

5 Stakeholder and community consultation

5.1 Consultation strategy

5.1.1 Background

The RTA considers a meaningful and engaging community consultation program as an essential component of the proposal. The proposal's consultation program has been prepared in accordance with the RTA's Community Involvement and Practice Notes and Resource Manual (July 1998), the RTA's Community Involvement Policy and the IAP2 Public Participation Spectrum, developed by the International Association for Public Participation.

The community and stakeholder engagement program has been undertaken for the broader Princes Highway upgrade program (between Gerringong and Bomaderry) and commenced in March 2006. Following the announcement of the preferred route (June 2009) community consultation has been centred on the proposed Gerringong upgrade and particularly:

- Access options development.
- The display of the preferred option and access arrangements.

This chapter provides the aims and objectives of the consultation program and discusses activities and key issues specific to the proposal and how they would be considered.

5.1.2 Communications strategy

Community involvement has been an integral component of the proposal. At each stage of the proposal the consultation activities have proactively informed the community and stakeholders with the aim of increasing public understanding and participation in consultation activities. This ensures the proposal benefits from the input of local knowledge and priorities and the project team gains greater insight into issues, potential mitigation strategies and opportunities to improve proposal outcomes.

Based on the IAP2 Public Participation Spectrum, the consultation program has been designed to inform and engage the community and stakeholders in a constructive, transparent and fair process.

5.1.3 Consultation objectives

The consultation program aims to provide optimum opportunities for community and stakeholder involvement. Program objectives are to:

- Support and maintain the current RTA community involvement process.
- Ensure an open, accountable and transparent community involvement process.
- Ensure all potentially directly affected property owners and interested stakeholders are provided with sufficient information about the proposal and the likely impacts so that they can provide informed input.
- Ensure appropriate and direct communication with property owners in relation to access to and investigations on landholdings within the study area by study team members.
- Encourage community support and involvement in the proposal to facilitate better and more generally accepted outcomes through innovative communication methods.

- Provide a range of accessible opportunities for stakeholders, interested groups and the wider public to contribute to the proposal through issues identification, information provision and options evaluation.
- Build an ongoing relationship between the RTA, its contractors and stakeholders in order to gain long-term support for the proposal.

5.1.4 Consultation program tools

The following list provides a summary of the communication and consultation tools established for use across the life of the proposal. The selection and design of these tools was guided by consultation with the community in the initial May 2006 workshops. Use of these tools has been tailored to meet the specific needs of each stage of the proposal:

- Permanent shop front for information at the project office located at Broughton Court 3/113 Queen Street, Berry. During display periods the project office is generally opened from 9am to 4pm Monday to Friday. During the remainder of the year it is staffed every Friday from 9am to 4pm or by appointment if required.
- Toll free community information contact line (1800 506 976).
- Project website www.princeshighwayupgrade.com.au.
- Project database to record all correspondence relevant to the proposal, including contact details and issues raised during the life of the proposal.
- Quarterly community update newsletters or correspondence.
- Community information sessions and public workshops.
- Targeted focus group workshops.
- Interest group meetings.
- Face-to-face meetings with individuals of properties that may directly affected by the proposal.
- Involvement of community participants in value management workshops.
- Information displays (staffed and un-staffed).
- Advertisements in the local press.
- Mail-outs (addressed and un-addressed).
- Community feedback forms.
- Acceptance of written submissions.
- Participation of the team's consultation specialists in value management workshops.

5.1.5 Stakeholders

Proposal stakeholders have been identified from an assessment of the proposal's potential sphere of direct and indirect impact, records of past and current contact with relevant government bodies, highway upgrade stakeholders and interest groups. The proposal has also made provision for community members to register their interest in receiving information about the proposal and participating in the proposal.

Stakeholders have been grouped into the following four categories:

- Potentially directly affected property owners.
- Interest groups such as Aboriginal Land Councils, community or business groups.
- Government and private agencies.
- The broader community.

A comprehensive and representative stakeholder database has been maintained during route options study. A list of stakeholder groups is provided in Appendix B.

