

MEETING MINUTES

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| Subject | <u>Community Liaison Group (north) meeting</u> | | |
| Venue | Elder Street Club rooms, corner of Elder Street and Delta Road, Watsonia | Date | <u>10 August 2018</u> |
| | | Time | <u>10am – 12noon</u> |
| Chair | <u>Mike Marasco</u> | | |
| Minute Taker | Chris Soderstrom | Tel | <u>1800 105 105</u> |
| | | Email | <u>Comms.adviserthree@northeastlink.vic.gov.au</u> |

Attendees

Mike Marasco (CLG Chair)
 Gemma Boucher (North East Link)
 Kim Jordan (North East Link)
 Kevin Begg (North East Link)
 David Hyett (North East Link)
 Chris Soderstrom (North East Link)
 Victoria Young (North East Link)
 Scott Lambert (North East Link)
 Michael Wickerson (North East Link)
 Allan Hunter (Watsonia)
 Michael Girdler (Watsonia)
 Jeremy Richards (Watsonia)
 Johanna Tabares (Watsonia)
 Fred Buono (Yallambie)
 David Hall (Greensborough)
 Gabrielle Callahan (Macleod)
 Dennis O'Connell (Friends of Banyule)
 Michelle Giovas (Warringal Conversation)
 Jonathan Risby (Nillumbik Council)
 David Bailey (Banyule Council)
 Mahesh Kaudal (VicRoads)

Apologies

Zoe Cassar (Resolve Rosanna Road)

ACTIONS as at 23 August 2018

| # | Action | Owner | Due | Status |
|---|--|-------------|---------------------|----------|
| 1 | Provide Kevin Begg and David Hyett's presentations to CLG with minutes | GB/CS | With minutes | Complete |
| 2 | Regular involvement of planning team in future CLGs to give updates on approvals, planning and environmental aspects (TRG) | DH/GB | Ongoing | Ongoing |
| 3 | Re-send link to EES scoping requirements issued on 24 June | GB/CS | With minutes | Complete |
| 4 | CLG members to send pictures of their local area for urban designers | CLG members | By next CLG meeting | Underway |

MINUTES

| Item | Agenda |
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| 1 | Introduction, Mike Marasco |
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- Opened the meeting with an Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners.
 - Confirmed previous CLG (north) meeting minutes adopted by group with one change (Rosanna Road not being listed in complementary projects, but has had improvements announced by State Government – this has now been changed in minutes on the website).
 - Outlined objectives for the session – to gain an understanding of Banyule Council’s plans for Watsonia, how it may the blend in with the Urban Design Strategy and provide an outline of the EES and an update on the TRG (a regular item from now for CLG meetings).
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| 2 | Watsonia precinct – outline of ‘Picture Watsonia’, David Bailey (Banyule Council) |
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- Outlined his past work at State Government and with VicRoads, and his positioning as a transport advocacy member who interfaces with NELA.
- Provided a snapshot of ‘Picture Watsonia’ – a community led document pulled together four years ago by planners to explore opportunities for growth in the area.
- Described ‘Picture Watsonia’ as a long-term vision – embedded into it are 30 and 40-year plans with some changes that have been initiated already, e.g. a small popup park.
- Covered the vision statement - to get best of the country meets best of the city in the suburbs. Objectives integrated into the vision – a magnetic, vibrant, green and colourful area known and loved by the community.
- Outlined the desire to prompt positive changes, while protecting areas of Watsonia that are close to the heart of residents. Eager to knit ideas together from the community and integrate them with the vision and future of the space. Necessary to re-visit ‘Picture Watsonia’ and see how it fits with NEL.
- Outlined where the council is at and how it responds to NEL’s request for assistance and input. At meetings with NEL, Banyule Council is considering opportunities in Watsonia and what longer-term goals can be brought forward.
- Said ‘Picture Watsonia’ is available online via the Banyule Council website for those interested in viewing.

In response to a number of questions:

- **(Asked by FB)** The difference between 30 and 40-year visions was looking at car park and railway areas, along with walkways around the station. We were looking at creating the village green as a concept beside the railway corridor that could really transform the area. The vision identified a barrier between residents on the east side of the corridor (Greensborough Highway). We are eager to see greater connectivity as a result
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of NEL so those on the east side can easily use shops and the village on the west side (DB answered).

