



STRATHBOGIE SHIRE COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE STRATHBOGIE SHIRE COUNCIL HELD  
ON TUESDAY 26 MARCH 2019 AT THE EUROA COMMUNITY CONFERENCE  
CENTRE COMMENCING AT 5.00 P.M.

- Chair:** Amanda McClaren (Mayor) (Lake Nagambie Ward)
- Councillors:** Debra Bower (Lake Nagambie Ward)  
Malcolm Little (Hughes Creek Ward)  
John Mason (Seven Creeks Ward)  
Kate Stothers (Honeysuckle Creek Ward)  
Alistair Thomson (Mount Wombat Ward)  
Graeme (Mick) Williams (Seven Creeks Ward)
- Officers:** Steve Crawcour - Chief Executive Officer (CEO)  
Phil Howard - Director, Innovation and Performance (DIP)  
Jeff Saker - Group Manager, Community Assets (GMCA)  
Emma Kubeil - Manager, Planning and Investment (MPI)

**BUSINESS**

1. Welcome
2. Acknowledgement of Traditional Land Owners  
*'I acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land on which we are meeting.  
I pay my respects to their Elders, past and present'*
3. Apologies  

David Roff - Group Manager, Corporate and Community (GMCC)
4. Disclosure of Interests  

Nil.
5. Petitions  

Nil.
6. Reports of Council Officers
  - 6.1 Climate Change
  - 6.2 Infrastructure
  - 6.3 Private Enterprise
  - 6.4 Public Institutions
  - 6.5 Housing and Recreation
  - 6.6 Tourism
  - 6.7 Organisation

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7. Urgent Business

Nil.

8. Closure of Meeting to the Public to consider matters listed for consideration in accordance with Section 89(2) of the Local Government Act 1989

Nil.

9. Confirmation of 'Closed Portion' Decision/s

Nil.

An audio recording of this meeting is being made for the purpose of verifying the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting, as per Local Law No. 1 - Meeting Procedure (2014) or as updated from time to time through Council Resolution

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## 6. REPORTS

### 6.7 ORGANISATION

#### 6.7.1 Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC) - Inland Rail

##### **Author & Department**

Manager, Planning and Investment / Innovation and Performance Department

##### **Disclosure of Conflicts of Interest in relation to advice provided in this report**

The author of this report and officers/contractors providing advice in relation to this report do not have a direct or indirect interest, as provided in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1989*.

##### **Summary**

Council have requested an Officers report be heard before them to allow Council to make a formal resolution in regard to their position for the benefit of representing their community.

Council staff have provided a technical response to ARTC's preferred concept design (new road overpass) incorporating community response to the design and the goals of relevant strategic documents.

Council heard members of their community speak at our Officers consultation sessions and at ARTC's consultation sessions. Observations from these sessions have been highlighted within the background section of this report. Community members have raised concerns during Question Time at Council Meetings. Council has concluded that further work is required by ARTC to ensure our community's views and formal submissions are captured appropriately for full consideration in the design of the project.

Council believes that their role is to ensure that due and fair process has been awarded to the community, to deliver an outcome acceptable to the community at large. In addition, the Council is to advocate collectively with other relevant authorities to achieve the best outcome. Council have agreed to provide resources (when and if required) to review and provide professional input to ensure that the final project does not burden our community and leave a poor outcome.

As per feedback from Councillors as at 21<sup>st</sup> March 2019, the following recommendation is made.



6.7.1 Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC) - Inland Rail (cont.)

**RECOMMENDATION**

**That Council formally submits to ARTC and seeks a formal response and commitment to the following recommendations:**

- 1. That ARTC start from the beginning with a process that includes the ability for all stakeholders – community, Shire, ARTC, V-Line, VicTrack and VicRoads, etc – to form a Working Group responsible for the scope and design of options for this project.**
- 2. That the first step with the Working Group is to explore values and opportunities under (but not limited to) the following principles:**
  - Functionality of the area around Railway, Binney and Anderson Streets**
  - Connectivity – what would good connectivity mean for Euroa in this area?**
  - Visual amenity – what does this involve?**
  - Accessibility – what are the requirements here?**
  - Safety – how can this be improved for pedestrians, cyclists, vehicles?**
  - Location – investigating the viability of other geographical solutions**
- 3. That ARTC call for an Expression of Interest from members of our community to form a working group. The formation of the group should represent members of the community including businesses, residents of Euroa and people who hold specialist qualifications of relevance to the project. This working group is to be approved by Council.**
- 4. Undertake a process that centres around holistic urban design principles where engineering solutions are just one component, and relevant Council strategies and plans are incorporated.**
- 5. Seek feedback through a referral to the Office of Victorian Government Architects at an appropriate stage.**
- 6. Undertake broader community consultation once Working Group options for the project are drafted.**
- 7. Final design is confirmed with broader community and Working Group endorsement**

