

Meeting Record

Project:	Coffs Harbour Highway Planning Strategy	Reference:	1093.50
Location:	Coffs Harbour Catholic Club, West High Street, Coffs Harbour	Date:	30 April 2003

Present: Apology: Copy: Name:

Interest/Groups represented:

SOUTHERN CFG

✓			David Doyle	Existing Highway interests
			Bob Bunting (WITHDRAWN)	Inner West Coffs residents interests
✓			Trish Welsh	Inner West Coffs residents interests
✓			Murray Williams	Utilities interests
✓			Phil Doyle	Outer West Coffs residents interests
✓			Gillian French	Korora residents interests
		✓	Steven French (proxy)	Korora residents interests
✓			Gail Latham	Bucca Valley residents interests
✓			Marlene Jacobs	Boambee West residents interests
			Peter Lubans	Business & Tourism interests
		✓	Ernie Armstrong (proxy)	Business & Tourism interests
	✓		Hugh Saddleton	Development interests
	✓		Paul Norton	Emergency Services interests
	✓		Ron Smith	Environmental interests
✓			David Pike	Agricultural interests
		✓	Ron Gray (proxy)	Agricultural interests
✓			Tom Hamilton-Foster	Commercial interests
	✓		Peter Jackson	Infrastructure interests
✓			Wilson Dale	Inner West Coffs residents interests

PROJECT TEAM				
✓			Chris Clark	RTA
	✓		Bob Higgins	RTA
✓			Peter Hurst	RTA
✓			Tim Paterson	Connell Wagner
✓			Rosemary Russell	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
	✓		John Finlay	Planning NSW
✓			Jo Gardner	Planning NSW
Recorded By: Pramax Communications				Total Pages: 15
Subject: Community Focus Group Meeting No 9 (Southern CFG)				

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Andrew Smith opened the meeting at 5.44 pm

2 NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

- 2.1 CFG member Trish Welsh referred to Item 4.7: "Nobody said the Inner Corridor was going through this residential area. Other CFG members disagreed with this." She said it should be changed to "Some CFG members disagreed with this".
- 2.2 CFG member Gillian French referred to p4, Item 4.23 and suggested that it also be added that members asked for copies of the overheads to show to their communities and the response was that they could not be provided till mid-year or July.
- 2.3 Andrew Smith said the request could be kept on the Agenda under "Business Arising".
- 2.4 CFG member Wilson Dale referred to Item 5.10 and said the second sentence should read: "EPA standards have an effective result of 10 per cent of the population will be highly annoyed by the noise level."
- 2.5 CFG member Gillian French said a comment was made at the previous meeting in regard to an upgrade of the existing highway. She said the comment was that the challenge would be how to cope with buildings and how to reorientate some of the

Provision to CFG members of "work in progress" overheads from previous meeting to be kept on Agenda under "Business Arising"

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buildings. She said perhaps it belonged with p6 Item 5.35. She said another comment that the last stage of the highway upgrade would look at mixing local and through traffic also was not noted. She continued: *"4.70. Tunnel to come back out to Diggers Beach Road. And the response was: "Yes, because of the coastal setting and residential area."*

- 2.6 Andrew Smith: So you want a bit of background as to why he said yes?
- 2.7 Tim Paterson (Connell Wagner): I think it missed the number one issue and that is, the terrain.
- 2.8 CFG member Wilson Dale: And the alignment, of course.
- 2.9 Tim Paterson: Perhaps it was in earlier.
- 2.10 CFG member Marlene Jacobs: *It was in earlier.*

3 BUSINESS ARISING

- 3.1 At this point, Andrew Smith invited Chris Clark (RTA) to introduce Peter Hurst, Acting Manager of the Pacific Highway Office. Chris advised Peter was standing in for Bob Higgins for about a month.

3.2 Copy of butcher's paper from Peer Review Workshop.

- 3.3 Rick Bennell (CHCC) indicated he had spoken to the consultant Geoff Smythe who had looked for the butcher's paper. Rick said he did not expect it would be found.
- 3.4 CFG member Trish Welsh: With anybody in business, it is automatically filed. So where do we go from here? This was February, and we are now in April.
- 3.5 Rick Bennell responded that the consultant believed the record was accurate.
- 3.6 CFG member Trish Welsh: *I am sorry, the record is not accurate. I am not happy about it. Could I have it recorded in the Minutes?* She agreed the matter should now be deleted from the items under Business Arising.

