

ALSTONVILLE BYPASS COMMUNITY LIAISON GROUP



Minutes of Meeting No. 2

TUESDAY 9 DECEMBER 2003

Present

RTA Representatives: Dave Purdy (Project Manager), Dennis Clancy (Client Representative), Murray Curtis (ERM – Noise consultant), and Sonia Williamson (Regional Communications Officer).

Community Representatives: Lothar Schwertner, Doug Sutherland, Gavin Robb, Kath Robb, Jane Gardiner, Marilyn Perkins, Robert Wilson, Judy Harmon, Geoff Harris, Garry Fuller, Wayne Garrard, Phillip Silver, Alison Carmichael, Simon Chate, Shirley Robertson, Maurice Collins, Les Smith, Russ Green.

Apologies

Peter Collins (Regional Manager, Northern Client Services), David Johnson (Design Manager), and Ian Taylor (community representative), Ivan Eichorn (community representative).

Confirmation of Minutes of 30 September 2003

The group accepted the minutes from the first meeting. Sonia Williamson advised that these would now be added to the RTA's website (www.rta.nsw.gov.au).

Update on status of project

Dave Purdy outlined the general progress of the project:

Geotechnical Investigations

- 28 boreholes totalling 750m.
- 87 test pits excavated.
- 1656m of seismic refraction survey.
- 10 piezometers installed.
- 120 soil samples taken for testing.

Acquisition

- Negotiations continuing with affected property owners.
- Compulsory acquisition notices have been issued.
- Compulsory acquisition process will ensure possession by 06/04.

It was asked if the Group could have the names of property owners who will be involved in the compulsory acquisition process. Due to privacy guidelines the RTA is unable to present this information to the Group.

Landscaping

- Seed collection of locally native species.
- Veiny Laceflowers and Rough-leaved Queensland Nut to be protected against accidental damage if not affected by the bypass.
- Seedlings and small plants of Rough-leaved Queensland Nut to be relocated as agreed with National Parks & Wildlife Service.
- Landscaping plan being prepared.

Public Utilities

- Telstra, optical fibre, water, stormwater, sewer and electricity have been identified as requiring relocation. The RTA is currently liaising with the necessary agencies for the relocation of these public utilities prior to the commencement of construction.

Ballina Shire Council

- The RTA is discussing a number of issues with Ballina Shire Council including entrance treatments to Alstonville, drainage improvements near Mellis Circuit, use of treated effluent for dust suppression during construction, and a visual record of Rous Mill Tramway and sugar mills.

LALC Involvement

- The RTA has been liaising with the Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC). The LALC has already been involved during geotechnical operations and an inspection at Maguires Creek for possible axe grinding grooves.

NSW Fisheries

- The RTA is currently liaising with NSW Fisheries to determine the most appropriate method of crossing Maguires Creek during the construction phase of the project to minimise impact.

Heritage commitments

- Vegetation planting to screen 'Waratah' homestead.
- Visual record of Rous Mill Tramway.
- Opportunity for community to utilise section of post & rail fence.
- Full recording of Browns Hill house and dairy, and Gibson house.

Potential Construction Issues – Blasting

- The RTA has identified the possible need to blast in two locations during construction. However, prior to this commencing the construction contractor will be required to develop a Noise and Vibration Management Plan. There will also be a requirement to undertake a number of trial blasts in non-critical areas prior to carrying out blasting to ensure that the process meets the guidelines. Dilapidation surveys will be undertaken of nearby residences both before and after any blasting. Any vibration will be within specified guidelines and adequate notice will be given to residents. A 'blasting mat' such as hessian or rubber matting would be used to suppress any flyrock material.
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Presentation by noise consultant

Murray Curtis from ERM Australia gave a presentation concerning the method used to monitor noise and the modelling process being used for Alstonville.

To assist in understanding some of the methodology the following terms were discussed:

- Sound Pressure Level (SPL) - the level of noise as measured at a particular location, usually expressed in dB(A).
- dB(A) - decibel unit used to measure SPL in the A-weighting scale, which approximates the response of the human ear.
- Noise criteria - a noise level adopted for planning purposes as the highest acceptable noise level due to a proposal for the specific area, land use and time of day.
- LAeq - equivalent steady sound pressure level over a specified period of time, expressed in dB(A).
- LAeq(15hr) - the LAeq noise level for the period 7am to 10pm.
- LAeq(9hr) - the LAeq noise level for the period 10pm to 7am.
- LAeq(1hr) - the highest tenth percentile one-hour LAeq noise level for the relevant period.

