

MEETING MINUTES

Narrabri to North Star Inland Rail (Phase 2)

Community Reference Group

DATE / TIME

19 June 2024
4.35 pm

LOCATION

Social Co-house, 167 Balo Street, Moree

FACILITATOR

Michael Silver OAM

MINUTE TAKER

Michael Silver OAM

DISTRIBUTION

N2NS (Phase 2) CRG

ATTENDEES

- ▶ Michael Silver (Independent Chair)
- ▶ Rodney Schoupp (Community Member)
- ▶ Alexander Munro (Community Member)
- ▶ Terry Haynes (Moree Gun Club)
- ▶ Meryl Dillon (Community Member)
- ▶ Cr Mark Johnson (Mayor, Moree Plains Shire Council)
- ▶ Mark Connolly (Moree Plains Shire Council)
- ▶ Lauren Marer (Inland Rail)
- ▶ Martin Singleton (Inland Rail) [video link]

APOLOGIES

- ▶ Karen Craigie (Community Member)
- ▶ Steve McIntosh (Moree Local Aboriginal Land Council)
- ▶ Michael Murphy (Community Member)
- ▶ Christopher Hartin (Moree Floodplain Committee)
- ▶ Angus Witherby (Community Member)
- ▶ Sonia Rowe (Community Member)

OBSERVERS

- ▶ John Zannes (Transport for NSW) [video link]
- ▶ Belinda Scott (NSW Department of Planning Housing and Infrastructure) [video link]
- ▶ Sophie Currenti (NSW Department of Planning Housing and Infrastructure) [video link]
- ▶ Adela Murimba NSW Department of Planning Housing and Infrastructure) [video link]
- ▶ Rob Leslie (IRDJV) [video link]
- ▶ Shirani Elasinghe (Moree Plains Shire Council)
- ▶ Rebecca English (Moree Plains Shire Council)

Discussions

NO.	DISCUSSIONS
1. Welcome	The Chair welcomed all members and observers to the meeting.
2. Acknowledgement of Country	The Chair acknowledged the Traditional Owners of the land on which the meeting is being held and recognised their continuing connection to land, waters, and culture, paying respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.
3. Declarations of Interest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Michael Silver – Pecuniary interest – expenses of Independent Chair borne by ARTC.

NO.	DISCUSSIONS
4. Minutes of Previous Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The meeting noted that the minutes of previous meeting of the Community Reference Group held March 2024 were approved on 24 March 2024.
5. Business Arising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Chair reported that the comments attributed to Meryl Dillon in Section 7.2 of the Proponent's Report relating to the potential impacts of noise walls on flooding had been reviewed and duly adjusted on 30 March 2024. The Chair advised that the amendments had clarified the intent of Ms Dillon's comments and had not altered the context of the minutes.
6. Actions	<p>6.1 That at the next CRG meeting, Transport for NSW provide advice as to whether the same level (height) of the Newell Highway (north of Moree) will be maintained during proposed upgrade works and how many additional culverts will be installed.</p> <p><i>Response: John Zannes (TfNSW) advised that, at this stage, there was no further information available. He noted that TfNSW has received the flood data from Inland Rail. He indicated that further advice should be available at the next meeting. The Chair questioned whether there was an indication of funding for the upgrade works on the Newell Highway north of Moree in the recent NSW Budget. Mr Zannes advised that this requires further assessment. The Chair enquired whether, following assessment of the Budget, members could be advised of the proposed project's status by email? Mr Zannes advised he would convey information to the Chair when available.</i></p> <p><i>Chair's note: Transport for NSW advises that there are no proposed changes to the design of the Newell Highway heavy duty pavement upgrade north of Moree and confirms that the design has 60 cell culverts. Further, that the project is a priority for delivery. The advice does not provide a timeline but does suggest that the project is a priority for delivery. COMPLETED</i></p> <p>6.2 That a report on stationary trains at Moree and potential safety mitigation measures be presented to the next GRG meeting.</p> <p>The Chair noted that the upgrade of Stage 2C, the section between Tapscott Road to Alice Street, has been paused and will be reactivated at a future date once the delivery regime north of Parkes has been confirmed by the Australian Government. Methods to mitigate illegal crossing issues and better integrate Moree East with the remainder of the community will be addressed at that time. DEFERRED</p>
7 Correspondence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nil
8 Proponent's Report	<p><i>Lauren Marer, Stakeholder Engagement Lead presented the Proponent's Report.</i></p> <p><i>A copy of the presentation is attached to the minutes.</i></p> <p>9.1 Operational Noise Mitigation Outcome</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lauren Marer outlined the requirements for preparation of the Preferred Infrastructure Report (PIR) regarding noise mitigation. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Noise Mitigation Options Report Targeted Engagement Preparation of a Justification Report Ms Marer noted that there were nineteen respondents to an online survey and one received by hard copy (20 in total). The outcome indicated a preference for a different mitigation option for east and west sides of the rail line. Initial consultation suggested a strong preference for a noise wall on the eastern side of the line, however the survey revealed a change of mind.

