



Roads and Traffic Authority

**Pacific Highway Upgrade -
Woolgoolga to Wells Crossing**

Report on Community Information
Session - 29 November 2004

January 2005



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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

The project involves the Upgrade of the Pacific Highway between Woolgoolga and Wells Crossing. The project is referred to as 'Woolgoolga to Wells Crossing' or 'The Upgrade' herein. The study area is approximately 24.3 kilometres long and 2 kilometres wide as shown in figure 1 below. The project involves upgrading the existing highway to a dual carriageway, median separated, controlled access highway to allow vehicles to travel continuously at 110km/h. The project is likely to comprise sections of duplication and upgrade of the existing highway as well as sections of new highway alignment. The project involves a number of major river crossings as well as flood prone land. GHD's scope of work on this project includes Route Option Investigation, Concept Design and Environmental Impact Assessment. A large part of this work involves consultation with the community

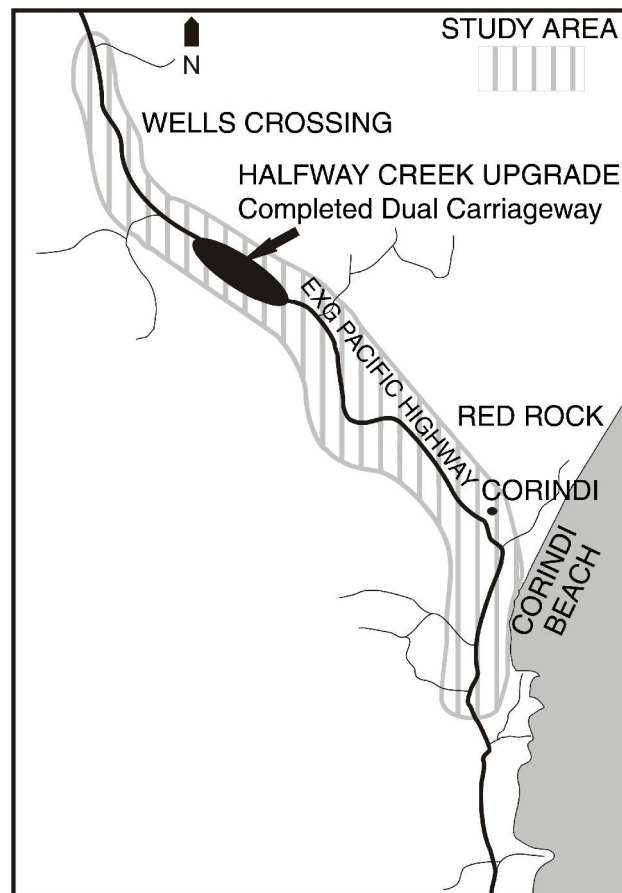


Figure 1 – Project Study Area



1.2 Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to document the first Community Information Session (CIS) that took place on 29 November 2004. The CIS was held at the Yarrawarra Large Conference Centre, from 7:00pm to 9:00pm.

1.3 Advertising

The CIS was advertised in a number of local papers, including The Daily Examiner, The Advocate and The Advertiser during the weeks commencing 13, 20 and 27 November 2004. Leaflets advertising the CIS and community update were also hand-delivered to commercial centres along the route. These locations include:

- » Coffs Harbour Roads and Traffic Authority;
- » Coffs Harbour City Council;
- » Halfway Creek Service Station;
- » BP Service Station, Halfway Creek;
- » Halfway Creek Fire Brigade;
- » Blueberry Farms of Australia;
- » Bus stop at intersection of Pacific Highway and Range Road;
- » Red Rock Bowling Club;
- » Red Rock Post Office/General Store;
- » Red Rock Ford Street bus stop;
- » Yarrawarra Cultural Centre;
- » Amble Inn (Corindi Beach);
- » Corindi Beach Post Office;
- » Corindi Beach General Store;
- » Lorikeet Tourist Park;
- » Arrawarra Beach Holiday Park;
- » Mullaway General Store;
- » Mullaway Caravan Park;
- » Woolgoolga Mobil service station;
- » Woolgoolga BP service station;
- » Woolgoolga RSL;
- » Woolgoolga branch of CHCC Library/Information Centre; and
- » Woolgoolga IGA Supermarket – notice board.



