

15 August 2025



Meeting Minutes

Northern Community Liaison Group

Date	15/08/2025	Time	10am - 12pm
Chair	Leah Waymark	Meeting no.	5 of 2025
Location	Watsonia Hub	Minute taker	Josh Ribarich

Attendees

Attendees			
Name	Organisation	Name	Organisation
Leah Waymark (LW)	Chair	Adam Mullins (AMu)	MRPV
Giselle James (GJ)	Community Representative	Josh Ribarich (JR)	MRPV
Michelle Molinaro (MMo)	Community Representative	Jasmin Lazzarotti (JL)	MRPV
Stephen Paul (SP)	Community Representative	Luke Minton (LM)	Spark
Michelle Giovas (MG)	Community Representative	James Hamilton (JH)	Spark
Sanjev Sivananthanayagam (SS)	Banyule City Council	Damian Percy (DP)	Spark
Lohith Tsavatapalli (LT)	Banyule Council	Christian de Oliveira (CO)	Spark
Yuan Li (YL)	Department of Transport and Planning	Donna Mongan (DM)	M80RRA
Stephane Hinkseering (SH)	Department of Transport and Planning	Steve Denton (SD)	M80RRA
Rob Harper (RH)	MRPV		

Apologies			
Allan Hunter (AH)	Community Representative	Jonathan Risby (JRis)	Banyule City Council
Deanna Hadid (DH)	Spark	Kathleen Petras (KP)	Banyule City Council
Ivan Zarezkij (IZ)	Spark	Mick Marcevski (MMa)	Department of Transport and Planning
Wade Howell (WH)	Community Representative	Carlos Ibarra (CI)	M80RRA
Andrew Mills (AM)	Community Representative	Nani Clark (NC)	Spark

Actions – previous

No.	Action	Owner	Due	Status	Update
NC251-4	M80RRA to arrange meeting with community representatives regarding traffic modelling post project completion.	M80RRA	15/08/2025	OPEN	To be presented at next NCLG meeting on 19/09
NC251-5	NEL to provide an overview of future traffic modelling for the project to members.	NEL	15/08/2025	CLOSED	Email sent to NCLG members on 06/08

Key discussion points/decisions

Owner	Action
Leah Waymark (LW)	Welcome and Outstanding Business Introductions Outstanding short-term actions NC251-4 – To be presented at next NCLG meeting. Action remains open. NC251-5 – Provided update in 15/08 meeting. Email sent to members. Action closed. Outstanding long-term actions NC242-1 – Information presented in 15/08 meeting. Action closed.
Rob Harper (RH)	NELP sustainability report <u>Presentation covered NEL greenhouse gas emission targets and projections, and measures on how this is achieved.</u> MG asked if the Project has counted the estimated carbon and tree loss for the project's lifetime. RH said that information is recorded in Environment Effects Statement and Environmental Management Framework which are both publicly available online. MG asked what percentage of Victoria's carbon emissions is associated with the Project, given that figure was 0.25 per cent in 2016. RH said the central package is now 0.18 per cent of 2022 emissions, which includes the 7 years of the project's construction lifetime and 50 years of operation post construction'

Owner	Action
	GJ said the North East Link (NEL) corridor was selected in 2017 and asked if there were other studies done in terms of sustainability for the other corridor options. RH said all corridor options were looked at and studies were completed on them as well. MG asked why the presentation only covered the tunnels package and not M80 or Eastern Freeway packages. RH said the tunnels package is the only one that has so far been independently verified. The other packages are likely to be published in next year's annual sustainability report. SP asked if the sustainability figures are expected to be similar for the other packages. RH said the tunnels package's biggest use of energy and savings is its tunnel boring machines (TBMs). Other packages have had to find other efficiencies in their construction methodology to achieve their targets. SP asked if there is capacity to put solar panels along the freeways to promote more energy savings. RH said it's something that's being looked at in great depth, but the primary issue is optimisation of solar panel placement. So, to get the best renewable energy outcomes, rather than placing panels in the project areas, the Project purchases the renewable energy output placed from more optimal areas. MM asked whether solar panels construction materials go to landfill. RH said they do go to landfill, but the Project is continuing to explore how to reuse materials from solar panels as much as possible.
Damian Percy (DP)	North East Link tunnels update <u>Presentation covered Banyule Creek update, environmental management, tunnels north project progress and lookahead, site updates, Lower Plenty Road and Silk Street upgrade completion works, and community engagement</u>
Luke Minton (LM)	
James Hamilton (JH)	MG asked how tall the stockpile is located at the Lower Plenty worksite. DP said it's about 15m high. MG said the Environment Protection Agency (EPA) guideline for stockpile heights is 4 metres. JH said Spark has completed a design for the stockpile to build it safely. Safety is a big factor in terms of how it's placed so it doesn't collapse. They have already started to reuse the stockpile to reduce the size as much as possible but are restricted in terms of use on site. Post meeting note: Following discussion during the meeting, the Project has reviewed the EPA guidelines for stockpile management. The Project is required to limit stockpile heights based on stability, manageability, dust and amenity impacts. The height of the current stockpile has been carefully considered with the mitigation measures discussed during the meeting regularly applied. MG said the stockpile was a dust issue. JH said the team uses polymer to suppress the dust, as well as mist cannons used to minimise dust at the source especially when excavating. They also keep the active side of the stockpile to the east to keep it away from residents and monitor dust 24/7. MG asked what the capacity of the dirt stockpile was a week ago. DP said it was around 100,000 tonnes.