- (MM) This document is a vision, not a development or strategic plan. It hasn't been taken forward at this stage. To move it to a stage of development plan is a different process. We are eager to look at 'Picture Watsonia' and take to a different step. We are looking at reviewing it as a concept before going forward (DB).
- (GC) 'Plan Melbourne' was created before 'Picture Watsonia' and its vision. Within it, there are several activity centres in the north. Watsonia does not feature in this strategy for community development. We see NEL as an opportunity to create change. We need to get community and government thinking about whether we grow organically or make pushes to change with NEL integration (DB).
- (DH) Reference design essentially proves things can be done. Opportunity for ideas to be brought forward to form references to those building it. Probably will not adjust reference design as it is one solution for area, but during procurement stage we will look at contractor submissions they may bring forward design that implements suggestions. Would not call it a 'base case' as that would be without considerations and we are taking feedback. There is an expectation that you will not get a lesser than expected outcome (MW).
- (JR) These projects provide opportunities in communities that would not otherwise be done, but they must be in the project's scoping directions. Next version of the reference design will have more detail presented. Feedback and input brought forward such as Fred's will go back to teams to say how it has been considered. In the scheme of the reference design, it is just a reference design that is unlikely that it is built. There comes a time when pens need to be put down so David's team can complete the EES process. This process involves alternatives being presented, showing story of corridors presented and consider options brought forward. Part must show options brought forward that are not feasible and why. Needs to explain are there other credible options that have been forward that have not been adopted and why. If there are micro or macro changes or improvements, they can be brought up in panel hearings process (KJ, DH).

3 Urban Design Strategy, Kevin Begg

- Outlined importance of the Banyule Council in its work with NEL, helping provide context for an important area of the project. The work of urban designers will reflect aspects manifested in 'Picture Watsonia'.
- Also outlined work with David Bailey and Banyule Council to see how NEL could contribute its long-term vision. We should understand it so we can give to proponents to show what the vision is and inform design.
- Provided a snapshot of Urban Design and noted its inclusion of architecture and landscape disciplines – it is how the project functions, relating to connectivity of community, how it looks and feels. Urban Design generally talks about the additional things from the road – the other parts that make a community such a vibrant place.
- Outlined how Government had changed its approach to large-scale projects – not just technical problems being solved, but many aspects are being addressed, and many people are brought along to help answer and address these. E.g., we are talking about

integrating a shared use network just as long as the road, to help create a fitter and more active community.

- Specified that a good outcome would be a solution with high quality context sensitive urban design components. Instead of a reference design, we provide an Urban Design Strategy that says at different levels here is what we want you to do, not how. We are not prescribing materials or design elements, but want to look at performance-based requirements and are seeking feedback on this via many forums, including CLG.
- Outlined how the urban design team is gaining feedback through the EES process. We want to tie everything back to the Urban Design Strategy, so that when proponents come to us with designs, we want to use competitive tension to maximise outcomes for the community.
- Detailed the eight guiding principles the urban design team is looking at integrating into the UDS to help reach its objectives (identity, connectivity and wayfinding, urban integration, resilience and sustainability, amenity, vibrancy, safety and accessibility).
- Urban Design team has divided the corridor into three distinct areas defined by landscape character - Ridgeline, Yarra River Valley and Koonung Creek Valley. It's gathering feedback from community and council that can be relayed to the design team for consideration. Experience you get from driving, cycling and walking through different areas is distinct and gives context for designs.

In response to a number of questions:

- **(Asked by DH)** The next version of reference design may not go into detail of all principles, more a functional proof of concept that a design and engineering team can use and make work. It provides minimum expectations – writing requirements expecting quality and outcomes to be much better. Must detail why changes to reference design have been made, why they are better against performance-based requirements **(KB answered)**.
 - **(GC, FB)** The EES planned to be completed at end of this year and be released to the public in either the first or the second quarter of next year. Panel hearings are likely to take place around this time next year **(DH)**.
 - **(FB)** We do not know yet the weightings that will be given to urban design compared with other aspects during the procurement phase of the project. In recent times, the development industry have consistently exceeded expectations in relation to urban design and there is typically lots of robust discussions and briefings with the design teams to stress the importance of how aspects of the project will look and feel.
 - **(FB)** CLGs will not be directly evaluating the bids. Evaluation process is a collaborative one where competitive environment will help to bring about better outcomes for community. There is likely to be much refinement to design – sometimes functionality will be more important than the look and feel via Urban Design Strategy **(KJ)**.
 - **(DO)** The evolution of freeways and their impact over decades has been that we have been trying to improve the processes on projects to get particular outcomes. There is a clear discussion with lots of different groups looking at roads, not just from driver experience, but also from the community's perspective. We are eager for proposals to be responsive to the character of the area, what community values and we need to balance out requirements in the urban design strategy **(KB)**.
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- (GC) We seek feedback to let us know whether we have grasped the character in our urban design strategy along the corridor, including around Simpson Barracks. We have seen how landscape effects the community layout and it will be important to balance needs and requirements of the community. Council has reflected idea of houses being 'in the bush'. We can look to integrate Macleod into the area (KB).
 - (MG) The brief/ Urban Design Strategy will set the tone and be part of the contract in that it specifies what needs to be complied with. There will be briefings provided to proponents, and guidelines for options. We will determine what will most strongly reflect the brief. The Urban Design Advisory panel is made of experienced professionals who meet and develop schemes and see as going through design elements (KB).
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4 Technical Reference Group, David Hyett

