

1 August 2024



Meeting Minutes

Northern Business Liaison Group

Date	1/08/2024	Time	5:30 - 7:30pm
Chair	Jeni Coutts	Meeting no.	5 of 2024
Location	Watsonia RSL	Minute taker	Katy Sylvia

Attendees

Attendees			
Name	Organisation	Name	Organisation
Jeni Coutts (JC)	Independent Chair	Renato Marnich (RM) Trader Engagement Specialist	NEL
Karim Hussein Senior Project Engineer	Spark	Adrian Carter (AC) Acting Senior Advisor, Communications and Stakeholder Relations, North	NEL
Sarah Maguire (SM)	Watsonia Traders Association	Jacqueline Weedon Community Partnership Advisor	NEL
Deanna Hadid Senior Advisor Communications and Stakeholder Relations	Spark	Katy Sylvia (KS) Senior Advisor, Communications and Stakeholder Relations	NEL
Hannah English (HE) Senior Trader Engagement Advisor	Spark	Steve Denton (SD) Interface Zone (Watsonia) Construction Manager	AMA
Mark Minahan Duty Manager	Watsonia RSL	Brett Kavanagh (BK) North Zone (M80) Construction Manager	AMA
Kim Norton (KN) Communications and Stakeholder Relations Lead	AMA	Jeremy Richards (JR)	Watsonia Optical/Watsonia Traders Association

Apologies			
Name	Organisation	Name	Organisation
Hesham Mobarek (HM)	Watsonia Pharmacy/ Watsonia Traders Association	Matt Guest (MG) General Manager	Watsonia RSL

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Karen Leeder (KL) Manager City Futures	Banyule City Council	Kate Zisos (KZ) Senior Community Engagement Advisor	Spark
Tania Treasure (TT) Economic Development & Tourism Lead	Nillumbik Shire Council	Colin Brooks MP (CB)	Member of Parliament
Yvette Stanfield (YS)	Macleod Traders Association	Jim Needham (JN) Communications and Stakeholder Relations Manager, North	NELP
Amy Harris (AH) Economic Development Coordinator	Banyule City Council		

Key discussion points/decisions

Owner	
Jeni Coutts (JC)	<p>Welcome and Introduction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduced guest presenters Acknowledged apologies All short term actions are closed Acknowledgment of country completed
Renato Marnich (RM)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RM gave an overview of business engagement enquiry topics for M80 and Tunnels north and discussed the differences based of where each project is at in the delivery programs. RM discussed the Watsonia car parking in the south end and reviewed the strategy moving forward and gave a timeline of expected completion of September 2024. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will include a minimum of 20 additional car parks Car park will need to be closed intermittently dependent on work program Jeremy Richards (JR) acknowledged that it is a good solution and is satisfied with the outcome for the community and traders. JR requested further information about parking time restrictions and access to and from the car park to the shops. ACTION: RM and Kim Norton (KM) to explore how timed parking arrangements can be made. JR requested additional advertising be made for the car parks. JR asked if traders could be informed could in advance of when the car park will be unavailable. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Steve Denton (SD) answered that there is still planning underway, and there are anticipated utility works that will affect availability. ACTION: M80 is working on a forward plan of car park closures and will present back to the group once confirmed. RM gave an overview of the collaboration between NEL and Banyule City Council business support collaboration, highlighting that over 110 businesses have taken up assistance and 90% of those traders are within Banyule.
Deanna Hadid (DH) Karim Hussein (KH)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DH reviewed the high level 3 month lookahead of construction activities across the tunnels north area. DH showed the group the most recent drone footage of the work areas in tunnels north, highlighting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The two Tunnel Boring Machines (TBMs) in the final assembly steps before launch

