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12 June 2025



Meeting Minutes

Northern Business Liaison Group

Date	25/06/2025	Time	5:30 - 7:30pm
Chair	Leah Waymark	Meeting no.	4 of 2025
Location	Watsonia RSL	Minute taker	Katy Sylvia

Attendees

Attendees			
Name	Organisation	Name	Organisation
Leah Waymark (LW)	Independent Chair	Jeremy Richards (JR)	Watsonia Optical/Watsonia Traders Association
Rania Fayad (RF)	Watsonia Traders Association	Mark Minahan (MM)	Watsonia RSL
Renato Marnich (RM) Trader Engagement Specialist	NEL	Georgie Meyer (GM) Manager Inclusive and Creative Communities	Banyule Council
Joshua Lim (JL) Manager, Communications and Stakeholder Relations, North	NEL	Deanna Hadid (DH) Senior Advisor Communications and Stakeholder Relations	Spark
Katy Sylvia (KS) Senior Advisor, Communications and Stakeholder Relations, Tunnels	NEL	Steve Denton (SD) Interface Zone (Watsonia) Construction Manager	AMA
Selena Jensen (SJ) Trader Engagement Manager	AMA	Isabella Luk (IL) Senior Environment Advisor North	NEL
Julia Widdowson (JW) Deputy Director, Environment & Sustainability, Tunnels	NEL		

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Apologies			
Name	Organisation	Name	Organisation
Emma Joyce	Banuyle City Council	Matt Guest (MG) General Manager	Watsonia RSL
Michael Cannatelli (MC)	Greensborough Chamber of Commerce	Carlos Ibarra (CI)	AMA
Esmond Angeles (EA)	Nillumbik Shire Council	Anne Warner (AW)	Greensborough Chamber of Commerce
Sean Carroll (SC) Trader Advisor	AMA	Hesham Mobarek (HM)	Watsonia Pharmacy/ Watsonia Traders Association
Hon. Colin Brooks	State Member for Bundoora		

Key discussion points/decisions

Owner	
Leah Waymark (LW) Renato Marnich (RM)	<p>Welcome and Introduction</p> <p>RM lead Acknowledgement of Country.</p> <p>LW went through apologies and confirmed previous meeting minutes.</p> <p>Outstanding actions reviewed:</p> <p>9.2: WTA & RSL to provide the project with request for updated signage.</p> <p>9.3: Closed.</p> <p>9.4: NEL will include NBLG membership link in upcoming works notifications and community newsletters to promote membership where appropriate; closed.</p> <p>9.5: Closed.</p> <p>Agenda reviewed.</p>
Julia Widdowson (JW)	<p>Tunnels IEA summary report overview</p> <p>An overview of the IEA summary report was given, including:</p> <p>Timeline of the next summary report, purpose of the IEA summary report, summary of findings between May 2024 and October 2024, review of top categories of findings, review of 6 business EPRs with no findings during this reporting period.</p> <p>Review of non-compliances open at the end of the reporting period.</p> <p>A case study was presented to the group relating to a non-compliance that was rectified during the reporting period.</p>

Owner

Isabella Luk (IL)

M80RR IEA summary report overview

An overview of the first two IEA summary reports was given, including:
Findings raised during the first summary report, breakdown of the areas for improvement.

Review of the second summary report was given, including key points, audit finding summaries and breakdown of the areas for improvement.

An overview of all the non-compliances raised during the reporting periods was gone over, including the findings related to Business EPRs.

JR asked what the Tunnels May-October 2024 IEA report EPRs relating to business were and how they were reviewed?

JW answered the auditors reviewed EPRs B4, B7, B8, B1, B5, B6 which is included in the summary report.

The EPRs were evaluated during the audit by reviewing the management plans, asking for evidence of actioning of the commitment made in the plans, evidence of vouchers, minutes from BLG and other key stakeholder meetings.

ACTION: NEL to determine what information can be provided on what business EPRs were evaluated in the Tunnel May-October 2024 IEA summary report and if a specific written list of what was evaluated can be provided to the NBLG.

ACTION: NEL to determine if the Business Disruption Management Plan can be presented to the NBLG. LW requested this action be addressed before the next NBLG meeting.

JR asked if the auditor talk directly to businesses as part of the process.

KS answered it is outside the scope of the auditing process to engage with businesses directly.

RM added the auditor reviews numerous documents, records of meetings, management plans, proof of engagement and complaint records amongst other items.

MM added it would be good for all the information from the actions above to be provided to the wider group before the next meeting.

Deanna Hadid (DH)

NEL Tunnels – Construction Update

An overview of the construction progress was given, including a walk-through video of the tunnel construction.

2025 milestone lookahead completed.

A construction update was given including Watsonia area, tunnel construction status, ventilation tunnel, TBM status overview, Lower Plenty Road widening work and piling at Rivergum work area.

An overview was given on the Silk Street pedestrian bridge upgrade, including traffic impacts, expected delays, and full closure dates for blitz weekends.

An overview of business and community support was given including tailored communications materials, in person meetings, advertising campaigns, key stakeholder briefings, regular notification and continued offer of respite and relocation where appropriate.

