Taylor’s Lane Cambewarra – Submission on Upgrade Options. Council Ref 50301E

Submission from Tony and Gayle Enright, supported by other residents and concerned ratepayers, who may submit separate submissions to Council

Background:

Residents of Taylors Lane have expressed concerns previously about the use of Taylors Lane for construction vehicle access to the Moss Vale Rd South URA. Council have previously agreed that in its present form the laneway is unsuitable for such use.

As the current proposal for upgrade of the Eastern end of the lane (“to URA boundary”) as part of the FNC project is open for public consultation, and as the sensible logic of having future URA residents’ traffic able to access North Nowra via FNC is obvious, residents request council reassurance that the intent for primary construction access for the first stages of URA construction should be from Moss Vale Rd. This could be achieved by DA approvals not authorising a road connection between Taylors lane and initial URA internal roadworks.

This would also preclude the need for council traffic control measures to ensure construction vehicles do not make use of the western (not upgraded) section of TL until the various stages of the URA are linked by the roadworks shown on the URA Indicative Plan

Comments on Option Selection Process

- A collective preference for Option 2 has been put quite strongly at a meeting with council officers on 26 Aug. 2019. We were unconvinced by Council arguments that Option 4 – to destructively remove several hundred very mature trees (against a few dozen for Option 2) was the preferred outcome.

- Following publication of the “Explanatory Statement”, we are even more mystified by the analysis process depicted in “Table 1: Comparison of Options 2 and 4”, and feel that the conclusion in favour of Option 4 is based on flawed assumptions, particularly the main criteria of environmental considerations.

- The council commissioned report (“Critical Appraisal”) states quite clearly that “Option 4 would clearly have the greatest impact on the native vegetation beside Taylors Lane (complete removal)”. Option 4 only attracts a positive environmental outcome if one starts with the premise that all the trees must be removed. Council justify this premise
on the grounds that that area is now zoned for future “medium density”
development, and therefore the trees MAY be victims of some future, as
yet unplanned development, and that this unknown future developer may
suffer financial hardship due to reduced yield!! To paraphrase, with a
touch of sarcasm, Let’s destroy all these trees now, so that they won’t
cause anybody problems in the future.
We concede the commendable engineering intent to resolve as many
future problems as possible, but in this case the solution is grossly
excessive - even considering the “Biodiversity Bank” benefits, which we
believe are grossly overvalued compared to the loss of the trees. The
meeting was told that Landcare groups would be happy to contribute to
“greening” options for Bomaderry Creek if considered beneficial.
• The concept of Option 4 being the more beneficial financial outcome is
difficult to accept, raising questions about the level of detail in this
comparable costing – eg road drainage costs – bearing in mind there is no
existing drainage that could be reutilised on Option 4 (one under-road
pipe and surface drainage to local creek).
Land acquisition costs should include the value of the retained road and
trees for Option 2 for future public use. Even a value for retention of this
iconic accident of nature/man for future generations to enjoy could be
justified in the comparison.
No allowance is mentioned in Option 4 for the relocation costs for part of
the 11KV overhead power lines.
No allowance has been made in Option 4 costs for traffic control
measures that would be necessary during rebuilding – this issue has been
raised previously and is of great concern to residents – there is no
alternative access to the eastern end for emergency services, and council
suggestions that a satisfactory solution would be traffic interruption for
the felling of each tree (for 317 trees??), not to mention the total
destruction of the carriageway, is clearly unacceptable. By contrast,
adoption of Option 2 would allow use of the existing roadway during
construction of the new alignment, with only minor disruption for
integration at each end.
The proposition that Option 2 scores badly against Option 4 on aesthetic
grounds due to “an unsightly S bend” in the new alignment is really
stretching the credibility of the assessment process when other more
important criteria in favour of Option 2 are omitted
In summary, depending on the Option selection, Council could be seen (good intentions notwithstanding) as approving the removal of more aged trees in the upgrade of 490 metres of a minor, dead-ended country lane than were removed in the RMS upgrade of the Princes Highway from Gerringong to Bomaderry, or could be the visionary body that preserves and enhances an icon for the pleasure of future generations.

See attached photo

Very Best Regards

Tony and Gayle Enright