Owner

- The completed acoustic shed at Winsor Reserve
- The work area at Lower Plenty Road (LPR) area and progress on the on and off ramps being constructed
- DH reviewed photos of construction progress in the various work areas:
- Watsonia highlighted the assembled TBMs, the completed enclosed conveyor belt and where the TBM will begin tunnelling.
- Winsor Reserve highlighted the newly installed artwork on the north and west side of the acoustic shed.
- **ACTION: RM to provide drone footage for the RSL website to Mark Minahan (MM).**
- Karim Hussein (KH) showed a digital fly through and 3D model of the project at completion, highlighting key areas like the new Greensborough Road boulevard, the vent structure, the new Borlase Park Reserve, the LPR interchange and the new pedestrian bridge at LPR.
 - Reviewed the ongoing and upcoming works for the new Greensborough Road boulevard.
 - Reviewed the ongoing and upcoming works for the widening of Lower Plenty Road and the early work on the new pedestrian bridge and the upgrade to the Silk Street pedestrian bridge.
- JR asked when the works at the southern end of Greensborough Road will start in earnest.
 - KH answered that it is still some years away, after the TBMs have passed through the area. It was noted that most of the south bound lanes of Greensborough Road will be constructed within site.
- Jeni Coutts (JC) noted it would be good to present acoustic and environmental information to the group once tunnelling starts.

Hannah English (HE)

- HE gave an overview of trader support in the area, highlighting new contact with the Lower Plenty Road and Macleod traders
- HE reviewed types of business support offered in the last six months and how many businesses took up offers for support.
- HE highlighted specific examples of recent trader support in the area and upcoming events to support local businesses.
- HE reviewed a map of additional traders engaged with along Greensborough Road.
- JR asked if the NBLG can include information on the new traders the project is engaging with and what can be done to support their attendance at BLG meetings.
 - RM answered that while the project offers and discusses NBLG participation, it is a challenge for most to fit into their schedule.
- **ACTION: RM to review format of the meeting and what options are available to expand the business liaison group.**

Brett Kavanagh (BK)

Steve Denton (SD)

Kim Norton (KN)

- BK showed a flyover video of the north section of the M80 construction progress.
 - Noted some tree removal works, noise wall removal, adding in gawk screens and temporary sound barriers, design works on one of the pedestrian bridges, and design of new noise walls.
- JR asked how many lanes will the final design include.
 - BK answered it will be four lanes in each direction on the freeway with an additional lane in each direction on an adjacent street.
- BK gave an overview of the six month construction lookahead for the north section of the M80.
- BK showed a flyover video of the south section of the M80 construction progress.
 - Noted where new walls will be installed, updated on a recent rail occupation to prepare for the extension of the train tunnel that will allow the road to be widened, Grimshaw Street car park area works.
- BK gave an overview of the six month construction lookahead for the south section of the M80.
- MM asked if works on the rail tunnel will be a full rail closure.

Owner

- BK answered it will be a full closure at times with buses replacing trains.
- SD showed a flyover video of the interface section of the M80 near Watsonia.
 - Noted piling works for the Watsonia Bridge, and discussed works on the future retaining walls that will allow the connection into the NEL tunnels, as well as two out of the six planned weekend works of the Watsonia Road intersection now completed.
- SD gave an overview of the six month construction lookahead for the interface section of the M80 near Watsonia.
- SD gave a full update on the Watsonia Road realignment including details of the construction blitz schedule and what was taken into consideration to determine the construction methodology being used, such as the ongoing Watsonia Town Square works.
 - Reviewed the impacts to the road network for each weekend of the construction campaign.
- MM asked if VMS signage could be used for the train station car parking to indicate parking is available.
 - SD answered there is corflute signage installed.
 - **ACTION: SD to determine if VMS signage can be added to indicate car parking availability and existence of the offset car park.**
- JR asked what the occupancy rate of the offset car park is.
 - SD answered it's lower than expected, around 350 to the expected 500.
- Kim Norton (KN) took the group through a graphic representation of the trader engagement that has been undertaken for the Watsonia Road intersection realignment, including all businesses and mediums of engagement.
 - Discussed the open for business campaign and reviewed branding that has been installed.
 - Reviewed the zone specific works notifications and the wider notification sent to nearby residents and the limited amount of complaints received after the first two weekends of the Watsonia Road realignment construction campaign.
 - Reviewed other methods of notification like Victoria's Big Build disruptions website and social media campaign.
- SD gave an overview of all the completed works on the Watsonia Road realignment for weekends one and two and highlighted:
 - Trader and resident interactions associated with those completed works.
 - Showed photos of the completed works.
- KM showed information on all community engagement and key topics for those interested in M80 works.
- JC asked what most complaints were about.
 - KM answered that complaints have recently been about dust around bulk excavation sites.

