

# **Appendix E**

---

## **SUMMARY OF COUNCILLOR MEETING**

Our Ref: 214346\_CSC\_Councillors Meeting\_6 May 2015.docx

## **COWRA SHIRE COUNCIL – PRESENTATION OF REVIEW OF ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS FOR THE HEAVY VEHICLE BYPASS FOR COWRA – COUNCILLORS MEETING**

Cowra Shire Council

6 May 2015

Attendees: Bill West, Judi Smith, Ray Walsh, Ian Brown, Peter Wright, Jack Mallon, Tim Long, George Ridley, David Walker, Latisha Ryall, (Ruth Fagan, late attendance).

Meeting start at 5.30 pm.

### **Introduction**

Tim Long – Welcome to Geolyse David Walker.

### **Item 1 - REF Presentation**

David Walker, a Town Planner of Geolyse, presents information in regards to the Review of Environmental Factors associated with the proposed Heavy Vehicle Bypass Route for the Shire of Cowra.

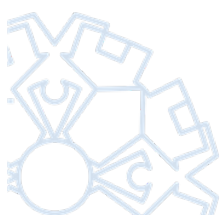
Council have engaged Geolyse to prepare and REF. The engagement to take bypass to next stage and look at environmental assessment of concept alignment as prepared by GHD.

This meeting is an element of the consultation process to support the preparation of the REF. Geolyse proposed direct consultation with the public and councillors and both of these will occur (in part) tonight.

This presentation will firstly involve Councillors, then a presentation is open to the General Public at 6.00 pm.

The purpose of this discussion will include the construction and operation of the bypass route, looking at the impacts that are at are likely to or could occur as the result of the construction and the operation. We will try to avoid detailed discussions regarding other alignment routes, reiterating that the purpose of the public meeting is to assess the adopted pipeline route, any other questions maybe directed onto George Ridley at Council for further discussion.

We hope to as much as possible getting into detailed discussions about the alignment, you as Council have adopted the alignment and engaged us to assess the alignment. Where there are questions, queries, or comments about particular elements of the alignment, we are happy to take them and hear them, but there is probably little that we can say at this point that is meaningful, as this is not what we have been engaged to assess. Some of those more directed comments can go back to George Ridley if needed.



## **Background/History**

2009 land use strategy – There was identification of a number of different bypass route options, this has been a long time in conception, dating to the 1980's?

GHD in 2012/2013 took this proposal forward and undertook a study of options and analysis of options and community consultation,

There were a number of options that were considered. GHD looked at a cost benefit analysis of a short list of three routes and these options are identified as Options A, B and 3. Through this process GHD undertook community consultation with regulatory Stakeholders, the community and Councillors. GHD consulted with the residents directly and as a result of this process, GHD decided that option 3 was the most popular and as a result of this recommendation Option 3 was adopted by Council.

## **Key concerns from the community**

The key concerns identified by the community for the potential impact of the bypass in relation to Option 3 was impacts to residential areas, traffic and pedestrian safety risks and increased traffic volumes.

(The adopted route was shown to the Councillors as a slide and described below).

Description of route starting from the West: Joins Airport Road, then turns South, East onto Boundary Road, crosses through the rail alignment/ electricity transmission line under the rail approach, through the Lachlan River, then follows the rail alignment where it joins Campbell Street and back up to Western Highway. 8.4 km in total, of which 5 km is existing roads and the remainder will encompass new roads.

Consultation prepared by GHD determined Option 3 was the most popular, most cost effective and most preferable.

## **REF Purpose**

The purpose of the REF is to assist the determination and consider all matters affecting or likely to affect the environment.

We are looking at anything and everything that could potentially occur to impact the environment as a result of the works. The impact is not just limited to environmental impacts such as Flora and Fauna, but also socio economics, acquisition, views, we are aiming to take everything into account.

In terms of specifics the listed items for consideration are as follows:

- Landscape Character and Visual Amenity;
- Flora and Fauna;
- Noise;
- Traffic and Access;
- Heritage (Indigenous and Non-indigenous);
- Air Quality;
- Land acquisition;
- Surface Water and Groundwater;



- Socio-Economic Considerations;
- Soils;
- Utilities;
- Wastes; and
- Hazards.

Regarding the specifics of the REF, this is not an exhaustive list and there may be other factors to include, Geolyse are presently focusing attention on the items listed, if anything you feel has been missed then please let us know at some point this evening. The environmental impacts of construction, time constraints and ongoing impacts associated with the route operating such as noise and air quality.