5.1.6 Key activities for consultation

An overview of the key consultation activities carried out to date conducted is summarised below in Table 5.1. Specific details for these consultation activities, including dates, locations and times can be found in Appendix B.

Table 5.1: Overview of consultation activities to date

| Proposal phase | Activity | Outcomes |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>March 2006 to August 2007</p> <p>Proposal familiarisation and route options development.</p> <p>(Specific activity details are reported in Table B-1 in Appendix B).</p> | <p>March 2006 – the first community update distributed, announcing the commencement of the Princes Highway upgrade program between Gerringong and Bomaderry and inviting the involvement of the community in the options and route selection study process.</p> <p>May – the first workshops and displays were held and focused on working with the community and stakeholders to establish a set of principles to guide the consultation process and the selection of communication tools.</p> <p>Consultation conducted as part of the route options selection study included:</p> <p>February 2007 – community information sessions.</p> <p>April – interest group workshops.</p> <p>August – specialist information sessions held.</p> | <p>Consultation identified local priorities for the Princes Highway upgrade program between Gerringong and Bomaderry and what was valued by the community in the study area. The results are documented in the Community Consultation Report (2006). This report is available on the project website</p> <p>The community and stakeholder perspectives of the options and selection of the short list of options are documented in the Route Options Development Report (November 2007). This report is available on the project website</p> <p>A preliminary social-economic impact assessment was also considered in the selection of shortlisted feasible options and is documented in Appendix F of the Route Options Development Report (November 2007). This report is available on the project website</p> |

| Proposal phase | Activity | Outcomes |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>November 2007 to July 2008</p> <p>Route options display and route options value management workshop.</p> <p>(Specific activity details are reported in Table B-2 in Appendix B)</p> | <p>November – Shortlisted route options were placed on display for public comment from 26 November 2007 to 29 February 2008.</p> <p>May – the the route options value management workshop reviewed the outcomes of investigations undertaken to date and recommended a direction for further investigation to progress the proposal's development.</p> | <p>The display period resulted in a high level of community participation with over 1,000 submissions which are documented in the Route Options Submission Report (September 2008). This report is available on the project website</p> <p>Additionally, feedback highlighted the importance to the community of the access arrangements for Gerringong. As a result, the RTA committed to undertaking community consultation on the access options for Gerringong and a value management study to assist in the development and selection of the access arrangements for Gerringong.</p> <p>Details of the workshop are published in the Value Management Workshop Report (May 2008). This report is available on the project website</p> |
| <p>October – November 2008</p> <p>Access options display and value management workshop.</p> <p>(Activity details are reported in Table B-3 in Appendix B)</p> | <p>October – the preferred option for the proposal including the access for Gerringong was announced by the NSW Government and was placed on public display from 13 October 2008 to 13 November 2008.</p> <p>November – the access value management workshop was held with key stakeholders and community members.</p> | <p>The display period resulted in a high level of community participation and submissions are documented in the Access Option Submissions Summary Report (June 2009). This report is available on the project website</p> <p>In response to feedback from members of the Gerringong community, three modifications to access options for Gerringong were included for further assessment by the participants of the access value management workshop.</p> <p>Details of the workshop are published in the Access Value Management Workshop Report (February 2009).</p> |

| Proposal phase | Activity | Outcomes |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>June 2009</p> <p>Preferred option and preferred access options announced.</p> <p>(Specific activity details are reported in Table B-4 in Appendix B)</p> | <p>The preferred option was finalised with the preferred access arrangements for Gerringong.</p> <p>The finalised preferred option was publicly displayed from 15 June 2009 to 26 June 2009.</p> | <p>A summary of design developments for the access arrangements for Gerringong undertaken since the access value management workshop were published in the Gerringong and Berry Preferred Access Arrangements Report (June 2009). This report is available on the project website</p> <p>A summary of findings on the investigations and analysis of the 'pink route' and 'green route' were published in the Toolijooa Ridge Preferred Option Report (June 2009). This report is available on the project website</p> |

5.2 Community and stakeholder involvement

5.2.1 Consultation tools

The consultation strategy has provided a diverse range of tools to provide opportunities for the public to be informed and involved in the proposal and access the project team. The list of consultation tools outlined in Section 5.1.4 demonstrates that the program has utilised a wide variety of two-way communication mediums that have informed, consulted and involved community members. See also Table 5.2 for the methods and participation levels of communication with community and stakeholders.