The Noise Modelling Process was outlined. Additional monitoring of existing traffic noise has been undertaken to complement the EIS data. Traffic noise criteria for specific residences is determined based on the type of road development, in this instance a new arterial corridor for the majority of the bypass and a redevelopment of an existing arterial road for the ends of the Bypass to be constructed over the current highway alignment. Specific criteria is also adopted for sensitive land uses such as schools and places of worship.

Murray advised that ERM are currently creating the traffic noise model including input of terrain, road design and traffic data. The model will be calibrated noise monitoring data, then run with no mitigation at opening and ten years after opening. Where noise criteria is exceeded, the model will be rerun with noise mitigation measures in place.

Typical noise mitigation options that are considered include traffic speed, road surface, noise barrier treatments (eg. noise mounds or walls), the road alignment, future building design and planning controls, reduction in vehicle noise emissions, and noise control treatments for individual residences.

It was noted that on the Alstonville Bypass the pavement will be a low noise producing surface which equates to 2dB(A) less than dense grade asphalt and up to 5dB(A) less than concrete pavement.

The noise barrier wall design process involves:

- Establishing technical requirements
 - Noise modelling results
 - Maintenance requirements
 - Budget
 - Consider context of road corridor and local setting
 - Determine architectural design, materials, landscaping etc.
 - Produce detailed design.
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Other issues raised by the Group:

- *Noise level at the Alstonville High School. Discussion took place concerning the noise monitoring at the school carried out in 1997 and the impact of the recorded night time noise levels on any traffic noise criteria adopted for the school. Murray advised that a specific noise criterion applies to the school irrespective of existing traffic noise levels. This criterion is applicable for the daytime period only. The final bypass design will incorporate noise mitigation as determined from the modelling process. Murray also confirmed that post construction noise monitoring will be undertaken to confirm traffic noise levels meet model predictions.*
- *Height of a noise wall in the Mellis Circuit area. Murray advised that detailed information on noise mitigation will be available following completion of the noise modelling process currently underway.*
- *Request to have a diagram indicating a comparison of common noise sources (This is attached to the minutes).*

Detailed design

Dave Purdy outlined the design progress and minor modifications being made to both the horizontal and vertical alignment to ensure it meets environmental, design and engineering constraints and standards.

Other comments included:

1. The tie in at the eastern end has been modified to reduce the high fill, lower the road level and utilise as much of the existing pavement as possible.
 2. Entrance treatment currently located on the western side of the link road from the bypass to the existing Bruxner highway.
 3. The Wardell Road - Minor changes to the roundabout at this location.
 4. Maguires creek to be crossed using an arch structure.
 5. Kays Lane to be overpassed by a 3 span bridge. This will provide a more "open feel" to the location and is the preference of the Urban Designers to use this type of structure.
 6. Sneaths road roundabout has been modified to provide more driver friendly traffic movements.
 7. Entrance treatment is currently located on the northern side of the link road from Sneaths road to the existing Bruxner Highway.
 8. Tie in at western end also reduced in length to maximise use of the existing pavement and intersection and to maintain two lanes travelling west from the Sneaths Road intersection with the highway.
 9. Lighting is being designed for all the major intersections and roundabouts.
 10. Landscaping design is underway utilising the local species from the Alstonville area as part of the urban design.
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11. Bridge design concepts are being completed.
12. The hydrology and hydraulics studies are currently being completed. Maguires creek and areas around Kays Lane and the Mellis Circuit area have had additional survey completed for the hydrology studies. Consultation with Ballina Council regarding the local drainage systems has been undertaken.

General discussion / questions

- *Dust during construction* - The contractor will be required to meet monitoring guidelines.
- *Access to the bypass from Alstonville* - Traffic movement exiting/entering Alstonville was discussed. The RTA will organise to have some type of models (enlargement of intersection arrangements that show all traffic movements, computer simulation or 3D) generated to assist residents understand the new intersections.
- *Duplication of Bypass* – When the RTA is acquiring property from a landowner it is acquiring enough land for the second carriageway. Bridge design will also take into account the future duplication. A duplication would require another Environment Impact Statement (EIS).
- *Division of carriageway* – Concern expressed with the accidents on the Brunswick Heads bypass and request for consideration of a central barrier. The RTA advised this would not be possible due to width restrictions and it would also prevent overtaking opportunities.
- *Relocation of speed camera* – Will this be relocated. The RTA to advise of what will occur after the bypass is opened.
- *Entrance treatments* – Areas at the eastern and western ends of the bypass would be landscaped to signify entrance. RTA considering information boards and the possible use of post and railing fencing. RTA is discussing with Ballina Shire Council and is encouraging comment from CLG members.