Owner	Action
	LM added the project works within set guidelines, and when they need to go outside those guidelines, they consult with relevant authorities around how impacts will be managed and are audited regularly by the IREA to ensure compliance with the EPRs. SP asked if there had been any more surface holes along the tunnel route. DP said there have been no surface holes since the isolated occurrence within site in February. MM asked why there is blank signage on the recently upgraded Silk Street bridge. DP said this will eventually indicate direction on how to enter the tunnels. SP asked if the Banyule Creek polymer incident was a system failure or human error. JH said the team has systems in place to ensure polymer was applied correctly. This appears to be an isolated error. MG asked what volume of polymer was released into Banyule Creek. JH said approximately 250L of polymer, already heavily diluted, entered Banyule Creek. MG asked if the public can be reassured that an incident like this won't happen again. JH said the team has audited all stormwater controls and strengthened measures across the project to ensure this type of incident doesn't happen again. MG asked what happened to cause the incident in the first place. DP said Spark is awaiting the outcome of the EPA's investigation and will provide another update to the group once complete. GJ asked if the size of the worksite was a problem. JH said it is a confined site, but the team has been applying polymer effectively here for the past three years. MG asked when the Project became aware of the spill and when the pump-out started. LM said the project became aware of the spill on the morning of 16 July and immediately mobilised with EPA, Melbourne Water, Yarra Valley Water, and Wurundjeri to initiate cleanup that evening, while engaging up to 60 nearby residents throughout the process. MG asked why the Project wasn't upfront with what the spilled material was. LM said EPA is leading the investigation and managing public communication. MG asked if people have been noticing vibrations from TBMs. LM said out of approximately 120 properties the TBMs have passed under, around 15 residents have contacted the team, with only minor vibration impacts reported, typically lasting 5–7 days. Short-term relocation is offered to all residents along the tunnel alignment while the TBMs are working underneath their property.
Donna Mongan (DM)	M80 Update
Steve Denton (SD)	<u>Presentation covered M80 project progress and lookahead, site updates, upcoming M80 Ring Road and Grimshaw Street interchange works, post-rail occupation works and community engagement</u> GJ asked if the noise walls along the M80 Ring Road near properties will be thicker than others.

Owner	Action
	DM said all noise walls are designed to adhere to standard decibel requirements – These walls are designed to achieve a 63-decibel standard during the day and a quieter 58-decibel standard at night, which are the toughest in Victoria. The walls vary in height and will incorporate materials like weathering steel and translucent acrylic panels. Some noise walls along the M80 Ring Road have been installed early to assist with noise attenuation during construction. GJ asked if the worksite areas near Elder Street were for the realignment of the Greensborough Highway. SD confirmed this was correct. MG asked if the upcoming Grimshaw Street closure was on the NELP webpage. DM said the information is on the Big Build website and with the next to occur from 12-15 September – on the eastern side - with more closures between October and December. SP asked if the Project is responsible for the Plenty Road interchange area. DM said anything west of Plenty Road is not part of the project scope, but the team still needs to coordinate interface works when they occur. The project works closely with DTP regarding disruptions to major arterial roads and councils in planning for local road closures. MG asked if recipients must sign non-disclosure agreements (NDA) for all respite offers. DM said general respite offers don't require an NDA. If changes to a property are required however, then an NDA is required.
Leah Waymark (LW)	Other Business N/A
Leah Waymark (LW)	Open Forum MG said she attended a recent EPA community information session on NEL and was told infringement notices had been issued to the contractors. MG requested a presentation on information about those notices. JR took request on notice as an action for the project team to follow up. Actions: NEL to investigate and provide information on infringement notices issued to the project by the EPA. SS asked when the EPA findings on Banyule Creek would be made available. JH said there was no set time.

Actions – new

No.	Action	Owner	Due	Status	Update
NC252-1	NEL to investigate and provide information on	NEL	19/09/25	OPEN	Email response sent to MG on 27/8

No.	Action	Owner	Due	Status	Update
	infringement notices issued to the project by the EPA.				

Actions – Short Term

No.	Action	Owner	Due	Status	Update
NC251-4	M80RRA to arrange meeting with community representatives regarding traffic modelling post project completion.	M80RRA	2026	OPEN	To be presented at next NCLG meeting on 19/09.
NC252-1	NEL to investigate and provide information on infringement notices were issued to the project by the EPA.	NEL	19/09/25	OPEN	Email response sent to MG on 27/8

Actions – Long Term

No	Action	Owner	Due	Status	Update
NC242-1	MG: Asks what is the percentage of greenhouse gas emissions for the entire NEL Project?	RH	Q3 2024	CLOSED	Information presented in 15/08 meeting

Actions – Post meeting update

No.	Action	Owner	Due	Status	Update
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Future Presentations

Scheduled Date	Date Raised	Topic	Owner	Update
2025	10 May 2024	GJ has requested the five phases of construction for Watsonia Road realignment and traffic plans including traffic signals and timings	M80RRA	Presentation to be given when further information is available (potentially late 2025 or early 2026).

Scheduled Date	Date Raised	Topic	Owner	Update
2025	31 March	Presentation on LXRP's communication plan for the Macleod level crossing removal	JN	LXRP to present at a future meeting.
2025	20 June	Gender representation in labouring roles and construction.	NEL/M80RRA	Presented at 20/6 meeting. CLOSED

Additional information - previous

North East Link Tunnels Community Interactions (May): 454	M80 Completion Community Interactions (May): 515
Enquiries/Comments: 90	Enquiries/Comments: 97
Project engagement and responses: 242	Project engagement and responses: 321
Complaints: 121	Complaints: 92
Positive Feedback: 1	Positive Feedback: 5

Additional information - new

North East Link tunnels Community Interactions (June and July): 1115	M80 Ring Road Completion Community Interactions (June and July): 522
Enquiries/Comments: 289	Enquiries/Comments: 210
Project engagement and responses: 545	Proactive check-in: 90
Complaints: 272	Complaints: 203
Positive Feedback: 9	Positive Feedback: 19