Table 5.2: Methods of communication with community and stakeholders since 2007

| Communication method | Incoming | Outgoing |
|-------------------------------------------------|----------|----------|
| Proposal information line – incoming | 906 | 1129 |
| Letters | 47 | 301 |
| Faxes | 3 | 4 |
| Email | 142 | 106 |
| Submissions received during submissions periods | 1968 | 277 |
| Community information sessions | 16 | - |
| Stakeholder meetings | 68 | - |
| Property owner interviews | 395 | - |
| Visits to the project office | 4000+ | - |
| Community updates to study area | - | 13 |

5.2.2 Key consultation and outcomes

This section demonstrates how stakeholder and community feedback from key consultation activities has informed the current concept design for the proposal.

Key community and stakeholder issues

Table 5.3 provides a summary of key community and stakeholder issues of the proposal and where they have been considered in the environmental assessment. Key community, stakeholders, interest groups and businesses that have been consulted during the proposal are listed in Appendix B.

Table 5.3: Gerringong upgrade community and stakeholder issues

| Functional issues | REF reference |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Appropriate provision of access on and off the highway during construction and operational phases of the highway upgrade. | Section 6.6 and 3.3.5 |
| Adequate provision for north and southbound travel eg from multiple locations. | Section 6.6 and 3.2.3 |
| Impact of traffic flow through residential area. | Section 6.6 |
| Provision of local access for homes and farms. | Section 6.6 and 3.3.5 |
| Provide Sims Road with a service road providing full access to Belinda Street. | Chapter 3 |
| Road safety for vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists. | Section 6.6 |
| Address current safety issues at Belinda Street and Fern Street. | Section 6.6 |
| Impact of traffic changes on use of community facilities. | Section 6.6 |
| Provision of two access points for Gerringong. | Chapter 3 |
| Availability of alternative access in emergency situations. | Chapter 3 |
| Provide safe access and accommodate emergency situations. | Chapter 3 |
| Accommodation for heavy vehicles. | Chapter 3 |
| Consideration of alternative access designs. | Chapter 2 |
| Consideration of long-term safety benefits and future growth in assessment of costs. | Section 6.6 |
| Avoid or minimise impacts on existing residential communities and community cohesion. | Section 6.10 |
| Social issues | |
| Disruption to daily living, movement patterns and social networks. | Section 6.10 |
| Impact on noise and visual amenity. | Section 6.7 and Section 6.9 |
| High quality impact mitigation and urban design for affected areas and residents. | Section 6.9 |
| Protection of the heritage and character of the region. | Section 6.5 |
| Environmental issues | |
| Protection of local heritage assets and character. | Section 6.5 |
| Protection of flora and fauna and biodiversity values of the region. | Section 6.3 and Section 6.4 |
| Preservation of fig trees at Rose Valley Road intersection. | Section 6.5 |
| Maintain wildlife corridors, wetlands, water bodies and endangered ecological communities. | Section 6.3 and Section 6.4 |
| Effects of spills and runoffs to Crooked River catchment. | Section 6.4 |

| Functional issues | REF reference |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Flooding impacts. | Chapter 3 |
| Visual impact on scenery and character of the area. | Section 6.9 |
| Impact of traffic flow along the 'Sandtrack'. | Section 6.6 |
| Economic issues | |
| Impact of redirected traffic to business and tourism. | Section 6.10 |
| Impact on property values. | Section 6.10 |
| Importance of appropriate access and interchanges to Gerringong for business sector performance. | Section 6.10 |
| Potential impacts to individual farms and agriculture sector. | Section 6.10 |
| Protection of natural rural and environmental values as key economic assets. | Section 6.3 and Section 6.4 |
| Process issues | |
| Construction staging and mitigation | Chapter 3 |
| Process and timing for property acquisition | Section 6.10 |

Gerringong access

Three shortlisted options for access to Gerringong as outlined in Section 2.3.2 were placed on display for public comment from 13 October 2008 to 13 November 2008. A total of 590 submissions were received for the Gerringong options and a full report can be found in the Access Options Submissions Summary Report, June 2009. This report is available on the project website.