Jacqueline Weedon
(JW)

- JW gave an overview of the opening of the third round of the North East Community Fund (NECF):
 - The focus will be on impacted geographic areas/suburbs.
 - The same four categories will apply for this round.
 - The grant funding round will close in September 2024.
- JC asked how the project is engaging with the suburbs on the list
 - JW answered that the project is contacting past applicants directly, engaging with local Councils and rolling out a marketing campaign with posters and postcards to get the word out.
- JW showed photos of past recipients awarded with a NECF grant.
- JR asked if multiple projects can be awarded to one organisation.
 - JW answered that each application will be evaluated on its own merit and organisations can apply for multiple grants however they can only apply once per category and each must be a different project.

Owner	
Jeni Coutts (JC)	<p>Other Business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JR raised an issue with the engagement around the car park availability and fulfillment of the Environmental Performance Requirements (EPRs) and expressed the challenging process that it took to get to an agreeable outcome. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Highlighted the issue that the lack of meeting of the EPR was not picked up by the independent auditor and is concerned that businesses will have to monitor EPRs that affect them individually. ○ Noted that businesses still have not received validation that the car park EPR was not met. ○ Requested an IEA report overview. ○ ACTION: Katy Sylvia (KS) to arrange for the NEL environment team to present key findings from the IEA at a NBLG meeting. ○ ACTION: KS to confirm if NEL can pass along requests for checking EPRs to the independent auditor on behalf of the BLG. • MM requested more information on the upcoming week for the courtesy bus driver at the RSL. • JR asked if an e-mail can be sent to traders every week to simply detail out disruptions for the upcoming weekend. • ACTION: KN to draft high level weekly e-mail template, seek feedback from BLG members, and regularly start sending update e-mails each week.

Actions – Short Term

No.	Action	Owner	Due	Status	Update
5.1	Explore how timed parking arrangements can be made at the new offset trader carpark	Kim Norton Renato Marnich	19/9/24	In progress	
5.2	M80 to prepare and present a forward plan of closures at the offset trader car park	Kim Norton	TBC	In progress	
5.3	Provide drone footage for the Watsonia RSL to include on their website	Renato Marnich	15/8/24	In progress	
5.4	Conduct a review of the format of the north business liaison group meeting and explore what options are available to expand membership	Renato Marnich	19/9/24	In progress	
5.5	Determine if VMS signage can be added to indicate commuter car parking availability and existence of the offset car park east of Greensborough Road	Kim Norton Steve Denton	19/9/24	In progress	
5.6	Arrange for the NEL environment team to present key findings from the IEA 6 month summary report at an NBLG meeting	Katy Sylvia	19/9/24	In progress	

No.	Action	Owner	Due	Status	Update
5.7	Confirm the process for NBLG members to request specific EPRs be checked by the IEA	Katy Sylvia Renato Marnich	19/9/24	In progress	
5.8	Create a high level weekly e-mail template for disruptions for the following week to send to BLG members.	Kim Norton	9/8/24	In progress	

Actions – Long Term

No	Owner	Topic	Status
1.5	WTA	WTA to work with Banyule Council on the possibility of getting electronic message boards installed	BCC met with WTA 06.07.23. The Committee will investigate some options and provide options ASAP. 21.09.23: ON HOLD - Will revisit Q1 2024
7.5	JN	JN to advise when the details for any planned Watsonia Station car park upgrades will be known	

Future Presentations

Scheduled Date	Date Raised	Topic	Owner	Update
Q4	16.03.23	Presentation on parking solution for southern end of Watsonia shopping strip	RM	Presentation of parking solution provided to NBLG on 1/8/24; action to be closed.
2024	09.11.23	Timeline of works for M80 completion to be presented	JN	Will be presented once UDLP approved

Additional information

NA