Key areas of investigation and the areas Geolyse have engaged specialist to investigate on our behalf.

- Noise and air quality;
- Areas for specialist engagement;
- Flora and Fauna – Aquatic Ecology;
- Noise;
- Traffic and assess ;
- Indigenous Heritage;
- Air quality;
- Surface and Groundwater; and
- Landscape Character and Visual Amenity.

Comments and Questions raised

Councillor Judi Smith – Are you looking at safety of residents and vehicles on the bypass?

Response –The Safety element is more assessed in engineering design, it is not an environmental impact as such to assess, we are introducing additional intersections into the Roadway, there is a degree of consideration in that area., re additional intersections majority of safety engineering through detailed design. Something that would occur in detailed design process, abide by AustRoads, RMS and council standards expect that deliverable is a safe road environment. Aim of standards, will certainly be included but will fall out of detailed design.

Councillor Judi Smith - Some of the residents talked about Pedestrian safety and safety of children?

Response - Concept alignment does not propose crossing points, bypass would attempting to limit as it undermines efficiency of the route – logically at intersections you will need crossing points, Southern extent of the town there is not many established footpaths. Again this would be addressed through detailed design.

Councillor Bill West - commented that the residences in one area particular have raised concerns on safety of pedestrian and children and animals as well as noise and would like to express their concerns, so would suggest that it may be brought up in the context of the human built environment.



Response – there is an element of consideration under socio economic factors, this is quite a big area.

Geolyse have engaged specialist investigations into those areas which all formed part of fee proposal. Geolyse (in house) is specifically looking at desktop assessment and critical considerations such as landscape character and visual amenity, surface and groundwater and land acquisitions that would be necessary.

### **Landscape character/ Visual amenity**

6 distinct landscape zones in this visual catchment.

The assessment was prepared in accordance with the relevant RMS guidelines. Drawing outlines the different land use environments, being Airport, residential, business, rural, and industrial and recreation. This has been reviewed to the extent these areas have the capacity to view the project area, the project introduces new features into the landscape that had not previously existed. RMS guidelines are relevant and we would expect to see the assessment to determine the extent to which a new development impacts on the environments

Geolyse have assessed those areas and at the present time there does not seem to be many large impacts, there will be further changes to visual amenities, due to construction activity, new roads, upgrading existing roads and, looking at the bridge, a new intersection at Lachlan valley conceived a large roundabout; how it will integrate with the existing rail bridge is unclear. This would be considered through detailed design, but the concept design bypass and Lachlan valley Way as intersecting under that rail pass, there will be liaison with John Holland on undermining the rail bridge approach. .

### **Potential land Acquisition**

Identified the lots that are affected not the land that will be acquired.

Description of areas discussed shown on map. The areas outlined in green are the affected areas, and assumed a 40m corridor, although realistically a 30 m wide corridor is probably acceptable, and excluding large portion on southern side of the railway to the east of the river 6ha the rest is 8ha and most of these are only about 500m<sup>2</sup> Through detail design there would be significant opportunities to further reduce this as these are existing road reserves and it should be possible to design the alignment within these existing road reserves where possible.

### **Concept alignment**

Councillor Ian Brown – You are discussing a 40 m reserve, will it be an old Road or a new Road, example of Airport and Boundary Road exiting Roads will they still be open for local traffic once it is operational?

Response Yes it would still be operation for anyone to use and for access to properties not just to Heavy Vehicles and there still would be access to properties.

Councillor Ian Brown - Have they used the 40m Road?

Response - No acquisition on the left hand side of acquisition plan shown, the reason is that it is assumed that the existing Road reserve would-be maintained and would not be widened to 40 m assumed through new Roads and the 3km through town centre. If a 30m road reserve is adopted, the area acquired would be less than identified.



## Surface Water

There are two sensitive water courses through the area. Lachlan River and Waugoola Creek both are flood planning area, most of the southern area is flood plain area in relation to the Lachlan River.

The initial assessment is that the building of the bridge will have some impact on flood flows and this is being quantified at the moment. Existing road levels are low and flood levels are quite high in that area, there is a degree of impact in a 1/20 year event, expectation the bypass will not be navigable in this flood event (1/20yr,) and the traffic will have to go through the main street.

