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## **Minutes of the WCCC General Meeting Wednesday, 25 July 2012**

### **1. Meeting opened**

Chair Tom Anderson opened the meeting at 7.45pm. About ninety persons were present. Tom welcomed WCCC members and guest speaker Mr Tony Gill, Director, Roads ACT. He also welcomed Ms Katharine Campbell, ESDD, and Mr John Husband, EDD, Mr Shane Rattenbury, Speaker of the ACT House of Assembly, and Ms Caroline Le Couteur, MLA.

**2. Apologies:** Gai Brodtmann, Mal Ferguson, Simon Hearder, Max Kwiatkowski, John Burke, Pat McGinn.

### **3. Presentation by Tony Gill, Director, Roads ACT**

**1. North Weston Ponds.** Mr Gill began with an update on the North Weston Ponds. The construction period had been problematic, he said. The ponds were intended to serve as a water quality control measure, but the site was an old sewerage treatment plant that had later been used as a tip for builders rubble, which meant there was a lot of contaminated material on the site. About 180,000 tonnes of contaminated material was excavated, and about 40,000 tonnes remains on site. This has been capped with 2 metres of fill, so it is now secure and will not be a problem in the future. The discovery of the contaminated material had necessitated a revision of the whole ponds project, and now two ponds will be created instead of the one pond originally planned, and together they will be roughly 60% the size of the original plan. The estimated cost of the project as originally planned was \$20 million, but has now increased to \$55 million. Completion date is now March 2015. The revised Development Application is now going through the approval process. There is a vital sewer main underneath the site, so its protection is a major factor for those carrying out the construction works.

**2. John Gorton Drive.** Roads ACT has responsibility for Stages 1A and 1B of the construction, and this work is almost completed. Subsequent stages will be associated with the Molonglo development, to be carried out by a different construction group. John Gorton Drive gives access to the suburbs of Wright and Coombs. [In the future, this arterial road will be extended to cross the Molonglo River a little way upstream of Coppins Crossing, and will go all the way to William Hovell Drive, on the southern boundary of Belconnen.]

**3. McCulloch St, Curtin.** The large amount of through traffic on McCulloch St has raised concerns among local residents about the impact of development in Molonglo which, they fear, will result in a significant increase in the amount of traffic. Over the last twelve months, Roads ACT has worked with about twenty resident of McCulloch St on the installation of acceptable traffic calming measures and safety features, and improvement of the general amenity. This work is being done as part of the upgrade of Cotter Road.

**4. Streeton Drive.** In this financial year, Roads ACT will also be looking at Streeton Drive, which is one of five streets that will be given special treatment in terms of traffic calming measures this year. (The others are Hambidge, Heagney, Coyne and Clift Streets in the Chisholm/Gilmore/Richardson area.) Roads ACT wants residents to be involved at an early stage of planning for the changes. Usually fewer than five streets are done in any one year.

**5. Hickey Court, Weston.** This street goes through the campus of Orana School. It needs new traffic management measures as a result of the new residential construction in North Weston.

A question and answer session followed.

Q: When will the **realignment of Dixon Drive with Unwin Place** begin?

A: Tenders for that work will be called in November 2012.

Q: **Hickey Court** currently provides the only access for interstate buses to the Bahai and Sikh Temples, as the streets constructed in North Weston by the developer are not wide enough for buses to traverse. Back in 2008 when the plans for North Weston were the subject of several meetings between representatives of the WCCC, Orana School, Bahai Temple and Sikh Temple with the responsible minister, Andrew Barr, this issue was raised (among a number of other issues of concern) and the representatives were assured that ACTPLA would ensure that whichever developer should carry out development of the area would be apprised of these concerns and would be asked to ensure that roads in the area would be wide enough to provide the necessary access.

A: Tony Gill said he did not know of any previous representations about North Weston and these issues, but undertook to look at the matter.

Q: One person said she had not been able to find information about the **realignment of Dixon Drive** on the Roads ACT website, and asked if a link could be set up to make it easier.

A: Mr Gill said that Dixon Drive would be altered to align straight with Unwin Place, and traffic lights would be installed at the intersection with Streeton Drive.

