

16 April 2025



Meeting Minutes

Northern Community Liaison Group

Date	21/03/2025	Time	10am - 12pm
Chair	Leah Waymark	Meeting no.	2 of 2025
Location	Watsonia RSL	Minute taker	Wiebke Wenzel

Attendees

Attendees			
Name	Organisation	Name	Organisation
Leah Waymark (LW)	Chair	Sam Doyle (SDo)	NEL
Giselle James (GJ)	Community Representative	Wiebke Wenzel (WW)	MRPV
Michelle Molinaro (MMo)	Community Representative	Josh Ribarich (JR)	NEL
Wade Howell (WH)	Community Representative	Marie Sesay (MS)	MRPV
Stephen Paul (SP)	Community Representative	Jacinda Shen (JS)	NEL
Michelle Giovas (MG)	Community Representative	Deanna Hadid (DH)	Spark
Alan Hunter (AH)	Community Representative	Damian Percy (DP)	Spark
Yuan Li (YL)	Department of Transport and Planning	Nancy Baillie (NB)	Spark
Kalyan Shrestha (KSh)	Department of Transport and Planning	Nicole Anderson (NA)	Spark
Kathleen Petras (KP)	Banyule City Council	Donna Mongan (DM)	M80RRA
		Megha Sharma (MSh)	M80RRA
		Steve Denton (SDe)	M80RRA

Apologies			
Name	Organisation	Name	Organisation
Tracey Varley (TVa)	Nillumbik Shire Council	Jonathan Risby (JRis)	Banyule City Council
Carlos Ibarra (CI)	M80RRA	Andrew Mills (AM)	Community Representative
Sam Doyle (SDo)	NEL		

Actions – previous

No.	Action	Owner	Due	Status	Update
NC248-2	Information to be provided about kangaroo injuries and fatalities on site	NEL	31/01/2025	CLOSED	Update provided at meeting
NC248-3	Information to be provided about type, number and location of dust monitors used across M80RR sites	M80RRA	31/01/2025	CLOSED	Update provided at meeting
NC249-1	Information to be provided around what type of creeping plants will be installed along the noise walls	M80RRA	21/03/2025	CLOSED	Indicative species provided in post-meeting note
NC249-2	NEL and M80RRA to investigate speed limit signs at Lower Plenty Road and Greensborough Bypass areas and make changes where necessary	M80RRA /Spark	21/03/2025	CLOSED	Information provided to MM post-meeting. Advisory speed limits are only required when speed limit changes by 30km/h or more.

Key discussion points/decisions

Owner	Action
Leah Waymark (LW)	<p>Welcome and Outstanding Business</p> <p>Introductions (new attendees)</p> <p>Marie Sesay (MRPV)</p> <p>Damian Percy (Spark)</p> <p>Donna Mongan (M80RRA)</p> <p>Megha Sharma (M80RRA)</p> <p>Outstanding short-term actions</p> <p>NC248-2 – DH advised no kangaroo injuries or fatalities have been reported on NEL project sites to date.</p> <p>MG claimed there had been kangaroo deaths along roads near the project area.</p> <p>JR reiterated there is a NEL-wide Kangaroo Management Plan (KMP) which project contractors have developed a Kangaroo Management Procedure from. This ensures all kangaroo-related incidents on or near our sites are recorded and dealt with in line with the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action kangaroo management legislation.</p> <p>JR said the project also works closely with Wildlife Victoria to ensure the best outcomes for wildlife are achieved and if injured wildlife is found on or near project sites, the public can contact the project's community number 1800 105 105.</p>

Owner	Action
	<p>SP added kangaroo deaths may not be a NEL-specific issue and you would need to understand the history of kangaroo injuries and fatalities in the area before the project sites were established in order to establish any correlation.</p> <p>Action closed.</p> <p>NC248-2 – GJ said dust remains a large issue for both residents and workers and the quantity of gauges is becoming more important as construction progresses. GJ asked whether the town square could also be contributing to dust and what guidelines were in place to manage its impact.</p> <p>DH said all environmental limitations set on the project sites are regulated by the Environment Protection Authority (EPA),</p> <p>GJ requested an update on dust and air quality compliance to be provided in the next presentation.</p> <p>JS said all sites have a duty under the Environment Protection Act to reduce dust and emissions across project areas and individual sites have their own management plans and monitoring.</p> <p>JS said management is a dynamic process that requires collaboration with each contractor required to manage their own area.</p> <p>GJ asked why EPA has specific standards for NEL, rather than an overarching approach.</p> <p>JS said performance standards around air quality specific to NEL construction and operation were included in the Environment Effects Statement (EES) and that the Project's Environment Performance Requirements follow standard EPA guidelines.</p> <p>JR said residents impacted by construction dust can contact the project to discuss potential support options.</p> <p>MG asked if respite options included air conditioner modifications.</p> <p>DH said respite options for impacted residents are assessed on a case-by-case basis. Requests and any available evidence can be emailed to the project team.</p> <p>Action closed.</p> <p>Action: NEL and M80RRA to provide dust and air quality compliance update in next presentation.</p> <p>NC249-1 – The indicative species was provided in the January CLG minute's post-meeting note.</p> <p>Action closed.</p> <p>NC249-2 – Information was provided to MM post-meeting. Advisory speed limit signage is recommended when the difference in speed between the two speed zones is 30 km/h or greater. This provides drivers with adequate opportunity to slow down at a safe and comfortable rate. Further information can be found at https://transport.vic.gov.au/road-rules-and-safety/speed-limits</p> <p>Action closed.</p>