Engineering costs associated with raising that Road level to the railway bridge would be very significant and introduce a new conflict with the rail bridge that provides an how you provide and how do you provide interaction between the two if they are at the same level.

Councillor Ian Brown - At times this proposed Roadway will flood?

Response – Yes, that is the concept alignment that has been adopted.

George Ridley - The bridge is a riverbank height crossing. The Roads will be closed elsewhere so would not be a great problem, detailed design will look at this

Response – In flood plain areas a 1/20 year event takes you over Lachlan Valley Way, the bypass would be closed, and traffic redirected through main bridge over Campbell Street. Understanding of the design, you could look at detail design.

Councillor - That is acceptable.

Description shown on presentation of flood plain areas including 1/100yr event.

## Groundwater

There is a large amount of groundwater vulnerable land, a review of bores in area suggests that groundwater is high; in areas is up to 2m from surface. There will be potential for interaction during construction, including spills, and accidents during operation and event of vehicle accidents. They are all potential impacts that will be managed through controls through REF. They are not insurmountable problems.

## Flora and Fauna

Filed survey of the alignment has been conducted to date.

Vegetation communities within the alignment are predominately disturbed grassland, some River red gum within the Lachlan River environmental zone in the right area corridor. There is a small area of Yellow Box, White Box and Blakely's Red Gum woodland on the corner of Boundary and Airport Road.

Within the aquatic environment we obviously have the river and the creek. There is obviously some removal of the grey box and the yellow box on the corner of Boundary and Airport Road which could be avoided, if that bend was softened through a bit of acquisition of that land on the corner. At the moment it is a 90° angle turn which looking at the concept alignment is not an ideal scenario if two B-doubles were trying to turn at 90° angle would not be feasibly possible. Ecologist is recommending that that particular area needs further detailed consideration, benefit for better turn for vehicles and save the



endangered community and opportunity for improvement. Overall the conclusions are it is unlikely to affect threatened flora and fauna or the aquatic ecology under state or commonwealth legislation.

### **Contamination**

There is one identified site of contamination that is the Shell depot, located on Campbell Street and identified by EPA. Groundwater monitoring sites are identified on the plan. 32 in total. A matter to identify controls through the construction to ensure there is protection to workers and the environment. It may be an opportunity to improve that particular site and improve status of that land.

### **Indigenous Heritage**

Consultation between Aboriginal community and an archaeologist have begun. Through the process of an Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment (ACHA), members of the aboriginal community have identified themselves to be involved with the assessment, and the archaeologist will conduct field work to have a look at the alignment and to determine if there are any areas of concern. If there are concerns further investigation would need to be done and permits will need to be obtained before construction is started.

### **Noise**

Noise loggers have been deployed in conjunction with Council traffic loggers to determine background noise level, and looking forward to projected traffic numbers.

The loggers are calibrated to model and determine the current background noise level. Looking forward to projected traffic numbers the noise level consultant will be able to determine the noise level for the bypass, once operational, and to see the extent of the noise levels to the properties located within the locality. It is looking like the predicted noise levels will exceed road noise criteria, in which case mitigation measures are necessary, such architectural features like double glazing. Alternative to that may be a revision to detailed design to slightly change the alignment to further offset the alignment from those properties. The critical area will be the Boundary Road properties.

There may be a cost to the project of architectural mitigation to those properties to make the noise level acceptable.

Vibration impacts associated with the project were also assessed for existing buildings.

### **Traffic and Access**

Statutory frameworks for the existing traffic movements and volumes and changes around the existing Road and intersections within concept alignment. More detail in regards to the 90° turn and the Lachlan Valley Way and other intersections, noting that community interest of those intersections was considerable in regards to where people could get on and off on at those key points. There would be a significant size roundabout at Lachlan Valley Way which the engineering design would address.

Councillor Bill West - Would the Olympic Highway would be a roundabout too?

Response – Not sure if that has been identified. We would be modelling those intersections to give the best level of service. A roundabout would likely be the best solution rather than lights to keep traffic moving on the bypass.



## **Air Quality Assessment**

The subconsultant is looking at existing air quality and meteorological conditions and omissions and predicting groundwater concentrations construction and traffic omission. If there are any noncompliance predicted to propose mitigation measures. This is standard approach, current sit potential impacts, control measures, and next environmental assessment. At this point that is unlikely to happen. Impacts are all manageable

### **Item 2 – Comments or Questions**

As part of the consultation phase, this is the opportunity to participate and any queries and will be answered tonight if possible and comments will be noted and included in REF.

