
MINUTES OF MEETING

Fairfield Community Liaison Group - Meeting 3

DATE: Wednesday 27 August 2008 at 6:15 pm

LOCATION: Cabravale Leisure Centre

Chair: Jim Morris

Minutes: John Murray

Community Representatives: Ken Chapman
John Medich
Kristyna Cyron
Momo Romic
Derek Corney
Tony Fornasier
Janette Hannaford
Stella Howatt

Guests: Angela Cagnetta
Sally Sitou

ARTC: Prue Hodgson, Community Liaison Manager, ARTC
Greg Mullens, Project Director, ARTC
Matt Hurst, Consultant, Parade Consulting
Carlie Faint, EMR (alternate)
Mel Meredith, Contractor, Arenco
Gary Cook, Contractor, Arenco
Chris Kyriacou, Contractor, Seymour Whyte
Daniel Rose, Contractor, Gartner Rose
David Cook, Caldis Cook
Brian Dale, Advisor

ICLR: Rowena Lennings, Integrated Analysis Pty Ltd

Council: Marzi De Santi, Fairfield City Council

Apologies: Dr Eman Sharobeem
Dr Thomas Diep
Martin Hicks, EMR
Jim Thompson
Jan Collie

1. Welcome, introductions.

The Chair welcomed meeting attendees and made introductions.

2. Minutes

Minutes of previous meeting handed out and read.

Explanation for the late distribution of minutes due to server issues given by Community Liaison Manager.

Some CLG members unable to read minutes on their computers with older versions of Word. Minutes will be sent in PDF format for future meetings.

Matters arising from Minutes: -

Discussion of terminology used in minutes for the walkway at Cabramatta station. CLG members argued that the term "Walkway" should be used rather than "Ramp" as matters relating to compliance differ between the two. The issue was held over for later in the meeting.

CLG members requested that copies of the power point presentations be available for future reference.

Examples of blocks used in retaining walls and sound barriers were brought in by ARTC for perusal by CLG members.

The Bareena Street bridge closure will be a half road closure, rather than the full road closure, as agreed at last meeting.

3. Cabramatta Station Access options -

An overview of access issues at Cabramatta station was given with the assistance of slides. This overview looked at the issues involved in coming up with the proposed station layout and accessibility. The feasibility of constructing a ramped walkway was addressed and found to be impractical given the area available and the constraints of existing standards.

Q: - The existing 1:10 ramp is 38mtrs in length. How does the ARTC arrive at the figures indicating a much longer ramp?

A: - The street level is going to be at a lower level than the Platform and a replacement ramp connecting to the lower footpath, which has to comply with a 1:14 grade as dictated by Disability standards, will mean the ramp will be unacceptably long and will require the removal of the Bus stop.

Q: - What is the total height the ramp has to accommodate?

A: - From Track level to the underside of the bridge deck needs to be at least 6 Metres. There is not enough room for a ramp even at 1:10 (which is non-compliant with standards).

Q: - Has the ARTC looked at alternatives to the Stair/Lift access options currently planned?

A: - Yes. If the ramp is to be built, then the area will lose other facilities such as parking and the Bus stop will have to be relocated away from the station entry point.

Q: - Can the ARTC confirm the gradient of the existing ramp? Are surveys available?

A: - The existing ramp is 1:10 based on measurements from the surveyed plans. The proposed design is the best compromise available given the restraints and will meet standards for disability access.

Q: - Could the ARTC provide drawings of the proposed design for perusal by the CLG?

A: - Yes

Q: - Can the Bus stop be moved to the other side?

A: - No. Not practical, as the bus stop on this side is for north bound buses (the other side of the road head south bound. The buses that stop at the station need to drop off and pick up outside the station.

Q: - Can the walkway be extended to the other side of the road with a ramp down to the street from there?

