



## Constructing Australia's Future

**Pacific Highway Upgrade  
Brunswick Heads to Yelgun  
Community Liaison Group Meeting No. 22  
13 June 2007**

**Attendees:**

Colin Tarbox  
Pauline Millington  
Tony Stupka  
Sue Stirton  
Kathy Norley-Farmer  
Frank Mills  
Barry Hutton  
Trevor Watts  
Gillian Secombe

Will MacDonald (Abigroup)  
Rebecca Walker-Edwards (Abigroup)  
Wendy Dooley (Abigroup)

Bill Gardyne (EMR)

Peter Borrelli (RTA)  
Ron Holmes (RTA)  
Janice Smith (RTA)  
Rachel Sadler (RTA)

Apologies: Mark Sabolch (Abigroup), Don Armstrong, Malcolm Murray,  
Jack Taylor, Greg Milham and Patricia Warren

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### **1.0 Welcome**

Following a light supper, the meeting opened at 7.10pm.

### **2.0 Agenda**

Welcoming the CLG, Wendy gave a brief outline of the agenda.

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### **3.0 Apologies**

Patricia Warren, Don Armstrong, Malcolm Murray, Jack Taylor, Greg Milham, and Mark Sabolch (Abigroup) were noted as apologies for the meeting.

### **3.1 Written Comments Received on Previous Meeting Notes**

**3.1.1** Email received from Patricia Warren 11 April 2007, referring to Item 5.1:

*"1. That Simple Pleasures explain the criteria used by them to argue that the photograph 'Morning Cast', which won their competition that specifically focussed on the simple pleasures of Brunswick Heads and is most likely to be used in say, their local calendar materials, would be deemed too dark and thus unsuitable for the Yelgun Rest area sign?"*

*"2. Has Simple Pleasures sole property rights on this winning photograph and has the winner of the competition been consulted re Simple Pleasures 14.2.07 position?"*

*"3. It would be remiss of the CLG to embrace the Simple Pleasures campaign as supported by NSW Tourism and the Department of State and Regional Development without acknowledging: (a) the economic imperatives of the state department in particular and (b) the public division caused by the campaign to date."*

*"4. I would also ask that future CLG minutes refer to the Business and tourism group in its proper capacity as a sub-committee of the Chamber of Commerce. It is unfortunate that oftentimes documents may be written and read as though this group is separate and independent of the Chamber."*

### **3.2 Outstanding Actions from Previous Meeting**

There were no outstanding actions to report.

### **4.0 Construction Update and Upcoming Works**

Will Macdonald used photos of the project to highlight the progress achieved to date.

Points included: -

- Finishing works such as installation of wire rope barriers, street lighting and landscaping are proceeding.
- An update on demolition of the old Brunswick River bridge.
- The northern bank of the Brunswick River, underneath the new bridge, has now been landscaped.
- Yelgun Interchange bridge number 1 now has throw screens installed. Lighting and asphalt has also been installed in this area.

- Progress on the retaining walls north of Rajah Road.
- Stone Mastic Asphalt surfacing is currently being placed along various lengths of the project.
- The Brunswick Heads Bypass section is close to completion and the pavement wearing surface will be concrete only as it is sufficiently far enough away from the nearest sensitive noise receivers.
- The Billinudgel shared pedestrian / cycle overpass now has many of its lights installed and will be open towards the end of the project.
- Line marking is progressing very well and the Yelgun Interchange offload ramp is currently being marked.

**Q.** How thick is the Stone Mastic Asphalt wearing course?

**A.** 30mm.

**Q.** What will be happening with all the rubbish around the project?

**A.** As works are being progressively completed, this is in the process of progressively being cleaned up and removed – the clean up process is not yet complete. A final clean up of the whole site will be conducted before completion of the project.

**Q.** The temporary lighting tower at Rajah Road has been relocated and is shining in the windows of the units. Could the lights be re-directed or angled to deflect light from nearby residences and more on to the road?

**A.** Yes we will fix this straight away.

**Q.** There are cabbage palms growing in Yelgun Creek bed. Can they be removed – concerned re flooding? Also the entrance to Yelgun needs remedial work.

**A.** After some discussion it was noted that this area was outside of the Brunswick Heads o Yelgun project extent. Peter Borrelli noted that the matter would be passed onto David Purdy who was the appropriate RTA person for maintenance of the Yelgun to Chinderah upgrade.

**Q.** How long will it take to demolish the old Brunswick River bridge?

**A.** Approximately 12 weeks. NSW Maritime Services have been informed, appropriate signage and buoys are in place and advertisements will advise the community when work is due to begin on demolition below the water level which may involve the use of small explosives.