Q: Why is a roundabout to be installed at the intersection of **Heysen and Hilder Streets**?

A: That intersection will provide access for the Defence Housing Australia (DHA) development that is to be constructed on the north side of Heysen Street above the Fetherston Gardens, and the roundabout will serve to manage expected traffic. The Development Application has not yet been submitted, and residents can still make comments on it.

Q: Traffic-slowng bumps in **Flinders Way** are too bumpy and cause problems for some people (for example, those with back problems). Another problem is that many traffic signs by the side of roads have become no longer visible because trees or other vegetation has grown over them. Why are there no red kerbs any longer in the ACT to warn people not to park there? What is Roads ACT doing about these matters?

A: The speed bumps in Flinders Way, and in Spofforth St, Holt, have not been well received, although they are acknowledged to be very effective in slowing traffic down. Some speed cushions have been installed at Woden because signs did not seem to be effective enough. Red kerbs are no longer part of the road rules in Australia, and have been phased out over the last five years. Roads ACT gets between 100 and 150 requests every week for vegetation to be removed, and they do what they can.

Q: The **Cotter Road upgrade** seems to be taking an inordinate amount of time. On some days, it appears that no work is being done at all. Is there a completion date? Is there a penalty clause in the contract for this work if the completion date is passed?

A: There were some delays at the beginning of this work, as an optic fibre cable had to be relocated. The completion date is October 2012; there are penalty clauses.

A contract has just been let for upgrading Cotter Road eastwards to Dudley Street. The roundabout at the intersection of Lady Denman Drive and Cotter Road will be converted to traffic lights. There is a project proposal in the ACT budget that will be voted on shortly to upgrade Cotter Road from Yarralumla Creek to the Tuggeranong Parkway.

Q: There is a problem getting on to **Namatjira Drive** from **Streeton Drive, Perry Drive, Badimara Street, and Kapunda Street**, because the amount of traffic on Namatjira makes it very difficult for traffic from the side streets to find a gap. If there has been an accident on the Parkway, the wait to get on to Namatjira Drive can be quite lengthy, as Parkway traffic tries to find alternative routes. It is particularly a problem for vehicles going to and from Chapman Primary School. Concrete islands and bike lane have made it even more difficult than it was before.

- Access on to **Sulwood Drive** (the extension of Namatjira Drive) from **Kambah Pool Road** is also difficult.
- Alfred Deakin High will be used by Molonglo residents, so that will probably bring more traffic through Curtin.

A: Mr Gill said he would look into this matter.

Q: On the question of roundabouts vs traffic lights, Noosa Council decided to have no traffic lights at all, and traffic there flows well. Has Roads ACT investigated how roundabouts work in other cities?

A: Roundabouts work well in certain situations, but have some disadvantages in some urban contexts. They are difficult for pedestrians and cyclists to negotiate, and they don't work well when most traffic comes from only one direction at a time.

Q: What is being proposed to improve **parking at Coleman Court**? What is meant to happen in the short term to cope with the extra number of cars anticipated when Wright and Coombs have families living there?

A: Katharine Campbell responded that under the proposed Master Plan, extra long-term parking would be provided on Liardet Street and near the tennis courts. However, these changes will take at least one year for planning, approval and implementation.

Tom Anderson noted that in 2009 Roads ACT had done a survey of parking around Coleman Court, and had agreed that the parking areas were full. If Weston Creek residents want to have something done to improve parking, they need to contact their political representatives and push for action.

Q: **Streeton Drive** is a good road, but if it is made narrower, then it will become worse than it needs to be. Over the last ten years, it appears that government policy has been "Build first, infrastructure second". Is planning an issue? For example, units were built at Darwinia Terrace and the road was narrowed.

Q: Is there any danger that the new traffic lights on Streeton Drive and Cotter Road will be synchronised?

Q: Do you think it is likely that the roads through the **Defence Housing Australia estate** will become a "rat run" for cars from Woden and Weston Creek trying to get to Cotter Road without having to go on to Streeton Drive?

A: The Development Application is still open, so please make a submission on it if you have concerns.

