

File No: D/00310/SA/01
Peter Hurst



Mr S Haddad
Director-General
Department of Planning
GPO Box 39
SYDNEY NSW 2001

13 NOV 2008

Attn: Lisa Chan

**Hume Highway Duplication. Albury Wodonga National Highway Project, Mullengandra to Table Top.
Request for Modification to Conditions of Approval.**

Dear Mr Haddad

I am writing to you to request a modification to the conditions of approval that apply to the Albury Wodonga National Highway Project between Mullengandra and Table Top. This project is being delivered by the Hume Highway Southern Alliance (HNSA) which is a team comprised of the RTA, Abigroup and Sinclair Knight Merz as part of the duplication of the Hume Highway between Woomargama and Table Top.

The section of the Hume Highway duplication between Mullengandra and Table Top is part of the Albury Wodonga National Highway Project approved by the then Acting Minister for Urban Affairs and Planning on 23 January 1998 (now a deemed Part 3A approval). Relevant to this request is the modification of the Minister's approval dated 6 February 2008 for the Albury-Wodonga National Highway Project that had the effect of making the hours of construction and process for seeking out of hours approvals consistent across the whole duplication project between Woomargama and Table Top.

This request seeks a modification to the approval for construction hours to be extended to enable a 6am start on weekdays. A detailed assessment of the potential environmental and community impacts of the proposed modification has been undertaken (HNSA November 2008). The assessment includes the information referred to in the Department's correspondence of 21 October 2008 to Cameron Silverthorne

In accordance with requests by your Department and the Department of Environment and Climate Change (DECC), a detailed investigation of alternative reverse warning systems to identify opportunities to further to mitigate amenity and community impacts has been undertaken and is discussed in the assessment.

The proposal has been discussed with individual residents and also at community meetings attended by the project EMR. Furthermore, this request follows two trial periods of 6am starts that were undertaken earlier in the year with no adverse community complaints.

The detailed assessment (attached) supports this application and a complementary application for the Woomargama to Mullengandra section (project approval 06_0249). The assessment concludes that, given the very low density of adjacent residents and the current nature of construction works, adverse impacts will be minimal. Stringent management measures are proposed to ensure this is the case, including the installation of tonal beepers for major construction plant for use in the early morning period.

Effective community and agency consultation would be a key aspect of management.



The HHSA has received comment by email dated 11 November 2008 from DECC (copied to Lisa Chan) on the draft assessment. The comments have been addressed in the final assessment.

The extended construction hours are justified on the following basis:

- There is a tight timeframe for the Project, which has been identified as a project of significance for NSW. All opportunities for ensuring delivery of the benefits of the highway upgrade within that timeframe and even earlier should be considered as being consistent with the Federal and NSW Governments' priority for the Project. Making use of available light at any time of the year, and particularly during the summer months when the earlier hours are cooler and offer respite, represents a real opportunity to shorten the project timeframe.
- The trials to date have shown that a shorter working week, with longer days, has the potential to increase efficiency such that the overall program may be shortened, providing that weather and other extraneous conditions are not unusual. This would represent an outstanding result as the benefits of the duplication would be available earlier.
- Approval for construction work to be undertaken for an additional hour on weekdays would provide the opportunity for a 5-day working week for the construction team. This is a significant initiative with potential positive social impacts.
- The restriction of most construction work, particularly major works, to weekdays would result in real benefits to both the local community and road users, by avoiding noise and intrusion during the weekends.
- Overall, if the project can be completed earlier than December 2009, the benefits to the travelling public, freight and other road users will be realised earlier.

Whilst it is intended to generally adopt a 5-day working week some activities will continue to be undertaken on Saturdays. Additionally, should delays outside of the control of the HHSA occur (eg for adverse weather) it may be necessary to work on Saturdays to achieve project commitments. Accordingly, it is not proposed amend the construction hours for Saturdays.

Please contact Peter Hurst on (6923 3415) or alternatively Jo Moss who is the HHSA's Environment & Sustainability Manager (9928 2162) should you wish to discuss this application or clarify any issues.

Yours sincerely



For Charlie Blomfield

Manager, Hume Highway Office

Attachments:

- Hume Highway Duplication Project. Southern Alliance – Woomargama to Table Top. Request for Modification to Conditions for Approval. HHSA 11 November 2008