

EUROA WORKING GROUP

Minutes

DATE / TIME

15 July 2019
6:00pm to 8:30pm

LOCATION

Euroa Library
62 Binney St, Euroa

FACILITATOR

Todd Beavis

MINUTE TAKER

Mark Blackman

ATTENDEES

- | | | | |
|------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------|--|
| ▶ Cr. Alistair Thomson | Strathbogie Shire Council | ▶ Ed Walker | ARTC, General Manager Victoria Projects |
| ▶ Cr. Mick Williams | Strathbogie Shire Council | ▶ Dinesh Batra | ARTC, Senior Project Manager Inland Rail |
| ▶ Edwina Thompson | DESIGN Euroa | ▶ Renee Preece | ARTC, Stakeholder Engagement Lead |
| ▶ Justine Collins | | ▶ Mark Blackman | ARTC, Stakeholder Engagement Advisor |
| ▶ Nola Dudley | | | |
| ▶ Tom Maher | | | |
| ▶ Ann Mahon | | | |
| ▶ Des Ryan | | | |
| ▶ Shirley Saywell | | | |
| ▶ Michael Tehan | | | |
| ▶ Sarah Treloar | | | |
| ▶ Bernard Walker | | | |

Discussions

NO.	DISCUSSIONS
1	Open meeting, welcome
	<p>Todd welcomed the Working Group and discussed the focus for the meeting – for ARTC to share and discuss the design options that had been considered to date so that members could ask questions and have the information they need to provide informed input into the design process.</p> <p>Ed re-confirmed that while the focus for the meeting was to look at options already considered by ARTC, including those previously considered as a result of community feedback, all options are on the table.</p> <p>It was also discussed that with the Working Group established as a key mechanism for the community to provide input and feedback, there is still the need for ARTC to be guided by the needs of other stakeholders, such as Council and VicRoads, and the broader Euroa community.</p>
2	Adoption of minutes
	No changes requested. Minutes adopted.
3	Actions from last meeting
	<p>Actions from the last meeting were reviewed, including changes to the Terms of Reference, no outstanding matters were identified.</p> <p><u>NOISE AND VIBRATION</u></p> <p>ARTC shared further information in relation to the approach to managing potential noise and vibration impacts of the project. The Group was advised that in Victoria, Inland Rail has voluntarily adopted the NSW Rail Infrastructure Noise Guideline (RING). This is the most stringent noise policy in Australia.</p> <p>Baseline monitoring for current levels of freight and passenger services has been completed, and ARTC is awaiting a final report.</p>

NO.	DISCUSSIONS
	<p>Following baseline monitoring, predictive modelling was completed on the previously considered bridge replacement option which indicated that noise impacts would be within requirements. Early indications suggest there are only two sites throughout Victoria that may present noise issues, Euroa not being one of them.</p> <p>Once a Draft Reference Design is decided, following further input from all stakeholders, further noise and vibration assessment will be undertaken, and the results shared with the Working Group. It was confirmed that assessment of noise levels will consider issues such as wind direction.</p>
4	Design process and timeline
	<p>Following the first Working Group meeting, ARTC has made the decision to revisit the timeline and design process for Euroa. The Inland Rail Process Timeline, providing an overview of the project from Concept Assessment to Delivery, was discussed.</p> <p>Whereas the team had been working towards confirming the design option, based on the bridge replacement as the preferred solution (Feasibility Design Phase 3), we are now back at confirming options (Feasibility Design Phase 1). The revised Phase 1 process includes the discussion of options assessed at tonight's meeting and further work with the Working Group to confirm options at the next meeting.</p> <p>ARTC will then take out the preferred options, based on input from the Working Group and other stakeholders, to the broader community for feedback prior to confirming the preferred solution. The aim is to have the Draft Reference Design (preferred solution) selected, ready to commence detailed design early in the new year.</p> <p>A member of the Group raised the Q&A advertising campaign currently running in the Euroa Gazette. The campaign indicates that the previously shared concept for a bridge replacement is still the preferred solution. ARTC acknowledged the advertising campaign did not reflect the current status of the project, advising the ad had been booked some time ago. It was agreed that all communication would be reviewed to ensure it aligned with the process agreed with the Working Group.</p>
5	Break
6	Presentation of considered options
	<p><u>ASSESSING OPTIONS</u></p> <p>Before exploring the options considered, the Working Group was given the opportunity to understand how ARTC assesses options. The following factors were discussed: project scope; technical viability; construction and operational safety; impact on rail operations; construction cost and timeline; environment and heritage impacts; community and property impacts; and approvals and stakeholder risk.</p> <p>It was noted that as the project operates in a 'live' freight corridor, the continuation of rail operations is a key consideration. With passenger services, there is the option to replace rail services with buses. There is no similar option with freight.</p> <p><u>OPTIONS CONSIDERED</u></p> <p>The remainder of the meeting was dedicated to exploring the options in detail. A high-level overview of the works, construction impacts, benefits and disadvantages of each of the options considered by ARTC was provided to inform the discussion. It was noted that the benefits and disadvantages reflected the view of ARTC at the time of the assessment and that this may differ from the community's views. Maps and technical drawings (digitally and in hard copy) were also provided to assist the members to understand and explore each of the options.</p>

