

Meeting Minutes

Meeting:	Yan Yean Road upgrade – Community Reference Group
Date:	Tuesday, 13 March 2018
Attendees:	VicRoads Chairperson: Warren Bradshaw (WB) Independent Facilitator: Bruce Turner (BT) Community members: Neisha Forbes (NF), Pam Hoyne (PH), Anne Trueman (AT), Joanne Jamieson (JJ) VicRoads: Damian van Dyke (DvD), Nerilee Kerlake (NK), Ben Matters (BM), Charlotte Claney (CC), Chinthaka Arachchige (CA)
Apologies:	VicRoads: Nancy Joseph (NJ) Community members: Michelle Rudd (MR), John Yeomans (JY)

Item 1 - Welcome

Item 2 - Introductions

WB commented that learnings from Stage 1 will carry onto Stage 2. WB explained there will be an evolution of CRG involvement throughout the life of the project.

JJ enquired about scope of Stage 2. BM explained that planning for Stage 2 runs from north of Kurrak Road to Bridge Inn Road, this includes tie in provisions for potential future upgrade works eg. at Bridge Inn Road and Doctors Gully Road.

NF asked if Stage 2 will continue the duplication of Yan Yean Road to four lanes. WB and BM confirmed that is the plan. NF asked if this meant Yan Yean Road could be classified as a freeway. WB and BM said it will be an upgraded arterial road, not a freeway.

WB said he hoped to create a collaborative environment within the CRG where community members can bring community issues to the group, so the project team can hear what those issues are and get the best outcome for the project and the community. WB encouraged the group to suggest tweaks to the format of the CRG meetings at any stage, in order to get the most out of the meetings and the group.

WB discussed the importance of remaining respectful of one another when discussing difficult issues, and promised VicRoads would be receptive and empathetic to such discussions. WB stressed to the group that all issues get the appropriate air time. WB indicated he was coming in with an open mind and hoped everyone else would as well. He offered his direct contact number to the group and encouraged members to approach him at any stage with feedback on anything more or different he could do as Chair.

BT explained to the group that his role as independent facilitator would allow Warren to participate in group discussion and share his project knowledge. BT went through his previous experience with the Flora & Fauna Panel, acknowledged NF and PH as former members of that group, and said he would be bringing his understanding of community perspectives from that group. He clarified his independent role and expressed that he hoped the CRG could work collaboratively and have constructive meetings.

NF said she found it interesting to be on the former Flora & Fauna Panel. NF acknowledged she belongs to the Plenty Historical Society, the Plenty Community Action Group and is a lifelong Plenty resident. She

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commented she has seen lots of changes in the area due to development but doesn't feel all of them have been good.

AT said she had lived in Yarrambat 35 years, and was most interested in the project upgrades near Heard Avenue. AT said she campaigned for Yan Yean Road to be upgraded years ago and understood why it is necessary to duplicate and upgrade the road to increase capacity and improve safety.

JJ has been a Yarrambat resident and lived in the area for 20 years. She is a police sergeant in the local area, and has been for 30 years. JJ told the group she had attended nasty accidents and fatalities on and near Yan Yean Road. She said that police can no longer give accurate accident statistics for Yan Yean Road because accidents are no longer recorded if there are no injuries reported. JJ rides horses and said it can take 15 minutes to turn out of her street with her horse float at the moment due to traffic. JJ is excited the design for Stage 2 proposes to signalise Bannons Lane. JJ has children who drive now and believes the risk of turning right onto Yan Yean Road at the moment means taking your life into your own hands. JJ said that currently she cannot turn out of her street unless she leaves by 6.15am. JJ said that duplicating the road will result in a lot of positives for VicPol to police Yan Yean Road effectively.

PH has lived in the area since 1967. PH says she loves the trees in the area but that they are too dangerous. PH believes access is too dangerous and kids cannot ride their bikes safely. JJ agreed that trees should not be around roads. PH has previously taught at Yarrambat Primary and her children attended Plenty Valley Christian College, and feels she can contribute her strong knowledge of the area and the road to the the group discussions.

WB recognised that JY and MR were apologies for the first CRG meeting. NF asked where they are from. CC responded that JY lives locally and is impacted by the design for Stage 2 of the project. Both MR and JY would be invited tell the group about themselves at the next meeting.

Item 3 - Community Reference Group

DvD distributed the updated Terms of Reference for the CRG. WB read through the Terms of Reference with the table. WB assured the group that necessary information will be fed back to the Contractor and that BMD will attend some meetings, as appropriate, to give information and updates to the group as well. DvD agreed that having BMD attend some meetings in addition to VicRoads feeding information back to them would help to ensure they understand the community perspective directly.

