

MINUTES

Lochinvar Working Reference Group Meeting 11th May 2009 – Third meeting

1. **Meeting opened:** 4:05pm
2. **Present:**
 - CI Henry Meskauskas (CIrHM)
 - CI Stephen Mudd (CIrSM)
 - Alan Wells (AW)
 - Jim Aird (JA)
 - Steve Barlow (SB)
 - Ian Higgins (IH)
 - Monica Gibson (MG)
 - Deb Gordon (DG)
 - Josh Ford (JF)
3. **Apologies:**
 - Leanne Harris (Group Manager – Service, Planning and Regulation)
 - Craig White
 - Jenny Schroeder
 - CI Ken Wethered
4. **Matters arising from last meeting**
 - Minutes from meeting of 6 April 2009 accepted. Moved IH and seconded by JA.
 - No matters arising.
5. **Distribution of documents**

Nil this meeting.
6. **Current status of project**
 - ARTC have held preliminary discussions with Council regarding the proposed Minimbah track upgrade, a Federally funded program for a third rail line between Maitland and Whittingham. Will involve changes to the existing level crossing on Station Lane with possibility for an underpass or overpass to replace the level crossing as identified as the preferred option in the Structure Plan. ARTC will continue to liaise with Council during their investigations.
 - Funding for the F3 Seahampton to Branxton extension to be announced with the Federal budget on the evening of 12th May 2009. If funding becomes available, the F3 link is expected to have positive impacts on the traffic studies for the NEH and Lochinvar.
7. **LES Matters**
 - Discussion on “Draft List of Studies to Inform LES” document prepared and tabled at meeting of 6 April 2009 for endorsement.

- Discussion of what is involved with an LES (Local Environmental Study). List of environmental studies is determined based on information requirements for community, landholders, government agencies and other various stakeholders.
- Clarification sought between site specific studies and overarching studies. The whole of the proposed Urban Release Area is to be considered “the site”. One complete environmental study (LES) addressing each of the identified issues and any additional matters arising is to be prepared for the whole URA, as opposed to individual studies from individual landowners with the potential for different outcomes.
- The relevance of further agricultural productivity and stormwater studies were questioned. Further investigations of these matters are required in order to satisfy Council and requirements of State Government agencies.
- Issue about access to private properties where owners do not wish to be included was discussed and remains an issue. To be discussed further once process and funding options have been determined. Important to ensure study area is assessed as a whole to ensure best environmental outcomes and avoid additional financial burden on community to repeat the process should individual circumstances change.
- Discussion on process of undertaking an environmental study – desktop assessment, site inspections, survey, reports etc.
- Discussion on who is representing what landowners. Role of community representatives are to provide information to the community and report to the group any issues that may be of concern or interest throughout the process.
- Structure Plan map requested identifying cadastral boundaries which could be used to highlight properties with development interests and those without.
- Discussion regarding the proposed ARTC Minimbah rail line upgrade. ARTC will be required to prepare its own environmental studies for this project, including noise impacts generated by the proposal. The results of the environmental investigations will be provided to Council and fed into the Lochinvar LES as appropriate.
- On agreement of the LES issues, a project brief will be prepared to cover the scope of the investigations required.
- The draft list of studies to inform the LES was endorsed by the group with the removal of “dust impacts” from the project managing consultant list.

8. Funding

- Options for funding threefold: developer funded; partnership between Council and developers; funded by Council upfront with cost recoupment plan from landowners as land develops.
- Report to be prepared and furnished to Council’s Corporate Management Team (CMT) exploring the opportunities for funding the LES and seeking their advice for Council’s involvement.

- Costs would largely depend on studies required to form the LES, and that sites already investigated would not require duplicate studies providing information is adequate. Studies will be costed in more detail following the preparation of the briefs.
- Issue raised that some landowners feel that developers have approached them in the wrong manner, and they do not wish to develop their land or sell to a developer. All land needs to be considered to ensure best outcomes for Lochinvar. In all URAs to date, some landowners wish to remain undeveloped, but it is best to collectively rezone land rather than exclude some landowners as their circumstances may change in the future and they may wish to develop or sell their land.
- Discussion regarding the engagement of consultants to complete the LES that have previously undertaken studies in the area for private landowners. If Council is required to manage project (rather than just maintain approval role), Council's tendering requirements would need to be followed when the project brief is issued to maintain transparency throughout the process.
- Next steps are:
 - (i) development of a project brief
 - (ii) costing proposal to be accepted by Council's Corporate Management Team

9. General Business

- Discussion about consultation with landowners. Information able to be distributed to all landowners within the URA to increase their awareness of what is happening during the URA process. Council to also provide information to Lochinvar community through Council's website and by supplying information at libraries at various milestones throughout process.
- Landowners are encouraged to bring information, questions or concerns to the WRG via their representatives or through Council.
- Information to be made available to all landowners within the URA once project brief and funding options are available to discuss.

10. Next Meeting:

- Next WRG meeting to be deferred until advice from CMT has been sought.
- Next meeting to be held at 4pm on Monday 6 July 2009 in the Paterson Room, Town Hall – to be confirmed.
- June meeting held over with aim to meet in July, once LES process and funding options have been determined in consultation with Council's Corporate Management Team.

11. Meeting Closed: 5.20pm