NO.	DISCUSSIONS
	<p><u>LEVEL CROSSING</u></p> <p>Following questions about replacing the bridge with a level crossing at the last meeting, it was decided to address this option prior to exploring the five options presented in the first meeting in detail.</p> <p>ARTC explained to the Group that replacing the bridge with a level crossing was ruled out early during Concept Assessment. The primary reasons were that it does not meet ARTC safety requirements and that it was unlikely to be approved by the Victorian Government or the Office of the National Safety Regulator. ARTC and the state government have a policy of removing level crossings, not creating new ones. While ARTC won't give further consideration to a level crossing, the Group was informed that the Euroa community may pursue it through alternative channels if they choose. It was explained that this would require approval by the Victorian Minister for Public Transport, however, this was unlikely given the Victorian Government's efforts to remove crossings from the rail network. It was also noted that creating a new level crossing would be contrary to VicRoads policy.</p> <p>Following discussion, there was general agreement amongst the Working Group that this option should not be pursued further. However, members of the group raised that there are still many in the community who think it's the best option and that ARTC needed to better communicate why a level crossing is not considered a viable option.</p> <p><u>BRIDGE REMOVAL (no crossing)</u></p> <p>This would involve demolishing the existing bridge and re-routing Euroa Shepparton Road (C366), preventing traffic from crossing the railway line at Anderson St. As a major arterial road between the High Country and Goulburn Valley, this would have significant impacts during construction and into the future.</p> <p>While being one of the lowest cost options for the project, this option was ruled out as it has a major impact on connectivity, contrary to one of the key requirements put forward by the Euroa community and ARTC's principles for managing impacts on local infrastructure. It would also require major road reconstruction and the re-routing of traffic, which would need to be approved by VicRoads.</p> <p>VicRoads was not supportive of this option during early high-level discussions, they clearly stated their requirement there needs to be a road connection. As such, this option was not progressed beyond early Concept Assessment.</p> <p>There was general agreement amongst the Group that a key problem the community was looking to solve was the fact that the existing bridge and station precinct divide the town and that removing the bridge would make it worse. The Group was comfortable that this option would not be explored further.</p> <p>During the discussion, the proposed roundabout at Brock Street was discussed. The Group made it clear that they did not support the construction of the roundabout and that it is a key issue of concern to the broader Euroa community.</p> <p><u>TRACK LOWERING</u></p> <p>This option involves lowering the tracks so double stacked trains can fit under the existing bridge and relocation of the east track parallel to the west track. It would also require significant works to mitigate the risk of flooding (as ARTC would effectively be creating a big trench), rebuilding the station buildings and platforms and underpasses as overpasses.</p> <p>Much of the discussion centred around the potential flood impacts and the impact of flood mitigation measures. This includes a large raised flood levee, to replace the existing raised rail line which acts as a levy today, a large concrete channel to assist with drainage and a pump station. Track lowering would also impact the existing goods shed (owned by VicTrack), which while not heritage listed, could play a key role in a future revitalisation of the station precinct.</p>

