

MINUTES

Lochinvar Reference Group Meeting 7th June 2010 – Fifteenth meeting

1. **Meeting opened:** 4:04pm

Present:

Clr Henry Meskauskas (ClrHM)
Alan Wells (AW)
John Whittle (JW)
Jim Aird (JA)
Ian Higgins (IH)
Josh Ford (JF)

Apologies:

Steve Barlow
Clr Ken Wethered
Leanne Harris
Monica Gibson

2. **Business arising from previous meeting**

- Clr HM informed the group that representatives from the Hunter 8 Alliance had visited Council to brief the Lochinvar Reference Group regarding the Maitland to Minimbah Third Railway Track project. The Hunter 8 Alliance representatives extended an option to come back in the future to again brief the group on progress of the project and discuss issues like methods of noise attenuation.
- AW asked what the status was of the Part 3A application for the Maitland to Minimbah Third Railway Track project, and how far land acquisition had progressed. JF responded that the status was unknown at this point in time, since the NSW Department of Planning is the determining authority for this matter, and not Maitland City Council. **** Note: The NSW Department of Planning began exhibition of the Maitland to Minimbah Third Railway Track project on the 9th June 2010, two days after the subject LRG meeting. ****
- JF noted that due to the past two LRG meetings been cancelled as a result of low attendance, meeting notes rather than minutes had been placed on Council's website.

3. **Status of Outstanding Environmental Studies**

- AW stated that he is awaiting a letter from Hunter Water Corporation which confirms that the servicing strategies for the site are adequate.
- AW informed the group that the Aboriginal heritage consultant Mary Dallas is making contact with various Aboriginal land council representatives.

4. **Review of Environmental Studies**

- AW argued that given the time taken since the submission of environmental studies for the rezoning of the Lochinvar Investigation Area (earlier in 2010), and that formal resolutions have been made by Council to progress the rezoning, Council should now be in a position to finalise a planning proposal for the rezoning of the Lochinvar Investigation Area. JF responded by stating that water and sewer servicing strategies remained outstanding and infrastructure servicing had been a major consideration for Lochinvar, an issue that was raised regularly in the LRG meetings. Furthermore, the Aboriginal Heritage Impact assessment for the site remained outstanding. JF did not provide a firm commitment for timing of the planning proposal since assessment of these issues, amongst others, was considered appropriate before finalising a planning proposal for consideration by Council.
- Clr HM noted that he will speak with Council's General Manager Mr David Evans regarding progress of LEP amendment for Lochinvar, to clarify whether the timing of the assessment of the submitted environmental studies had been appropriate.
- JA questioned the timing of the environmental studies for Lochinvar, arguing that some environmental studies had been submitted to Council well before the consolidated set of environmental studies which were submitted earlier in 2010 for the whole investigation area.
- AW highlighted the difference between water and sewer servicing strategies and the more detailed design stage. JF stated that issues raised in previous LRG meetings regarding infrastructure highlight the importance of ensuring that water and sewer infrastructure can be extended to service the site.

5. Discussion re: 3rd Railway Track Briefing

- IH stated that following the briefing by the Hunter 8 Alliance, there did not appear to be a clear plan for the new rail track. IH identified that the Lochinvar Structure Plan was completed well before the Third Track proposal, stating that people will not live in Lochinvar unless the rail corridor is attenuated.
- JW supported IH's comments, stating that Hunter 8 Alliance did not seem to have a clear plan and that not all of the land along the rail corridor required for acquisition has been purchased yet.
- IH & JW argued that, according to discussion in the briefing on the Third Track, the Hunter 8 Alliance has only undertaken a pre-development assessment on issues such as noise and vibration with no allowance for future residents in the Lochinvar Investigation Area.
- JA argued that Hunter 8 Alliance and the NSW Department of Planning must have known about the Lochinvar Structure Plan, and stated that consideration should be given to Lochinvar.
- AW stated that the Lower Hunter Regional Strategy 2006 (LHRS 2006) and the Lochinvar Structure Plan 2007 (LSP 2007) identified the Lochinvar Investigation Area well before the Maitland to Minimbah Third Track was proposed, arguing that

there has been a lack of discussion within the NSW Department of Planning regarding the two sites.

- JA asked whether the group should contact MP Frank Terenzini about the potential impact of the Third Track on the Lochinvar Investigation Area.
- Clr HM stated that it was premature to contact the MP given that the NSW Department of Planning had not yet even exhibited the project for public comment, and that an assessment was still required by the NSW Department of Planning.
- JF provided a summary of strategies that identify the Lochinvar Investigation Area. These include the LHRS 2006, LSP 2007 and the Maitland Urban Settlement Strategy 2008 (MUSS 2008). The interrelationships between these strategies was discussed to provide a history of the Lochinvar Investigation Area and the significance of the site in the context of the Lower Hunter region and the Maitland LGA.
- IH argued that the LRG needs a firm commitment from Hunter 8 Alliance regarding the management of noise and vibration issues and how these are likely to impact upon the Lochinvar Investigation Area. JF identified that the Environmental Assessment for the Maitland to Minimbah Third Track project needed to be reviewed before the group jumped to conclusions about the impacts. **** Note: The NSW Department of Planning began exhibition of the Maitland to Minimbah Third Railway Track project on the 9th June 2010, two days after the subject LRG meeting. ****
- IH asked the group who could be approached to resolve issues arising from the Third Track project. Clr HM responded by stating that the group should wait until the exhibition period begins.
- JF identified that exhibition would likely be imminent given that on the 3rd May the Hunter 8 Alliance had indicated that exhibition was likely to begin 3 weeks after that date, pending the NSW Department of Planning granting approval to exhibit the project.
- IH raised concerns with the increased length of trains which results in longer delays at the Station Lane railway level crossing, and how this could potentially impact on the ability of emergency service authorities to undertake their duties within the Lochinvar area, given increased delays. The group indicated that this was a rail transport issue that could more appropriately be considered by the Ministry of Transport and ARTC.

6. General Business

- JW/JA/Clr HM agreed that when the plans for the Maitland to Minimbah Third Railway Track project are on exhibition, the group should seek a second meeting with the Hunter 8 Alliance.

7. Next meeting time

- Next meeting to be held at 4pm on Monday 5th July 2010 in the Paterson Room.

8. Meeting Closed: 4.48pm