

Submission to the Department of Planning and Infrastructure Berry Bypass – The Victoria Street options and the school

Although the safety of Berry Public School students is barely referenced in the EAR, the issue demands comment. The suggestion that Victoria Street be closed seems to have originated from a meeting (minuted by the RMS January 2012) that several parents and residents of Victoria St, with no conferred authority to represent others, requested. A concern for the safety of children at the school and for the residents of the over 55s villages was raised and form letters that had been signed by parents from the school were presented. (Some parents later said they had been given little explanation as they signed other than it's for the safety of our children.) RMS then formed a subgroup of the Community Working Group to continue community discussion of the issue. The same group who had first raised the issue of closure put their case at these meetings. This no doubt influenced the later decision by RMS to close Victoria St. **That decision has found little support in the wider community!**

The safety of children outside their school is a perennial and emotive issue. Each generation of parents expresses the same concerns and fears. I submit that this issue is one that should have been taken up with the appropriate department of Shoalhaven City Council which has the experience and the means, including access to funding, to suggest improvements. Measures generated from discussion with the SCC will be far more immediate than a bypass years in the future.

Measures already in place at the school include a safety crossing on Victoria St, upgraded in Dec. 2011; a teacher escorting "walkers" across the road; removal of buses from Victoria to Clarence St; a 40 kph school zone; provision for parent drop off in Clarence St on the eastern side of the school; a widened pull in zone on the lower side of Victoria St; and no left turn out of Clarence St across the front of the school in school zone hours. In addition, parents are reminded in local and national campaigns to accept responsibility for the safety of their children around schools. There has been no case of student injury at this school that might justify the level of concern expressed to the RMS. Accidents outside schools are always tragic but fault can usually be attributed to an unwary driver, an unthinking parent or a child with no concept of danger – not the street.

With no right turn possible from the highway into the western end of Victoria Street once the Bypass is built, traffic past the school will be almost halved. As well, there will be no external southbound traffic using Victoria Street to bypass Queen St. Those drivers will have remained on the new highway. This should be enough to reassure parents that children will be even safer in the future.

Some parents supporting closure of Victoria Street live on the western end of that street. Residents there express justifiable concern about the speed of traffic travelling downhill between George Street and the highway. Some drivers speed down the road, look ahead for a gap in the oncoming highway traffic and prepare for the 100kph just ahead. Closure of the street is a drastic measure to mitigate this problem. A traffic-calming device halfway down the street, a marked pedestrian crossing to Mark Radium Park and a stop sign at the bottom of the street, not a roundabout or a sweeping left turn (options 2&3) with the 100 kph zone moved further south would address the problem. Again, this is a problem to bring to the attention of the local council with demands for action.

Advocates for closure of the street are not sufficiently aware of the impact this would have on all surrounding streets. The north-south streets, particularly George Street, will experience an

unacceptable increase in traffic, far greater than that predicted by the RMS. The growing number of drivers going to the school from the new Huntingdale Park has also not been factored in. They will use George or Edward St. There are no special measures in any of these streets to keep children, including preschoolers, safe. Traffic past the school is only significant between 8.30 - 9.10 am and 3.10 – 3.45 on school days. I suspect that in these periods much of this is generated by the school. **Unnecessary extra traffic in nearby streets will be of concern all day, every day.**

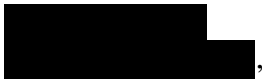
Little consideration has also been given to the traffic generated from the western end of Victoria St. Residents, visitors, employees and tradespeople accessing the 48 dwellings, projected 173 residences in the Grange and Arbour and the nursing home with 142 beds when completed will have to drive east up Victoria St before turning down George St or driving past the school.

Option 3, with a southern exit and a two way street beside Mark Radium Park leading to the North and West, will remove much of this traffic from Victoria St and therefore the school.

A Victoria Street resident asked me whether I want to be responsible for injury to a child outside the school. There is no question that concern for the safety of schoolchildren is genuine, but it is also highly emotional. It prevents a calmer assessment of the whole situation and the realization of the deleterious impact on the town should Victoria Street be closed.

