# Meeting notes

MARCH 2015

## Proposed Albion Park Rail bypass - flood focus group meeting

The first flood focus group meeting for the proposed Albion Park Rail bypass was held on Monday 16 March 2015 at The Rail Community Centre, Albion Park Rail.

### Purpose of the meeting

Roads and Maritime Services invited community representatives to participate in a flood focus group to give local residents a chance to understand and contribute to the flood assessment process. Nineteen community representatives registered their interest in being involved in the group and were selected. The community members will work with the project team and technical specialists during 2015.

### Meeting Summary

A project update was provided by Roads and Maritime, followed by presentations by Wollongong and Shellharbour City Councils on the project's flood modelling. This included Duck Creek, Macquarie Rivulet and Horsley Creek floodplains.

Community respresentatives then had the opportunity to ask questions and outline any concerns they had regarding potential flooding impacts.

*The following is a summary of the comments and questions raised at the meeting and of Roads and Maritime's response.*

| *Comment/question* | *Response* |
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| **Flooding is a major concern for the Albion Park and Albion Park Rail communities.** | We agreed early on in the planning process that flooding is a key issue and we are working to manage any impacts related to the bypass proposal. |
| **Does the project go through the Duck Creek catchment?** | Yes – at the northern end of the project. |
| **Does Wollongong City Council's flood modelling take into account future residential releases?** | No. Wollongong City Council is starting to look at re-zoning for future residential releases. |

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| **Why is Roads and Maritime proceeding with a road design when modelling from Shellharbour City Council has not been completed?** | We are using a final draft version of the Macquarie Rivulet model as this is still being verified by Shellharbour City Council before finalisation.<br><br>Once this model has been finalised, we will re-assess our results to ensure there are no changes in impacts.<br><br>This draft model is the most current and best available flooding information for this catchment, and has had considerable effort invested in its development to date. |
| **Concern based on community observation and experience that each flood is different. While best estimates have been outlined in the councils' flood modelling, there was a view that flooding may never happen like this.** | Yes it is agreed that each flood is different and it is not possible to predict and model every possible flooding scenario.<br><br>Flood modellers build models with information such as catchment areas, watercourses, vegetation, structures and historic rainfall data.<br><br>These flood models are then calibrated against historical flood information and adjusted appropriately to replicate known events.<br><br>Once calibrated, statistical rainfall data is entered into models (e.g. 1 in 100 year event), for a range of potential storm durations (ranging from hours to days). The storm durations which produce the highest peak flow are adopted.<br><br>This process, while not guaranteed to ensure the flood model will accurately replicate every flood event, gives confidence that the worst scenarios are identified and addressed. |
| **Does the Shellharbour City Council flood study take into account future sea level changes and climate changes?** | Yes. Modelling includes an increase in sea level (in this case Lake Illawarra levels) and an increase in rainfall intensity. |
| **Has Shellharbour City Council done its flood studies just for the bypass?** | No. The studies are part of Shellharbour City Council's flood management strategy and were established before the current work on the bypass commenced. |
| **Will Taylors Road be a Roads and Maritime or Shellharbour City Council road?** | Taylors Road is and will continue to be Shellharbour City Council's responsibility. |
| **Questions were raised around how much of the bypass would be elevated.** | The proposed bypass will be a combination of large bridges and embankments. This will be covered in more detail in the next meeting. |
| **Why can't the bypass be bridged all the way** | We need to balance building a functional road that |

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| **through the floodplain? There were concerns raised that not bridging all the way through the floodplain would increase impacts of flooding in Albion Park.** | minimises impacts with budget constraints. Typically it costs around seven times more to build a bridge than to elevate the ground (i.e. build an embankment). |
| **What risk assessment has been done of the known impacts?** | We are currently preparing an Environmental Impact Statement. This will assess and detail the benefits and impacts of the project. It will also detail and assess how impacts will be managed. |
| **Are there any plans for future improvements on the current Princes Highway?** | We have no current plans for significant improvements to the existing Princes Highway through Albion Park Rail. We are focusing on planning for the proposed Albion Park Rail bypass. |
| **Concern that Tongarra Road and the existing Princes Highway are currently floodplains. Will the bypass be elevated, so as not to impede flooding?** | The proposed bypass will be elevated between 2 and 4 m above existing ground level to be flood immune over and above the 1 in 20 year event.<br>Tongarra Road would remain at its current level to avoid creating impacts to flooding.<br>This will be covered in more detail at the next meeting. |
| **Concerns raised around scouring?** | Scouring is addressed in detail as part of the design process. Further detail will be provided through future Flood Focus Groups. |
| **Issues around lack of maintenance were raised i.e. a lack of maintenance leads to drainage structures being blocked and this contributes to flooding.** | It is correct that lack of maintenance can increase blockage and reduce the effectiveness of bridges and drains. There are numerous ways to address this including:<br>• Ensure some level of blockage is factored into the flood modelling of each structure<br>• Ensure the design minimises the requirement for maintenance<br>• Ensure maintenance is safe and straightforward to carry out<br>This issue will be addressed in more detail at future flood focus groups. |