

Meeting Record

Project:	Coffs Harbour Highway Planning Strategy	Reference:	1093.57.GE
Location:	Norm Jordan Pavilion, Pacific Highway, Coffs Harbour	Date:	21 March 2002

Present: Apology: Copy: Name:

SOUTHERN CFG			
✓			David Doyle
✓			Wayne O'Brien (proxy Wilson Dale attended)
✓			Trish Welsh
✓			Murray Williams
✓			Bruce Partridge
✓			Gillian French (proxy Jenny Oliver attended)
✓			Ron Woodlands
✓			Gail Latham
✓			Marlene Jacobs
✓			Andrew Huggett
✓			Peter Lubans (proxy Ernie Armstrong attended)
✓			Hugh Saddleton
✓			Paul Norton
✓			Ron Smith
✓			David Pike (proxy Ron Gray attended)
✓			Tom Hamilton-Foster
✓			Peter Jackson
PROJECT TEAM			
✓			Wes Stevenson RTA
✓			Bob Higgins RTA
✓			Robert Kook RTA
	✓		Jill Christy RTA

	✓		René Burkart	RTA
✓			Tim Paterson	Connell Wagner
✓			Rosemary Russell	Connell Wagner
	✓		Bruce Penman	Connell Wagner
✓			Barry Hancock	Connell Wagner
✓			Andrew Smith	Pramax Communications
✓			Bill Wood	Coffs Harbour City Council
	✓		Rick Bennell	Coffs Harbour City Council
	✓		George Stulle	Coffs Harbour City Council
	✓		Malcolm Imrie	PlanningNSW
	✓		John Finlay	PlanningNSW
	✓		Jo Gardner	PlanningNSW
Recorded By: Pramax Communications				Total Pages: 6
Subject: Community Focus Group Meeting No 3 (Southern CFG)				

Details:

Action By/Date:

1. INTRODUCTION

Meeting opened at 5.40pm. Andrew Smith welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Andrew drew attention to the current information release and the two options now under close scrutiny. This information release has been supported by setting up six displays and 12 community notice boards. In addition there are currently some 4,000 letters being sent to property owners along the identified corridor and existing highway who are potentially impacted.

Next week 6 public forums will be run over two evenings to give members of the public an opportunity to come along and speak directly with project team staff about the project.

Andrew went on to clarify the main purposes for the meeting.

- 1) To give an up-date on the corridor bypass announcement and give some information on what is to happen next.
- 2) To move into workshop sessions where we look at the large-scale maps, make comments, work out where do we go from here and identify the issues and factors that need to be taken into consideration.

2. NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

- Gillian French sent a memo to Pramax regarding the Minutes of Meeting 12 February. The CFG went through Gillian's memo. The meeting notes were accepted with Gillian French's memo to be attached as an amendment with the following changes to her memo. The BCRs quoted on p.2 as 2% and 1% should read 2 and 1 respectively – benefit cost ratio is a ratio, not a percentage. The statement that "the RTA confirmed that they have never before looked 20 years in advance at a project" should not be included as it is incorrect.

Attach copy of memo to meeting notes

Details:

Action By/Date:

- Andrew reminded the group that the meeting notes were not “minutes” as such and not a word for word account, but a written record covering the main issues discussed and decisions made.

3. MATTERS ARISING

- In relation to Gillian’s memo “RE NO. 5 – TECHNICAL INVESTIGATIONS” – the RTA has a policy document regarding land acquisition. What René Burkart was saying last meeting is that once a corridor has been chosen there is a statutory process for acquisition that is described in this document. This document is available through the web-site or by calling the 1800 63 63 63 number.
- Gillian French requested that taping of meetings be reviewed. Andrew Smith reminded the group that this was not a voting group, it is a consensus group to provide feedback from the community. Taping is technically difficult to do in such a large forum. Andrew said he would endeavour to ensure the meeting notes were as accurate as possible. If any member of the group needed to raise issues in relation to the meeting notes then they should contact Pramax prior to the meeting.