Berry Primary School is located at a considerable distance from the western end of Victoria Street. RMS/ AECOM, in its consideration of the three options, made no reference to it. The school and the P&C take no position. I ask that the issue of the school, for all of the reasons above, be removed from the final decision for Victoria Street.

Victoria Street needs to remain open with a two-way access up past Mark Radium Park.

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Berry, 2535

Foxground and Berry bypass Environmental Assessment

Submission from [REDACTED] Berry

I refer to the traffic impact studies used by RMS to support their case for closure of Victoria St (Option 1).

I wish to challenge the methods used by RMS/AECOM engineers to predict the growth of traffic on local streets as a result of the closure of Victoria St. Incorrect inferences and relationships were drawn from the traffic data available, areas to the south of Victoria St that contribute greatly to its traffic volume were ignored, the traffic generated by the rapidly growing western end of Victoria St which will be forced into new traffic patterns was also ignored. The predicted growth of 185% of traffic carried on George St in particular is a grossly understated figure.

The true picture is so dire that RMS should abandon immediately any plans to close Victoria St.

RMS is reminded that one of the project objectives is to:

Optimise the benefits and minimise adverse impacts on the local social environment

Or, as stated under Urban Design Objective 4 (p.96 Volume 1)

Minimise the impact of the project on the amenity of Berry residents.

When all of the convincingly presented, but **highly incorrect**, information supplied by the RMS is eliminated from both their traffic impact studies and from their consideration of the three Victoria St options (Mark Radium Park) in Volumes 1 & 2 of the EAR, it is abundantly clear that the only option that truly achieves the above for Victoria St, the north-south streets, Mark Radium Park and Queen St is Option 3.

I ask the Director General to consider the following in conjunction with the flow diagrams referred to below:

1 RMS supposed a direct relationship between the traffic counts at the western and eastern ends of Victoria St as shown in the Appendix F Victoria St AADT flow diagrams (Appendix D Traffic and Transport) with the volume of traffic measured on George, Edward, Albany and Alexandra streets between Victoria St and Queen St. **There isn't!** A simple addition of numbers shows this. What begins with 1036 vehicles entering Victoria St at the western end in Figure 1 becomes 1,534 when movement off Victoria St is added to the number remaining at the eastern end.

What the diagrams do not show are the southern ends of Albany and Alexandra streets and other streets to the south of Victoria St that contribute to the Victoria St flow and to traffic on the north-south streets without necessarily exiting at either end of Victoria St. Clarence St which feeds from the largest housing area is not even shown, nor is King St. Albany St feeds to a retirement village and nursing home.

Asked at the Community drop-in session on Traffic held on 22 November 2012 whether traffic from this southern area had been measured, RMS/AECOM responded it had not.

2 If the traffic counter at the western end of Victoria St was sited opposite Mark Radium Park and below housing as is suggested in the EAR, none of the traffic heading east from this residential area was included in the volume of traffic on Victoria St. It seems that only the traffic entering from the highway was counted.

3 The percentages shown in orange on George, Edward, Albany and Alexandra (21, 18, 39 and 22 respectively) in Figures 2 to 4, purporting to represent the volume of Victoria St traffic they will carry in 2037 after closure, relate only to the percentage of traffic carried at present by that particular street compared to the total traffic for all four streets. **Again, the percentages cannot be considered to bear an accurate relationship to the volume of traffic carried on Victoria St because of points 1 and 2.**

4 The decision then to re-allocate the traffic, both incoming and outgoing, taken off the western exit of Victoria St by closure of the street on the same percentage basis to the four north-south streets is **completely misguided and leads to totally erroneous predictions for increase in traffic volume.** These predicted increases are shown in orange for the north-south streets in Figure 2 (Victoria St closed).

5 RMS state on page 199 of the EAR that Option 1 would re-distribute the largest amount of traffic from Victoria St to other local roads with an overall 35% increase compared to the other two options. The figure 35% is misleading, it appears tolerable. In fact, compared to Option 3, RMS state that Option 1 would increase traffic on George St, for example, by 185%. Even this figure, for reasons demonstrated in this submission, is incorrect and grossly understated.

