

Meeting minutes

Benalla Working Group #1

Date / Time

21 September, 2020
6.00pm to 8.00pm AEST

Location

Online

Facilitator

Cath Botta

Minute taker

Carrie Donaldson

Distribution

All

Attendees (Show organisation if not ARTC)

- Cr. Don Firth Benalla Rural City Council
- Cr. Scott Upston Benalla Rural City Council
- Philip Rees Better Benalla Rail
- Susan Pearce Better Benalla Rail
- Bill Parris (independent)
- David Blore (independent)
- Graeme Paul (Independent)
- Janette Anderson (Independent)
- John Dennis (Independent)
- Pamela O'Connor (Independent)
- Rowan McEwan (Independent)
- Ed Walker, ARTC, General Manager, Victoria Projects
- Samantha Smith ARTC, Stakeholder Engagement Manager
- Angeline Daniels ARTC, Stakeholder Engagement Lead
- Shondelle Mathews ARTC, Stakeholder Engagement Advisor
- Carrie Donaldson ARTC, Stakeholder Engagement Advisor

Apologies (Show organisation if not ARTC)

- Annette Jones (Independent)

Discussions

NO.	ACTIONS
1	<p>Opening and Welcome</p> <p>Ed Walker, General Manager ARTC thanked the participants for their time, interest in the project and acknowledged that many people within the Benalla community and this Working Group may have concerns about the Inland Rail Project in Benalla, ARTC's design thinking and community consultation to date.</p> <p>Ed confirmed that ARTC are committed to revisiting the design process in consultation with the Working Group and broader Benalla community. Ed advised that there is time to go through the design options and understand what may or may not be feasible for the project site within the scope of the ARTC project.</p> <p>Ed introduced Cath Botta as the Independent Facilitator, her role and the reason for her engagement.</p> <p>Cath welcomed everyone and congratulated the participants on their appointment to the ARTC Benalla Working Group. She provided an overview of her role as the independent facilitator on behalf of the project outlining that she had been engaged by ARTC in a paid capacity to provide independent facilitation of the meeting and to act as the Chair for this inception meeting.</p>

NO.	ACTIONS
2	<p>Introductions</p> <p>Cath asked the Working Group members to introduce themselves and outline their interests in being involved in the Benalla Working Group.</p> <p>Each member provided a brief introduction regarding their experiences, involvement in the Benalla Community reasons for being involved in the Working Group.</p> <p>The ARTC Team were introduced outlining their roles and previous experience. The team present included;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ed Walker, ARTC General Manager • Samantha Smith, ARTC Stakeholder Engagement Manager (observer) • Angeline Daniels, ARTC Stakeholder Engagement Lead • Shondelle Mathews, ARTC Stakeholder Engagement Advisor (observer) • Carrie Donaldson, ARTC Stakeholder Engagement Advisor (observer) <p>Angeline advised that the majority of team members were new starters and that the purpose of the extended team participating in the meeting was to introduce them to the BWG and enable the team to learn more about the issues identified to date by the BWG members.</p> <p>The group acknowledged the challenges and efforts of joining the first meeting via Zoom given the current COVID19 restrictions.</p>
3	<p>Working Group establishment and purpose</p> <p>Cath framed the purpose for tonight's inception meeting and outlined that the meeting would include the following elements with opportunities for discussion and questions;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inland Rail Project Overview • Working Group Terms of Reference • Working Group Code of Conduct
4	<p>Inland Rail Project Overview</p> <p>Angeline provided a high-level overview of the Inland Rail Project (IRP) including scale, scope and stages of delivery highlighting;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ ARTC is delivering the IRP, a federally funded infrastructure project that will improve supply chains and complete the backbone of the national freight network by providing a transit time of 24 hours or less for freight trains between Melbourne and Brisbane via regional Victoria, NSW and Queensland. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall benefits of the IRP, include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Melbourne to Brisbane in less than 24 hours ▪ Removing + 200,000 trucks from the road by 2050 ▪ Provide the backbone for a world-class supply chain ▪ Help meet Australia's freight challenge. • Progress to date: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The first section of the IRP between Parkes and Narromine was completed last week, which included upgrades to 98km of existing track and 5.3km of new rail. ▪ The other sections of the project are in the project reference or assessment phase. ➤ Victoria is made up of 2 stages. The first stage is between Beveridge and Wodonga. Second state is south of Beveridge.

