. The tubes were then placed over reinforcement cages on solid abutments. The earth was then compacted around a second outer tube that provided protection for the inner tube before it was filled with concrete to form the pile.</p> <p>The Brunswick River Bridges, although similar in principle in that they are founded on cast-in-situ piles, piers were then cast on top of these piles and there is a totally different manner of delivering the superstructure.</p> <p>The majority of bridges on the project are of a more traditional driven pile construction that involved “driving” pre-cast concrete piles, casting a pier-head to connect a group of piles and placing the pre-cast girders between the pier-heads.</p>
<p>3.5</p>	<p>Bypass Bridges</p> <p>Will noted that these traditional driven concrete pile bridges (2) now had all the vital piles in place and the focus would now shift to construction of the necessary formwork and reinforcement to cast the pier-heads. Will also pointed out though that in terms of the overall bridging strategy, these were not critical in delivering traffic onto the new service road.</p>
<p>3.6</p>	<p>Brunswick River Bridges (BRB)</p> <p>Since the last meeting, significant advances had been made on the BRB. These included the arrival and installation of the second tower crane on the southern platform. The tower crane’s primary function is to deliver materials including concrete and reinforcing steel to the travelling forms used to construct the superstructure.</p>

<p>3.7</p>	<p>Will pointed out that the particular cranes used for this project were selected because they were electric cranes. The decision to use electric cranes rather than diesel powered options was made on environmental grounds because it removed the risks associated with refuelling the alternative diesel engine models so close to the marine environment.</p> <p>Will also reported back on the night pour that had been undertaken for the southern abutment. This had been a major operation that completely consumed the output of two local batch plants operating at full capacity for an entire evening. It had also required some 14 concrete trucks, two concrete pumps and about 40 people.</p> <p>As explained at the last meeting, the pour had been undertaken at night to best manage the temperature and curing issues associated with such a large concrete pour. Will showed a series of slides that included an egg being cooked on the concrete to indicate the heat generated. Other slides included one showing the entire 850 cubic metres of concrete encased in polystyrene to manage the cooling and curing process. Will explained sensors ('thermo-couples') had been left in the concrete to monitor the rate of temperature decrease, and even though the pour had occurred several weeks ago it was still 50 degrees celsius inside the concrete mass.</p> <p>While this major piece of work had occurred at night without a complaint, several nights later the team had received a noise complaint in relation to night works and had responded by immediately stopping the works then and amending work practises before resuming.</p> <p>The BRB pier-heads were now well advanced on both the north and south sides of the river and were now close to final traffic level. Will explained how it was important to keep these items progressing simultaneously so the travelling forms could commence from both sides of the bridge at approximately the same time, and hence meet in the middle at the same time. Will also explained that with the weight of the deck suspended forward of the skewed piers, this set up forces that required temporary props to be installed until the load could be evenly distributed across the completed structure.</p> <p>Coolamon Scenic Drive Underpass</p> <p>The project team has just reached a significant milestone at this complex underpass with the completion of the major culvert works. Will explained to the group that the gap that they had observed was not actually at road level but had been left for the placement of major culverts under the modified Coolamon Scenic Drive road. These particular culverts were "fish friendly", meaning they had a channel that allowed the passage of aquatic creatures even in low flow periods.</p> <p>Now that the culverts had been installed, construction of the overpass could commence and piling was expected to start there in a matter of weeks.</p> <p>Q What is the capacity of the culvert under the new road compared to the existing culvert under the rail line upstream and will RTA maintain the railway culvert?</p> <p>A Do not know the capacity of the railway underpass so can not really</p>
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	<p>do a comparison. Our culvert was sized to meet the requirements of that particular drainage line. ARTC is responsible for maintenance of their infrastructure, but it appears they contract most of it out for this line. Byron Shire Council is one of their approved contractors in this area. Where we have had other interface issues with ARTC, they have proven to be very co-operative so maintenance issues relating to that rail line culvert should be directed to them.</p>
<p>3.8</p>	<p>Marshalls Creek</p> <p>At both Marshalls Creek and Marshalls Creek overflow two of the three bridges were ready for delivery of the girders. Several trucks carrying the 37 tonne girders had already arrived at site and it was expected the first girders of the project would be placed the next day.</p>
<p>3.9</p>	<p>Yelgun Interchange</p> <p>Construction of the northbound flyover exit bridge had commenced with the support column and the northern abutment well also well advanced. This single support pier was also of a duraduct construction style.</p> <p>Retaining Walls</p> <p>Will explained the importance of the retaining walls in the sequencing of construction works, especially in the vicinity of Rajah Road. It was essential to have these walls completed before any traffic could be switched to the local Service Road. Because of the nature of the material in the area, the walls could only be constructed in two metre benches with stabilisation required before the next two metres of excavation could occur.</p> <p>As the southern walls in this area were largely completed, foundation work for the new section of the local Service Road could now be commenced in earnest and was starting to take shape.</p> <p>On the inland side of the highway just north of the bridges, extensive work was being done on the foundations for the vertical retaining wall that had been included in the design to minimise the footprint of the project through the wetland. Will pointed out that this was largely being done with concrete injection piles and to his knowledge this was a first for the Highway. Traditionally, wooden piles had been driven for this purpose but the use of timber piles would have placed a strain on resources and the concrete piles were a more environmentally friendly alternative.</p> <p>An environmental assessment for this activity has been prepared and submitted to DEC (NPWS). The clearing must be approved by DEC (NPWS) before the trimming can commence. No trees in the Brunswick Heads Nature Reserve will be removed, but rather they will simply have any overhanging branches lopped as required. The work will be supervised by a qualified aborist.</p>
<p>3.10</p>	<p>Underboring</p> <p>On a project such as this, the management and relocation of services within a corridor was critical. One significant and visible component of that work was the under-boring currently happening from the north side of the river</p>