Councillor Ian Brown – If a family living on Boundary Road, wished to access the Road from their property, will there be access.

Response – Yes, unless a slip Road is conceivable which the concept plan does not identify.

George Ridley – There is a need to separate the two stages. The initial stage is the REF, the next stage once approved is then to go onto detailed design and engineering design. One of the options for engineering design is to have a service Road that all your accesses are on, it would be costly, but the best option in regards to safety, entrances onto the bypass because you would need access. The more entrances onto the bypass lessens the effectiveness. It needs to have more work when going through the design phase.

Councillor Bill West - Residents will ask the question, at what point do we get the detailed drawings after the REF?

George Ridley - This is not normally done until DA.

Councillor Bill West - So a response to the public would be as a result of the REF being signed off on and issues identified, which is where detailed drawings will be provided?

Response – The REF identifies constraints provides and recommendations to deal with these constraints. If you have done detailed design first it is assumed that you are ignoring the constraints, this is the process RMS take to identify concept, do the assessment, develop concept through and in conjunction with REFs, conservative assessments of the impacts, Controls that are recommended through the REF drives the detailed design – if the detail design results in a significant change then you revisit the REF and issue an addendum to deal with the change in design. Process allows to see the constraints and respond to design.

George Ridley - In the REF you do have a Traffic and Access section in terms of the access how much information is included in the report?

Response - It is an issue as there are multiple properties that need access, so it would be addressed via written recommendation of the detail design needs to consider this and should consider the following options such as joint access arrangements, slip Roads or may be realignment to move this away, there a few options to readdress this. The REF will consider those but won't take the step of doing detail design. It is the recommendations and controls that will inform the detailed design.





Councillor Peter Wright - you advised that the Boundary Road was a narrower corridor, service Road might be if the access traffic is going to be difficult there, you many need a bigger acquisition.

Response – did not mean to imply that Boundary Road was narrower, it is standard Road width, the Concept design alignment fits within the 30m corridor comfortably. There is with the exception of one house, farmland, only a recommendation or comment, if you were considering acquisition there the approach to take would be to look at the southern side as there is only one land owner negotiations would be significantly easier and also it is a logical way to consider.

Councillor Peter Wright – On the southern side of Boundary Road there are 3 houses there.

Councillor - Is this a dual lane Road?

Response - Concept is for one lane each way.

Councillor - Will there be room for a vehicle to pull off onto the side of the Road if it has to stop or is it to allow access or is it going to table drains?

Response - The concept alignment is not developed enough to conclusively answer this .there would not be curb and gutter, there would be table drain.

Councillor Peter Wright - It would have to be level, if a Heavy Vehicle truck would have to stop to get off....

Response - it would need to comply with AustRoads which has its own clear zone requirements, which re gradients, requires those areas to be kept clear of obstructions. It would be able to be driven on. Concept long section would smooth out, to keep a consistent grade, yes there would be capacity to pull off if you have to.

George Ridley – The Road is a standard 30m which would give you more than a standard Roadway, if you did need a service lane you could dependant on a specialist report, if not the bypass would certainly have sufficient shoulders.

Councillor Peter Wright - Could you have a service Road as a dual lane carriageway?

Response - Detailed design would answer these questions, unable to comment as we not specialised traffic engineers present tonight. There would be a number of options for the traffic engineers to provide recommendations to respond to this look at all options.

Councillor Judi Smith - As part of socio economic investigations, will this look at analysis on likely effects on house prices?

Geolyse Response - We can look at this, it has not been considered in detail as yet but , we are aware that it is an area of concern through public consultation to date, one member of the public have requested to get In touch with the Valuer General's office? and discuss that with them. It will be responded to fully.it was already existing on the list of considerations.

Councillor - What is the mitigation measures for this?

Response - There probably is not one, the alignment route has been adopted for nearly three years, to a certain degree, people have been forewarned about the likelihood that this would be developed, it is



logical that this would have some type of impact on land values. There is no control. As the determining authority would need to defer to Council to make that decision.

Councillor unknown - There are drawings dating back to 1981 showing the alignment as a possible routes.

Councillor Peter Wright- Yes there has been old drawings but whether those people who have purchase blocks have been clearly advised of purchase of land. Is it a direct conclusion that land values necessarily depreciate because of a better Road or a bypass?

