



Hawkesbury City Council

ordinary
meeting
late supplementary
business
paper

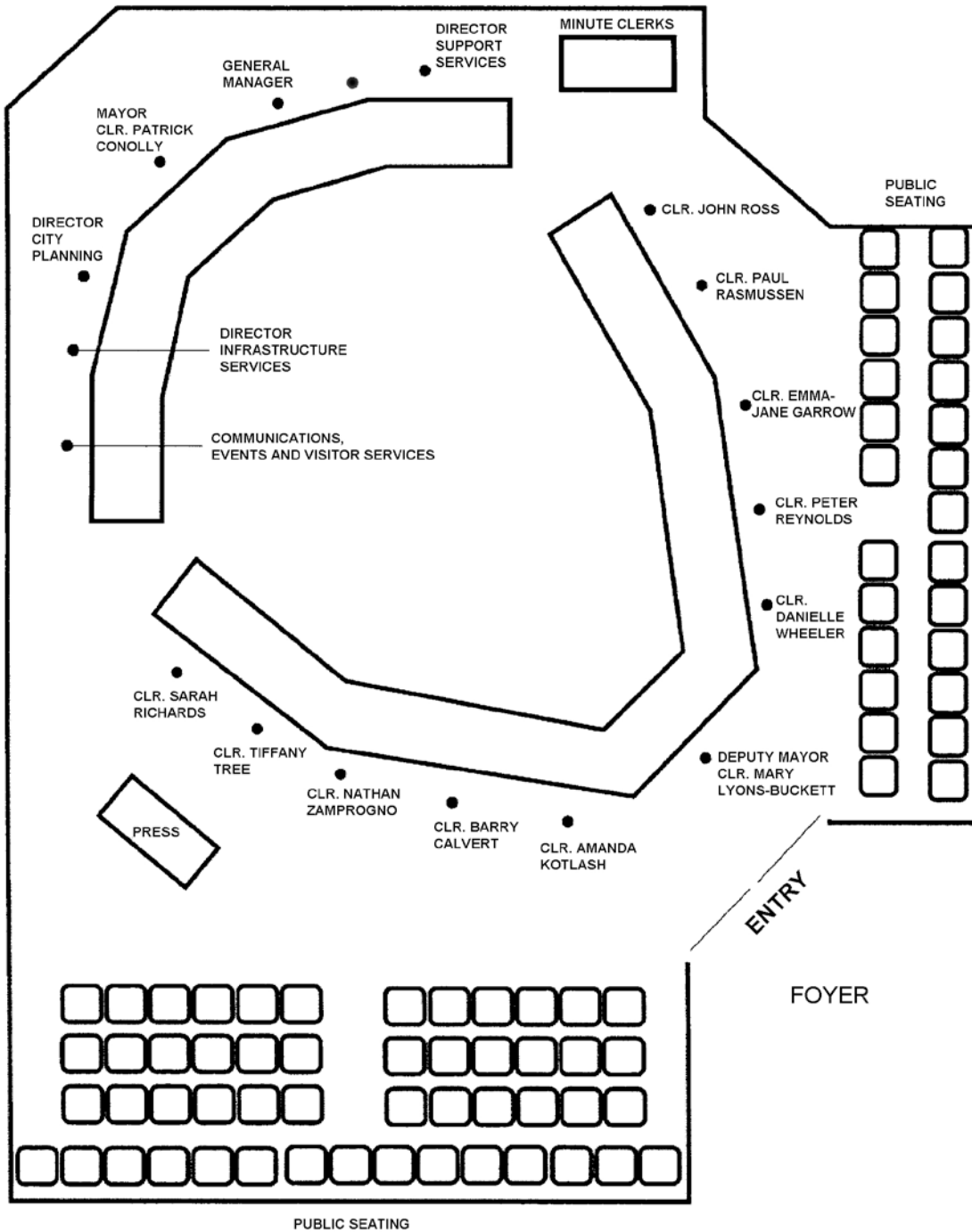
date of meeting: 14 September 2021
location: by audio-visual link
time: 6:30 p.m.



mission
statement

*Hawkesbury City Council
leading and working
with our community
to create a healthy
and resilient future.*

Hawkesbury City Council



ORDINARY MEETING

Table of Contents

Meeting Date: 14 September 2021

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ITEM	SUBJECT	PAGE
	LATE SUPPLEMENTARY	3
	SECTION 3 – Reports for Determination	3
	CITY PLANNING	3
Item: 172	CP - Council Submission - Richmond Bridge Duplication Project Preferred Corridor - (124414, 95498)	3