A: - This will have even more impacts on the configuration of the street, the laneway on the other side of the street will be blocked, more car parking spaces will be lost and the shops will have a large long ramp directly in front of them blocking their light etc. From an Urban design point of view this solution would also look much worse. All options have been looked at and the proposed plan is the result of much research.

Q: - The existing ramp caters to mothers with children and invalids who will be dependent on the new lifts. What happens if the lifts malfunction?

A: - RailCorp has Service agreements with lift companies for critical areas that ensure a low response time for repairs etc.

Q: - Has the ARTC looked at escalators? Do they comply with standards?

A: - Not without stairs. Escalators are impractical and expensive to maintain and are only used in high volume traffic areas.

A general discussion ensued about options with the bus stop at Cabramatta station. ARTC has to comply with the Act regarding ramps which states that station access must always be compliant. Because in this instance access is being provided to a station the design must comply. Discussions with disability groups highlighted the reluctance of these groups to sanction non compliant walkways as they encourage incorrect usage and can be detrimental/dangerous for disabled users. The disability groups are happy with stairs and lift combination. Another consideration is that if a ramp is in place of the stairs then the bus bay will be compromised as will the footpath around the base of the ramp adding further non compliances.

CLG members expressed concern that they are coming to the meetings but no issues are being resolved. The chair affirmed that the meetings are about reaching a conclusion of the many issues involved within a restrictive time frame.

Q: - ICLR asked if the Bus stop can be relocated.

A: - If the bus stop is relocated then it will be difficult to relocate the car spaces that will need to make way for it within a 400 metre radius of the station. The ARTC's design will allow the incorporation of future upgrades intended by Railcorp over the next 10 to 15 years without major disruption of the existing footbridge. Conditions of Approval are predicated on the existing station configuration.

Note: - A community representative said he would discuss these matters including the requirement to conform to standards and the relevant conditions with the Federal member (Jason Clare) at a meeting with the Chamber of Commerce on the 10th September and would report back at the next CLG meeting.

Q: - Escalators are used at the new Chatswood station. Why are they not considered here?

A: - The volume of traffic at Chatswood is significantly higher than at Cabramatta station and they are only used in conjunction with stairs in accordance with the DDA standards. As previously discussed, there is not room for both escalators and Stairs at Cabramatta

Q: - Can the size of the lifts be altered?

A: - Yes, Lifts can be deeper but not wider. RailCorp specifies the size of the lifts as they will own them and are responsible for the ongoing maintenance.

4. Noise Assessment and Control – Rob Bullen, Wilkinson Murray

A presentation of the methodology used in the assessment of existing and future noise levels and considerations for noise suppression was delivered by Rob Bullen of Wilkinson Murray. An overview of the current noise levels at various points was discussed and what measures are to be taken where feasible to bring the noise levels into line with DECC goals.

Q: - Will there be walls on both sides of the track on some parts of the project?

A: - Not in the Fairfield section.

Q: - Is the 4 Mtr height restrictions of the walls relative to the track or the ground?

A: - Above the base of the wall which is assumed to be at top of formation level (about 300mm below top of track).

Q: - Has the ARTC considered dropping the height of the track in any sections?

A: - A 1:100 grade dictates how far the track can be lowered. The track has been lowered where it benefited the design to do so, but in most instances, due to existing constraints (bridges and culverts etc) the vertical alignment of the new track will have to match the existing one.

Q: - How will the ARTC stop reverberation where high rises are on both sides of the track?

A: - Detailed modelling has indicated that there will not be an increase in noise levels in these circumstances.

Q: - Villawood to Carramar. Horsley Drive. There are 6 new houses in this section. Will Council talk to the residents?

A: - Consultation will be organised through local meetings by ARTC.