Further correspondence was received from Hugh Saddleton and Wayne O’Brien.

Attached letters to be included with notes of the meeting

- There seems to have been some misunderstanding at the last meeting about what was confidential information and not to be made public and what was not. There is obviously a need for the project team to clearly state what information is confidential and still in draft form.
- If a western bypass is chosen, who maintains the existing highway? Project team replied that this would be negotiated between Council and the RTA. The RTA would usually retain maintenance of traffic lights.
- It was made clear that projects such as the Link Road, Hogbin Drive etc., were all projects that were part of the current planning program and it was assumed they would be finished before the Coffs Harbour highway upgrade would begin.
- Wayne O’Brien requested that Peter Jackson’s membership of the CFG be reviewed. As Peter is an employee of the RTA, Wayne felt he may have a conflict of interest. Wilson Dale who was there as a proxy for Wayne stated that Wayne felt very strongly that in other forums this would not be allowed.

Peter was given the opportunity to reply. He stated that when they were asked to introduce themselves at the first meeting, he had clearly stated he was an RTA employee but that he was here as a community representative. He had been open and honest from the beginning. He has a lot of valuable background and experience to contribute in these sort of issues.

Andrew Smith pointed out that regardless of where people work, the CFG is a consensus group not a decision-making group. There were three independent community members on the panel that selected the CFG members, to ensure a balanced and appropriate selection. The CFG agreed that Peter had the right to remain on the CFG as a representative community member.

- Wayne had also asked to make a presentation to the group to address points of:
 - 1) Deficiency in the process of the selection of the inner corridor
 - 2) Further planning implications for Coffs Harbour.
- Andrew asked the group how they would like requests for presentations from CFG members to be handled. How do they want to deal with information from different interest areas?

Details:

- CFG agreed that there needed to be a right to express a view. It was decided that information should be put into writing and be circulated to all CFG members before the meeting and be put on the Agenda for discussion.
- Wilson Dale felt that it was a contradiction that the CFG could not discuss something without prior warning when all the information they are receiving tonight is not sent out prior to the meeting.
- It was pointed out the purpose of CFG meetings is for the project team to share information with the CFG, some of which is confidential and not for general distribution. It was agreed that, where possible, information would be distributed to CFG members prior to meetings.
- Wilson Dale presented the information from Roselands Action Group. The project team said they would need some time to look at the information before they could respond.

Action By/Date:

Action: CFG members wishing to make presentation need to get the information to Andrew so it can be circulated to CFG members before the meeting.

Attach Roselands Action Group information as an appendix.

4. CORRIDOR ANNOUNCEMENT RELEASE

- Tim Paterson ran through overheads: SOUTHERN COFFS HARBOUR AREA – COMPARING THE CORRIDORS: Key Issues / Influences; Suggested assessment criteria.
- The working papers are available on the Internet, and copies are also at Coffs Harbour, Toormina and Woolgoolga Libraries, Coffs Harbour Council and the RTA Motor Registry for viewing.
- Tim pointed out again that all the projects such as Hogbin Drive, Link Road extension, Bonville Road extension and the Highway from Sapphire to Woolgoolga are assumed to be works that are in progress over the next 5-10 years and will be completed by the time the Coffs bypass is undertaken.

Attach copy of overheads to meeting notes.

5. REFINEMENT OF INNER CORRIDOR

- Overhead - Main Studies
- Question from CFG member whether the studies will be out of date in 20 years time when planning for building the bypass has commenced?
- The studies represent a significant work commitment. They won't be outdated – the geotechnical studies will not change and studies on issues such as biodiversity will not need to be as detailed as they would be in an EIS. The studies are basically to see if there is anything that needs to be investigated further.
- CFG raised the point that their role was to assess the three corridors, take this information back to the community and bring feedback to the project team. The CFG has not had a chance to go back to the community and give them the information and bring to the project team which option the community wants. Already a decision has been made that the inner corridor and existing highway are the only feasible options. How have the project team got to this decision without consultation from the CFG, isn't that supposed to be part of our role?
- Tim Paterson replied that the group had established a process and the process had not wavered, but been shortened and advanced. There has been continuous activity, release of public information, two CFG meetings where information was given and discussed and recorded as well.
- There had also been a very strong request from the group to get on with it and get some answers. Project team felt they had to move quickly in response to what the community wanted which was to know where the bypass corridor was going to be.
- The working papers are now available on the Internet (since 20 March). These should answer a lot of questions on how the project team assessed the corridors.

