

Roads Working Party Meeting - Notes

Date: Tuesday 26 July 2022

Time: 1.02pm

Location: Minlaton Council Office

Meeting Objective: To consider the future utilisation of the road network within our Council area for community access, freight, tourism and agricultural needs.

Item No.	Item	Who	When
1	Attendees and Apologies		
1.1	<p>Attendees</p> <p>Councillor David Langford (Cr DL) (Chair) Mayor Darren Braund (Mayor DB) (Ex Officio) Councillor Anthony Bennett (Cr AB) Andrew Cameron (AWC), Chief Executive Officer Andre Kompler (AMK), Director Assets and Infrastructure Services Michael McCauley (MSM), Asset Manager Roy Dick (RAD), Works Manager Richard Murdoch (RM), Community Representative - Agricultural Industry Greg Twelftree (GT), Community Representative - Agricultural Industry Michael Cadd (MC), Community Representative - Transport Industry Anthony Trengove (AT), Community Representative - Transport Industry Kira Tapps (KLT) (Note Taker), Executive Assistant to the Director Assets and Infrastructure Services</p>		
1.2	<p>Apologies</p> <p>Councillor Naomi Bittner (Cr NB) Ben Wundersitz (BW), Community Representative - Agricultural Industry Shane Carty (SC), Community Representative - Transport Industry</p>		
2	Next Steps - Outcomes of the Network Level Heavy Vehicle Route Assessment and Risk Analysis		
2.1	<p>Background and Why Council Undertook a Network Level Heavy Vehicle Route Assessment and Risk Analysis</p> <p>At the 9 December 2015 meeting of Council, the then elected body unanimously carried a motion to endorse the access of vehicles with Higher Mass Limits (HML), including 36.5m Road Trains, to Council's entire road network.</p>		

	<p>Subsequently, Council provided pre-approval for the use of 26m B Doubles fitted with Certified Road-Friendly Suspension at HML on all commodity routes within the Council area to the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR).</p> <p>This was done with no risk assessment having been undertaken of the suitability of the road network to cater for 26m B Doubles.</p> <p>Following the increase in popularity of 30m Road Trains, at its meeting on 8 November 2017, Council moved a motion to support an application to the NHVR for blanket approval of all Council roads and intersections for Road Trains up to 30m.</p> <p>Council's request for pre-approval for 30m Road Trains was not accepted by the NHVR, as not all roads had been assessed.</p> <p>As a result, in 2018, Council engaged HDS Australia to undertake an investigation into the safety aspects of gazetted B Double General Mass Limit (GML) routes, B Double Commodity routes and other potential B Double routes within the Council area.</p>		
<p>2.2</p>	<p>Overview of the Network Level Heavy Vehicle Route Assessment and Risk Analysis</p> <p>HDS Australia's investigation into the safety aspects of gazetted B Double GML routes, B Double Commodity routes and other potential B Double routes within the Council area culminated in the provision of the Network Level Heavy Vehicle Route Assessment and Risk Analysis to Council.</p> <p>The aim of the Network Level Heavy Vehicle Route Assessment was to determine the overall risk of each road segment and categorise the identified risk as Low (P4), Moderate (P3), High (P2) or Very High (P1), in accordance with accepted heavy vehicle route assessment criteria.</p> <p>The Network Level Heavy Vehicle Route Assessment and Risk Analysis was undertaken in two phases, with Phase One focussing on Council's rural sealed roads and High Use sheeted roads. These roads make up approximately 1,000km of Council's approximately 3,900km road network.</p> <p>Phase One was completed in May 2019, with HDS Australia providing a report and presentation to Council in July 2019.</p>		