AT asked if CRG's are common. WB replied that they are increasingly becoming part of road upgrade projects because they provide an open two-way dialogue between the community and the project delivery team during construction. WB explained that CRG's are not always appropriate or required, giving the example of Plenty Road because it is a thoroughfare. WB explained that the Flora & Fauna Panel advised during planning and tendering of Stage 1, and the CRG will advise during this next phase of the project.

WB encouraged the group to get out and talk to the community, and bring their issues back to the table. PH asked if there would be council representation in meetings. NF claimed that Nillumbik Council wouldn't get involved as much as she would have liked with the Flora & Fauna Panel, so that's why at a community meeting it was decided to start the Plenty Community Action Group. PH said that Councillor Grant Booker did come and speak at a couple of Flora & Fauna Panel meetings. BM explained that it was inappropriate for VicRoads to commit council resources. NF requested a council representative to attend all CRG meetings, specifying Jonathan Risby from Nillumbik Council. WB assured the group that VicRoads meet regularly with Jonathan. CC said that the minutes from each CRG meeting will be shared with both Nillumbik and Whittlesea councils.

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WB mentioned that we will be looking at workshopping timber re-use initiatives, and shared details with the group of a recent shared use path connectivity workshop undertaken with all relevant authorities, including attendance by Danielle Green MP.

BT asked if the group would like identify some common sense behavioural guidelines to make CRG meetings as productive and collaborative as possible, being mindful that we will work through some thorny issues and must all be respectful of one another. After further discussion and contributions from most, the group agreed on the following guidelines:

- We will listen with respect to all the views so everyone feels heard
- We endeavour to tap into and act as a conduit for wider community views and local knowledge
- We aim for consensus where possible (or at least accurately record the differences in view where consensus is not possible)
- We are able to be flexible (give and take)
- If a member is going to be absent, it is possible for them to arrange a suitable substitute in discussion with VicRoads

WB said an important part of discussion will be around the timing of particular construction activities. By getting community insight on local events and understanding what the community milestones are, we can try to work with the Contractor to minimise disruption for the community as much as possible.

BM noted that not all community members present represent a group or organisation, so to please be mindful to try and take a community approach and not use the group to air personal grievances or give airtime to specific issues, for example impact to my driveway.

Discussion turned to social media presence and JJ said that online community groups can get nasty, and she doesn't think Facebook is the best forum to discuss community wide issues.

NF asked if horse riders would be allowed on the footpath. BM answered that yes, they would.

DvD said we will check in with everyone the week before a CRG meeting to make sure the date works for all. The group then discussed the process of attendees reviewing draft meeting minutes, providing comment, and that the final version would capture the essence of discussion and be published on engagevicroads.

Meeting locations. Meetings will mostly be held at Rivers of Yarrambat but on occasion we may hold them at the site office.

Action 1.1: Approach Nillumbik and Whittlesea councils to see if a representative can attend some future CRG meetings.

Action 1.2: Meetings to be moved to the second Monday of every month generally, as this suits the group best. However, next meeting will be 16 April to avoid school holidays.

Item 4 - Standing agenda

CC distributed the standing agenda, WB ran through it with the group. CC explained the "group workshop" agenda item as where we can get into the detail of a particular topic, such as landscaping or urban design.

DvD reminded the group that we need to have flexibility in the agenda to include discussion around issues that pop up and are timely. BM agreed that if there is a hot button issue we can bump the agenda items, with

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group consent, to focus on that issue. BM gave the example of a large rainfall event might mean we want to discuss flooding one month and move that up to the top of the agenda.

DvD asked the group if we should start at 6.15pm to allow time to get something to eat and say hello before beginning the meeting promptly at 6.30pm. This would help us make the most out of our time, since everyone is putting aside a night every month to be here.

Item 5 - Project overview

DvD spoke to how VicRoads awarded the contract to BMD last year: a reference design was released and agreed on a design and construct contract. BMD must now go through the detailed design process and they are well through that. DvD notified the group that property boundary fencing and tree removals would likely start in the next week - with works starting at Mackelroy Road. DvD assured everyone that the site office is local so staff are accessible to the community. Queries can come in and there is an open invitation to contact us, and we will meet with you where we can. DvD explained that construction had been broken up into 10 zones. CC mentioned a zone map is being progressed and that direct communications will be sent to everyone along the alignment so they know what zone they are in, what construction activities will take place that month and how they may be impacted.