Attach overhead 'Main Studies' to meeting notes

Details:

Action By/Date:

- A CFG member encouraged all other members to urge the community to fill in the evaluation forms as many people have an opinion and need to be encouraged to fill the forms in. Could the project team please make sure that the forms are available and topped up regularly.
- Sapphire to Woolgoolga is slowly being brought into line with Coffs Harbour. There are four corridors that are being investigated more closely. Some of the same investigations that are happening for the Coffs Harbour section will be also done concurrently in the Sapphire to Woolgoolga section. The next release of information for Woolgoolga will be in July and hopefully a final conclusion drawn in November this year.
- CFG asked if the same thing would happen to Woolgoolga where a choice is made without too much discussion of which corridor the community finds preferable.
- Project team response - Woolgoolga has already had four CFG meetings. We are providing outcomes and studies progressively, and discuss options and pros and cons. It will be early July before some form of conclusion is made and results are available.
- The Sapphire to Woolgoolga highway is only a single carriageway and has progressively deteriorated to the stage where it needs priority attention.
- The Council, RTA and PlanningNSW also decided Coffs Harbour and Sapphire to Woolgoolga planning should be at the same stage. Accelerating the study process has been difficult.
- The outer corridor in the northern section has a number of constraints and a lot of information is already available regarding biodiversity issues. There is a lot of existing material which provides information regarding these corridors.
- The outer corridor in the northern section was suggested by an individual and raised at the Woolgoolga CFG meeting. It attracted support from this group and the northern community and was supported as a legitimate option.
- The Bucca community is affected by this outer corridor option.
- Andrew Smith said that there would be overlap of information as there is a definite relationship between the CFG groups. He spoke of working out a "buddy" system so that information could be shared between the groups and everyone represented.

6. UPGRADING EXISTING HIGHWAY

- Tim Paterson showed overheads: EXISTING HIGHWAY CORRIDOR - IDENTIFYING LONG TERM SCENARIOS: Some key variables / uncertainties; A Base Case / Minimum Change Strategy; Moderate Upgrade Strategy; Major Upgrade Strategy (Very Long Term).
- Request from CFG to have someone with planning experience to tell us what the city will look like in 20 years time, how far is the city going to stretch, will the inner corridor be in the middle of the city in 20 years? Coffs Harbour is the size of the Gold Coast 30 years ago.
- Bill Woods - the city centre will over time become a very densely populated area. It is a strategy that has been adopted world wide – higher density living. As the city centre develops there will be residential living over the shops. The council looks along way ahead with zoning. We need to look at the existing highway and try to achieve a framework of how to go forward.
- A CFG member felt that activity times should be set for when the population reaches a certain level as the trigger to set off these improvements rather than a "date".
- CFG felt that Coffs Harbour would really have been let down by the RTA if a lot of this upgrading of the existing highway was not done before 20 years time regardless of a new bypass.

Attach overheads to meeting notes

Note – to be arranged

Details:

Action By/Date:

- Tim Paterson reinforced assumptions underlying work that tunnels over the full length was not viable in the planning time-frame and that elevated viaducts were assumed to be unacceptable.

7. DISCUSSION SESSION

The meeting divided into two groups to look at and discuss maps of the proposed corridors. Issues regarding the upgrading of the highway and the development of the inner corridor were noted and taken away by the project team for integration into the development of route concepts / options.

8. NEXT CFG MEETING

RTA Property Manager, Mr Martin Howard, will address the next meeting of the Community Focus Group.

9. CLOSE OF MEETING

Meeting closed at 8.30pm

Next Meeting: **Wednesday 24 April 2002**