Next meeting

The next meeting of the group will be held in February 2004.

Meeting closed at 9.45pm

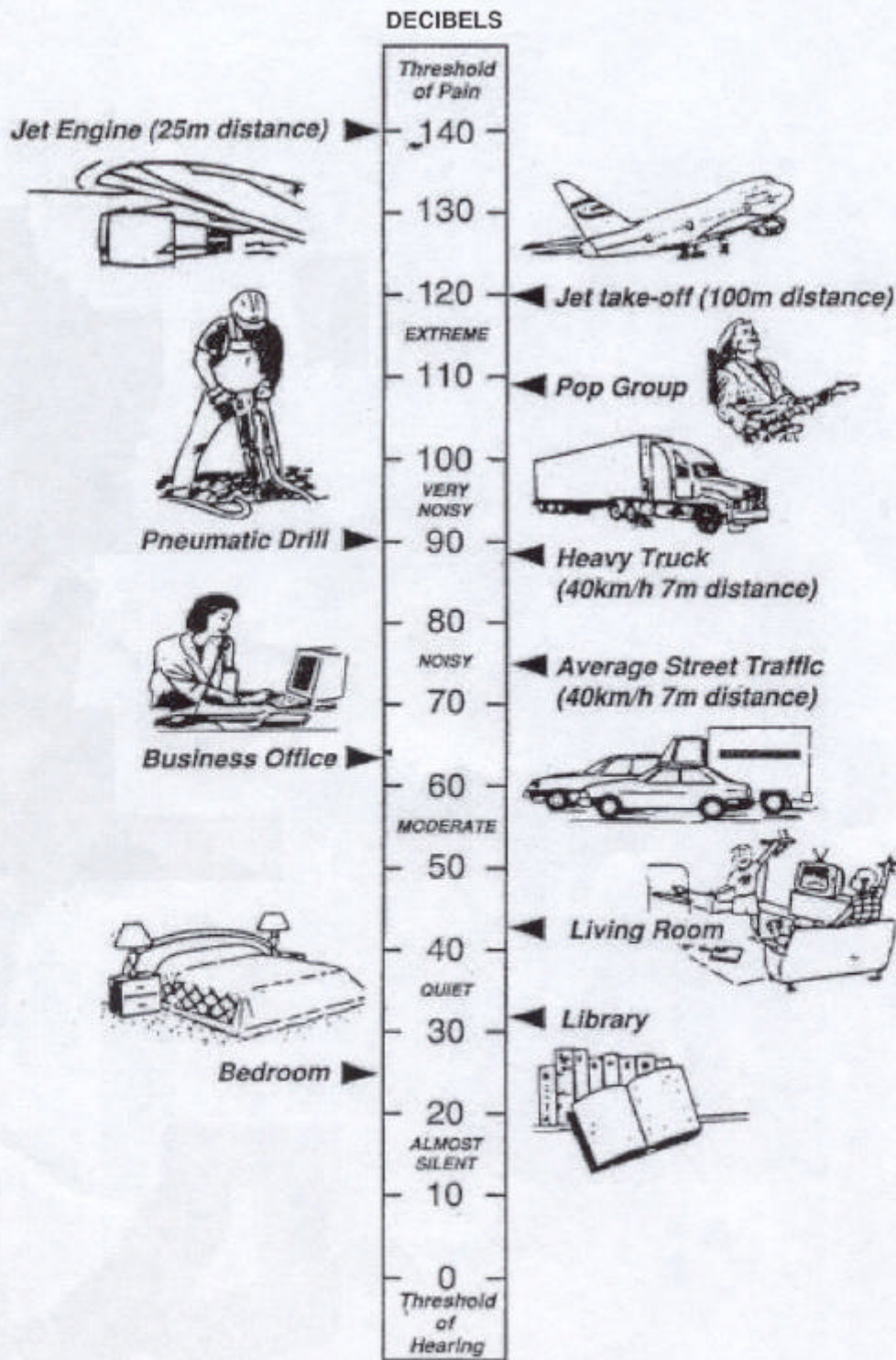


Figure C1. An illustrated comparison of common noise sources
Source: Road Traffic Noise Task Force Final Report