Rick Bennell confirmed on May 1 that the consultant no longer had the butcher's paper. Nevertheless the consultant was confident that his notes were an accurate record of what was recorded on the paper but not necessarily all that participants said.

- 3.7 CFG member Gillian French asked how members could therefore respond to the "missing bits" of the record of the Council-arranged workshop?

- 3.8 Andrew Smith suggested response should be direct to Council and any issue arising from that relevant to the CFG process could be submitted as a future agenda item.

3.9 Agricultural Land Use Report

- 3.10 Tim Paterson indicated the report would be dealt with in one of the Working Papers that would be released in conjunction with the release of the refined options later in the year.

3.11 Procedure for placing Notes of CFG Meetings on Website

- 3.12 Andrew Smith indicated the feedback from the other two CFG groups was that the current procedure of posting the meeting Notes on the website once they had been provided to CFG members should continue. Amendments to the Notes would be made at the following meeting.
- 3.13 Some discussion followed.
- 3.14 Andrew Smith indicated that, at a previous meeting, the group had agreed that it

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would accept having the Notes a week before the next meeting. The Notes would be provided as soon as they could.

- 3.15 CFG member Trish Welsh indicated it had been eight weeks since the last meeting, which was too long.

- 3.16 CFG member Gillian French suggested a small ad in the newspaper could advise the community of the availability of the Notes on the website.

- 3.17 Andrew Smith advised the suggestion could be dealt with under the agenda item of Media Release from this Meeting.

3.18 **Visual Impact Issues**

- 3.19 Rosemary Russell (Connell Wagner) said this item was similar to the agricultural report. A study was being done.

3.20 **Geotechnical Investigations**

- 3.21 Tim Paterson indicated the same status applied to the geotechnical studies which were in an advanced stage and would be released in the Working Papers. Some of the information could possibly be presented to the group at its next meeting.

- 3.22 CFG member Wilson Dale queried whether models or computer techniques could be used to present information to the community?

- 3.23 Tim Paterson responded that physical models had not been contemplated on cost grounds.

- 3.24 Chris Clark indicated that, particularly for the upgrade of the highway through town where the design involved overbridges and interchanges, photographs of a typical existing interchange could be used.

- 3.25 Tim Paterson said it was important to keep in mind that what was being undertaken was an assessment from a planning point of view. It was a strategic assessment. It was not locking in the routes.

- 3.26 Discussion followed on the merits of using cross-sections to illustrate some of the cuts involved in the next information release.

3.27 **Update on Heavy Vehicles Servicing Coffs Harbour**

- 3.28 Chris Clark indicated that information on heavy vehicles was presented to the last meeting. An update on that was that there had been a submission during the route options exhibition for the Sapphire to Woolgoolga project which had involved a survey of 11 trucking companies. The companies had depots in Coffs Harbour and their vehicles were involved in the transportation of refrigerated items, logging, dangerous goods, fuel and gas, etc. In general terms, the net result was that about a third of the vehicles they operated serviced the local area.

- 3.29 CFG member Trish Welsh asked how many B-Doubles travelled through Coffs Harbour as opposed to those that stopped? *You were going to source that information.*

- 3.30 Chris Clark responded that of the 11 companies, about 6 B-Doubles serviced the local area.

- 3.31 Tim Paterson reminded the group that this should not be taken as the definitive answer – it was a snapshot of B-Doubles. It was unknown if this was out by 10 or

Subsequent review of the information provided showed that between 8 and 11 B-doubles operated by the 11 Companies serviced Coffs Harbour each day. No information is available on the total number of B-doubles that pass through each day.

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50 per cent.