WB confirmed with DvD that the roll plot (on the table) was the functional design.

DvD explained that traffic congestion was unavoidable during construction but VicRoads can supply as much information to the public as possible. NF asked why tree removal didn't begin weeks ago. JJ asked if any protests were expected. NK said wildlife rescuers may come on site to assist during tree removal. DvD said processes and procedures, safety protocols, wildlife handlers, and safety handling were in place. CA said that while the tree removals were delayed, services relocations as still being undertaken. NF asked if nest boxes have been installed. NK confirmed that installation of 65 nest boxes had commenced and works will include reinstating felled hollows back in the area too for habitat use.

PH said temporary fencing had helped to visually show the community what trees will be removed and prepare them. DvD said it was about balancing road safety, amenity, and saving trees and land. He said the difference between where we started and where we ended up was considerable and community feedback and the Flora and Fauna Panel played a large part in that.

NF urged VicRoads to take learnings from the engagement undertaken for Stage 1 and carry it through to Stage 2.

BM said that planning for Stage 2 includes intersection upgrades at five intersections, and access changes to left in and out. JJ asked about Worns Lane. BM answered that near Worns Lane is Heard Avenue and it will have a roundabout. BM expanded to say that where there is a signalised intersection close by then a u-turn can safely happen there but we have also provided two u-turn bays where the distance was too far to travel to a signalised intersection. BM said that a key learning from Stage 1 has been that we want to minimise the land we need for Stage 2. There are a number of potentially impacted properties and we have met with all property owners (but one) and have been working with them. The majority of landowners we have spoken to are supportive of the project and understand why the impact to their land is necessary. A small minority are not supportive of the impact to their land but recognise the need to upgrade the road. BM said that the planning submission for Stage 2 is likely to be submitted in June. Broader community consultation is likely to take place late April.

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Action 1.3: Investigate possible solutions to traffic congestion around Aged Care Home.

Item 6 - General discussion

NF raised compensation as an issue of concern for those facing acquisition as part of the upgrade. BM explained the offers to landowners are not based on VicRoads' evaluations; the formula and assessment is done independently. WB explained the process is the two valuers, both government and private working for the landowners, get together and align on a final figure, all at the project's cost.

NF asked JJ if the safety barriers to be installed on Yan Yean Road would make it more difficult for police to pull people over. JJ said that in fact it will be easier (currently not possible) because the dual lanes will allow police to use one lane to pull people over safely. BM added that two 3.5m lanes will provide plenty of space.

NF and PH asked if that would be the same for CFA. BM assured them that we are working with emergency services and that the increased capacity will make evacuation in emergency situations much faster than it is now. AT agreed that it will be better than it is now. JJ agreed too, saying that at the moment if a tree falls we are stuck in a fire situation. NK said stage one meet quarterly with CFA and attended Emergency Management Committee. CA has been talking to CFA re: barriers and spacing and emergency access. Their feedback was incorporated.

JJ asked BM how many property owners will lose land in Stage 1 and Stage 2. BM explained that during the acquisition for Stage 1, Stage 2 was still classified a local road with no plans to duplicate. There are 1-3 landowners impacted but they have all been spoken with and understand what is happening and why. BM said we have learned from this and have spoken with people as far as Doctors Gully Road to allow for future proofing tie ins for potential upgrades of other roads. BM said we are identifying it early so in the future they can prepare. JJ said it does cause stress.

Action 1.4: Circulate brochure outlining how the land acquisition compensation process works.

Action 1.5: NK to find out who attended Emergency Management Committee meetings from VicPol and CFA, and get back to JJ and NF.

Action 1.6: Increase time allocated to project update in standing agenda, current allocated time won't be sufficient.

Meeting ran overtime and concluded at 8.30pm

Outcome / Action	Responsible	Due
Action 1.1: Approach Nillumbik and Whittlesea councils to see if a representative can attend some future CRG meetings.	WB	16 April 2018

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Action 1.2: Meetings to be moved to the second Monday of every month generally, as this suits the group best. However, next meeting will be 16 April to avoid school holidays.	All	Complete
Action 1.3: Investigate possible solutions to traffic congestion around Aged Care Home.	WB	16 April 2018
Action 1.4: Circulate brochure outlining how the land acquisition compensation process works.	BM	16 April 2018
Action 1.5: NK to find out who attended Emergency Management Committee meetings from VicPol and CFA, and get back to JJ and NF.	NK	16 April 2018
Action 1.6: Increase time allocated to project update in standing agenda, current allocated time won't be sufficient.	CC	Complete