Owner	Action
Marie Sesay (MS)	<p>North East Community Fund <u>Presentation covered next round of NECF, eligibility criteria, grant categories, application support and key dates.</u></p> <p>KP asked if individuals with an ABN can apply for a grant. MS said individuals cannot apply, only not-for-profit organisations or community groups.</p> <p>GJ asked if the Fund was connected to the project. MS said it was directly related to the project and is part of the overall project budget.</p> <p>GJ asked about the community fund budget. MS said \$10 million has been allocated, with \$5.6 million granted to projects so far.</p>
Deanna Hadid (DH)	<p>North East Link tunnels update <u>Presentation covered 2025 milestones, TBM tunnelling update, worksite updates, ventilation structure construction update, and recent community engagement.</u></p>
Damian Percy (DP)	<p>MM asked which TBM broke through at Lower Plenty Road site.</p> <p>DP said both TBMs have arrived at the site.</p> <p>MG asked about closures of Lower Plenty Road during the Silk Street bridge upgrade.</p> <p>DH said a section of Lower Plenty Road would need to be closed over two weekends during the July school holidays to remove and replace the bridge span. More information will be provided in advance to the community and wider traffic network in the lead up to these works.</p> <p>WH asked about what the ultimate height of the northern ventilation structure would be.</p> <p>DH said the ultimate height of the northern ventilation structure above ground is approximately 49 metres.</p> <p>AH asked if there was any information regarding the surface hole at the Lower Plenty site.</p> <p>JR said a surface hole was detected at the Lower Plenty Road worksite by the excavation team in February. There were no injuries, and a thorough review confirmed there is no risk to the community, property or the surrounding environment as a result of this incident. The hole has now been filled.</p> <p>The Project team has also conducted its investigation with the support of WorkSafe and tunnelling experts from around the world, with further measures and controls implemented, and tunnelling has since safely resumed on the Project.MG asked whether the ventilation structure would include office spaces.</p> <p>DH said the structure would act as a secondary Motorway Control Centre (MCC).</p> <p>MG asked how air pollution from the ventilation structure would be controlled.</p> <p>JS said emissions are vented high into the atmosphere away from people at ground level. The system is designed to prevent emissions escaping from the tunnel entry and exit points. The height of the structure has also been designed to ensure safe dispersion of vehicle emissions.</p>

Owner	Action
	<p>SP asked what volume of emissions would come out of the structure.</p> <p>JS said this is dependent on a number of factors including the number and type of vehicles, the types of fuel used and driver behaviour. Modelling was completed during the EES and used two scenarios – opening year and 10 years post opening. The modelling took a very conservative, worst-case scenario approach. More information can be found at https://bigbuild.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0013/524002/NELP-EES-Chapter-10-Air-quality.pdf</p> <p>MM asked what cladding would be used on the ventilation structure and whether it would be graffiti-resistant.</p> <p>DP said the height of the ventilation structure and the cladding itself would deter graffiti. DH said the final material for the cladding is yet to be confirmed.</p> <p>GJ asked whether there will be any air quality monitoring stations in the area post-project completion.</p> <p>JS said that as part of the Project's EPRs, six additional monitoring stations will be established across the project corridor, with three at the southern end of the project and three in the north.</p> <p>SP said there are concerns about traffic coming from Yallambie Road onto Greensborough Road.</p> <p>DH said traffic in this area is regularly monitored by the relevant road authorities.</p> <p>SP asked if photos of the TBM breakthrough were shared with mainstream media.</p> <p>DH said media was invited to the TBM breakthrough and there are plans to celebrate the milestone.</p> <p>SP asked whether the project will be attending the Watsonia Primary School fair on Saturday 22 March.</p> <p>WW said the Project team will be attending.</p>
Donna Mongan (DM)	<p>M80 Ring Road Completion Update</p> <p><u>Presentation covered community engagement and traffic staging in Watsonia.</u></p>
Megha Sharma (MSh)	<p>MM asked about the concurrent closures of the Hurstbridge Line and Lower Plenty Road and why these were scheduled at the same time.</p> <p>SDe explained that disruptions are coordinated between packages.</p>
Steve Denton (SDe)	<p>MM shared concerns about rail replacement bus driver behaviour.</p> <p>WW said she would pass on feedback to Metro Trains as bus services are organised by Metro Trains.</p> <p>MG said that in the future, concurrent closures should be minimised.</p> <p>JR acknowledged the disruption to residents and said before implementing any traffic changes, several factors are taken into account including the safety of available traffic movements and the flow on effects to surrounding streets. These factors are then also considered by the Department of Transport before being finalised.</p> <p>DH added project teams meet regularly internally and with relevant stakeholders.</p>