6 The statement on p. 199 EAR Volume 1 goes on to point out, as a mitigating factor for the increase in traffic on the north-south streets, that Option 1 would also remove 2000 vehicles per day from the western end of Victoria St. **This simple sum of close Victoria St and take away all the traffic from the western end is unbelievably unthinking!!** It takes no account whatsoever of the fact that the western end of Victoria street is the area of highest growth in Berry and will have the highest density of residences, all generating considerable traffic for Victoria St.

7 With Victoria Street closed, motorists in this area will be forced to adopt a new directional flow to head south or west. Instead of just joining the Princes Highway at the end of their street, they will be forced to go east up Victoria St and then will ALL, not just 21%, go down George St. Currently this western end traffic wanting to go north would head east on Victoria St and then down any of the local streets to reach Queen St before continuing north up the highway. With the southern interchange to the north to be located over the Kangaroo Valley overpass, all this traffic will also now go down George St. Traffic measurements taken on current patterns are in no way an indicator of traffic volume when these patterns are forced to change. **The only traffic that may go past George St from the western end of Victoria St will be that heading to a local destination and George St is handy for that also!**

8 Page 200 of the EAR, Volume 1 states that, "For all options, predicted traffic volumes would not significantly change the residential nature of the local road network in Berry." This overlooks the fact that even the RMS recognizes the importance of the amenity of its 19th century street grid to the character of Berry. To say that even the understated figure of 185% growth of traffic on George Street is acceptable in this important historic rural township is most unacceptable!

9 With no traffic count done to accurately measure the traffic currently generated by the western end of Victoria St alone; and with the magnitude of the growth in this area understated in the EAR; the only way to accurately assess the future volume of traffic would be to make predictions based on traffic generation rates once all building here is finished. This will probably be before the bypass is even completed. There are 48 dwellings, there will be 173 residences in two over 55s villages and there will be 142 beds in the nursing home BUPA. Shoalhaven City Council traffic engineers used RMS traffic generation rates to calculate the impact this area would have on George St in particular. RMS seems quick to discount SCC predictions that **this area has the capacity to generate 1500 traffic movements per day, the majority of which will use George St.**

10 Inexplicably RMS chose to ignore their own traffic generation rates and to instead apply an annual 2% growth over 25 years to their traffic count figures. This explains the difference to the figures shown in blue between diagram 1 (current conditions) and diagrams 2-4. This may suffice for the rest of the town but not in this area where there will be approximately 45% growth before 2017. RMS stated only the current size of the projects in this area in the EAR, not their completed size. Irrelevant when you consider that RMS did not factor in any traffic from this area at all. **SCC was correct to base their calculations on traffic generation rates. RMS/AECOM must accept the appropriateness of the SCC approach. They must also accept that they, themselves, chose an absolutely inappropriate methodology full of error!**

11 RMS/ AECOM, based on a traffic measurement of only 30 vehicles a day turning right out of Victoria St, argues the following against Option 3 on p.200, EAR Volume 1 and elsewhere:

“This low volume of traffic shows that the two-way ramp option would provide a negligible benefit when compared to the other two options – particularly option 2”.

Such a judgement show total ignorance of the present situation at the bottom end of Victoria St and a lack of insight into why this low volume of traffic will greatly increase:

a) Only a brave local would make a right hand turn out of Victoria St on to the highway with at many times heavy traffic coming towards them downhill and from around a corner. In addition, this traffic, once it has cleared the speed camera, often chooses to accelerate past Victoria St towards the 100kph zone ahead;

b) The only reason for a local to make this turn would be to quickly access Kangaroo Valley Road. Motorists from the western end of Victoria St wanting to head north will head north. Currently this means east up Victoria St and then down to the highway when they choose.

If this was no longer a highway, but a much quieter two-way local street (Option3), everyone from the western end of Victoria Street would use it to access the Queen St roundabout to head north or west. Highway travellers would also have much easier and safer access to and from Mark Radium Park. With the highway predicted to carry 84% of southbound traffic and the sandtrack only 16% in future, there will be many more travellers wanting to access the park than currently.