1.4 Attendees

Approximately 30 residents and local community stakeholders attended the first CIS. A complete list of attendees is contained in Appendix A.

GHD representatives in attendance included:

- » Mirella Di Genua (chairperson);
- » David Waddell (facilitator);
- » Katrina Grundy (facilitator);
- » Melanie Miels (facilitator);
- » Rafael Chemke (facilitator);
- » Shaun Lawer (facilitator);
- » Naomi Leo (facilitator);
- » Ben Luffman (facilitator);
- » Andrew Geddes (facilitator); and
- » Nicole Martyres (facilitator).

Road and Traffic Authority (RTA) representatives in attendance included:

- » Stephen Williamson;
- » Mark Eastwood; and
- » Neil Heinze.



2. Agenda

The CIS agenda for the evening included:

2.1 Greet and Meet

Informal introductions during greet and meet the community. At this time community members were asked to register and provide details on a large-scale map of where they lived or worked within or outside the study area. They were also provided with an information package, which included:

- » Community Update No. 1;
- » Feedback forms (2);
- » Writing paper; and
- » Pen.

2.2 Official Welcome

An official welcome by the Garby elders of the Gumbangira Tribe, Milton Duroux and Cecil Laurie.

2.3 Introduction to the Session

An introduction by the chairperson who introduced the project, highlighted housekeeping issues and established the ground rules for the information session.

2.4 Overview of the Pacific Highway Upgrade Program

An overview of the Pacific Highway Upgrade program, presented by Mark Eastwood, Senior Project Development Manager of the Pacific Highway Upgrade Program.

2.5 Project Objectives

The RTA Project Manager, Stephen Williamson gave a detailed presentation of the project's objectives and an explanation of the study area.

2.6 Current Activities

The GHD Project Manager, Andrew Geddes gave an overview of the current work activities being completed by the team.

2.7 Community Consultation Process

Andrew Geddes provided a summary of the community consultation process (see Appendix B).



2.8 Small Group Questions

The second half of the program involved dividing the larger group into groups of about six (6) people. A GHD representative facilitated the small groups, asking them to respond to the following three (3) questions, and then to agree to the top two (2) points or issues for each of these for presentation back to the larger group. The three (3) questions were:

- » Q1 What is important to you about the road and the local community along the road?
- » Q2 What needs improving or what are you concerned about?
- » Q3 Identify questions that need to be answered tonight or over the coming months.

A summary of the responses to these questions is provided in Section 3.

2.9 Small Group Feedback

A brief presentation by community members or the facilitators of their main issues followed.

2.10 Questions

The last 15 minutes of the session was dedicated to question time. Most questions were answered on the night and a commitment was made to provide a Q&A information sheet (on the web site) to answer those questions that could not be answered adequately on the night or were identified in the group sessions.



3. Feedback

3.1 Small Group Session

The following sections provide a summary of responses received during the small group sessions. These responses are a valuable source of information as they represent the issues at the heart of the community. Answers to the questions that have been raised will be developed and posted on the project web site (subject to RTA approval).

3.1.1 Question 1 – What is important about the road and the local community along the road?

- » Safety: Community requires safe passageway;
- » Access: Private and business, local traffic road, to serve local community;
- » Emergency service access;
- » Noise pollution (especially from trucks);
- » Exhaust pollution;
- » Nature reserves: Wells Crossing Flora Reserve, Spotted Quoll at Bottle Brush Drive; and
- » Heritage value: Aboriginal camps in Newfoundland, Aboriginal men's site at Shell and Halfway Creek.