An option known as "G4" was proposed by a group of Gerringong residents. However, investigations by the project team determined this option did not provide value for money and had some technical difficulties, including proximity to the proposed grade-separated Rose Valley Road junction. Two modifications of G2 (G2/6, G2/8) and one of G3 (G3/5) were developed in response to the proposed "G4" community option and other community feedback.

G2/6, G2/8 and G3/5 incorporated two interchanges allowing all turning movements to and from the highway. They were included for further assessment by the participants of the value management workshop and option G2/8 was eventually adopted into the concept design. A full report of this workshop has been published in the Access Value Management Workshop Report (February 2009). This report is available on the project website.

Concept design refinements since June 2009 display period

As a result of the extensive community and stakeholder consultation the design refinements shown in Table 5.4 have been considered by the project team in the concept design for the proposal.

Table 5.4: Significant design refinements considered following display in June 2009

| Design refinements | Reasons for investigation | Adopted / rejected | Reasons for adoption / rejection |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Lesser alignment design standard adopted between Mount Pleasant and Rose Valley Road | <p>The proposal would provide a high standard 110 km/h alignment from Mount Pleasant to Toolijooa Road. The proposal would be of sufficient length that driver expectation would be heightened – particularly for northbound motorists approaching the Kiama Bends. Methods would be required to gradually reduce driver expectation and introduce the much lower standard of the Kiama Bends.</p> <p>Consideration was also given to a potential future upgrade of the Kiama Bends and where this might connect to the proposal.</p> | Adopted | The need to lower northbound motorist's expectations and the location of a potential future upgrade of the Kiama Bends led the design team to adopt an 80 km/h design standard for the section between Mount Pleasant and Rose Valley Road. |
| Rose Valley Road southbound on ramp | <p>At the time of display a southbound on ramp from the Rose Valley Road interchange was not incorporated in the design. A subsequent study of the heavy vehicle movements originating from Rose Valley Road, and confirmation of the load restriction requirements in Gerringong, led the design team to consider the incorporation of this movement.</p> <p>A change in vertical alignment for the Fern Street rail overpass bridge to provide a design speed of 80 km/h provided the opportunity to pass a southbound on ramp under this bridge.</p> | Adopted | A study of the heavy vehicle movements originating from Rose Valley Road, and confirmation of the load restriction requirements in Gerringong, led the design team to consider the incorporation of this movement. |
| Alignment shift at Rose Valley Road interchange | <p>The design presented in June 2009 required the removal of two mature fig trees in the vicinity of the Rose Valley Road interchange. Further discussions with the local Aboriginal community highlighted the significance of these trees to that community. An arborist was commissioned to provide an assessment of the condition and life expectancy of the trees.</p> <p>The design team considered a revision to the Rose Valley Road interchange to avoid impacting</p> | Adopted | <p>The design team considered a number of alternative arrangements for the interchange. All the alternative arrangements required shifting the highway alignment to the east and impacting the previously avoided Renfrew Park property.</p> <p>Various alignments were considered for the northbound off ramp. A loop alignment was considered which avoided impacting both trees. This was dismissed on</p> |