I ask that all statements in the EAR, including pp198-200, relating to the Victoria Street Options and all information disseminated, both electronically and in hard copy, on this facet of the Berry Bypass be discarded. RMS provided serious misinformation on the imprint on Mark Radium Park, the RMS/ AECOM meeting held on the 23/5/12 to consider the three options has been discredited (see separate submission by [REDACTED]), and the Appendix AADT flow

diagrams discussed in this submission reveal nothing other than inexperience or incompetence. There should be no further discussion, Option 3 should be selected, paving the way to further modifications suggested in other submissions.

NB During my research for this submission I discovered that RMS has no traffic generation rates for over 55s villages in the RTA Guide to Traffic Generating Developments. Given their popularity, rapid spread and that they have been around for a considerable number of years, this demands immediate attention. The suggestion given to me that they would be similar to a home established for the aged or the disabled is astounding. I would suggest from experience that a rate consistent with that of median density housing would be far more appropriate for these active independent “seniors”.

Submission to the DP&I

I refer you to the meeting held on the 23 May, 2012 with 8 representatives from both RMS and AECOM present to decide which of three options RMS would adopt for Victoria Street.

I challenge the processes used in this meeting, I believe they were flawed and that they led to a seriously flawed outcome. The full minutes of the meeting are in a separate attachment. They should be read in conjunction with the points made below.

The meeting notes begin with the following:

Summary – Purpose of the meeting

Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) convened a project team meeting to discuss three major

design options, each with slight variations, for Victoria Street.

The options considered were:

- 1. Close Victoria Street at the Princes Highway – cul-de-sac*
- 2. Two-way access between Queen and Victoria Streets, with southbound on-ramp from Victoria Street. Roundabout at Victoria Street*
- 3. One way southbound access between Queen and Victoria Streets, with southbound on- ramp from Victoria Street. Roundabout at Victoria Street.*

I submit that a reading of the meeting minutes shows that the primary focus and concern of the meeting became the adjoining Mark Radium Park rather than the stated intent above.

Seventeen points were considered, drawn from the Director General's requirements under Section 75F of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*. They provided a structure for the consideration of the 3 Options but the application of some to such a small section of the complete Berry Bypass project caused difficulties. **I believe it was the questionable decision then by the team to apply equal weighting to each of these points in a "scoring" of the options that led to a seriously flawed outcome.** The intent of the meeting should have been to ensure an even consideration of each of the points but to recognize at the same time that **some points were of far greater import to the meeting than others.** Faced many times with little relevance to the road for comment, attention shifted constantly to the adjoining Mark Radium Park repetitively focusing on and then scoring footprint/ impact. This seems to have escaped the notice of the meeting participants. All three options have an impact on the park; the Berry community is clear that they want the park retained. If *Impact on Mark Radium Park* had been included as a point in its own right, the skewing of and repetition of scores that occurred in many of the other areas would have been avoided and the discussion would have remained focused on the true issue, Victoria Street and its importance to the community. **The outcome of the meeting would have been quite different, Victoria Street would have been left open.**

I present my comments below. I have numbered the points for ease of reference.

1 Improve road safety	No comment. Focus remained on the road.
2 Improve efficiency of the Princes Highway between Toolijooa Road and Schofields Lane	No comment. Focus remained on the road.

3 Support regional and local economic development	Any local traffic heading down Victoria St does not want to go to the shopping precinct. There will be no incoming visitor traffic using Victoria Street to avoid Queen St when the bypass is completed, they will be on the highway. The score 5 for Option 1 is not valid. There is no consideration of the economic benefits of highway signage used to draw travellers from the highway with 2 way access directly to the park for a rest stop and then signage to the Queen St precinct.
4 Provide value for money	All agree there is a low level of differential between all items but commentary begins with a consideration of impact on the park. At this point emphasis starts to shift to the park.
5 Enhance potential beneficial environmental effects and manage potential adverse environmental impacts	Comments on the size of the footprint on the park have already been made in 4. The same argument now gets its second vote.
6 Optimise the benefits and minimise adverse impacts on the local social environment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The argument for a cul de sac is based on an incorrect assumption. RMS now recognizes that Mark Radium is a travellers and workers rest stop. It is not a park used by locals. Residents of the Arbour were invited by Landcare to form a Parkcare group, that is their only contact. • Impact on the park was scored negatively yet again. In fact any decision that prevents use by travellers is a poor one for the town. • No consideration was given to the negative impact of rerouted traffic from the most densely settled area of town on the closest local streets that would now need to carry this traffic down to Queen St. • Consideration of the duck pond is not relevant here. Contouring of the land by Huntingdale Park across the road with its own billabong suggests that the water source for the pond has already been removed as have the ducks.
7 Manage the upgrading of the route in accordance with ecologically sustainable development (ESD) principles.	Mark Radium park gets its third vote for exactly the same issue covered in 4 and 5. Amount of pavement required gets another score in 13
8 Strategic Justification	A local application of this point may well have become the most important issue. Why close Victoria Street and take away the second of only three E-W link roads in Berry and an important second exit point to the south.
9 Project Justification The environmental, social and economic impacts of the project.	Environmental, social and economic considerations have already been made in other points. The judgement of no substantial difference across all three ignores the impact on the town's amenity and its current traffic patterns.