Will MacDonald explained that the rubble would be captured on barges, with protective measures such as silt curtains in place. The debris would then be transferred to an area beside the site compound.

**Q.** When is the seagrass going to be planted out?

**A.** Abigroup and the Department of Primary Industries (Fisheries) are further discussing this issue; with the flooding which occurs, the rehabilitation may take another form.

**Q.** Has notice been put in to the local papers advising people not to jump from the new bridge?

**A.** Yes, an RTA media release was issued to the local media, and it was noted in some papers.

It was noted that there appeared to have been no further activity relating to people jumping off the new bridges.

The upcoming Coolamon Scenic Drive diversion was explained to CLG members. Tunnel Road has been sealed in preparation for the temporary diversion of traffic from Coolamon Scenic Drive commencing 27 June 2007. Coolamon Scenic Drive at its northern end where it intersects with the Pacific Highway will be closed while the last piece of the Pacific Highway upgrade is completed and the new roundabout is built. Variable Message Signs to advise motorists of the changes will be in place prior to Saturday 23 June 2007, advertisements are appearing in all local newspapers and a letterbox drop has also been organised to notify as many people as possible of the changes.

**Q.** At the entrance to Rajah Road, will there be a sea horse sculpture or similar?

**A.** No.

**Q.** What are the ribs on the wall opposite Rajah Road?

**A.** These are the supporting brackets for the clear noise wall panels which are attached to the back of the retaining noise wall.

**Q.** Is the project on target?

**A.** Yes. It's only a fraction behind and that is simply because there modifications and a lot of infrastructure had to be installed in the space of two years.

#### **4.1 Nightworks**

Wendy Dooley advised that there is still a large amount of night and weekend works proposed from now until the upgrade opening. Many of the workers will be working a seven day week, which could include night work on the weekend. CLG members were advised that as always, Abigroup would be notifying potentially affected residents if work needed to be undertaken out of hours. There were no objections raised to this issue.

#### **4.2 Community Open Day**

Janice Smith announced that a joint media release regarding the Community Day to celebrate the project and say "thank you" to the local residents would be held on 8 July 2007. Variable Message Signs will also show this. There will be many activities situated on the upgrade near the Brunswick River bridges and event preparations for the community Fun

Day are underway. Such events will include a community auction with the major item being an autographed NSW Cricket Team cricket bat, souvenir tee shirts, giant sausage sizzle, colouring competition for local primary school students and appearances by Bernie Cinders, Prime Possum and Big Dog, as well as the official ceremony. Fund raising on the day will go towards the Brunswick Valley Volunteer Rescue Association and Brunswick Surf Life Saving Inc.

One carriageway (the north bound) will be used for activities and the other (the south bound) will be used for bus tours and emergency services. People will be able to either walk the road, ride a bike along the new alignment or take the bus tour.

**Q.** Is there going to be an event in the evening on the bridge?

**A.** No.

**Q.** Is there a bicycle race?

**A.** A bike (cycle) activity has been arranged, for the morning (7.30am to 9.00am) of the Fun Day, where any cyclists, including the local cycle clubs, can come along and ride up and down the south bound carriageway free of traffic.

**Q.** Which ministers are coming?

**A.** We are still to be advised who will be coming.

There will be a presentation of the old Brunswick River bridge plaque to the local Historical Society.

**Q.** How long will the event be?

**A.** It depends on feedback from the officials attending but we anticipate that festivities will extend from 9.30am to 2.30pm. The times will be confirmed in the local news papers.

As key stakeholders of the project, all CLG members are invited to attend the day's festivities.

**Q.** Has the local Brunswick River bridge been officially named?

**A.** Although there has been comment in the newspapers, there is still ongoing dialogue with Byron Shire Council. It is anticipated that the bridge name will be unveiled on the Community Fun Day.

## **5.0 Yelgun Rest Area**

Rachel Sadler (RTA) presented an update on the Rest Area notice boards. There would be three AO panels and Rachel stressed these were still in draft stage.

- One panel will feature an aerial depiction with facts and figures e.g. how many cubic metres of concrete were used, date project approval was gained etc. It will also illustrate key features such as the Billinudgel shared pedestrian / cycle overpass.

- The second panel will focus on the three bridges over the Brunswick River. It will cover the history of river crossings and the community farewell to the old bridge.
- The third panel will feature environmental issues e.g. a species list for the local area, the RTA's translocation work, compensatory habitat for the project and the story of the pied oyster catcher. This board is significant as the RTA leads with compensatory habitat initiatives.