| Design refinements | Reasons for investigation | Adopted / rejected | Reasons for adoption / rejection |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | one or both of the significant trees. | | road safety grounds. A northbound off ramp alignment was adopted which required removal of the smaller fig tree. |
| Design speed of the rail overpass bridge increased from 60 km/h to 80 km/h. | The design team considered raising the design speed of the rail overpass bridge to better suit the likely posted speed of 80 km/h for the service road. | Adopted | The adoption of the higher design speed enabled a 'flatter' vertical alignment of the proposed bridge over the rail line and facilitates posting the speed of the service road at greater than 60 km/h. |
| Consideration of a northbound heavy vehicle rest area. | It is intended that a northbound and southbound heavy vehicle rest area be provided in the Gerringong upgrade. A suitable site for a southbound heavy vehicle rest area was not identified in the proposal. A potential site for a northbound heavy vehicle rest area was identified at a residual section of highway on the Gerringong Bends. | Rejected | The potential northbound heavy vehicle rest area site was deemed unsuitable primarily because of the steepness of the grade at the site exit. A suitable site for the northbound heavy vehicle rest area has been identified elsewhere in the Gerringong to Bomaderry upgrade program. |
| Consideration of cattle underpasses. | At the time of display in June 2009 the configuration of cattle underpasses had not been considered. Existing cattle underpasses are located 500 m north of Rose Valley Road and at Crooked River. The project team also identified a potential future need for a facility approximately 500 m east of Toolijooa Road. | Adopted | Existing cattle underpasses are informal and generally of sufficient size to cater for cattle and not farm machinery. Farm machinery has been able to cross over the existing highway. A median barrier would prevent cross over movements on the upgraded highway. The cattle underpass proposed for 500 m north of Rose Valley Road would cater for farm machinery and cattle. Baileys Road would cater for farm machinery movements at Crooked River with a separate cattle underpass spanning the service road and upgraded highway. |
| Sims Road access / connection options | The residents of Sims Road and Alne Bank Lane requested the design team consider options for improving connectivity of Sims Road with Gerringong. The project team considered two options: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A bridge connecting Sims Road to Bridges Road over | Rejected | Both options were not considered to offer value for money. The findings of the design team were presented to a resident group representing the Sims Road / Alne Bank Lane area. The upgraded highway cutting in the vicinity of Sims Road was lowered slightly so that |

| Design refinements | Reasons for investigation | Adopted / rejected | Reasons for adoption / rejection |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | <p>a cutting in the upgraded highway and the railway line.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A two lane service road from Belinda Street interchange with on ramp developing from Sims Road – similar to the service road connecting to Willowvale Road. | | <p>the possibility of a future bridge overpass was not excluded.</p> <p>A shared pedestrian / cycle path is proposed to link Sims Road with Belinda Street.</p> |
| Bus provisions | The project team considered the current provisions for school, local, and intrastate buses. | Adopted | <p>It is proposed to retain the current bus interchange facility at Rose Valley Road.</p> <p>Incorporate a new bus interchange facility on Belinda Street at the entrance to the railway station</p> |
| Incorporation of emergency u-turn and cross over facilities | At the time of display the project team had not documented the incident management features of the proposal. The need for incident management facilities was investigated and emergency u-turn and cross over facilities were incorporated in the design. | Adopted | Emergency u-turn and cross over facilities would provide opportunity for traffic to be diverted around incidents under the direction of emergency services. |

5.3 Aboriginal community involvement

In accordance with the requirements of the RTA Procedure for Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Consultation and Investigation (PACHCI, June 2008) the RTA has undertaken Aboriginal community consultation and investigation consistent with the Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water (DECCW) Interim Guidelines for Aboriginal Community Consultation.

Consultation and liaison with the Aboriginal community commenced at the beginning of planning phase for the Princes Highway upgrade program. Expressions of interest to attend an Aboriginal Focus Group were issued on 23 June 2006 with initial meetings held in Nowra on 21 July 2006 and Wollongong on 24 July 2006.

Since that time DECCW has published the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Consultation Requirements for Proponents 2010 in April 2010 to replace the Interim Guidelines for Aboriginal Community Consultation. Transitional arrangements are in place for proponents that have commended Aboriginal consultation. The transitional arrangement relevant to the proposal is: allowing consultation to progress under the Interim Guidelines for Aboriginal Community Consultation given notification and consultation has commenced.

Consultation would also be undertaken in accordance with the PACHCI which appears to be consistent with the remaining stages of the Aboriginal cultural heritage consultation requirements for proponents 2010.