<p>The suitability of the site.</p> <p>Whether or not the project is in the public interest.</p>	<p>There was no consideration of the most important issue of whether or not the project, i.e closing Victoria Street is in the public interest.</p>
<p>10 Traffic and Transport</p> <p>Changes to local road connectivity and access and impacts on local traffic arrangements and local road capacity/safety from traffic rerouting and modified access to the upgraded highway, including direct impacts from the replacement of the existing highway that currently passes through Berry. The assessment must take into account potential interactions with local traffic associated with the residential sub- division at Huntingdale Park, Berry (including future growth) and any severance impacts on local connectivity within Berry as a result of the proposed route. Consideration must be given to potential impacts of changed traffic arrangements on local and/or school bus services, access for emergency services and garbage trucks routes.</p> <p>Opportunity for the provision of cycle way connections along the highway and to adjoining communities</p>	<p>This is the most important point given the purpose of the meeting. Its complexity is reflected in the notes under the key issue heading. As it stood, this complex issue only earned one score.</p> <p>This point should have been broken up into 3-4 sections to allow careful consideration and scoring of each:</p> <p>1- Changes to local road connectivity, including severance impacts. A most important issue.</p> <p>2- Potential interactions with local traffic associated with the residential subdivision at Huntingdale Park (including future growth). Closing Victoria Street forces all south bound Queen St traffic into conflict with incoming traffic from the Huntingdale Park and Kangaroo Valley precincts at the Queen St roundabout. Leaving Victoria Street open allows its current users to bypass the roundabout thereby making it safer for other users. This was not considered.</p> <p>3- Potential impacts of changed traffic arrangements on local and/or school bus services, access for emergency services and garbage truck routes. (With 3 locations in Berry providing independent accommodation for seniors and 2 hostels/ nursing homes, all with immediate access to Victoria Street, the issue of the most speedy ambulance exit towards hospitals in Nowra deserved closer consideration).</p> <p>4- Opportunity for the provision of cycle way connections along the highway and to adjoining communities (If this point was considered relevant to the central purpose of the meeting).</p>
<p>11 Noise and Vibration</p>	<p>Another most important issue associated with the changes to Victoria Street with only one opportunity to score. The noise and vibration associated with a high speed ramp within town limits in the cul de sac option was not mentioned.</p>
<p>12 Flora and Fauna</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With no flora and fauna on the Victoria Street roadway, Mark Radium park gets another score for the same issue of footprint already scored in 4,5 and 7. • Impact to trees south of Victoria St is not an issue and should not have been mentioned. Projected depictions