NO.	DISCUSSIONS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms Marer stepped the Committee through the community views, highlighting the differing opinions on the benefits and disbenefits of a noise wall/barrier. She noted concerns over visual impacts, mitigation of road noise on the east but not on the west, residences not considered ‘directly impacted’ and the implications on the area from increased train activity with implications on property values. • Ms Marer advised there had been no negative comments about effectiveness of a noise wall, but concern was expressed about noise travelling down the Mehi River. Eastern resident considered a noise wall would also mitigate road noise. Concern was expressed that the noise wall will not continue south beyond Alice Street. • Ms Marer provided an overview of the ‘At-property’ treatments. • The Chair questioned whether residents fully understood the extent and implications of ‘At-property’ treatment. Ms Marer advised that the extent of At-property’ treatment had been explained in detail to residents and they understood the extent of works to be undertaken. Mark Connolly sought clarification on the need to change from evaporative cooling (windows open) to reverse cycle air-conditioning at residences. Ms Marer confirmed that reverse cycle air-conditioning would be part of the various ‘At-property’ packages. <p><i>Eastern Preference – Noise Wall</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ms Marer explained the outcome of the survey relative to the weighting of responses from directly impacted and indirectly impacted respondents. She advised that directly impacted responses carried a 70% weighting whilst indirectly impacted responses were rated at 30%. The outcome being 56.25% in favour of a noise wall compared to 43.75% against. <p><i>Western Preference – At-Property</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ms Marer advised that all five respondents (Three directly impacted and two indirectly impacted) in the survey supported ‘At-property’ treatment. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms Marer outlined the community views on the social and environmental impacts of the proposed noise mitigation treatments. She noted that noise wall graffiti is a concern, but this could be reduced by engagement of local artists on designs. Concern had also been expressed at the ‘closed environment’ that is created by the noise wall with potential to create isolation and anti-social behaviour targets. ‘At-property’ treatments did not create any negative social or environmental impacts. • Ms Marer provided a snapshot of the community engagement process and stakeholder feedback for the Committee’s notation. The Chair noted the extensive nature of the information and suggested members individually review the information upon receipt of a copy of the report. • Ms Marer advised that the N2NS Phase 2 PIR Engagement and Justification Report will be included in the Preferred Infrastructure Report and will be available when the PIR is made public. Ms Marer also advised that the results of the Engagement and Justification Report will be subject to further review and confirmation during the Operational Noise and Vibration Review (ONVR) and the Operational Compliance Report (ONCR) to confirm actual operational noise impacts. • Meryl Dillon questioned the implications of a noise wall on the east side of the rail line and not on the west. In particular, she expressed concern that reverberation or bounce from the east could negatively properties on the western side of the rail line. Martin Singleton acknowledged that rail noise will “bounce around.” However, the inside face of noise walls may be lined with