- 3.32 Chris Clark also said the information was only from the 11 companies and no information was available from the other companies that did not have depots in town but still serviced Coffs Harbour.
- 3.33 He corrected the total number of heavy vehicles – 150 were B-Doubles and 100 were semis.
- 3.34 Discussion followed. CFG member Wilson Dale queried, if the larger trucks were coming to a depot, it didn't mean they would go through town if there was an alternative route. It would depend on the location of the depot.
- 3.35 Chris Clark said he believed Lindsay Bros would be the only depot that was south of Englands Road.
- 3.36 CFG member Trish Welsh asked, regarding Item 5.25 of the previous Notes, whether there were any preliminary results from the Christmas holiday period?
- 3.37 Chris Clark responded that on Christmas Day, the number went down to about 100. However the submission regarding heavy vehicles had indicated that during peak demand periods, school holidays and long weekends, etc, the volume of B-Doubles and semi-trailers actually servicing the town could double.
- 3.38 CFG member Phil Doyle: It therefore adds more force to cleaning up the traffic woes in town. If you double up the trucks on holidays, Easter, Christmas, school holidays, that means you are going to have a bigger stuff-up as far as the traffic is concerned.
- 3.39 Chris Clark: Yes, as the town grows and develops you have more and more traffic coming into town to service it.
- 3.40 **Update on towns with 6-lane highways running through**
- 3.41 Tim Paterson indicated a sample location was Wollongong. Some of the others ranged from major metropolitan areas to relatively small urban communities in rural settings such as Murrumbateman, west of Canberra, which had a population of about 1000.
- 3.42 CFG member Trish Welsh: *Anything around 60,000?*
- 3.43 Tim Paterson continued. There were smaller ones such as Coolongolook, moving up to large towns such as Raymond Terrace, Oak Flats and Albion Park, south of Wollongong. Albury was a major urban centre down on the Victorian border.
- 3.44 Peter Hurst: The population of Albury is 70,000; Wodonga 30,000.
- 3.45 Tim Paterson indicated that at Wollongong, there was a strip of urban communities that were traversed by the upgrade of the Princes Highway and, within the greater Sydney metropolitan area, many urban precincts were traversed by the M5, F6 and Cumberland Highway.
- 3.46 CFG member Trish Welsh asked how many of those had an 80km/h speed limit through the centre of town?
- 3.47 Tim Paterson responded that Wollongong, Coolongolook and Albury did precisely that to some degree with speed limits of between 70-100km/h.
- 3.48 CFG member Gillian French said one key difference was that many of the

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examples were traditionally bigger places that were urbanised and industrialised but Coffs Harbour was a tourist town, with bananas, etc. It might change if there was an urban motorway going through the centre of town. Calling something an urban motorway conjured up differences from a dual carriageway.

3.49 **Observers at Steering Committee Meetings**

3.50 Councillor Bill Wood advised that Council had decided that having a forum involving the members of the three CFGs and Council, where there could be an interchange of information, would be a more productive process than having observers at Steering Committee meetings. The forum had not been arranged yet due to pressures to do with the Draft Management Plan and Budget etc. A letter would go out soon.

3.51 **Contact with CFG Members re continuing membership**

3.52 Andrew Smith advised that members who had not attended a number of recent meetings had been contacted re continuing their membership. Bob Bunting had left the area and thought he had notified someone. That hadn't happened. He was now about to formally resign from the group.

3.53 CFG member Gillian French: How many times has Peter Jackson attended?

3.54 Andrew Smith: I don't know.

3.55 CFG member Trish Welsh: Does the Charter state how many meetings people miss before they are off?

3.56 Andrew Smith responded he thought it was two but the charter did not state automatic suspension. The relevant members had been contacted.

3.57 CFG member Gillian French: It might only be three times.

3.58 CFG member Gail Latham said she believed one person had contacted Pramax regarding filling a vacancy. Would a vacancy be filled?

3.59 Lengthy discussion followed. CFG member Murray Williams indicated he had resigned and knew of someone who could fill his representation which was for Karangi and Planning Developments for State Government Authorities.

3.60 CFG member Gail Latham said the person she had referred to lived at Sapphire and also had a property at Bucca. He wanted to represent both those areas. She wanted it noted that she would like consideration given to having another representative from the Sapphire/Bucca area and believed that now was a relevant time for that to occur.

3.61 Andrew Smith indicated the charter set out that if a member resigned, the CFG had to decide if their representation needed to be replaced. In the case of Bob Bunting, he had represented the Roselands Estate area. It also had been discussed that, as the project developed, it would be considered whether there might be a need to introduce new players or other key representation. The two should not be confused.

3.62 The group agreed that Bob Bunting should be replaced with a representative from his area.

3.63 Further discussion followed on the composition of the CFG and the number of members representing a geographical area. Andrew Smith reminded members the

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CFG was not a voting forum and not the only means of liaising in regard to the project.