<p>3.11</p>	<p>near Rajah Road.</p> <p>This work involved a very specialised drilling rig that would deliver twin 450mm tubes through the bedrock about 15metres under the river bed. One tube would carry sewer and optic fibre lines and the other electricity services.</p> <p>The under-boring option was preferable from a construction point of view as it placed one less restriction on bridge construction and meant the services would not have to be included within or slung under the local Service Road bridge across the Brunswick River.</p> <p>One Month Outlook</p> <p>Will outlined some of the activities that would be a high priority over the next month. Obviously bridgework was becoming critical if the project was to meet the desired completion date and this could mean more pressure to conduct a variety of night works.</p> <p>The team was also now in a position to undertake more early revegetation works at a range of locations along the corridor. Such works would assist stabilisation during wet periods and dust lift off in dry windy weather.</p> <p>Will also pointed out that the Review of Environmental Factors (REF) for the concrete batch plant at the site selected north of Shara Boulevard was almost ready for submission. One item that the group should be aware of was that Abi had applied for different operating hours for this facility as it was necessary to start the plant and have it running in time to allow the concrete pavers to commence work at 7am. To do this the plant would have to start around 6.15am. Consultation had already been undertaken with the closest neighbours (about 300m removed) and none had raised objection to this proposal. At this point the batch plant was likely to be on site in May.</p> <p>Also on operating hours, it was again pointed out that steel fixing was continuing on the BRB for another two to three weeks but it was also possible in mid April when the travelling forms were in place, that more night bridge works may be required.</p> <p>Terry Paxton also updated the group on the status of the barges mentioned last meeting that were being brought in to facilitate some of the bridge works. It was now anticipated that the barges would arrive mid-March and arrangements had been made to unload them at the boat harbour. Some river channel closures would be required and these would be notified with signage at the boat ramps and advertising among other means. One key group of stakeholders in this process was the oyster farmers and they had been contacted and advised of the situation. Processes were being put in place to work together to minimise any impacts on their business operation. Most other people had the option of using a boat ramp upstream or downstream of the works site.</p> <p>Questions and Comments</p> <p>Q Are you still on schedule?</p> <p>A With the wet weather we are slipping behind schedule and there is still a lot of work to do so we may have to look at a range of options to reach the target completion date.</p>
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	<p>Q Will there be flood free access from Balemo Drive to the Pacific Highway?</p> <p>A Balemo Drive will only connect to the local Service Road, not the Pacific Highway.</p> <p>Q How does your batch plant capacity compare with say, the local concrete plants?</p> <p>A The Billinudgel plant can produce about 300m³/day, Ewingsdale in the order of 500m³/day. While the plant we are bringing up is capable of about 2000m³/day, we will not be using it to that capacity. Our demand is more likely to be about 1000 -1100m³/day.</p> <p>Q So you won't be using the other plants?</p> <p>A We will still be getting concrete for the bridges from local plants and the batch plant will supply our paving needs. One of the benefits of the selected site is that it will have direct access to the new Pacific Highway and we will be able to deliver concrete in dump trucks, rather than agitators.</p>
<p>4.0</p>	<p>Yelgun Rest Area</p> <p>Mr Peter Borrelli, the RTA Representative and Senior Project Manager, provided the group with an over-view of the Yelgun Rest Area.</p> <p>Peter commenced his presentation by pointing out why it was that this particular site was selected: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Highway upgrade project included a grade separated interchange at this location which could be utilised to allow safe access to both north and southbound vehicles. • The locality and topography presented an opportunity to accommodate the facility in a sheltered area with no immediate neighbours and a natural noise buffering ridgeline. <p>The current plans that were presented incorporated the amended local road layout and connections that had been requested by the community in response to some initial concerns. This amended road allowed direct access to the Tweed Valley Way while also providing a link to the new Highway through the grade separated interchange.</p> <p>There was also a strip of RTA owned land between the local road opposite the Rest Area and the Billinudgel Nature Reserve and this area, currently pasture, offered an opportunity for revegetation with appropriate selected native species.</p> <p>Within the facility itself, users would be separated according to their vehicle size or whether or not they were a refrigerated van or stock carrier that had the potential to impact on other Rest Area users. This separation into different areas would be done through directional signage at the entry. This would allow non commercial motorists, travellers, caravans etc to be located in another part of the Rest Area separated from the heavy commercial vehicles.</p> <p>The Rest Area will incorporate a range of facilities including: -</p>

- Flushing toilets;
- Picnic tables/shelters;
- Barbecues;
- Play equipment;
- Fenced off dog run;
- Concrete slab for Driver Reviver van; and
- Information Signage.

