

JULY 2012

## Foxground and Berry bypass – southern Berry bypass review decision

The fifth community Q&A session for the southern Berry bypass review was held on Tuesday 3 July 2012 at the Berry School of Arts.

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### Summary – Purpose of the meeting

RMS convened a fifth question and answer session on the Berry bypass review, following the announcement on Monday 25 June 2012 by the Minister for Roads and Ports that the northern alignment is the option RMS will now include in the environmental assessment for approval by the Department of Planning and Infrastructure.

The meeting was an opportunity for community members to ask questions on the findings of the review.

The session was opened and facilitated by Lucy Cole-Edelstein of Straight Talk who introduced the following speakers:

- Gareth Ward, Local Member for Kiama.
- Brad Turner, RMS General Manager Southern Region, who outlined the review process deliverables, community engagement undertaken to date and the way forward through the environmental assessment process. Mr Turner identified a double counting in the costing information published on 25 June 2012 and advised that all data presented during the evening has been updated to correct this error. A list of addenda has also been provided to accompany the *RMS report on route feasibility comparative cost estimates*.
- Dan Reeve, SMEC General Manager Transport, representative of the independent review team presented information on the role and findings of the independent review team.
- Michael Moore, Evans and Peck Principal, Project Advisory, representative of the technical investigation group presented the role of the technical investigation group, and outlined the estimating process, findings and outputs.

A copy of the presentation is available on the project website at [www.rms.nsw.gov.au/fbb](http://www.rms.nsw.gov.au/fbb)

At the commencement of the question and answer session a community member, Stuart Coughlan, addressed the meeting. Mr Coughlan advised that he had received requests from the community to explain the \$50 million cost saving identified by Bruce Ramsay and how Bruce's costs and design relate to the information presented by RMS.

# Meeting Notes



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Approximately 150 local residents attended the meeting.

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

<b>Comment / question</b>	<b>Response</b>
<b>Request that RMS review Bruce Ramsay's balanced cut and fill design properly.</b>	<p>Dan Reeve advised that the independent review team required the technical investigation group to review 'like for like' designs for the northern and southern alignments.</p> <p>The independent review team requested the technical investigation group to review Bruce Ramsay's alternative concept design. The technical investigation group took the design and applied the current RMS design guidelines and AusRoad standards to make it a conforming design. This design was then used to generate quantities that were transferred directly to the estimators for evaluation.</p> <p>The independent review team also requested the technical investigation group to review the northern and southern alignments along the whole Foxground and Berry bypass project.</p> <p>The estimates produced by the technical investigation group are based on a balanced cut and fill design across the complete length of the project.</p> <p>The independent review team believes the design produced by the technical investigation group is a fair and conforming representation of Bruce Ramsay's alternative design and provides for a 'like for like' comparison.</p>
<b>RMS has spent a lot of time and effort on technical and cost evaluations however the social benefits of the southern alignment have not been evaluated. Concern raised over potential pollutants from an alignment to the north of town. The northern alignment is not a proper bypass of the town.</b>	<p>Brad Turner advised that RMS' brief was to undertake a cost comparison between the preferred northern and suggested southern alignment.</p> <p>If the costs had been closer between the two routes then RMS would have been required to review non cost factors including social and environmental impacts for both routes.</p> <p>The Minister for Roads and Ports has made a decision that RMS will progress with the northern alignment. RMS will now concentrate its efforts on the environmental assessment for the northern</p>

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	<p>alignment and as part of this process will investigate a number of environmental factors including social impacts.</p>
<p><b>Concern that if division continues in the community then the project funds may be lost. Are members of the community prepared to progress the southern alignment further at the risk of losing funding or are we going to get the road built?</b></p>	<p>Question directed at the community members present. No response provided by RMS.</p>
<p><b>Has a decision been made to progress with the northern alignment before a social impact assessment has been undertaken regardless of the potential impacts on the residents of Berry?</b></p> <p><b>How can a decision be made on a final route when a social impact assessment has not been done?</b></p>	<p>The Minister for Roads and Ports has instructed RMS to progress the northern alignment through the environmental assessment process.</p> <p>Social impact investigations will now be based on a route to the north.</p> <p>RMS has already undertaken a preliminary social assessment for the northern route as part of the route selection process.</p> <p>The project cannot proceed without approval from the NSW Minister for Planning and Infrastructure. The process for approval is to undertake an environmental assessment which will identify any potential impacts.</p> <p>Potential social impacts will be identified during the environmental assessment and published for community comment for a minimum of 30 days.</p> <p>The Minister of Planning through the Director General of the Department of Planning and Infrastructure will impose conditions on the environmental assessment which will include consideration of the submissions received, issues raised and how these submissions have been responded to.</p>
<p><b>A preferred northern alignment has been on the table since June 2009. What was there to stop the environmental assessment process carrying on during the southern Berry bypass review?</b></p>	<p>It was not possible to undertake all the work required for an environmental assessment for both routes in parallel. RMS has held a number of working groups since February 2012 which have further developed the northern alignment. RMS has endeavoured to keep the northern alignment moving during the southern bypass review in case the northern alignment was selected.</p>
<p><b>What guarantees are there that the northern alignment is the final route and the southern alignment or another proposal will be not be</b></p>	<p>The Minister for Roads and Ports has made a decision that RMS will progress with the northern alignment.</p>

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<p>investigated further? <b>What will happen if the environmental assessment is not approved by the Minister of Planning?</b></p>	<p>However, RMS cannot guarantee that a change in government etc. will not adopt a different approach. The Minister for Planning and Infrastructure will make the final decision on the project.</p>
<p><b>Concern that costing errors have been made in the past and publications have been incorrect. What guarantee does the community have that the Minister for Roads and Ports has been provided the correct information this time?</b></p>	<p>This review process has undergone an independent review and information provided to the Minister for Roads and Ports has been reviewed in detail and deemed appropriate for the Minister to make an informed decision.</p>
<p><b>Concern raised over how the town has been split in two during the review process, but greater concern is that it is only a question of time before someone is killed in Berry. The longer it takes to make a decision the higher the risk. It is cosmetic decisions which are delaying this project. How long are the community going to let the debate go on and risk the danger of someone being killed in Berry?</b></p>	<p>Statement directed at the community members present. No response provided by RMS.</p>
<p><b>How much has the southern Berry bypass review cost?</b></p>	<p>The review has taken six months and cost approximately \$3 million.</p>
<p><b>When will the environmental assessment be complete? What is the RMS' projected timescale for the Minister of Planning to make his decision?</b></p>	<p>RMS is targeting public display of the environmental assessment towards the end of 2012 and project approval around mid-2013.</p>
<p><b>Request for clarification on whether the funding for the project has already been allocated by the NSW Government.</b></p>	<p>Gareth Ward advised \$310 million has been allocated to the Gerringong upgrade project from Mount Pleasant to Toolijooa Road.  A total of \$100 million has been allocated this year, with \$90 million allocated to the construction works for the Gerringong upgrade; \$9 million allocated to <u>planning, pre-construction and design</u> of the Foxground and Berry bypass; and \$1 million for the planning of the Berry to Bomaderry upgrade.  At this stage no funds have been allocated for the <u>construction</u> of the Foxground and Berry bypass.</p>