ORDINARY MEETING

Table of Contents

Meeting Date: 14 September 2021

ORDINARY MEETING
SECTION 3 – Reports for Determination
Meeting Date: 14 September 2021

LATE SUPPLEMENTARY
SECTION 3 – Reports for Determination

CITY PLANNING

Item: 172 **CP - Council Submission - Richmond Bridge Duplication Project Preferred Corridor - (124414, 95498)**

Previous Item: NM2, Ordinary (26 February 2019)
 124, Ordinary (29 June 2021)
 155, Ordinary (10 August 2021)

Directorate: City Planning

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT:

The purpose of this report is provide for consideration a further amended draft submission to Transport for NSW's Richmond Bridge Duplication and Traffic Improvements Preferred Options Report.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The Business Paper contains a report on the Council Submission – Richmond Bridge Duplication Project Preferred Corridor. Attached as Attachment 2 to that report is an amended draft Submission to Transport for NSW's Richmond Bridge Duplication and Traffic Improvements Preferred Option Report (the amended submission).

The amended submission was prepared following consideration of this matter at the Council Meeting on 10 August 2021.

Following publication of the Business Paper, the Mayor circulated a copy of the amended submission with suggested edits and sought input from Councillors. The suggested edits are contained in the further amended submission attached for Council's formal consideration as Attachment 1 to this report.

RECOMMENDATION:

That:

1. The contents of the Business Paper Report – Council Submission – Richmond Bridge Duplication Project Preferred Corridor, and the contents of the report in the Late Supplementary Business Paper be received and noted.
 2. Council endorse the further amended draft submission to Transport for NSW's Richmond Bridge Duplication and Traffic Improvements Preferred Option Report attached as Attachment 1 to the Late Supplementary Business Paper.
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ORDINARY MEETING
SECTION 3 – Reports for Determination
Meeting Date: 14 September 2021

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Transport for NSW is currently undertaking community engagement as part of this project. Council is considering a draft submission to that consultation.

CONFORMANCE TO THE HAWKESBURY COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN 2017-2036

The report is consistent with a wide range of Focus Areas, Directions and Strategies within the Community Strategic Plan 2017-2036, including:

Our Leadership - 1.4 and 1.5.

Our Assets - 4.2 and 4.3.

Our Future - 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5, 5.6, 5.7 and 5.8.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

This project is jointly funded by the NSW and Federal Governments.

FIT FOR THE FUTURE STRATEGY CONSIDERATIONS

This project is a NSW and Federal Government project.

ATTACHMENTS:

AT - 1 Further Amended Draft Submission to Transport for NSW's Richmond Bridge Duplication and Traffic Improvements Preferred Option Report.

ORDINARY MEETING

SECTION 3 – Reports for Determination

Meeting Date: 14 September 2021



- Proposed Grose River Bridge
- Resilient Valley Resilient Communities – Hawkesbury-Nepean Valley Flood Risk Management Strategy

Such an approach will ensure that funding for the project is spent in a manner focussed on long term solutions as opposed to shorter term issues. Additionally, the Preferred Option Report should consider whether projects such as the Grose River Bridge not proceeding represents a critical risk to the project, and whether or not such a scenario would affect the assessment of preferred corridors. Essentially, Council believes that the community needs to know what might happen if the Grose River Bridge is not built by the developers of Redbank. Does Transport for NSW have modelling for this scenario? Is Transport for NSW proposing to guarantee that the Grose River Bridge would be built with the contributions it would receive from the developer?

The capacity of Grose Vale Road to cater for any of the options should be assessed and outlined in the Preferred Option Report, including traffic loading on the road, and the intersection with Terrace Road.

Socio Economic Impacts

Council notes that the Preferred Option Report does not include a full assessment of the social and economic impacts of the project (particularly with respect to people living and working in North Richmond, Southee Road and the Lowlands. Council believe that this is an essential part of the assessment to ensure that the preferred option has been chosen on the basis of a full assessment.

Need to Improve Flood Resilience

Council is very disappointed that the preferred option only offers a 1 in 5 year flood height solution. The need to improve flood resilience within the road network in the Hawkesbury local government areas cannot be emphasised enough.