- 3.64 CFG member Gail Latham indicated she felt the project still had some way to progress and she faced large demands representing and communicating with the communities she represented.
- 3.65 Andrew Smith suggested that the particular application referred to could be re-examined and, if it was felt there was merit, it could be brought back to the next meeting. He also offered to discuss ways to assist Gail.
- 3.66 **Earlier Receipt of Minutes**
- 3.67 Andrew Smith said it would be endeavoured to get the meeting Notes out as early as possible. The previous Notes had been caught up with the completion of the submissions report for Sapphire to Woolgoolga which had been a lengthy process in itself.
- 3.68 **Hard copy of presentation material to be available at meeting**
- 3.69 Andrew Smith indicated there were perhaps three or four overhead transparencies of which copies were not available tonight.
- 3.70 CFG member Trish Welsh said copies of overheads were not available for most meetings.
- 3.71 Andrew Smith indicated the information had only become available that afternoon.
- 3.72 Rosemary Russell suggested the overheads could be sent out, say, the next day prior to the meeting Notes.
- 3.73 Chris Clark agreed there was a lot of value in providing hard copies of material as soon as they could and, if possible, prior to meetings. He said some of the information was confidential, for example, some of the options for the Inner Corridor and the alignments of the corridor because they had the potential to impact directly on people's properties.
- 3.74 It was suggested that the venue's photocopier be used during the break to provide hard copies to members.
- 3.75 **VMS/VE Outcomes**
- 3.76 Councillor Bill Wood advised the Steering Committee had received copies of the VM and VE workshop reports that day and they had been accepted for distribution to the workshop participants. Copies also would be available to the members of the three CFGs.
- 3.77 Jo Gardner advised the VM and VE Workshop reports were one input into the final route selection decision-making process.
- 3.78 CFG member Gillian French questioned information in a newspaper article saying that Options A and B had been ruled out. She also questioned the timing of the workshops before the assessment of community feedback.
- 3.79 Councillor Bill Wood responded that there had been no conclusion reached regarding the Sapphire to Woolgoolga project, and no rejection of any of the options.
- 3.80 Jo Gardner said a press release had been provided to the media that said a Value

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Management Workshop had been held, that the findings of that workshop was that options C and D performed better, based on agreed criteria, than options A and B – A, because of environmental factors and B, because of agricultural factors. She said information regarding the community feedback had been provided to the VM workshop. The final report was expected to be released in June. The issues raised in the submissions would still be considered by the Steering Committee as part of the decision-making process on a preferred option from Sapphire to Woolgoolga.

- 3.81 Chris Clark said submissions on the project were accepted at any time. He offered to provide a quick rundown of the information provided to the Value Management Workshop regarding the submissions received.
- 3.82 CFG member Gillian French asked if the Coffs CFG members also would receive a copy of the submissions report? Jo Gardner responded that an advertisement would be placed advising of the report's availability. It also would be sent to all CFG members, placed in libraries and posted on the project website.
- 3.83 Chris Clark gave an overhead presentation on the report. He said the report graphed the issues raised in submissions which had provided an opportunity for very up to date information. The information was updated daily and was the sort of information that was provided to participants at the VMS.
- 3.84 CFG member Wilson Dale queried whether the Steering Committee had made a decision regarding 10 points presented by Council at the VM workshop. The first point was that the north and south sections should be considered as one project. Mr Dale said the Value Management therefore should be done on one project, not on half a project. That was a major criticism of the project to date.
- 3.85 Rick Bennell responded that the Steering Committee had agreed to have a meeting to work through the 10 points.
- 3.86 Councillor Bill Wood said holding one VM workshop or one VE workshop to examine the whole project would mean delaying the process by another six months. The other way was to try to have them run parallel and eventually they would catch up. From a personal point of view, he did not believe it desirable to delay the whole process.
- 3.87 Tim Paterson said, in relation to the issues Council provided to the VM, each one of the points was considered in the morning session on Day 1. They were presented and then one of the working groups, on which Council was represented by Mark Ferguson, went through and looked at how the issues raised there could be reflected in the evaluation criteria that was used in the Day 2 assessment. In relation to the whole project being assessed as one, there also was an acceptance in the VM workshop that the assessment of the northern part could progress without compromising the assessment of the southern part. More specifically, the cross-over options that existed in the general Moonee area were quite apparent to the participants and to continue with the assessments in the north did not compromise what was happening in the south.
- 3.88 CFG member Wilson Dale said he took the opposite view. He said he had some notes taken by one of the participants which said Coffs Harbour City Council were denied the opportunity to make a presentation.
- 3.89 Jo Gardner responded that this was not correct and the points were raised by Mark Ferguson at the start of the VM workshop. He clearly said they were Council's position as a result of workshops with council staff and councillors. They were

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addressed in the VM workshop.