Q: The **intersection of Hilder Street and Streeton Drive** has become more dangerous since Streeton Drive was made into one lane from the corner of Hilder Street. Can something be done to improve that situation?

Q: **Resurfacing of roads:** The roads in Weston and other Weston Creek suburbs were resurfaced earlier this year, but the quality of the new surface was poor, and even now there

are lots of loose stones on the roads. Sometimes there are flung up by passing cars, even into front gardens. It seems the quality control and supervision by Roads ACT over the contractor who did this work was not sufficient to ensure the job was done well.

A: That process is used in many places as well as in Canberra. The stones should be swept up some time shortly after the work has been completed. Roads ACT does have staff who should check on such jobs to ensure they have been done to our satisfaction. If you let me know which street are affected, I will look into it.

**Affected Streets:**

**Weston:** Lycett St and streets off it (Meldrum Souter, Fullwood, Rowell Sts); Shore Place

**Holder:** Hyndes Crescent, Hellyer St

**Duffy:** Burrendong St

**Waramanga/Fisher:** Badimara St

[These street were specifically mentioned by people attending the WCCC meeting, but there are probably a number of other streets that also need to be finished properly.]

Q: The top end of **Hilder Street** has become a speedway. Sometime there is a speed check car at the bottom end, but it can be easily seen in that location; it need to be up at the top end of Hilder Street if the speedsters are to be caught.

Q: In relation to **McCulloch Street**, is Roads ACT thinking about why people are using that street? Is it because there is **no connection between Cotter Road and Yarra Glen** so people can get to Woden?

A: The option to build a connecting road is being considered as part of the Yarralumla Brickworks.

Q: Why has **Streeton Drive** been cut back to one lane near the intersection with Namatjira Drive (near Cooleman Court)?

A: When roads are resurfaced, under current government policy, Roads ACT seeks to improve lanes for cyclists. [Near Cooleman Court, Streeton Drive was made only one lane in order to make it safer for cars exiting from Cooleman Court and wanting to turn right on to Streeton Drive.]

Q: The **road surface of Hindmarsh Drive** where it passes under the Tuggeranong Parkway, and also at the junction with Melrose Drive, is very poor. Could it be resurfaced and improved?

Q: It is difficult to find a **disabled parking spot at Cooleman Court**. In addition, the spaces used to be wider, so you could park in the middle of the space and either driver or passenger could open the doors fully.

A: Usually three disabled spaces per 100 spaces are provided. If there is a need for more disabled parking at Cooleman Court, Roads ACT can look into the matter. The width of disabled parking spaces has been changed in line with new national standards, which were designed to accommodate wheelchairs. The new standards have caused contention, and in the ACT the program to change these spaces has been stopped as the result of complaints from disabled users. We thought we were doing the right thing, but it seems we need to reconsider.

Q: Why do we need to have bike lanes on the road (as on Streeton Drive) when there is plenty of space in the median strip to put a segregated bike lane?

A: Cost. The cheapest way is to use existing roads; it is very expensive to create new bike lanes in the median strip.

Q: Has there been any consideration of having **traffic lights at roundabouts**, to manage heavy traffic flows?

A: Yes, there are a few in Canberra, for example, at the junction of Isabella and Drakford Drives, where the traffic lights come on only in the afternoon. We are considering installing traffic lights at the roundabout at the junction of William Slim Drive and Barton Highway.

Q: There are problems at **Mt Stromlo** when there are cycle events at Stromlo Forest Park, especially now when there is a lot of work being done on the roads in connection with the Molonglo development. further, the **surface of the road that goes up Mt Stromlo is very poor** and needs repairs. Part of the road is the responsibility of the National Capital Authority, but it is the lower part of the road, which is ACT Government responsibility, that needs repair.

A: Roads ACT will have a look at the Mt Stromlo road.

Q: In 2010 I went through Glenloch Interchange frequently, and saw that often no work was being done on current roadworks. It was the same thing at the airport.

A: This financial year alone, Roads ACT has delivered 126 million dollars' worth of work for the Government.

Q: I understand the logic of putting bike paths on roads, but do we really want bikes on roads where cars are going at 80 km per hour? Wouldn't it be better to have separate paths for bikes?