Owner

Overview of trader engagement given, including businesses along Lower Plenty Road and local early childhood education centres.

MM asked what the traffic impacts of the Lower Plenty Road widening works were and if there were delays.

DH answered the traffic delays are between 5 and 10 minutes.

Selena Jensen (SJ)

M80 Ring Road – Trader Update

An overview of key feedback from the community was given, including the total number of interactions and sentiment.

Trader engagement overview was given including what support was given for the utility upgrade on Greensborough Road. It was noted that additional planning for the next six months of impacts with traders is underway.

MM asked what the EFTPOS system trader support listed in the presentation was.

SJ answered it is like a specific gift card for only specific businesses the project can give out to support local traders.

RF noted that during their current engagement with businesses, it was raised that most were not aware of night time construction works and they did not receive any in person visits from project staff to discuss.

SJ thanked RF for the feedback and pointed out that the contractor for non contestable Comms 02 work had developed the methodology for pavement reinstatement in consultation with impacted businesses.

Steve Denton (SD)

M80 Ring Road – Construction Update

An overview of construction activities was given including a Plenty Road, Grimshaw Street, the Nell Street pedestrian bridge progress. New lanes and carriageway piles completed were discussed. Update was given on noise wall construction progress.

JR asked when the main impacts to Grimshaw Street are expected.

SD answered he didn't know but would find out

ACTION: M80RR to determine when the most impactful work to Grimshaw Street is to be expected and provide an update to NBLG.

JR asked how long Elder Street impacts will continue.

SD answered 2-2.5 months, starting in early 2026.

Overview was given of the utility relocation works from July to August planned near Grimshaw Street, the installation of blue steel noise walls along the M80, and Nell and Yando Street overpasses.

Update on a school visit from the Concord School on site was given.

Reviewed high level impacts expected for the remainder of 2025 with highlights of upcoming full closures.

MM provided feedback on AK Lines traffic signalling, which is thought to be causing traffic to bank up at Greensborough Road and preventing vehicles from turning on the correct signal.

SD said he would discuss it with the traffic team to see if anything has changed.

Owner

RR provided the feedback about the \$100 vouchers that they can spend on major retailers instead of local businesses are a challenge.

SJ answered that it is part of the respite package, and the vouchers are provided for these larger retailers when it make sense based off the impacts.

RF noted that the Project's community respite program had contributed in excess of \$20,000 to local traders since end of January 2025. RF enquired whether that figure included respite measures that provided vouchers to major retailers outside of the Watsonia Road precinct. SJ clarified that the figure quoted was spent with for traders in the local area only. SJ clarified that at times it is more appropriate to use other respite mechanisms such as movie vouchers and vouchers with major retailers, based on impacts to individuals

Leah Waymark (LW)

Other business

JR repeated the request for more traffic figures that we have been measuring over months/years to look at trends over time, and for that information to be provided in writing. It was noted this is an outstanding action from the regular Watsonia Traders Association meeting.

ACTION: NEL to ascertain what traffic figures that have been measured over time can be provided to NBLG in writing.

UPDATE: Open source traffic data is available through the following weblink:

<https://discover.data.vic.gov.au/dataset/traffic-volume>

JR raised concern about the Watsonia Station car park UDLP timeline of engagement and requested early access to the information before public exhibition to ensure traders have time to meaningfully participate in consultation.

ACTION: M80RR to provided timeline of Watsonia Station Carpark UDLP when available, with details on early engagement provided.

JR noted the IEA summary report presentations were done in a way the reflected the NBLGs priorities and was grateful for the consideration taken in developing the presentation based off of previous feedback.

Actions – Short Term

No.	Action	Owner	Due	Status	Update
4.1	NEL to determine what information can be provided on what business EPRs were evaluated in the Tunnel May-October 2024 IEA summary report and if a specific written list of what was evaluated can be provided to the NBLG.	Katy Sylvia	Before 24 July	OPEN	
4.2	NEL to determine if the Business Disruption Management Plan can be presented to the NBLG LW requested this action be addressed before the next NBLG meeting.	Renato Marnich	Before 24 July	OPEN	

No.	Action	Owner	Due	Status	Update
4.3	M80RR to determine when the most impactful work to Grimshaw Street is to be expected and provide an update to NBLG.	Carlos Ibarra / Steve Denton	TBD	OPEN	
4.4	NEL to ascertain what traffic figures that have been measured over time can be provided to NBLG in writing.	Renato Marnich	TBD	OPEN	Further to the link provided in the minutes, NEL will investigate what further traffic information can be presented at a future meeting.
4.5	M80RR to provided timeline of Watsonia Station Carpark UDLP when available, with details on early engagement provided.	Joshua Lim / Carlos Ibarra	TBD	OPEN	

Commented [RM1]: This needs to be determined by M80RRA Traffic team.
 **To be further discussed post-contractor review and PRIOR TO SENDING TO MEMBERS.

Actions – Long Term

No	Owner	Topic	Status
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Future Presentations

Scheduled Date	Date Raised	Topic	Owner	Update
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Additional information

NA