- 3.90 Chris Clark also responded that very early in the VM workshop, the three members of the Steering Committee (Council, PlanningNSW and the RTA) gave a presentation of what was important to them. The 10 points were presented by Mark Ferguson and there was no time restriction at all. The intention was to take the Sapphire to Woolgoolga project through to eventual construction. The southern Coffs Harbour section was a planning exercise to identify if a bypass corridor of Coffs Harbour was viable, and if it was, to ensure that the land was set aside so that strategic planning could continue. They were two distinct projects but very much inter-linked. The Steering Committee was proceeding with parallel investigations to ensure that both projects were compatible with each other into the future.
- 3.91 CFG member Trish Welsh queried at what stage the acoustics investigations were at. Tim Paterson responded there would be a Working Paper on that. Trish also queried Item 5.39 in the Notes of the previous meeting and asked what "broadly supported by the community" meant. What was the criteria for acceptance by the community?
- 3.92 Chris Clark responded that it meant there was general support for it, recognising that there would be some people who would not be happy whichever option was chosen.
- 3.93 CFG member Trish Welsh: If you were voting, probably 50 per cent plus 1.
- 3.94 CFG member Wilson Dale: If the majority of the submissions that are put in are counted as part of this process, you can hardly say you have got community support.
- 3.95 Chris Clark: If you look at the submissions we have in the latest round and treat it as a voting process, there is no doubt there is majority support at this point in time for Option A. But if you see the submissions report and how the Options impact on the issues, that tends not to support the 'vote' mentality.
- 3.96 CFG member Trish Welsh said she remained concerned at the lack of media releases providing information about the project.
- 3.97 Andrew Smith suggested it should be raised when the media release from the meeting was dealt with later in the meeting.
- 3.98 CFG member Wilson Dale asked if the project update on trucking results would involve discussion about trucking movement figures and that averaging them ignored the fact that truck movements were concentrated on certain days.
- 3.99 Andrew Smith suggested it should be raised when the item was dealt with.

4 PROJECT UPDATE

4.1 Status and findings of technical investigations

Land Use Planning

- 4.2 Rick Bennell said Council had been working with the Steering Committee to work out how the different highway options impacted on future planning, particularly with the southern section. It had looked at North Boambee Valley with a projected population of 10,000 people. If the highway went through the valley, it would create a barrier to development of the release area. If some of the land was not released,

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there could be a population of about 3,500 which had implications for a number of infrastructure facilities such as school, sports facilities, etc. It was an issue to be sorted out. Similarly, if the option to upgrade the existing highway was considered, there were implications for inner city housing, cultural facilities, community facilities etc.

In West Coffs, there was the "West Coffs Extension" which sought to accommodate about 3000 people. When it was last looked at, the best estimate was that this area could accommodate about 1000 people. The inner corridor would probably render this expansion unviable. The other issue of West Coffs was a proposal for a high school that would be severely impacted if the Inner Corridor was adopted.

North was the Korora Basin and the need to examine how the highway upgrading options could impact upon rural residential areas. Current thinking was that it could still proceed. South of that, there were implications for the connection of Mastracolas Road.

Council had worked on the basis 'what if the inner corridor goes ahead' and, giving consideration to the option of upgrading the existing highway, he believed upgrading the existing highway through the City Centre would be a tragedy for its growth and development. It would disengage the western side from the eastern side.