*10/19 CRS MASON/WILLIAMS : That the Recommendation be adopted.*

**CARRIED**

### 6.7.1 Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC) - Inland Rail (cont.)

#### **Background**

The ARTC provided Council officers with technical engineering drawings for comment to ARTC in December 2018. A 10 day turn around to make a technical submission was provided by ARTC to which Council officers requested an extension of time due to the Christmas closure period for all authorities.

The information provided by ARTC was purely to comment within the scope of works at that stage of their project. Therefore, Council officers were limited by the parameters of the technical work of ARTC; however, the officers knew, in their professional opinion having regard to previous strategic documents, that the scope needed to be broader with consideration of urban design, visual amenity, connectivity etc.

Council staff met with relevant representative groups to inform them of the scope provided to officers and that our technical submission needed to be in-line with our community's thoughts.

Council officers had 3 plans put together to assist in discussions with the community. The first plan depicted the works of ARTC, the second plan highlight potential issues and finally the third plan for discussion reflected the issues removed from plan 2 and expanded the precinct area of ARTC's scope. All discussion and consultation was within the confines of ARTC's suggested preferred solution. No discussion outside this scope was facilitated.

Over 3 evenings, Council representatives (Councillors and staff) were present to listen to the community and hear their thoughts, in addition we provided clear direction that the community as individuals needed to make a submission direct to ARTC to ensure they were heard. As Council officers, our technical submission with covering letter reflected the important components/modifications we heard from the community i.e.

- 'Openness' no divide between both sides of the track
- Green open space for public purpose
- Pedestrian connections from both sides to ensure access for all abilities and most importantly reflect our aged demographic.
- Emergency Services access to the platform
- Make use of the disused VicTrack land (Old goods shed)
- Connection to the main street
- Improve the visual appearance of the area.

Council officers made their technical submission which we believe reflected what we heard but within the scope as required by ARTC.

As representatives and advocates for our community, Council will make a submission to ARTC by formal resolution. Council have heard our community speak at Officers consultation, ARTC's consultation sessions and Council Meetings. Council has made the following observations:

### 6.7.1 Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC) - Inland Rail (cont.)

- That ARTC's initial project approach does not seem to have started by exploring current functionality of the existing overpass and surrounding precinct and desired outcomes for the same by the community. Perhaps understandably ARTC's initial response does not sufficiently address legacy issues created by the current overpass and the consequences on the surrounding precinct.
- That ARTC's approach to our community has not been satisfactory, and therefore, Council will be asking for more in depth consultation from ARTC to inform ARTC's design.
- That ARTC need to consider the precinct as a whole not just the area of their scope of works.
- That Council need to be strong and clear in what they want for the community.
- That further consideration of technical work needs to be completed to demonstrate that other options i.e. tunnel, can or can't be ruled out.
- That VicRoads provide Council with clear direction on their requirements to assist Council in weighing up options for ARTC's project.
- That the Officers modifications to ARTC's overpass plan was seen as a significant improvement by the majority of those whom viewed it recognizing that obviously there will be some amendments required.
- That upon a design being available that it be submitted to the Office of Victorian Government Architects for comment (OVGA) jointly from ARTC and Council.

#### **Alternative Options**

The author and other officers providing advice in relation to this report have considered potential alternative courses of action. The following alternatives have been identified for the consideration of Council;

- The Council accepts the ARTC's process and makes no formal submission and just notes the report without any action required.

However, due to the details outlined in this report; this alternative is not recommended.

#### **Risk Management**

The report is about advocacy and community engagement, therefore there is no liability or financial risks as such. However, there is reputational risk that Council is not fulfilling the expectations of its community.

#### **Strategic Links – policy implications and relevance to Council Plan**

The following Strategic documents are of relevance for the ARTC Inland Rail Project. These documents highlight previous community consultation and views captured at the time of consultation. Upon review, these documents are still relevant as captured below.