The recent February 2020 and March 2021 flood events in the Hawkesbury-Nepean Valley only served to highlight this even more acutely. As outlined in the Resilient Valley Resilient Communities – Hawkesbury-Nepean Valley Flood Risk Management Strategy, the Hawkesbury-Nepean Valley has the highest flood risk in NSW if not Australia. The March 2021 flood event in particular, whilst considered the first major flood within the Hawkesbury-Nepean Valley since 1992 still only represented a 1:15 year flood event. The impacts of the March 2021 flood event were significant for individual property owners, but also the community. This is particularly the case for the community on the west side of the Hawkesbury River who were isolated from early in the flood event for a number of days. This isolation was further compounded by failures of the state road network to the west (Bells Line of Road in particular).

As such, Council strongly encourages a corridor option and design solution that improves the flood resilience significantly above what is currently proposed (approximately 1:20 bridge height and 1:5 approaches). This includes potential flooding impacts on signal box for any traffic signals proposed along the corridor.

Council call on Transport for NSW to consider both the traffic and flood resilience objectives of the project, and evaluate options which may provide a better balance between these two considerations, especially in light of the increased budget.

ORDINARY MEETING

SECTION 3 – Reports for Determination

Meeting Date: 14 September 2021



Heritage Considerations

There are a number of heritage impacts that require detailed consideration on the preferred corridor in particular.

Of significant concern to Council is the state heritage listed item known by various names, including Mountain View on Inalls Lane. As highlighted by Council's Heritage Committee, the item being constructed in the early 1800's is of paramount importance on a state level. Whilst it is noted that no acquisition is proposed of this site, that being in original condition, and the construction techniques, the item is considered to be potentially susceptible to significant impacts associated with both construction (noise and vibration) of the preferred corridor, and traffic movements following completion of the project. It is understood that no condition assessments have been undertaken on this item to help inform the preferred corridor option.

Council would encourage further detailed assessment of the potential impacts of the preferred corridor option on this state heritage listed item, and if unable to be appropriately mitigated, selection of a corridor that avoids impacts to the item.

Funding

Given the significant increase in the project budget, a comparison of the expected costs of each route would give Council and other stakeholders better context to provide our feedback.

Additionally, in terms of the matters raised above, and in particular flood resilience, given the need for improved flood resilience is considered to be crucial, Council requests the costs of providing a much improved solution that increases the bridge and approaches heights to a 1:20, 1:50 and 1:100 year flood immunity be made available for consideration.

As outlined above in the Socio-Economic Impacts section of this submission, given the additional funding, there should be a comparison of alternative options in addition to those considered in the Preferred Option Report.

Opportunities for Town Centre Revitalisation and Active Transport Links

Council welcomes the opportunity that a bypass of both Richmond and North Richmond presents in assisting Council's efforts to revitalise these town centres. Council has undertaken a Masterplan for the Richmond town centre, in addition to Windsor and South Windsor as part of the Western Sydney City Deal Liveability Program. Council's vision for the North Richmond town centre is still being developed, and involves a number of individual property owners.

Council also welcomes the opportunity that this project offers for active transport, both within the centres of Richmond and North Richmond, but importantly between these centres. Council undertook a Community Insights Report (Placescore) for Hawkesbury Town Centres in February 2018 which highlighted the significance the Hawkesbury community and visitors placed on active transport within and between our town centres. In support of other points raised above the report also highlights the importance the community and visitors place on heritage, being the top place attribute. A copy of that Community Insights Report is included for your reference.

Acquisition and Engagement with Affected Property Owners

Previous corridor planning undertaken by Transport for NSW (in particular the 2018 Bells Line of Road and Outer Sydney Orbital corridors proposal) has proved to be highly problematic and stressful for the affected community.

ORDINARY MEETING
SECTION 3 – Reports for Determination
Meeting Date: 14 September 2021



Council encourages a process when dealing with affected property owners, particularly where acquisition is proposed that is equitable, fair, transparent, and maintains high levels of meaningful communication with those affected property owners.

With respect to the proposed noise mitigation of the corridor along Southee Road, Council recommends that the corridor option be designed to avoid the need to mitigate the proposed corridor.

Suggested Improvements/Clarification of Timing and Process

The following points are also provided as suggested improvements to the project:

- Should the preferred corridor option proceed, consideration of a flyover at Kurrajong Road in order to avoid an at grade intersection of the new road corridor with Kurrajong Road, and the potential for delays at a signalised intersection
- Consideration of a corridor route in more detail to ensure that the impacts are minimised and more appropriately balanced against traffic efficiency, including provision of a corridor that minimises the number of 90 degree bends, and provides for less interruption of traffic flow

Additionally, it is recommended that the following points be considered as the project continues in order to ensure that the community is fully informed:

- Provision of details in terms of timing and milestones/prerequisite steps
- Announcements versus reality of timing expecting stage 1 build stage 2 shovel ready
- Clarity in terms of the type of approvals required - Environmental Impact Statement or Review of Environmental Factors, and expected timing of either.