- 4.3 CFG member Gail Latham: When is the new Coffs Harbour Strategic Management Plan coming out?
- 4.4 Cr Bill Wood indicated it would probably be passed the following night and placed on public exhibition as a draft with provisos relating to decisions on the highway planning strategy.
- 4.5 Further discussion followed.
- 4.6 CFG member Gillian French: You are talking about reducing populations from 10,000 to 3,000 to no longer enable populations that you originally thought. It seems you are saying whether we go with a highway upgrade or the corridor, both of those will severely impact population growth. Will the Council consider another Option which will not have that level of impact?
- 4.7 Rick Bennell: The jury is still out. No decision on that as yet. At the moment we are looking at the options, the Inner Corridor, and the existing highway.
- 4.8 CFG member Gillian French: When you say the jury is out, Mark Ferguson stood up in November and said he wanted all three to be considered equally. So why is Council not considering all three routes and still only considering two?
- 4.9 Rick Bennell: We are, in part. The Coastal Ridge Way follows pretty much the same alignment as the Central Corridor. In terms of the Coastal Ridge Way it does not affect the urban planning.
- 4.10 CFG member Gillian French: So the comment would be made somewhere within this plan, then, that the original Boambee Valley population was to be 10,000, but with the Inner Corridor it would only be 3,000.
- 4.11 Rick Bennell: No, I did not say that. The original proposal was for 10,000 people. That was 5 years ago. If you look at the Boambee Valley now it would be lucky to support that. Constraints such as Koala habitat and bushfire issues have limited its potential. The same applies to Stages 2 and 3. So the ambition of 12,000 is not

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going to be met in this area.

- 4.12 CFG member Gillian French asked, therefore it was not just the highway planning strategy which had constrained possible future populations?
- 4.13 Rick Bennell: Not just the highway. You have a flood plain. You have Koala land. The game has changed a lot since that initial planning. We could probably never get support for a high school. Ideally we would like a population of sufficient size to support a primary school, not necessarily in the Boambee Valley, because it is such a good facility to the community.
- 4.14 CFG member Gillian French: What is concerning is that in November last at the Norm Jordan Pavilion, the motion was put that the North Boambee Valley be considered and it was not until last Council meeting that it was confirmed that these three were being considered equally. The comment should be made, 'yes, this area will be affected by the Coastal Ridge Way, this area won't', and so on.
- 4.15 Rick Bennell said Council also had a biodiversity strategy which would also have to be examined in the context of the highway planning strategy.
- 4.16 CFG member Wilson Dale, asked how much discussion was going on with people in relation to zoning in the Inner Corridor potentially being light industry? He said changing the nature of the area to light industry and commercial development only compounded things.
- 4.17 Rick Bennell: I am trying to be as up front as possible; nothing has been looked at in fine detail. We are looking at better use of the land than just vacant green space as a buffer. I think we owe that to the community as the best use of the land. It might end up as Recreation, I don't know but we are looking at other uses apart from green space.
- 4.18 CFG member Trish Welsh: So we have to take it that the Inner Corridor is going around rather than in the middle of Coffs. So you can have McDonalds or service stations or light industry or whatever, and that is the concern that we have.
- 4.19 Rick Bennell: I am just trying to broaden the debate and your thinking of it at the moment. I would not look at this as a barrier.
- 4.20 CFG member Wilson Dale: If I were to tell residents that they could possibly end up not just with the inner corridor, but commercial and light industry, they would be more horrified than they are now.
- 4.21 Further discussion followed involving Council's Rural Lands Strategy and the inner corridor's possible impacts on banana lands.
- 4.22 Andrew Smith suggested it needed to be acknowledged that this was work in progress and there would be lengthy consultation.
- 4.23 **Visual Impact/Heritage/Traffic Results**
- 4.24 Tim Paterson listed the studies that were being undertaken: landscape visual and urban design, agriculture, noise, heritage, land use planning, socio-economic issues – which was an agenda item – geotechnical considerations, and biodiversity. Some would be reported in stand-alone Working Papers while others would be grouped in Working Papers. There also would be a strategic options report and a traffic assessment. All would be released in the public exhibition phase.
- 4.25 CFG member Trish Welsh queried whether weather was being investigated?

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- 4.26 Tim Paterson said it had been considered but it was felt it was not a critical issue. Another investigation that was queried was the need for an air quality assessment. An air quality adviser was available who could provide a strategic view as to whether some preliminary assessment was required. There were some issues about diesel emissions, etc.
- 4.27 CFG member Wilson Dale said he had made a suggestion that people should look at the Health Report on ABC Radio on Monday. There was a link to diesel emissions being a potentially major health problem.
- 4.28 Tim Paterson then showed 3 overheads on revised concepts for an ultimate upgrade of the existing highway, answering questions from members.
- 4.29 CFG member David Pike: How much of that work would need to be done in the next 20 years anyway, regardless of which option was chosen?
- 4.30 Tim Paterson responded that if no relief was provided through a bypass, then there would need to be incremental upgrading through town.