- Q: - Prospect Creek to Carramar. Prospect road is right beside the line. Why not put 2 barriers in that section.
- A: - Noise is going down at that location for Prospect road because the freight trains will be moving further away. There will be a non reflective facing on the barriers.
- Q: - Solar access near barriers. Are there any other alternate barriers which are transparent?
- A: - An issue is the high cost of maintenance for these barriers. These issues will be discussed with the residents. Suggestions will be presented to DoP.
- Q: - Has noise contouring been developed?
- A: - Noise contouring has to be prepared for a fixed height above the ground. It would be preferable not to do contours as it does not accurately indicate the extent of the worst noise levels received by the receivers in the worst locations. Specific modelling of individual noise receivers provides a better understanding of what noise will need to be ameliorated.
- Q: - Council has commissioned noise contouring. Has the model factored in height issues for the residents?
- A: - These issues have been carefully calculated when modelling for the worst case receivers.
- Q: - Have the Prospect Creek residents been considered regarding bridge noise?
- A: - The noise levels calculated have indicated that there will be reduced noise for these residents because the new bridge will be a ballast top bridge, much quieter than the existing steel transom decked bridge.
- Q: - Can you guarantee a reduction in noise levels at Prospect Creek?
- A: - Yes
- Q: - The Bat colony east of the line on Cabramatta Creek. Can the ARTC guarantee no adverse noise issues for the colony?
- A: - A Fauna study did not rate the colony as significant.
- Q: - Will there be a significant increase in noise for the bat colony if the new track is closer?
- A: - There will be about a 1db increase in noise which is almost undetectable to hear.
- Q: - Is there an estimate of the noise peaks during the day?
- A: - The worst case modelling assumed that the increase at night will be slightly higher than the day. This depends on the actual usage increase for the rail line.
- Q: - Current freight usage averaging 1 per 1 ½ hours. What is the prediction for the increase of usage?
- A: - Depends on demand.

Q: - The ARTC only has to comply to noise standards when “feasible and reasonable” in residential areas however commercial industry has to strictly comply. Why? This seems strange.

A: - The DECC is the authority to ask.

Q: - The CLG was under the impression there was to be no freight at night and that there was only going to be daytime trains because of the new track.

A: - The modelling has assessed a possible worst case scenario only and the walls are designed accordingly. Most train operators prefer to run their trains during the day.

5. Community Amenity Offset Planning -

A description of the Federal and State approvals process was given. These are in display on the Web and at community centers. The project requires both State and Federal approval.

Q: - How does the process relate to timing of construction. Is there a date in mind for start of construction?

A: - There is no real change. When we get sign off from DoP NSW, community and Premier. Various activities such as surveys, land acquisitions, dilapidation surveys, work sites etc. that have minimal environmental impact have already started. Sensitive activities will not be started until signoffs from Federal and State Ministers.

Q: - At the first meeting, the users of the building on the corner of Bareena and West Streets (Polish club) were told someone will come for a dilapidation survey. When will this happen?

A: - ARTC will do an inspection before the start of any work in the area. This will be done approximately a month before construction work begins.

Q: - Will there be someone present from the Polish Club?

A: - Yes, they are welcome to attend the survey.

Q: - There is \$2M to be spread between all the affected Councils as part of the Federal CAOP. How much extra package for Cabramatta?

A: - There are various options with the package. It will be costed at local government area. The Minister has the final decision.

Q: - When will notifications be sent.

A: - Adverts in local papers, libraries etc. CLG's thoughts will also be gathered. The Plan's outcomes are to be spread across the 4 LGA's.

Q: - Fairfield Council. Can we get a guarantee that the offset program will be in addition to the allowance made for public art and other urban design and landscaping requirements?

A: - The Minister has series of conditions for expenditure.

Q: - What extras are gained?

A: - Car parking in addition to existing car parking is the only addition recommended by the Minister.

Q: - What legal stand does the community have if the noise levels you are required to meet are exceeded during the operation of the freight line?

A: - The noise levels have to be monitored over the next 10 years and further noise mitigation will be required if the allowable noise levels are exceeded.

6. General Business

No general business.

7. Meeting Close

Meeting closed: 8.30pm

8. Next Meeting

When: Thursday 9th October 2008 at 6.15pm