NO.	DISCUSSIONS
	<p>absorptive panels that will dull most of the reflected rail noise. He indicated the existing earth bunds will do most of the noise management for reflected noise for those on the west, noting that in the noise assessment of the PIR noise reflection was analysed and not found to be a significant issue.</p> <p>9.2 Hydrology</p> <p><i>Rob Leslie of IRDJV presented the report on Hydrology.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rob Leslie advised that the flood model had been validated against the floods of October 2022 and March 2021. He also advised that the model was updated with LiDAR (aerial survey) obtained by ARTC in 2023 and with data from a survey of irrigation levees obtained by Council. This additional information did not change the model's predictions. • Mr Leslie that some changes to the levels at the Camurra Hairpin and some bridges have occurred since the EIS hydrology was undertaken. This has resulted in longer spans adopted for bridges and the introduction of inlet weirs at culverts to provide greater control in managing the flow of water through the corridor. The culvert design has been reviewed with more culverts included and the model retested. • Rodney Schoupp questioned the implications of a sudden failure of the railway embankment potentially causing a major flood impact. Mr Leslie responded that a sudden failure does not cause a significant problem due to the slow-moving nature of the water. • Mr Leslie detailed the requirements of the PIR request. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Extend the flood model to Ashley. ○ Model the retention of Camurra Hairpin ○ Assessment of impact of Moree Station Bund • Martin Singleton spoke to the design work being undertaken to mitigate flood impacts. He advised that the bund in the vicinity of Moree Station would be installed to mitigate potential residential flooding in the town. He indicated that there would be a commitment in the PIR to meet the required mitigation standards. He suggested that the project determination would carry a condition requiring the flood mitigation standards and projected outcomes to be satisfied. In response to a question from Mark Connolly regarding ARTC's track record on meeting the necessary mitigation requirements, Mr Singleton expressed confidence that the proposed mitigation measures would be effective. Mr Leslie explained the mitigation benefits of the bund, noting it will contain the minor elevation of flood levels east of Moree and the potential impacts of the current. Mr Singleton added that the proposed mitigation measures will be reviewed by an independent hydrologist with a further independent hydrology assessment process to be undertaken post determination and prior to construction. • Mr Leslie stepped the Committee through the outcomes of the flood modelling and explained the maps. <p>Extend Model to Ashley</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Extended model shows no non-compliant flooding impact to Ashley. Mr Leslie advised that the area in yellow in the 2% AEP event does not come above any floor levels. He indicated that there are some minor effects at Ashley in the 1% AEP event due to proposed works at the Camurra Hairpin resulting in a slight redistribution of flow. This due to minor changes in flow at the Camurra Hairpin having an effect downstream. <p>Model Retention of Hairpin</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mr Leslie advised that the models had been re-run with hairpin embankment retained. He noted that the outcomes are an improved surface flow distribution more similar to the existing flows. He advised that impacts on Newell Highway, Moree Gun Club, Back Pally Road and surrounding agricultural land have been reduced compared to

NO.	DISCUSSIONS
	<p>those reported in the EIS. Ms Marer commented that maintenance of the hairpin remains with ARTC.</p> <p>Impact of Moree Station bund</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mr Leslie advised that combined with other mitigation measures the proposed bund provides full mitigation for the 86 residences in Moree otherwise impacted by up to 40mm afflux impact in a 1% AEP event. He added that the bund will provide for a reduction of up to 50mm in water level in flood impacted areas. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms Marer explained the post EIS consultation, noting discussions with landowners regarding updated hydrology impacts from LiDAR mapping and model recalibration. She advised survey work on levees and floor levels had been undertaken and that seven landowners had been advised of possible mitigation that may be required if the impacts cannot be designed out. She indicated there will be ongoing discussion with these landowners. • Mr Leslie summarised the major conclusions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residential areas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reduced impact on residences compared to EIS ○ Some impact on properties in central floodplain between rail and highway corridors – mitigation measures agreed in principle with affected landowners if impacts cannot be designed out at detailed design ○ Positive impact on Moree – reductions in flood levels in and around town Newell and Carnarvon Highways <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Significantly reduced impact compared to EIS ○ Minimal impacts on highway closure times ○ Minimal change to highway hazard and highway operability Local roads <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reduced flood impact compared to EIS on Gwydirfield Road and Back Pally Road <p>Mr Leslie advised that the PIR has achieved an improvement in all identified impacts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sandy Munro sought clarification that pipes under the existing rail line will be replaced by culverts. Mr Singleton responded in the affirmative. • Mr Singleton stepped the committee through the likely approval's timeline. He noted that the PIR may be exhibited for a minimum of 14 days, and that the subsequent reporting and PIR Response to Submissions report may take 4-5 months after the exhibition period to conclude. He also highlighted the State government determination and Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 process may be expected to take up to a further six months after this. • Mr Connolly questioned the need to exhibit the PIR given the extensive nature of the community consultation. He expressed the view that the community is feeling some consultation fatigue. He questioned whether the CRG could make representation to DPHI regarding the need to exhibit the PIR. The Chair advised that the CRG could make a submission in this regard to DPHI. • The Chair invited Belinda Scott of DPHI to provide comment on the exhibition and submission process under the Environment Planning and Assessment Act 1979. Ms Scott provided an overview of the process and indicated that submissions may be made to DPHI at any time prior to determination and will be considered.