5 SOCIO-ECONOMIC ISSUES

5.1 Criteria and Feedback

- 5.2 Andrew Smith said at the last meeting, members had been asked to provide feedback for a socio-economic assessment. Some very detailed inputs had been received. Everyone had received a copy of the information provided by other members.
- 5.3 Tim Paterson used overheads in a presentation. Broad factors had been provided as the possible criteria that could be used in considering the socio-economic implications of different corridors. The responses had been consolidated to serve as a very basic prompt or checklist for compiling the Working Paper. They had been sorted into two groups: advantages and opportunities, and disadvantages.
- 5.4 Discussion followed on the feedback including its accuracy.
- 5.5 Tim Paterson indicated the material would not go directly into any publication. Whether people had the facts right or wrong was not the issue. The Social Planner would work through the information.
- 5.6 CFG member Wilson Dale asked was there going to be any discussion on the merits of the points?
- 5.7 Chris Clark responded that the opportunity to provide further comment was encouraged. The point of the exercise was to canvass the views and opinions of people on the CFG and the result would be a checklist as the socio-economic report was prepared. One of the many reasons for CFG groups was so that members could provide their views and their understanding of the community's views as an input to the process. The other major part was providing a forum where the project team could provide information to members and receive feedback on it.

6 FORTHCOMING ACTIVITIES / INVESTIGATIONS

6.1 Proposed Study Program / Process

- 6.2 Tim Paterson outlined the forthcoming program. Investigation reports would be completed and the options would then go on display, possibly in late July.

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Submissions would be invited and analysed and then evaluation workshops would be held. Representatives of the CFG would be invited to take part. The preferred strategy was expected to be announced at the end of the year.

7 OTHER ISSUES

7.1 Media Release from this Meeting

7.2 Chris Clark indicated that a combined meeting of the Woolgoolga and Sapphire to Moonee CFGs would be held next week. It would be appropriate to put together a combined media release from all groups.

7.3 Members suggested items could include the timetable for the strategy, that CFG members could be contacted by calling the Freecall number, that the Notes of meetings were available on the website and at libraries, that Council was arranging a forum to liaise with the CFGs and that members were providing input into the possible route options including their socio-economic assessment.

7.4 CFG member Gillian French said she believed small advertisements run regularly over a period of time could be more effective than a media release. The suggestion had been raised previously.

7.5 Discussion followed on the merits and costs of such advertising.

7.6 Andrew Smith suggested it be considered by the project manager.

7.7 Rick Bennell said Council was redesigning its web site so it could be possible to include information about the strategy on it.

Rick Bennell has advised that the project web site will be included on Council's web site

7.8 CFG member Wilson Dale said he had found out that day about a Pacific Highway Noise Taskforce. It had held its first meeting on March 13. The only representative of this area on the committee was Phil Price. Surely the representation could be extended. At least two more from this area were needed.

7.9 CFG member Trish Welsh said she had contacted Caroline McCally who was the environmental person on the RTA and asked how people got on the committee. She was told that Bob Higgins had given her a list of all the action groups from Coffs Harbour to the Queensland border and, from that, people had been invited to be a representative. WAR, PANIC, Bucca, were not even on the list that Bob Higgins had. Why were those action groups not included in the invitation?

7.10 Andrew Smith indicated that in Bob Higgins' absence, the question would be noted and passed on to Chris.

7.11 CFG member Trish Welsh: And if the opportunity came up again, two representatives from the various action groups to be on the group.

7.12 CFG member Tom Hamilton-Foster: *I would actually like to be on that.*

7.13 CFG member Trish Welsh: And if we could get the response before the next meeting of this group, as to whether we are going to be invited prior to the next meeting of this group.

Wilson Dale has been invited to attend the Noise Taskforce meetings.

7.14 CFG member Wilson Dale referred to an earlier comment about averaging daily truck movements. Heavy days were the problem and averaging the figures did not tell the whole story. The method was flawed.

7.15 Chris Clark: This process is a standard process that is used. It is consistent across all the projects that we do. A lot of data logging is done day and night, and it picks

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up very definite differences in noise levels between day and night. It is a very robust process.