NO.	DISCUSSIONS
	<p>It was discussed that while this would have significant community and passenger impacts, there would be no impact on traffic as the existing bridge would remain as is. It was noted that leaving the bridge as is may be viewed as a benefit to the project, however, a lot of people in the community would not agree with this assessment. It would also require the relocation of town infrastructure, including the sewer and water mains.</p> <p>It was explained that due to the significant scope of works, which would have major impacts on the local community and rail passengers, ongoing safety concerns around flooding, and the high cost, that this option was not considered further.</p> <p>There was general agreement amongst the Group that there was no need to explore this option further.</p> <p><u>ROAD UNDER RAIL</u></p> <p>This option involves removing the existing bridge building a road tunnel underneath the railway tracks. It would involve closing existing access points at Nelson Street, Railway Street and the ramp to the station, and relocating the pedestrian underpass. It would also require major works that would impact nearby properties, including raising streets and reconfiguring intersections.</p> <p>Like Track Lowering (above), this option presents significant challenges to mitigate the impact of flooding, resulting in significant disruptions and high cost. It also means there is an ongoing risk the road underpass will flood, with initial flood modelling showing that cars and trucks would be under water if the pump failed.</p> <p>Members of the group raised the view that if this risk is unlikely given that in a 1-in-100-year flood the surrounding streets would be flooded, and cars wouldn't be able to enter the underpass.</p> <p>ARTC explained that this option is not simply an inverse of the bridge replacement, that it is more complex with greater impacts on the surrounding areas. In this context, the group raised concerns about the impacts of the works on access to Nelson St, a one-way street with access from Anderson Street. ARTC acknowledged that this would need further investigation, along with further consideration on potential impacts to the intersection of Elliot and Scott Streets and surrounding properties.</p> <p>There was a lot of discussion about whether or not the underpass could be designed only for cars and smaller trucks, rather than requiring a 5.4 m height clearance and width (current design is as wide as the bridge) to allow large trucks (including B-Doubles). If so, this would lessen the scope of works and impacts on surrounding streets and properties.</p> <p>ARTC advised that given the fact that Euroa Shepparton Road (C366) is an arterial road that this option had been designed to accommodate larger vehicles. ARTC agreed to come back to the Group with more information about current routes and limits for over-sized vehicles through and around Euroa and to speak to VicRoads as to whether they would consider alternative routes for larger vehicles.</p> <p>It was agreed that this option required further investigation.</p> <p><u>RAIL OVER ROAD (SKYRAIL)</u></p> <p>This option involves extensive works (2.2km) through town, with a long, elevated rail bridge and elevated station. The main benefits of this option are removing the risk of flooding and the potential for improved connectivity. However, it would mean a significant new structure (5.4m high pillars), with double-stacked trains on top, that would have significant construction impacts and ongoing visual impacts that many felt would be inconsistent with the character of the town.</p> <p>There was no requirement from the Group to explore this option further.</p> <p><u>BRIDGE REPLACEMENT</u></p> <p>This option involves replacing the current bridge with a higher bridge and had been considered the preferred option prior to the establishment of the Working Group and agreement to revisit the design process. ARTC</p>

NO.	DISCUSSIONS
	<p>reminded the Group that bridge replacement is open for discussion and feedback along with the other options.</p> <p>It was noted that ARTC had got the message that many in the Euroa community did not like the existing bridge and therefore building a bigger version of what currently exists is not likely to be accepted. It was also noted that the community did not support the previously preferred design and that a bridge replacement could look very different to what had been presented.</p> <p>From a construction perspective, bridge replacement is a good option as the bridge would be built off-site minimising impacts on the community and there would be no disruption to passenger and freight movements. It also offers improved safety, including wider lanes, straightening the road and removing the dangerous ramp access. The downsides include that it removes the direct access to the station and the visual impact of a larger structure.</p> <p>Much of the discussion centred around the various options that could be included in a bridge replacement, including various options to access the station and track realignment.</p> <p>It was agreed that a couple of the options discussed, including track realignment and improved road connectivity would be presented for discussion at the next meeting.</p>
7	Next meeting
	<p>It was agreed that the ARTC would take on board the feedback from the meeting and present further information on road under rail and bridge replacement, including a number of variations of the latter, at the next meeting. The Group was also invited to submit any other options or feedback ahead of the next meeting.</p> <p>The next meeting will be August 19th.</p> <p>The library is unavailable for the next meeting, with the Seven Creeks Hotel or an adjoining business Temple Kitchen proposed as alternative locations. No opposition to these options. Location to be confirmed ahead of next meeting.</p>
8	Close meeting

Actions

NO.	ACTIONS	ACTION BY	DUE DATE
1	Stop all planned communication, including the Q&A campaign in the paper.	RP	17/07
2	Provide baseline noise monitoring report, including noise logger locations.	DB	19/08
3	Information on oversize vehicle routes and limits through Euroa	DB	19/08
4	Explore the possibility that the road underpass could be limited to smaller vehicles.	DB	19/08
5	Investigate whether flooding or traffic studies are available.	MB	19/08
6	Present more information on road under rails and bridge replacement variations.	EW	19/08

Next Meeting

19 August, 2019

6:00pm – 8:00pm

TBC