### 6.7.1 Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC) - Inland Rail (cont.)

The **Euroa Structure Plan, Final Report 2010, Planisphere**, Urban Strategy Planners, is a reference document within the Strathbogrie Planning Scheme. Page 6 within the section of *What we've heard*, and additionally again on page 14 under the heading of *Issues*, states that there were; *poor quality connections across the railway line*. Page 24, of the ESP supports *higher density residential in close proximity to the Euroa Railway Station*, further emphasising the importance of this connection. Page 28 continues to highlight that the *Railway Street – train precinct to be made into garden reserve*.

There is a strong strategic link to this document and the proposed project by ARTC. Within the Appendix to the ESP, 2010 consultation highlighted the following;

*The railway underpasses and overpasses create a real and perceived barrier between the western and eastern and western sections of the town, potentially limiting the accessibility of existing basic and higher order services and facilities to the community west of the railway station.*

The **Euroa Neighbourhood Character Study**, 2008, Planisphere, Urban Strategy Planners, listed as a reference document within the Strathbogrie Planning Scheme, highlights that; *views to the railway overpass were frequently emphasized as a negative feature of the character of some parts of the township*. Furthermore the community views were captured and this highlighted what was important to them, one item was *Proximity to shops, parks and the railway station*.

The **Urban Design Framework**, Connell Wagner, July 2003 listed as a reference document within the Strathbogrie Planning Scheme. Page 10, quote the following;

*On the north western corner of the Euroa town centre, the overpass which leads the Shepparton-Mansfield Road over the North Easter Railway has created two hazardous intersections. The intersections occur near the top of the overpass where ramps from Railway Street and a railway station service road intersect with the Shepparton-Mansfield Road. The hazard is due to short sight distances onto a climbing and curving road. The ramp which connects Railway Street with the overpass could be eliminated with negligible affect on traffic movement in the area. Removal of the ramp would remove a constraint on development and improvement of the western end of Railway Street and create the opportunity for parking improvements and a town edge small park.*

#### **Best Value / National Competition Policy (NCP) / Competition and Consumer Act 2010 (CCA) implications**

The author of this report considers that the report is consistent with Best Value, National Competition Policy and Competition and Consumer Act requirements.

#### **Financial / Budgetary Implications**

Currently there is no material financial implications. However, should Council decide to engage external expertise, this will need to be costed and reported appropriately.



### 6.7.1 Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC) - Inland Rail (cont.)

#### **Economic Implications**

The Inland Rail Project with the re configuration of the Anderson Street overpass has the potential to create significant economic enhancements for Euroa if considered carefully. These works have potential to place the township of Euroa in a far greater position to capture people passing the town via road or train to stay or visit Euroa as a destination of choice by enhancing a railway precinct to bring greater community economic benefit.

#### **Environmental / Amenity Implications**

The Inland Rail project (Anderson Street overpass) has an opportunity to clean up an unsightly piece of land i.e. VicTrack land with old goods shed. This precinct has the opportunity to be created into a useable space for potential car parking, community hub, arts and cultural precinct as reflected in several strategic studies.

Conversely, should the ARTC project be delivered poorly this would result in adverse amenity impacts.

#### **Community Implications**

The author of this report considers that the recommendation has significant community implications for Council and the broader community. Council's decision to act is in the best interest of the community to achieve an acceptable outcome to a Federal Government project is of utmost importance.

#### **Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006**

The author of this report considers that the recommendation does not limit any human rights under the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006.

#### **Legal / Statutory Implications**

The author of this report considers that the recommendation has no legal or statutory implications which require the consideration of Council.

#### **Consultation**

The author of this report considers that the matter under consideration warrants significant community consultation. As highlighted within the Strategic Links section of the report. The community's views have not altered in relation to the railway station precinct. Therefore, it is important that Council continue to advocate strongly to represent their community's' views holistically.

#### **Attachments**

Nil.

7. URGENT BUSINESS
8. CLOSURE OF MEETING TO THE PUBLIC TO CONSIDER MATTERS LISTED FOR CONSIDERATION IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 89(2) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1989
9. CONFIRMATION OF 'CLOSED PORTION' DECISION/S

***THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS, THE MEETING CLOSED AT 5.15 P.M.***

Confirmed as being a true and accurate record of the Meeting

  
Chair

*16.04.2019*  
Date