Owner	Action
	<p>MM asked if there will be traffic lights for the U-turns to access Elder Street during the next phase of construction.</p> <p>SDe confirmed both U-turns would be signalised.</p> <p>MM asked about tolling and whether the same toll collection provider (Linkt) would be used on the project.</p> <p>SDe confirmed the same system would be used.</p>
Leah Waymark (LW)	<p>Other Business</p> <p>N/A</p>
Leah Waymark (LW)	<p>Open Forum</p> <p>MG asked about parking on local roads and whether NEL is paying for parking permits for residents.</p> <p>KP confirmed that Banyule City Council will provide permits in line with residential permit policies, and will reimburse residents for one additional visitor permit.</p> <p>MG said traffic management at the southern end of the project is continuously changing and signage is confusing for drivers, including at Manningham Road, the Eastern Freeway exit to Bulleen Road and during the Eastern Freeway lane split.</p> <p>JR said he would pass the feedback on to the relevant project teams and said road users can reach out to the project directly if any other concerns arise.</p> <p>MM commented that recent written communications were excellent and that older residents heavily rely on written forms of communication to receive information.</p> <p>GJ complimented the professionalism and quality of communications from DM and SDe at previous community engagement sessions.</p> <p>GJ asked whether worker health was monitored, including site workers and employees of local businesses.</p> <p>DP said the health of workers on site is strictly monitored.</p> <p>DM said traders are regularly engaged to understand impacts.</p> <p>DH said the Project also engages regularly with highly-impacted residents.</p> <p>GJ asked if traffic is monitored on Elder Street and nearby local roads, and how the project works with Banyule City Council on traffic impacts.</p> <p>KP said BCC regularly works with MRPV to understand traffic impacts and coordinate.</p> <p>GJ commented on the under-usage of the offset car park in Frensham Reserve and suggested that drivers are using local roads to access alternate train stations.</p>

Actions – new

No.	Action	Owner	Due	Status	Update
NC250-1	NEL and M80RRA to provide dust and air quality compliance update in next presentation.	NEL and M80RRA	16.05.25	OPEN	

Actions – Short Term

N/A

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	OPEN	We won't be able to provide the emissions total until the final energy models have been received from our delivery partners associated with the project once it becomes available in July.
NC243-6	Would like to know the figures of women and the gender balance in labouring roles and construction.	SM/KM	Q3 2024	OPEN	

Future Presentations

Scheduled Date	Date Raised	Topic	Owner	Update
Q4	1 December	JC has requested actual v's modelling for noise and vibration to be presented in 2023	LM	LM to arrange JRo (Spark Environment Manager) to present when results available
Q3	31 March	Vent outlet operation presentation including how will the vent outlets disperse the emissions and how far will they go?	LM	LM to arrange presentation
2025	31 March	Presentation on LXRP's communication plan for the Macleod level crossing removal	JN	LXRP to present at a future meeting

Scheduled Date	Date Raised	Topic	Owner	Update
Q1 2024	27 October	M80RRA to present what goodwill offers will be available to residents	CI	Presentation to be given in future meeting

Additional information - previous

North East Link tunnels Community Interactions: 612	M80 Completion Community Interactions: 389
Enquiries/Comments: 139	Enquiries/Comments: 87
Project engagement and responses: 272	Project engagement and responses: 202
Complaints: 199	Complaints: 99
Positive Feedback: 2	Positive Feedback: 1

Additional information - new

North East Link tunnels Community Interactions: 599	M80 Ring Road Completion Community Interactions: 1028
Enquiries/Comments: 143	Enquiries/Comments: 228
Project engagement and responses: 264	Project engagement and responses: 520
Complaints: 197	Complaints: 256
Positive Feedback: 5	Positive Feedback: 23