3.1.2 Question 2 – What needs improving or what are you concerned about?

- » Safety: In terms of right turn south-bound, safe bus stops/bays, better merging/exit lanes, coastline cycle-way, and safety during construction;
- » Flooding: Has this been taken into consideration?;
- » Land widths: Insufficient space to pull over on roadside, lanes of insufficient widths, B-doubles overtaking caravans, current wire road barrier too close to Highway, and is inadequate for break-downs;
- » Road surface type and quality;
- » Access to Highway and villages;
- » Land acquisition by the RTA;
- » Access to all side streets, especially Corindi Beach when turning off Highway; and
- » Access to Mullaway when turning into Highway from Bottlebrush Drive – there is a lack of visibility, dangerous intersections (such as Cox's Lane).



3.1.3 Question 3 – Identify questions that need to be answered tonight or over the coming months.

- » Why can't they make the road on the same level as the bridge?;
- » What can be done about the "black spots" in the near future (this cannot wait 10 years)?;
- » Heavy transport separations: Why are trucks and cars on one road? Why not take trucks away from the coast?;
- » How wide will the lanes be?;
- » Will the road be able to accommodate both B-doubles and caravans?;
- » Will there be adequate lane room for overtaking?;
- » When do they start construction?;
- » What's the budget for construction?;
- » Is planning constrained by a preset budget?;
- » Why does the study area start at Arrawarra Creek?;
- » Will they be incorporating facilities for vulnerable road users in planning, eg pedestrians/cyclists?;
- » Where is it going?;
- » How will access be affected (private and business); and
- » Why aren't we having a true by-pass?

3.2 Feedback Forms

Participants were provided with feedback forms as part of the project information package. These forms could be completed during the evening and handed to a project team member, or completed elsewhere and either faxed, posted or e-mailed back to GHD. Of the 30 people who attended, only four (4) feedback forms were completed and forwarded to the Community Relations Officer. The responses to the feedback forms are given below:

1. What are your biggest concerns about the upgrading of the Highway?

- The elimination of accident "black spots";
- It is a long timeframe to complete;
- Feeder roads intersections;
- Corindi Village access;
- Time delay in improving current position;
- Inconvenience during construction;
- Access to Highway from local areas; and
- When?



2. Was the community information session useful? Please provide comments.

- There was more input than output i.e. we commented, but not much information aside from format was presented;
- Very useful- Basic ideas and way it was handled – Good;
- Yes – Outline was good;
- Very useful;
- Good presentation; and
- Friendly atmosphere.

3. Did you feel you had an opportunity to comment on issues/ideas?

- Plenty of comment;
- Looking forward to how it was received;
- Yes;
- Yes – Hopefully comments will be noted;
- Yes; and
- Could not have asked for better.

4. Do you have any suggestions for future sessions?

- Accident history is a major concern, yet no figures were discussed;
- No delays, stick to 2-year aims;
- Groups give everyone an opportunity to have their say. Some will not stand up and make comments to whole group;
- Good Corindi Hall; and
- Keep to time – not late.



4. Summary

The first Community Information Session for the Pacific Highway Upgrade – Woolgoolga to Wells Crossing was attended by a broad spectrum of community members, including local residents and business owners. All participants were given an update on the project and are now much more familiar with the process of route selection and community consultation.

Key issues at the heart of the community include land acquisition, noise, access, safety, heritage and nature conservation. These issues will be taken into consideration during the route development and route selection phases of the project.

Whilst the formal feedback from the evening was not extensive, the comments that were made are relevant and will help to improve future community sessions in this area.



Appendix A

Attendees



Appendix B
Presentation

Document Review

Position	Name	Date
Author	<i>M. Miels</i>	19.01.2005
Technical Review	<i>M. Di Genua</i>	19.01.2005
Team Leader	<i>J. Hannaford</i>	19.01.2005
Document Controller	<i>A. Deck</i>	25.01.2005

Document Approval

Position	Name	Date
GHD Project Manager		
RTA Project Manager		

Document Status

Revision	Date	Description
0	28.01.2005	Draft report issued to RTA for review.
1	1/03/05	Final report issued to RTA

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