The RTA called for registrations of interest from local Aboriginal groups to participate in the consultation program through advertisements in the following newspapers:

- *Koori Mail.*
- *Deadly Vibe.*
- *Berry Town Crier.*
- *Illawarra Mercury.*
- *South Coast Register.*
- *Illawarra Advertiser.*

An Aboriginal focus group (AFG) has been formed to provide a forum to bring together the registered Aboriginal stakeholders to discuss the scope of the upgrade program and the cultural heritage assessment process. The aim of the focus group was to identify Aboriginal cultural issues at an early stage of the proposal. The group facilitates ongoing community involvement throughout the life of the proposal ensuring appropriate care and control of Aboriginal artefacts identified during the Aboriginal heritage investigations and to provide for comment on all aspects of the Aboriginal heritage management.

To ensure the best approach to Aboriginal participation in the consultation process the AFG and the project team undertook the following:

- Meet DECCW requirements for consultation with Aboriginal community stakeholders regarding the application of section 87 (preliminary research) permit and/or section 90 (consent to destroy) permit.
- Provide information on the scope, timing and reasons for the proposal.
- Inform Aboriginal community stakeholders on the NSW Government Aboriginal Affairs 10 year policy ("Two ways together" policy), DECCW Interim requirements for consultation with Aboriginal community for the applications under section 87 and section 90 and Aboriginal participation in construction.
- Provide a connection to the RTA's Aboriginal Program in support of the working in partnership options to provide genuine training and realistic employment for local Aboriginal people.
- Provide information about the current knowledge of Aboriginal cultural values and archaeological investigations to date.
- Allow Aboriginal community input into the design and methodology for the Aboriginal cultural and archaeological assessment.
- Allow Aboriginal community stakeholders to contribute to the development of Aboriginal heritage management recommendations.
- Discuss the process of engagement of Aboriginal stakeholders to assist in the Aboriginal cultural assessment and archaeological assessment.
- Discuss the care and control of Aboriginal artefacts identified during the Aboriginal heritage investigations.
- Provide archaeological and proposal standards to identify and preserve traditional Aboriginal sites.
- Provide comment on all aspects of the Aboriginal heritage management.

The following objectives were agreed by the group:

- Work collaboratively with the RTA and all stakeholders for the benefit of Aboriginal cultural heritage and the proposal.
- Facilitate processes for improved communication and flow of information between all stakeholders.
- Respectfully acknowledge the traditional land, law and customs of the traditional owners / custodians.
- Acknowledge the diversity of our Aboriginal community and their contributions to the process.

The terms of reference note that the AFG is not a decision making body and there is no requirement to reach a consensus amongst members on issues discussed. There is likely to be a diversity of viewpoints expressed on a number of issues. The RTA has considered and would continue to consider all viewpoints.

AFG meetings have been conducted approximately quarterly and additionally as required at proposal milestones and content of the meetings has varied depending on proposal development and pertinent issues at the time. Meetings attended by representatives from registered Aboriginal groups, throughout the route selection process include:

- Illawarra Aboriginal Focus Group Meeting #1, 16 February 2007.
- Nowra / Jerrinja Aboriginal Focus Group Meeting #2, 8 March 2007.
- Illawarra Aboriginal Focus Group Meeting #3, 20 April 2007.
- Aboriginal Focus Group Meeting #4, 18 May 2007.
- Aboriginal Focus Group Meeting #5, 7 August 2007.
- Aboriginal Focus Group Meeting #6(a), 3 December 2007.
- Aboriginal Focus Group Meeting #6(b), 29 February 2008.
- Aboriginal Focus Group Meeting #7, 27 May 2008.
- Aboriginal Focus Group Meeting #8, 21 October 2008.
- Aboriginal Focus Group Meeting #9, 21 April 2009.
- Aboriginal Focus Group Meeting #10, 17 November 2009.
- Site walkovers were conducted with AFG members on 23 June 2008 and 17 June 2009.

Liaison with the local Aboriginal community was also undertaken in the form of cultural knowledge holder interviews as part of the cultural values study for the broader Princes Highway upgrade program (Gerringong to Bomaderry Aboriginal Cultural Values, January 2009). Discussions were held with a selection of the local community nominated by the AFG within the open forum of the AFG meetings, as the most appropriate to provide cultural knowledge about the study area. The AFG forum also facilitated the nominations of who should attend a study area site walkover and a bus trip.