NO.	DISCUSSIONS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr Schoupp expressed concern regarding aspects of the consultation process, noting that seven (7) residents in the vicinity of the Newell Highway had been interviewed but he had not. He made mention of his concerns regarding a culvert at the rear of his property which does not seem to have been addressed. Ms Marer noted consultation had occurred with Mr Schoupp, however she would further discuss his concerns with him. Mr Schoupp expressed further concern that he had not been party to discussions regarding a possible levee or bund to protect his property from flooding. Ms Marer assured Mr Schopp they were part of the discussions and will be able to go over what was said with assistance of the meeting minutes taken during the meeting with Mr Schopp. Ms Marer advised that it is essential that levees are compliant, that is, provide protection against a 1% AEP event. She noted a levee or bund would only be required if the flood impact cannot be mitigated by further improvements in design. She indicated that she would also discuss this issue with him. • Cr Mark Johnson advised that, as an effected landholder, he personally had been consulted. He advised that Moree Plains Shire Council would support the CRG should it wish to make a submission to DPHI regarding the PIR exhibition. • MOTION: Cr Mark Johnson moved ~ Sandy Monro seconded - <i>That the GRG make a submission to DPHI expressing the view that given the extensive nature of the consultation undertaken on the N2NS (Phase 2) project it does not believe that it is necessary to publicly exhibit the PIR.</i> <p>Meryl Dillon said it is essential that the community has the opportunity to make comment on the PIR and therefore the document should be publicly exhibited.</p> <p>Mr Connolly commented that the document could be made available locally by Council to ensure that there is a broad awareness and understanding of its content. Ms Marer added that its availability will be highlighted in the project's community newsletter.</p> <p>With the Chair's consent, Rebecca English sought clarification on the difference between 'public exhibition' and being 'publicly available.' Ms Scott responded that the EPA Act 1979 provides certain rights to submissions made during a public exhibition although these are limited in terms of critical State Significant Infrastructure proposals.</p> <p>Mr Connolly asked if the PIR will be made available to Council as a review agency.</p> <p>The four community representatives and the two Moree Plains Shire Council representatives present voted on the motion. The motion was CARRIED, with Ms Dillon voting against and Mr Schoupp abstaining. ACTION</p>
9 Other Agenda Items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nil
10. General Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nil <p>Meeting closed at 5.52 pm. The Chair thanked all for their attendance</p>

Actions

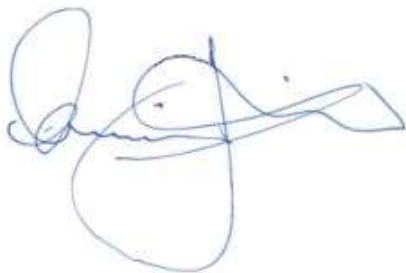
NO.	ACTIONS	ACTION BY	DUE DATE
1	That at a future meeting, the Proponent provide a detailed presentation on the hydrology and proposed flood management requirements associated with retention of the Camurra hairpin embankment.	COMPLETED Rob Leslie 11/10/23	31/12/2023

NO.	ACTIONS	ACTION BY	DUE DATE
2	That at a future meeting, the Proponent provide an overview of the requirements of the EPBC Act and the areas of natural environment within the N2NS (Phase 2) project that are likely to be subject to 'controlled action' requirements under the Act.	COMPLETED Rebecca Phyland	06/03/2024
3	That at the next meeting, Moree Plains Shire Council be invited to make a presentation on the Special Activation Precinct Master Plan and the Precinct's integration with the Inland Rail Narrabri to North Star (Phase 2) Project.	COMPLETED Rebecca English	07/03/2024
4	That at the next meeting of the CRG, Transport for NSW be invited to make a presentation on the proposed Newell Highway upgrade works.	COMPLETED John Zannes	06/12/2023
5	That a presentation on Noise and Vibration Assessment be made to the next meeting of the CRG.	COMPLETED Butch Rossouw	06/12/2023
6	That advice be provided at the next meeting of the CRG on the use and benefits of smaller wheels on rail rolling stock and implications for double stack 1.8-kilometre-long trains.	COMPLETED Butch Rossouw	06/12/2023
7	That a report on stationary trains at Moree and potential safety mitigation measures be presented to the next GRG meeting.	DEFERRED Lauren Marer	TBA
8	That at the next CRG meeting, Transport for NSW provide advice as to the whether the same level (height) of the Newell Highway (north of Moree) will be maintained during proposed upgrade works and how many additional culverts will be installed.	COMPLETED John Zannes	27/06/2024
9	That as part of its presentation on the Special Activation Precinct (Action 2 above), that Moree Plains Shire Council also advise what criteria is used by Government to assess funding for these projects.	COMPLETED Rebecca English	06/03/2024
10	That the accuracy of comments attributed to Ms Dillon in Section 7.2 of the Proponent's Report relating to the potential impacts of noise walls on flooding be reviewed by the Chair.	COMPLETED Michael Silver	31/03/2024
11	That the Chair make a submission to DPIE advising that the GRG is of the view, that given the extensive nature of the consultation undertaken on the N2NS (Phase 2) project, that it does not believe it is necessary to publicly exhibit the PIR.	Michael Silver	19/07/2024

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the N2NS (Phase 2) CRG will be held in November 2024 at a date to be confirmed.

Meeting minutes approved.



Michael J. Silver OAM
Independent Chair
10 July 2024