NO.	ACTIONS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Stage 2 is on hold temporarily while a study is undertaken to determine the location, configuration and timing of a new Intermodal terminal, which is an industrial area where it's possible to move goods onto different transportation modes, in Melbourne. ▪ Stage one is progressing through the design and approval stage. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ T2A will be delivered in two tranches, or 'packages'. Benalla is in Tranche 2. ➤ ARTC is about to commence an Early Contractor Involvement Phase (ECI) for Tranche 1 sites to enable the award of a Design and Construct (D&C) contract by mid-2021. ➤ Construction is scheduled to begin until late 2023 once detailed designs have been resolved and approvals received. ➤ To support the IRP delivery pathway, ARTC has engaged the third-party services of AECOM to assist in the delivery of our complex approval pathway program for the Tottenham to Albury Project (T2A). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a mix of State and Commonwealth legislation that guides the approval pathway for T2A. • Our most recent approval processes have included referrals under the Commonwealth Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Cth) (EPBC) for matters of national significance, and the Environmental Effects Act 1978 (Vic). • ARTC has received confirmation from our referral to the Environmental Effects Act 1978 that this project does not require an environmental effect statement, with conditions. These include that we consult with Department of Environment, Water, Land and Planning (DEWLP) to prepare an environment report and an environmental management framework. These documents will assess the various impacts and mitigation strategies and commitments regarding the environment. • Under the EPBC referral, we submitted two referrals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Heritage Matters of National Environmental Significance at Glenrowan. In August, the Minister for Environment determined the project could proceed without formal assessment under the EPBC Act. - Biodiversity Matters of National Environmental Significance, excluding Glenrowan and Barnawartha North In August, the Minister for Environment determined this project is considered a "controlled action" and would require formal assessment and approval under the EPBC Act. ➤ Working through the project approvals pathway we will work with the BWG and broader community through the detailed design phase to understand the high-level aspirations of the Community and other stakeholders and incorporate where possible in the designs of the station precinct, ➤ Angeline advised that the Stakeholder Engagement Team are currently are preparing a reference guide to outline all of the approval processes and interdependencies to inform the approval pathway. This will be made available to the BWG once completed.
5	<p>Questions/Comments</p> <p>Cath thanked Angeline for providing such a detailed project overview and invited comments or questions from the Group.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suzie – Requested further information regarding the State EES and Federal EPBC approval process and documentation. <p>Action: Angeline to send documentation relating to the project referrals and decisions.</p>

NO.	ACTIONS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • David – Requested more detail on the anticipated growth in train movements and associated timeframe. Ed advised that the current modelling is aspirational and future based. It is anticipated that there will initially be a reduction in freight train movement due to the double stacked nature of the trains. It is anticipated that by 2030 – 2040 that there will be an addition of up to 8-12 trains per day. Ed offered to provide details on the predictive modelling at a future meeting. Action: ARTC to provide further information regarding truck modelling on the Hume • Phillip – Enquired if single lines will continue or if double tracks will be introduced. Ed advised that single tracks made up the scope. It is not anticipated that the freight trains will have a negative impact on scheduling and on-time running of passenger rail. Ed advised that there will be signalling investment and upgrades as part of the project. • Don – General comment about the interlinked nature of Inland Freight and Passenger Rail. Requested that ARTC take on notice the need for the Federal Government to have the best interests at heart of communities along the IRP. Expressed concerns on the effects on the community and passenger rail. • John – Endorsed Phil’s comment about the competing nature of the freight and passenger trains at Beverage. • Janette – Expressed the need to treat both freight and passenger train needs equally and the need to consider social mobility. • Graham – No argument with the investment in inland rail and the positive impact of taking freight off the road and reducing CO2 emissions. Noted that there are concerns with passenger rail services, travel times, safety in Benalla and acknowledged that it was the Federal Government’s responsibility however requested that ARTC assist in getting this message to the Federal Government. Requested that the Working Group Members’ email addresses be shared to the group for communication and contact purposes. Action: Angeline to seek approval and share email addresses with the BWG. <p>Cath summarised the issues raised in the following themes to be tabled, explored and discussed at future meetings;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Approvals processes and the implications and responses so far. ➤ Projections so far on the reductions of freight movements along the Hume, with particular consideration to the Hume Freeway and the Melbourne to Sydney route. ➤ Potential impacts on passenger rail movements, and ➤ Potential impacts on community from the realisation of Inland Rail. <p><i>The Working Group took a short break.</i></p>
6	<p>Establishing the Working Group - How do you want to work?</p> <p>Cath welcomed the members back and then took the BWG through the proposed Terms of Reference (TOR) section by section inviting feedback.</p>