The key issues identified by the Aboriginal community through the AFG forum and through individual and group submissions in relation to the proposal and how and where they have been considered are summarised in Table 5.5.

Table 5.5: Key issues raised by the Aboriginal community in relation to the Gerringong upgrade

| Issues | REF reference |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Genealogy and the provision of cultural knowledge by the appropriate traditional owners of the land within the study area. | This has been addressed directly by the AFG through the agreed terms of reference. |
| Concerns regarding the potential for encountering and impacting Aboriginal burials, both generally, and within areas with archaeological potential or areas remembered as sensitive in this regard. | Section 6.5 |
| A number of old-growth fig trees are present within or near the proposal. Of particular concern are the fig trees situated near the Rose Valley intersection which are significant to the local Aboriginal community and direct impact should be avoided. | Section 6.5.5 |

5.4 Government agency and stakeholder involvement

Consultation has been conducted with various government departments and agencies as follows:

- Planning Focus Meeting, held 29 September 2006 in Wollongong. This meeting was attended by representatives of key government agencies, local councils, utility companies and emergency services.
- Emergency Services Meeting, held 11 December 2008 held in Kiama. Attending were representatives of the Illawarra Emergency Management Division, Rural Fire Services, Ambulance Services NSW, Kiama State Emergency Services and NSW Police Force.

A list of agencies consulted with over the course of the proposal can be found in Appendix B and key issues raised by government agencies are outlined in Table 5.8.

5.4.1 Local council meetings

Three meetings have been held with representatives of Kiama Municipal Council. These meetings have assisted the study team in better understanding the various requirements and key issues that need to be considered in the Gerringong upgrade. Meetings with representatives of Kiama Municipal Council have been held on:

- 19 April 2007
- 14 March 2008
- 14 December 2009

5.4.2 ISEPP consultation

The consultation period under ISEPP is 21 days and accordingly the RTA has provided Kiama Municipal Council with formal written notice of the intention to carry out the proposal in a letter dated 16 February 2010, accompanied by a detailed description of the proposal. This followed a formal proposal briefing to the council by the RTA on 14 December 2009. A copy of the response provided by Kiama Municipal Council is included in Appendix B.

Table 5.6 provides Kiama Municipal Council's feedback in relation to clause 13 of the ISEPP and the impact on the council's related infrastructure and services

Table 5.6: Kiama Municipal Council response to clause 13

| Clause 13 issue | Council response | REF reference |
|------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Storm water management | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wherever storm water drainage from the proposal impacts on council's existing storm water drainage system, an analysis of the impact on the capacity of the downstream system be undertaken and any necessary works to upgrade the system to accommodate additional flows be included in the proposal. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 6 |
| Traffic generation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detailed traffic modelling for both the construction phase and post-construction phase to determine the likely impact on the local road network. The implementation of appropriate traffic management infrastructure during the construction phase. The development of a post-construction traffic management scheme as a result of the detailed traffic modelling. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 3, Chapter 6 |
| Restoration works | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preparation of a dilapidation report prior to construction on all infrastructures owned and maintained by the council. Ongoing maintenance during the proposal to ensure reasonable public access. At the completion of the proposal, all damage be repaired to the council's satisfaction. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 3 |
| Local access | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reasonable access to be provided to all properties during construction including adequate signage to commercial properties where direct access may be closed due to construction activities. Notification to effected residents and the council of any proposed disruption to access, including anticipated duration and alternative arrangements. Due consideration to be given to individual requests for pedestrian and vehicle access. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 3, Chapter 5 |

| Clause 13 issue | Council response | REF reference |
|---------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| Bus stop facilities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requested future involvement in the proposed bus facility in the vicinity of Belinda Street and the railway station entrance through consultation with the local traffic committee. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 5 |

Kiama Municipal Council also provided feedback on clause 14 of the ISEPP in relation to potential impacts on local heritage. Council commented on the potential impacts to Renfrew Park and the removal of the western fig tree as a result of the Rose Valley Rose interchange and requested clarification and further information on the potential visual, traffic and noise impacts. The final REF would provide Council with the additional information requested.