- 7.16 CFG member Murray Williams: *When is that going to be done?*
- 7.17 Chris Clark responded this occurred at the EIS stage.
- 7.18 CFG member Tom Hamilton-Foster said he didn't agree with that. He said he did not believe the RTA understood what had happened since the Yelgun-Chinderah bypass had been opened. The community views in Coffs Harbour showed concern at the number of trucks, the diversity of trucks, the noise levels on the highway. There were people prepared to stand there for 7 days and nights counting them.
- 7.19 Chris Clark responded that at the last meeting of the CFG he had provided a quick run-through of the latest data that was available, which gave data about traffic volumes after the opening of the Chinderah project. Additional data collection work was being done and that information would be available as soon as it was analysed.
- 7.20 CFG member Wilson Dale: Both truck movements and noise levels?
- 7.21 Andrew Smith indicated he felt the issue raised was how much data was being collected for this strategic phase, that there was not sufficient data being collected to allow for the variations between day and night and in different seasons.
- 7.22 CFG member Wilson Dale: My issue is there always seems to be averaging and it seems to average backwards.
- 7.23 CFG member Tom Hamilton-Foster: Council did monitoring on the highway for 4-5 months. Why can't we get something out of that? Because I can assure you that there is something wrong in the figures. I really don't believe your figures are right.
- 7.24 CFG member Trish Welsh: Is there a counter in Coffs Harbour.
- 7.25 Tim Paterson indicated there was no permanent counter. Council wanted to have an understanding of holiday time traffic, also a snapshot of heavy vehicle numbers because of the expectation of the big jump after the Yelgun/Chinderah opening. A brief summary had been provided at the last meeting. The Working Paper would come out in June/July. He suggested acoustic expert Neil Gross be invited to attend the group's next meeting.
- 7.26 Chris Clark said that would be a good idea. He said the RTA was very aware of the noise issue because it was one of the main drivers for the noise taskforce. The taskforce did traffic monitoring and noise monitoring to provide the RTA with an opportunity to evaluate traffic volumes and traffic mixes. Traffic volumes were not difficult to collate. Comparative noise figures were more difficult because there was no permanent noise monitoring equipment on the highway. Noise also varied depending on volumes of traffic, the mix of traffic and road surface.
- 7.27 CFG member Tom Hamilton-Foster said if Council was organising a forum with the CFGs, some sort of noise information should be collected by Council prior to the meeting. Without such information, there was only people's perceptions.
- 7.28 Rick Bennell responded that Council did not have acoustic information.
- 7.29 CFG member Tom Hamilton-Foster responded that there was no reason why Council could not get noise experts to obtain that information over the next two weeks, day and night, to determine whether the noise level was within acceptable

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standards.

- 7.30 Rick Bennell advised he would see what could be done.
- 7.31 CFG member Trish Welsh asked how the noise taskforce came about?
- 7.32 Chris Clark responded that there was no doubt that additional traffic had been generated on the highway since the opening of the Yelgun/Chinderah project and that the additional traffic had created additional noise. The RTA and the Minister had received quite a number of representations from individuals and groups along the Pacific Highway. The main drivers for the taskforce were to obtain a better understanding of these changes and their impact on the community.
- 7.33 CFG member Gillian French said she had recently had an incident with a truck between Woolgoolga and Coffs Harbour. What could be done in the short term to improve safety?
- 7.34 Chris Clark responded that a number of similar comments had been made by the community in recent months, particularly concerning incidents with heavy vehicles at night. These comments had been passed on to the co-ordinating taskforce between the RTA and the Senior Regional Officers of the Police Force with a request that they increase their road patrols, particularly at night time.
- 7.35 Some discussion followed on other members' experiences.

Rick Bennell later advised that whilst Council has noise meters, it does not have the data logging equipment or the software to collect the traffic noise data requested

8 CLOSE OF MEETING

Meeting closed at 9.22 pm.

Next Meeting: To be advised. (about six weeks)

APPENDIX

Ideas and suggestions taken from the floor on butchers paper notes

CFG No.9 – SOUTHERN SECTION GROUP

Coffs Harbour Catholic Club, Coffs Harbour

30 APRIL 2003

Media Release:

1. Program (forward) → next information release mid year
2. CFG members and representation → 1800 63 63 63
3. Meeting notes on website → libraries
4. CFG – council liaison
5. Option details shared at CFG meetings → feedback process eg socio/economic