**Q.** Will it feature the microbats?

**A.** No, not likely at this stage.

On the reverse on these panels: -

- Local and regional key attractions and places to visit. This panel has been designed with NSW Tourism and local Chamber of Commerce input.
- The second panel will be an initiative to assist motorists to stay alert. It will be an "entertainment" panel and feature puzzles and 3D pictures. Although there have been considerable copyright issues, the RTA felt that, as a safety issue, something should be provided for adults to stimulate their minds. This will be a first for a rest area in NSW. The answers to the puzzles will be on the RTA website.
- The last panel will feature the indigenous and European history of the area as it relates to the project.

**Comment:** Please make sure that the bridge is not referred to as the "Byron" bridge as was on the Northern Star masthead.

Janice explained that advertisements by subcontractors would be given to the media and an editorial would be provided by the RTA who will make it very clear that the bridges are at Brunswick Heads.

Janice further explained that the information boards need to be in place for a long time so must be resistant to fading from sunlight and be as anti-graffiti as possible.

**Comment:** If boards were installed specifically for people to 'tag' perhaps there would be less graffiti.

It is unlikely that this idea could be accommodated at this late stage of the project.

**Q.** Will there be any Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) in the Rest Area?

**A.** No.

**Q.** Any indication of a date for the opening of the Rest Area?

**A.** It will take at least 6 – 8 weeks allowing for the fit out e.g. toilets etc., after the opening of the Upgrade.

**Q.** So as part of the demolition, have you found any of the old bridge to have any concrete cancer?

**A.** No, the reinforcing in the bridge looks alright.

## **6.0 General Business**

**6.1** Sue Stirton was invited to read out an email sent to Abigroup from Greg Milham, referring to unresolved issues he has with Abigroup and RTA.

*"For the record these meetings have been informative and on the surface seem to answer most objections however there have been many problems unknown to all regarding dust and vibration issues here at Billinudgel which have affected Sanctum and other businesses. Unfortunately these have been set aside by RTA and Abi and we reached a critical situation here at Sanctum whereby we needed to close and seal our factory from airborne roadwork pollutants late last year.*

*Contrary to Will's comments that this was indeed a "set up" to extract compensation it has cost us all dearly and this has forced us to make some difficult personal and business financial decisions.*

*Thank you all for your involvement. I have enjoyed many of the meetings however I believe in many circumstances we had little or no say in any decision-making that had consequences. The next flood will determine if the decision to call the 2005 flood a 1 in 500 year rather than a 1 in 100 year (so work could continue) was made purely for expediency and costs."*

Peter Borrelli responded that many of Greg's comments had been addressed and noted his disappointment that Greg wasn't at the meeting in person to discuss his issues.

Sue Stirton empathised with how Greg felt regarding the road closures and the effect on business. She stated she will miss the workers but the road work has driven away other regular customers. No-one could appreciate the impact unless they were in the same position.

Wendy Dooley said with any construction such as this there would be a possible loss of custom. She herself had been in exactly the same situation once and it was inevitable that once the workforce left the area, the full impact would be felt.

It is unfortunate that the matter cannot be resolved but it is appropriate that the issue can be aired.

**6.2** Wendy read out an email from Malcolm Murray, thanking the group for their friendship and input over the project. He wrote *"..... the entire Abigroup have earned nothing but praise for their commitment to the project. I am sure that all of us have been most impressed and sing their praise loud and widely."*

Colin Tarbox said that he has appreciated being able to attend these meetings and hear Will's presentations and Peter Borrelli's expert advice. He has appreciated being briefed and the cooperation; he noted that the process is so important and it had also been a pleasure to meet everyone.

**6.3** Before closing the meeting, Wendy Dooley thanked all members of the Community Liaison Group for their participation. The project had been through some extremely challenging times but hopefully everyone could understand why certain decisions had been made. Although this was the final CLG meeting, members were advised that their comments and queries could still be directed to the 1800 number.

Peter Borrelli, who had been involved with the project for the past 7-1/2 years, stated that he and Ron Holmes (RTA) felt that this was the best project on the Pacific Highway. Peter noted that whilst he was aware some people in the community were not accepting of the route, RTA had worked extremely hard to continue to consult and address the community's concerns in the completed project. He noted that one of the benefits of the CLG had been the community interaction where members could put forward and discuss different views openly and that he appreciated the respect for one another and good spirit in which this had been done.

As with the commissioning of any major infrastructure project there will be teething problems and some fine tuning is anticipated but the fundamental objectives of improved road safety, superior travel conditions, improved environmental outcomes, saving lives and improving local conditions for the community and in particular separating through and local traffic, will have been met.

On behalf of the RTA, Peter Borrelli reiterated his thanks to the CLG including the many former members and those that could not be here tonight, hoped that they would all enjoy the new project and its benefits and farewelled the group.