Table 5.7 provides Kiama Municipal Council's background and future planning considerations for Gerringong provided during the value management workshop for Gerringong access options. These have been taken into account in developing the concept design.

Table 5.7: Kiama Municipal Council considerations for Gerringong area

| Background |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gerringong has always maintained two access points to the Princes Highway. Belinda Street is a classified Main Road (571) and provides for all turning movements. It is flood affected at times. Fern Street restricts the right-hand turn, northbound from the Princes Highway, and is often flood affected on Omega Flat. Belinda Street has a height restriction of 4.5 m at the railway overbridge. Fern Street is impaired by a railway level crossing which has experienced problems with queuing Both intersections are at grade and have a poor crash history, including fatal crashes. Traffic volumes in Fern Street have traditionally been similar to those on the Princes Highway due to the use of the 'Sandtrack'. Fern Street at Omega Flat is subject to five tonne load limit. |
| Future planning |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A draft urban strategy has been developed for Gerringong which would be exhibited with the draft Kiama LEP. Provision would be made for 200-300 lots over 15 years. Council's Elambra Estate subdivision has two more stages of development (Stages six and seven) on an additional 66 lots of the total 252 dwellings proposal. Council's position – no development west of the highway at Gerringong. Flood free access for at least one north and one south access ramp. Provision of two north and two south ramps. A focus on preserving agricultural land and enhancing support for the dairying and agricultural diversification. |

5.4.3 Key issues raised by government agencies

The key issues raised by government agencies in relation to the proposal and how they would be considered are summarised in Table 5.8.

Table 5.8: Key issues raised by government agencies in relation to the Gerringong upgrade

| Functional issues | Agency | Ref reference |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Important to maintain access to Gerringong from highway. | Kiama Municipal Council | Chapter 2 |
| The highway design must accommodate emergency vehicles (including access / egress to the highway, sufficient road widths and openings in the central median). | Illawarra Emergency Management District Rural Fire Service Ambulance Service, NSW Kiama State Emergency Service NSW Police Force | Chapter 3 |
| Provision required for cattle crossings. | Kiama Municipal Council | Chapter 3 |
| Provision required for school and bus drop off/pick up areas. | Kiama Municipal Council | Chapter 3 |
| Safe access to Rose Valley Road and Omega Lane needs to be considered. | Kiama Municipal Council | Chapter 3 |
| Inconvenience to local residence for left-in-left-out access at Sims Road junction. | Kiama Municipal Council | Chapter 3 and Section 6.6 |
| Adequacy of railway culvert at Belinda Street interchange | Kiama Municipal Council | Chapter 3 |
| Social issues | Agency | Ref reference |
| Retention of agricultural land in the study area and in particular dairy farming areas is important. | Kiama Municipal Council | Section 6.10 |
| Impact on small rural lot housing. | Kiama Municipal Council | Section 6.10 |
| Environmental issues | Agency | Ref reference |
| Preservation of the larger Moreton Bay Fig tree at Rose Valley Road interchange. | Kiama Municipal Council | Section 6.5.5 |
| Flood mitigation of Union Creek crossing at Belinda Street adjacent to Rowllins Road. | Kiama Municipal Council | Chapter 3 |
| Visual impact of bridge at Fem Street. | Kiama Municipal Council | Section 6.9 |
| Economic issues | Agency | Ref reference |
| Closure of Fem Street during construction. | Kiama Municipal Council | Section 6.10 |

5.5 Ongoing or future consultation

The next phase of community and stakeholder consultation would commence with the public display of this REF and the concept design for the proposal. The focus of the consultation is to gather community and stakeholder input on potential impacts and measures to avoid reduce or minimise those impacts for the proposal.

The RTA would continue to provide regular progress updates and information to residents and property holders in the study area. The consultation process would continue to encourage public participation during the finalisation of the concept design and the environmental assessment to ensure that all identified issues can be addressed as the proposal moves forward to detailed design and construction.