A: In some locations we are trying to provide segregated cycle facilities, for example, around Civic. Cycling groups have told us that many of their members want fast, direct travel, and they prefer to have cycle lanes on the roads.

Q: If cyclists use the major roads, then they should be required to have third-party insurance, just as vehicles have to have.

Q: Why should cyclists have bike paths as well as lanes on roads?

A: That is government policy.

Q: The **surface of the car parks at Coleman Court** is so bad that one can't push a trolley or pram along.

A: Resurfacing of the car parks will be done in this financial year, some time between November and March.

Tom Anderson thanked Mr Gill. After the presentation there was a short break for tea and coffee.

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After the break, the meeting continued.

#### **4. Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the previous public meeting (27 June 2012) were accepted as circulated.

#### **5. Treasurer's Report**

There was no Treasurer's Report, as the Treasurer was absent.

#### **6. General Business**

**1. WCCC Survey:** WCCC has emailed a survey questionnaire to people on the WCCC email list, and has put the survey up on the WCCC website. It can be forwarded to anyone from the website. The aim is to find out what matters are of concern to Weston Creek residents at present, so we can tell candidates for the ACT Assembly what is needed in our area.

**2. Master Plan for Weston Group Centre:** A Draft of the proposed Master Plan was on display at Coleman Court last Saturday, 21 July, and there is a small version available at the Community Centre. It is also displayed in the Woden Library. The Draft Plan will be displayed in Coleman Court again on Saturday, 25 August. It is available on the ESDD website.

**3. Charity Bin Trial:** Charity bins are to be removed from their current locations at suburban shopping centres, because there has been too much rubbish dumped beside them. Instead, some bins will be set up near Cooleman Court on a trial basis.

**4. Diversion of B-Double trucks:** WCCC has been notified that B-Double trucks will be diverted from Cotter Road through Hindmarsh and Eucumbene Drives for a period of three weeks from Tuesday, 24 July, until Monday, 13 August, so that roadworks to build a roundabout at the junction of Cotter Road and Settlement Drive (Stromlo Village) can proceed.

**5. Fetherston Gardens:** The Fetherston Gardens Friends (FGF) group is waiting for discussion with the ACT Government over the priorities and timing of infrastructure works at the Gardens. There will be a working bee this Sunday, 29 July, and all interested persons are invited to join in. There will be a General Meeting on Thursday, 9 August, at the Weston Club, at which a new committee will be elected. FGF intends to make some comments on the Development Application for the Defence Housing Australia development.

**6. Legislative Assembly hearing on DV306:** WCCC Chair Tom Anderson and Deputy Chair Pat McGinn attended a hearing in the Assembly, to put the views of WCCC about the proposed changes. The most important issues for Weston Creek relate to RZ! and RZ@ zones.

**7. Airport Consultation group:** Tom Anderson will attend the regular meeting tomorrow.

**8. Meeting with Gai Brodtmann:** Tom Anderson had a meeting with Gai Brodtmann, Federal Member of Parliament for Canberra and they discussed a number of issues of importance for Weston Creek, including the DHA development. He conveyed WCCC's opinion that DHA has had little consultation with local residents and the community about the impact of their development.

**9. Weston Creek Festival:** The Festival will be held on Saturday, 29 September, at Cooleman Court. Tim Dalton is the coordinator, and has been organising events and participants. There will be a twilight concert sponsored by St Peter's church.

**10. Vandals rampage in Weston:** Last Sunday, 22 July, vandals went on a rampage in Weston. Two cars were damaged in Lycett Street. Efforts to inform the Southside Chronicle so they could do an article met with a disappointing response.

**11. Trees:** Trees near the tennis courts at Cooleman Court have not been looked after and need some attention. In addition, the off-road bike path along Streeton Drive has been littered with limbs broken off trees beside the path.

**12. New Community Centre:** Residents are asked to support the proposal in the Draft Master Plan for a new community centre to be built at Cooleman Court. Refurbishment of the present community centre will NOT produce a satisfactory outcome for Weston Creek residents, as the centre is too old and cramped.

The meeting closed at 9.45.