	<p>The findings from the Phase One report were included in <i>Table 6.2: Risks and Treatment Plans</i> of the Transport Asset Management Plan (TAMP), with a recommendation that the remainder of the road network be assessed.</p> <p>Council included funding for Phase Two, which made up the remainder of Council's rural road network, in the 2021/2022 budget.</p> <p>HDS Australia completed Phase Two in February 2022 and presented to Council in May 2022.</p> <p>Following HDS Australia's presentation a report was presented to Council at the June 2022 Ordinary Council Meeting.</p>		
<p>2.3</p>	<p>Outcome of Council Report</p> <p>The report presented to Council in June 2022 recommended:</p> <p><i>That Council:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Receive the Network Level Heavy Vehicle Route Assessment and Risk Analysis undertaken by HDS Australia.</i> 2. <i>Liaise with the Roads Working Party and bring a report to the November 2022 meeting of Council on the proposed long term risk management strategy and proposed funding source for future budgets, prior to community consultation and final adoption of the strategy.</i> 3. <i>Endorse the focus of the 2022/2023 intersections budget on P1 and P2 signage and sight distance issues associated with existing Oversize Overmass (OSOM) and agricultural permit roads.</i> <p>The P1 and P2 risks identified by HDS Australia have been separated into eight categories, with a high-level budget estimate placed against each category to address these risks. The estimated cost to address the P1 risks identified is \$52 million and the estimated cost to address the P2 risks identified is \$69 million. P1 will be the starting point for the changes required.</p> <p>Council has included \$190,000 in its budget for 2022/2023 to commence addressing P1 and P2 risks on High Use sheeted roads.</p>		

<p>2.4</p>	<p>Challenges for Council</p> <p>As per the report presented to Council in June 2022, Council needs to develop a long term risk management strategy, and identify proposed funding sources, to address the risks identified as P1 and P2. This strategy needs to be developed for the 2023/2024 financial year.</p> <p>Outside of the \$190,000 included in the 2022/2023 budget, there is no funding available to address these risks.</p> <p>\$2 million per year for ten years could be allocated to address some of the P1 issues; however, a source of income for this funding needs to be identified.</p> <p>Another option, which would reduce the total funding needed to address the P1 and P2 issues, could be to remove roads identified as having P1 issues from the 26m B Double gazettal notice and revoke pre approval for 26m B Double HML from these roads. This would require B Double operators to instead apply for a permit to access these roads, which would allow Council to monitor how many B Doubles are using these roads.</p> <p>Council's ultimate aim is to push traffic from its road network onto the state road network at the earliest possible opportunity.</p>		
<p>2.5</p>	<p>Working Party's Initial Thoughts</p> <p>The Roads Working Party were given the opportunity to mark roads of concern on a Rack Plan and discuss amongst themselves issues that they are aware of.</p> <p>It was agreed that Council will provide Rack Plans to all members of the Working Party, for them to take away and mark roads of concern on. The Working Party will then provide feedback via KLT prior to the next meeting of the Working Party.</p>	<p>Roads Working Party members</p>	<p>16 September 2022</p>
<p>2.6</p>	<p>AADT Status</p> <p>Council's road network is categorised as per the TAMP. Over the last three years Council has placed traffic counters on rural roads to ascertain the Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT).</p> <p>There are currently 68 traffic counters out on Council's rural roads. These counters are left out for four to six weeks at a time.</p> <p>The AADT collected recently shows that traffic has increased on Council's coastal tourist roads.</p>		

	<p>Recent AADT has also shown that some roads in the Maitland area, that are currently classified as High Use in the TAMP, are no longer High Use, with the AADT being 50 to 100 vehicle per day. As a result the categorisation of these roads within the TAMP needs to be reviewed, with the roads moved to a lower classification (Medium Use or Low Use).</p> <p>As per current AADT data, heavy vehicles account for approximately 3% of Council's total road usage. This increases to approximately 20% on Clinton Road and Melton South Road, which are Council's most highly trafficked roads by heavy vehicles.</p>		
2.7	<p>Working Party Input into the Online Survey Questions</p> <p>As part of the development of the long term risk management strategy it is proposed that Council undertake an online survey of its rural ratepayers to inform Council of the overall usage of its rural road network, as well as rural ratepayers willingness to pay for upgrades to ensure that roads remain accessible by heavy vehicles.</p> <p>To get the ball rolling AMK provided the Working Party with some sample questions for them to provide comments on and requested that any feedback on these questions, as well as any additional questions, be provided via email to KLT by mid-September.</p> <p>Cr DL also suggested that AMK present this information at agricultural bureau meetings, as a way to disseminate it amongst the ratepayers that it will most affect. This suggestion will be given further consideration by Council staff.</p>	Roads Working Party members	16 September 2022
3	General Business		
	Nil		
4	Next Meeting		
	1.00pm, Tuesday 11 October 2022.		

Meeting Closed: 2.45pm