Additionally, please note that Council received a number of community representations with respect to the Preferred Option Report at Council's Ordinary Meeting on 10 August 2021. Community representatives raised a number of points which Council has resolved to include the information from these community representatives for Transport for NSW's consideration. These representations include:

Strategic - Remove suggested improvements for the preferred route, as this is tacit endorsement of Transport for NSW's decision. Consider a return to the scope of the project, and seek to eliminate the negative social and economic impacts associated with the stated Preferred Option, all of which were minimised by the hybrid or yellow routes.

What other major pieces of infrastructure are being modelled/proposed post 2046, and has the preferred route been selected based upon future developments that aren't yet public knowledge.

Provide a detailed drawing of the yellow route which has the same quality and detail of the preferred route.

Increase in the budget (doubled), allows opportunity for further consultation and analysis between the green and yellow routes.

Socio-Economic Impacts – assessment needs to be provided, including need for further data to show the effects on businesses as a result of bypassing. The economic impact from the loss of polo fields and the impacts to the equine industry need to be considered and avoided.

Visual Amenity and Noise – impacts to 80 plus residential properties on Southee Road and Inalls Lane, and 50 plus residential properties in the Lowlands, Norfolk Place, Terrace Road and Bells Line of Road. Using the full Driftway corridor to Castlereagh Road, and a route alongside the current bridge completely eliminates this impact. Loss of visual amenity to the Lowlands in particular.

ORDINARY MEETING

SECTION 3 – Reports for Determination

Meeting Date: 14 September 2021



Flood Resilience - Transport for NSW note that to achieve a 1 in 100 flood resilience would require a 2.5km bridge. It is worth noting the Jim Anderson bridge cost \$135M. The project now has a \$500M budget and opportunity to provide a significant increase in flood resilience for the Hawkesbury. Moving from a 1 in 2 to a 1 in 5 flood resilience for a \$500M investment is a poor investment of taxpayer dollars. Additionally, has climate change been considered as part of assessment of options, and the level of flood resilience to be provided?

Aboriginal Heritage - A key constraint was the impact on Aboriginal Heritage sites on the purple route. Transport for NSW's recent map of the Green preferred Route shows for the first time that it also crosses 5 identified areas of Aboriginal Heritage Significance. Duplication in the existing bridge/road corridor reduces any Aboriginal Heritage Significance site impacts.

Sporting Field – Property and Land Use - The preferred route significantly impacts on Soccer, and Polo fields. The Options Report indicates that the yellow route has the lower impact on all of these. There has also been no accounting for the compulsory acquisition of Western Sydney University land and economic impacts on relocating important climate research.

Traffic modelling and road safety - a stated objective was to reduce right hand through traffic to reduce traffic accidents, however the Green Route creates a number of additional right turn traffic intersections, and other intersection problems which are not present in the yellow route. Concern with the proposed route parallel to Southee Road which will be blocked off at both ends, and the only way without backtracking through the suburban streets of Hobartville is via the new road, with the entrance concentrating traffic onto Valder Avenue.

Environmental Impact - on the Western Sydney University and the Hawkesbury – loss of the 100 year Pecan Trees, and the Eucalypt Plantation which is not only part of the Climate Change Research but feed many of the animals in our Sydney Zoos. The natural spring opposite houses at 49 – 63 Southee Road will now have a road on top of it.

Engagement - due to the ongoing COVID situation, Transport for NSW should keep open the public consultation period until it is possible to conduct full community consultation meetings. Seek transparency from Transport for NSW, and seek public access to the full traffic modelling, Socio Economic Analysis and full Benefit Cost Ratio reports. Need for greater engagement with the community, and shouldn't proceed to next step until further direct consultation has occurred. Need to re-engage with the community working group and businesses in North Richmond and Richmond who could miss out on business because of the green route.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission. Council would welcome ongoing communication and discussion with Transport for NSW in this respect.

Should you have any enquiries in relation to this matter please contact me on (02) 4560 4604.

Yours faithfully

Andrew Kearns
Manager Strategic Planning



ordinary
meeting

end of
late supplementary
business
paper

This business paper has been produced electronically to reduce costs, improve efficiency and reduce the use of paper. Internal control systems ensure it is an accurate reproduction of Council's official copy of the business paper.