NO.	ACTIONS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Terms of Reference (TOR) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 1 – Purpose of the Group – confirmed • Suzie – Council has no jurisdiction on this project, adamant that there be representation from the State Government – preferable from the Office of the Victorian Government Architect (OVGA). (deferred to Section 3 – composition of the Group) ➤ Section 2 – Scope and Authority <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bill - Concerns raised regarding the level of decision-making powers of the BWG. • Group requests assurance that the input of the group will be taken into consideration in the planning and delivery of the project and that there will be circling back of advice and decision making along the way throughout the lifespan of the BWG. <p>Ed Walker advised it was not possible to incorporate decision making in the powers of the BWG as this is not a statutory body. However, Ed advised that this process is genuine, that the BWG’s input is valued and we will take it into account. We can’t always agree with all feedback however we will not dismiss the feedback as we genuinely want the community’s input and will incorporate where possible.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phillip – Inland Rail, concern that the Passenger Rail is not part of the scope of this BWG. It was requested that any impacts on Passenger Rail be captured and reported on. Ed offered to provide information where possible on both the NERL and IR projects. • David – Inland Rail Enhancement site definition needs to be made clear. Rowan McEwan including suggested wording in the Group chat. <p>Action: ARTC (Angeline) to revise wording for the scope and authority section of the TORs and recirculate for endorsement.</p> ➤ Composition <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suzie – highlighted that the BWG are community representatives trying to influence what happens on State based land/assets and requested representation on the BWG of the State Government including the Office of the Victorian Government Architect and VicTrack. <p>Angeline and Ed suggested that the BWG consider inviting subject matter experts or departmental representatives when and where needed to provide updates and information to the BWG. It is important that this remains a community-based working group focussed on the needs of the Benalla community. Ed advised that ARTC work closely with the State Government and engage regularly and can invite at appropriate times and reiterated that this is a Federal Government funded project being delivered by ARTC. requested that relevant State and Federal Government Ministers or departmental representatives be invited to join/attend the BWG meetings to provide more detail on the approvals process.</p> <p>Action: Insert wording to enable invitation of subject matter experts and agencies when and where appropriate to inform the BWG.</p> ➤ Section 4- Member Appointment and Selection Process – confirmed ➤ Section 5 - Appointing the Independent Chair

NO.	ACTIONS
	<p>It was clarified that ARTC will be seeking nominations for an independent Chair and that this independent Chair will be appointed from outside the Working Group. Nominations from members are welcomed. The Chair will go through a formal application and interview process. The role will not be advertised. A position description will be provided and is normally a paid position.</p> <p>Action: Angeline to circulate the PD to the group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Janette – advised that she would like to nominate Cath Botta as the independent Chair. Deferred to the later part of the meeting. <p>➤ Section 6 - Functions and Expectations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The group requested that details of the costings of the project be included in the reporting of ARTC back to the BWG. <p>Ed agreed during the course of the working group to provide suitable insight/transparency into the costs and options for consideration, comparison and evaluation to be given to the various options for the Benalla, taking into consideration commercial in confidence operations.</p> <p>➤ Section 7 – Operation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was suggested that (COVID 19 restrictions permitting) the group be able to meet face to face and that the Benalla Council be a suitable venue. The next meeting will be scheduled post the pending Local Government Elections. <p>➤ Code of Conduct</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concern raised regarding the definition of a members' representative role. <p>Action: ARTC to delete point regarding representing views of my community group from the Code of Conduct.</p> <p>Action: Once amended, the BWG members are requested to sign and return to ARTC via the method most suitable by the BWG.</p>
7	<p><i>Future Meetings & General Business</i></p> <p>Angeline proposed that a discussion of the key issues impacting the current station and user experience be included on the next agenda.</p> <p>Next meeting is proposed for 16th November or 23rd November to allow for the future meeting date allowing for the Local Government Elections.</p> <p>Details next date and time will be confirmed.</p>

NO.	ACTIONS
8	<p>Conclusion</p> <p>Closing reflections:</p> <p>Each member was given the opportunity to provide a closing comment or reflection.</p> <p>General sentiments from the BWG members included;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Off to a good start • Very informative and look forward to seeing everyone at the next meeting • Highlighted the need for good will to continue in moving forward • Glad to hear that options are open for consideration and discussions and we have an even playing field • Appreciated listening to views and sharing opinions at future meetings • very positive vibe and pleasantly surprised and looking forward to continuing • Looking forward to considering options • Lovely to meet those that we haven't met before and that it was a positive meeting and looking forward to working together for the best outcome for Benalla <p>Angeline and Ed thanked everyone of their time and input on behalf of ARTC and we look forward to working with everyone closely.</p> <p>Meeting closed at 8:23pm</p>

Actions

NO.	ACTIONS	ACTION BY
1.	Provide members with documentation relating to the EES and EPBC referrals	AD
2.	Provide further information regarding truck modelling on the Hume	EW
3.	Angeline to seek approval and share email addresses with the BWG	AD
4.	Revise wording under Scope and Authority section of the TORs and recirculate for endorsement.	AD
5.	Insert wording to enable invitation of subject matter experts and agencies when and where appropriate to inform the BWG.	AD
6.	Circulate the PD for the Independent Chair to the group	AD
7.	Delete ninth point regarding representing views of my community group from the Code of Conduct.	AD
8.	Reissue updated TOR and Code of Conduct to Working Group members	AD

Next meeting

TBA