- Provided outline of his role as a coordinator in the preparation of the EES and the importance of the EES as the highest level of assessment in Victoria, and its value for this large project.
- Provided context around the EES— that it's not an approval in itself, but it informs the decisions of statutory decision-makers in the State Government regarding the key approvals for the project. The key approvals being sought are the Planning Scheme Amendment (Minister for Planning) and the Works Approval for ventilation structures (EPA Victoria). Separately a Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP) is required to be approved before the project can proceed. Commonwealth approval is also required under the Environment Protection & Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999.
- Outlined the process of the EES:
 - Assessments are conducted before the EES is finalised. Documents checked over by end 2018 or early 2019. Late quarter one or early quarter two, on the documentation will be placed on public exhibition and the public can make submissions in relation to the EES over a period of 30 days.
 - An Inquiry and Advisory Committee (IAC) will write a report based on the EES, public submissions and further information gathered through public hearings. The Minister for Planning then prepares a Ministers Assessment taking into account the IAC report that will in turn inform approvals decisions.
 - DELWP runs the TRG process on behalf of the Minister for Planning, whilst the North East Link Authority is the proponent.
- Described the TRG, which is the largest assembled, including six councils and a range of different departments. It meets on a regular basis, and tasked with advising on policy and standards to be adopted, amongst other things. Councils are acknowledged as having a lot of local knowledge that we want to be brought into the process. They are a conduit for community values and concerns.
- Outlined the importance of the EES, setting out matters to be included and the Scoping Requirements issued by the Minister for Planning are used as a checklist. The Minister determines whether the EES accounts for everything in the Scoping Requirements and the engagement plan sets out the requirements and steps, both statutory and non-statutory, that should be brought into the process.

In response to questions:

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- **(Asked by MG)** The TRG helps us with changes to policy that are pertinent to what we are doing. Completed reports we are happy with will be made public when the EES is exhibited. We are doing preliminary draft reports before the TRG that are subject to change and refinements, and are not freely distributed. The completed reports will be made public once review has been made **(DH answered)**.
 - **(FB)** The EES compares doing something vs not doing something by looking into the future with and without the project. For instance, prediction of noise levels with and without the project. Transport modelling needs to consider what the future will look like and consider road and infrastructure improvements, including consideration of autonomous vehicles. The EES reflects transport work. We have an assessment that predicts size and shape of project for the demand. It will explore how intersections and traffic interact **(DH)**.

5 **Other comments:**

- As CLG members, you are encouraged to bring community feedback to the table. We will not tell you that things can or cannot be done, but as representatives you need to think about how you can get a response to input such as Fred's design. The project wants feedback of its design. Informal engagement processes should be explored to get optimal feedback and consensus **(MM)**.
- We are working with AusNet to understand what it would look like to put HV power cables underground and look to collaborate and consult with councils. Feedback has shown that end towers are quite a lot bigger than many think and the footprint would be such that many more acquisitions would occur. The footprint does not fit in the scope **(MW)**.
- **(DH)** We don't have a confirmed date on new CLG session date this year, but once we have it, we'll be meeting with you before caretaker and the election. We want to come out soon, but we want to ensure that pens down, though TRG need to be happy we are following the necessary process. We will do our best to provide this session and will endeavour to release information to the group before the public, if permitted **(GB)**.

6 **Closing, Mike Marasco**

- Thanked speakers and attendees for attending the CLG session and ended closed the session.

Next Meeting:

Group - CLG north

Date & time - Friday, 5 October 2018 from 10am to 12noon

Venue - TBC