The area will be landscaped with a range of plants including some advanced trees. Peter pointed out that the RTA had addressed feedback in relation to what was seen as excessive lighting of the Byron Bay interchange and paid considerable attention to lighting issues for the Rest Area, going so far as to specify particular styles of lighting in the tendering process. This would provide a far more subdued lighting outcome while not compromising the principles of road safety, through good urban design.

(A full copy of the presentation will be posted on the Project Website.)

4.1

Questions and Comments

Q With a new service station approved for the Shara Boulevard intersection, is there a chance to get a direct access onto the highway to ensure any truck that exits the Yelgun interchange to get fuel, doesn't continue down the local road?

A No. We appreciate the concern but the reality is that trucks have a significant fuel range and fuel is cheaper across the border to the north. In relation to B Doubles, they can only travel on designated routes and the service road is unlikely to become a gazetted B Double route. Upon opening of the upgrade Pacific Highway, this will become the gazetted B-Double route not the local Service Road. When the local Service Road is handed over to Byron Shire Council, Council can determine the kind of vehicles it is gazetted for and if it wishes to change this.

Comment: We would like to raise this when the Council Representative is next present.

Q Is the new England Highway currently being upgraded?

A Yes, parts of it.

Q Would the spill trap at the rest area have to be manually closed?

A Yes, but the trap itself will have a significant capacity before reaching the discharge level. Realistically the Rest Area is safer from a spill incident than most of the highway or roads generally, which are not set up to contain spills.

Q Is this Rest Area the largest north of Grafton?

A Not sure in terms of size (square area) but suspect so, and it will certainly have the best facilities.

Q Will plantings include large trees or just shrubs?

	<p>A The intention is to plant some advanced plants straight away. One of the issues is to get shade trees established early for heavy vehicles.</p> <p>Comment: The Brunswick Valley Tourism group and local Chamber of Commerce would like to ensure they have some input into the information signage in the Rest Area.</p> <p>Reply: Please put a submission together and we can address it through this forum.</p>
<p>5.0</p> <p>5.1</p> <p>5.2</p> <p>5.3</p> <p>5.4</p>	<p>General Business</p> <p>Sediment Basins</p> <p>Mark Sabolch, the Abigroup Environmental Manager for the project followed up his presentation at the last CLG meeting on sediment basins with the news that four more sediment basins were to be commissioned. These were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yelgun Rest Area (temporary basin); • Yelgun interchange (permanent- ultimately water quality role); • Batch plant area (temporary); and • Wetland B – near STP (permanent - ultimately water quality role). <p>Project Event</p> <p>Colin Tarbox reported to the group that the Lions Club and Brunswick Valley Rescue Squad had held a preliminary meeting regarding organising an event to tie in with a project milestone, yet to be determined. The group had come up with a range of possibilities and would meet again shortly and had invited the RTA and Abi to attend.</p> <p>The objectives were not just to celebrate, but also to raise funds for a local cause (not yet agreed upon).</p> <p>Billinudgel Landscaping</p> <p>Terry Paxton advised the group that Abi had completed a consultation exercise with Bonanza Drive and Lucky Lane property owners and business operators and the outcomes of that had been supplied to the landscape architects. Revisions based on that feedback would be considered but we were also waiting on some additional data from Council before the plan could be presented and finalised for submission to Council. If the data was forthcoming and the revisions could be made prior to the next meeting, we would ask the landscape architects to present it at the next CLG but this was not a certainty.</p> <p>Habitat Box Project</p> <p>Since the last meeting the Expression of Interest that had been lodged to the NRAC for funding for the habitat box project. The project had been short listed and a comprehensive submission had been provided. This funding, should the submission be successful, would provide the impetus to get the project off the ground. To date, most of the work had been done by Abi and some individuals but a joint effort by the CLG membership would be</p>

	<p>required to deliver the project in the timeframe that the group originally imposed upon itself.</p> <p>Southern Cross University had provided some valuable assistance in the preparation of the submission and would be a major partner in the project, especially in terms of a placement strategy, development and ongoing monitoring.</p>
6.0	<p>Meeting Close</p> <p>The meeting was closed at 8.40pm and the next meeting date nominated as Wednesday 5 April.</p>