Response - Depends on who you talk to it is subjective cant be influenced through this process and guidelines are used for this process. It will be dealt with. One person has advised that they 'like the noise of trucks' only one view 25% are happy with this alignment.

Councillor Ian Brown - Coming off Sydney Road onto Campbell Street, will it follow the same line as now?

Response - No it is simplified the curve is straightened out, there is a bit of acquisition through there.

The intersection not an RMS Road, the intersection will have to be made to a very high standard, there will be a degree of impact. There are big trees there, through detail design you try to avoid impacts, but they can't be incorporated into a clear zone.

Councillor Peter Wright - Airport outline shows endangered fauna area?

Response - It is not directly affected by the concept alignment. But advising that it is sensible to think about this area. The ecologist is suggesting that a curve would avoid the EEC, as Road widening would occur and the traffic engineer suggest that a 90° turn on a V Double route would not work. There would have to be a degree of acquisition in that area.

George Ridley- Where is the EEC area?

Response - They are as you head south down Airport Road they are located on the left hand side trees just before the 90 turn.

George Ridley - If you were going to do the curve you would do this on the inside of the trees?

Response - Start at northern property boundaries run the curve, and miss all but one tree. Other benefit of area, take the Road that you have closed, you can enhance the EEC area.

Councillor Bill West – What about an option to south, change alignment by using opposite block and swing the curve lower.

Response - This could be another option. It has to be navigable.

Re discussions on reroute of land use, navigable for the vehicles.

Councillor Peter Wright- Regarding B-double and semi-trailers, what is the environmental impact having B-double on the Road would it increase the impacts of omissions and noise more than semi trailer's. Will they increase problems with the environment?



Response - From an engineering perspective yes from an environmental perspective no.

Existing volume of traffic moving through town that is being redirected, not increasing volumes, increase in volumes of traffic from one area to another on existing Roads

Omissions are staying same in regional area, noise in a localised sense will change. There will be an impact to those people who directly front the route. Is not a B-double route at the moment.

From noise and omissions perspective these are the critical aspects. Road surface will need to be more robust back to detail design to resolve.

Geolyse - How do we generally feel about the bypass, generally ok as it was adopted in 2013?

Councillors Bill West - Definitely want the heavy vehicle bypass, unanimously decided that this was the preferred route.

Councillor Peter Wright - Has there been much feedback from aboriginal community? Elders indicated that there are children's graves along the riverbank?

Response - Aboriginal archaeologist has been in contact with the interested parties they will visit the site, they will look at these issues. If there are sites that are problematic there a ways in which these can be avoided such as minor realignment, or moving artefacts by the local community or other options for approach to take. At this stage there does not look like there are many issues.

Councillor Bill West- How was this done, was the land council involved?

Response - There was an ad in the paper and registration has gone directly back to the archaeologist who has a list of groups that are interested and liaison directly. The consultation is being prepared under local council policy, especially in regards to impacts on the Southern end, Geolyse engage specialists, to undertake these tasks and the process is underway.

By giving you a summary tonight hopefully will prompt questions in regards to the consultation process. This is the opportunity to identify issues, one update today we will not have all the answers tonight.

Councillor Peter Wright- You indicated at the start of this meeting that you indicated there was a public meeting to follow. We were advised by management on Monday night that it was an invitation only public meeting? Not open to the general public?

Councillor - Where is the public consultation?

Response - There was an ad placed in the paper, letters sent to anyone who is directly associated with the Road, this was the consultation process proposed to council and what was agreed to. If there was a perception that more needed to be done....

Councillor Peter Wright - No – just getting clarification of what the definition is of public consultation.

Response - We would define this as a public meeting as it is being attended by members of the public. This is not a closed meeting, the general public are welcome to attend.

George Ridley- This meeting was targeted for directly affected people that is why a special invite was given. It was in the paper for anyone to attend Part of the REF is required to do this process.



Councillor Ian Brown - Further on there will be a public meeting in regards to the issue of the REF.

Response – Geolyse will issue Council a draft report Issue for review.

Councillor Bill West - It will become public through the council process.

Response – Yes we can come back and present if need be, this has not been agreed to, but there is no issue to present the facts if this is the best option to present the information.

Councillor Bill West- Thank you for the presentation.

**Meeting close 5.45pm**