	(RMS office) show at the most 1-2 trees removed further down the road than will have been removed for the access ramp if Victoria St is closed. The same trees remain in all three close to Victoria St.
13 Surface and Groundwater	Scoring here concentrated on 2 issues – pavement (cost?) and the park. Issue 4 states that the item is based on value for money, not cost. With little to consider for surface and groundwater, attention turned again (see 6) to a tokenistic consideration of impact on the duck pond. A reading of the EPA's guidelines for Surface and Groundwater shows that, on such a small scale, the pond has no real relevance to the issue of surface and groundwater. Its major water supply does not come from the park.
14 Landscape and Visual Amenity	Yet again the size of the footprint on the park is used in the scoring. Another score, joining those already from 4, 5, 7 and 12. The commentary on visual impact again refers to the park.
15 Aboriginal and Historic heritage	No comment
16 Land Use/Property	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A decision was made here to separate the EPA's Land use/ Property, Social Economic into two separate items for scoring, 16 and 17 despite the Director General's key issues notes making it clear that the Social Economic here referred specifically to Land Use/ Property. 16 and 17 are one key issue, not two. • The depth of the commentary here does not indicate that the meeting considered this to be an important complex and separate issue. • This is the sixth time that footprint and therefore, land take is scored.
17 Social Economic	<p>See above. Social and Economic considerations have already been listed in 9 under the heading Project Justification. Impact on Mark Radium park is scored again for the seventh time. The exit roads (conflict points?) for the over 55's villages are neither a social or economic consideration and if important, should have been dealt with under traffic. There is no overall support from the village residents for closure and management takes no public stance.</p> <p>Social impacts have also been already considered in point 6, economic in point 3</p> <p>Why was thought not given to the social impact on all Berry residents whose use of Victoria Street will be severed and residents of those local connecting streets whose amenity will be downgraded by increased traffic associated with the closure of Victoria Street?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seventh reference to impact on Mark Radium Park

The impact/ footprint of Mark Radium Park scored **seven times**, an arbitrary and ill considered scoring system, social and economic impacts considered three times, important issues not addressed, assumptions based on incorrect information that reference to a “local” would have corrected, superficial interpretation of some points... the flaws in this evaluation of the three options for Victoria Street should have been obvious to the meeting participants. Perhaps the first mistake was to apply EPA guidelines to this decision making process. Key issues relating to a local situation should have been identified, advantages and disadvantages associated with the three options discussed and then a decision made. The chosen option should then have been assessed under EPA guidelines for the purpose of the submission to the DPI and to the public for final comment.

I believe the selected option in an unbiased process would have been to keep Victoria Street open with two way access to Queen Street. Attention should have then turned to questioning the estimates provided for impact of all three options on the park (**now shown to be highly erroneous with only a 5% difference between all three**), re-examining the imprint of the two way road on Mark Radium Park and examining ways of minimizing it.

I appreciate that the RMS is still open to change on the Victoria Street issue and are looking for guidance from the community, Shoalhaven City Council and the DP&I before the final decision is made.

I ask that you reject the findings of the 23 May 2012 Foxground and Berry bypass – Victoria Street workshop, that attention is paid to community calls for Victoria Street to remain open with 2 way access from Queen St and that the RMS be directed to discard the input from the meeting referred and to reconsider their stance.

[REDACTED]
Berry, 2535
[REDACTED]

23 MAY 2012

Foxground and Berry bypass – Victoria Street workshop

The Foxground and Berry bypass project team held a meeting to discuss design options for Victoria Street on Wednesday 23 May 2012 at the RMS Southern Regional office.

Attendees:

Julian Watson, RMS Environmental Manager
Jayd Houguet, RMS Road Safety and Traffic Engineering Officer
Annette Beedles, RMS Graduate Engineer
John Poposki, RMS Road Safety & Road Design Review
Leah Henderson, RMS Environmental Officer
Laura Scott, RMS Business & Administration Officer
Stuart Dalziel, AECOM Transport Planning
Jon Williamson, AECOM Project Manager

Summary – Purpose of the meeting

Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) convened a project team meeting to discuss three major design options, each with slight variations, for Victoria Street.

The options considered were:

1. Close Victoria Street at the Princes Highway – cul-de-sac
2. Two-way access between Queen and Victoria Streets, with southbound on-ramp from Victoria Street. Roundabout at Victoria Street
3. One way southbound access between Queen and Victoria Streets, with southbound on-ramp from Victoria Street. Roundabout at Victoria Street.

Note:

- All options considered are subject to no right turn into Victoria Street for northbound highway traffic under the concept design and associated central median safety barrier.
- All options require the same property acquisition and footprint to accommodate private access / driveway to Vanini property.

Julian Watson, RMS Environmental Manager, opened the meeting and briefly discussed the current traffic situation on Victoria Street and provided an overview of the meeting objectives. He then presented the design options and advised that the design option chosen would be included in the Environmental Assessment (EA).

Meeting Notes



Stuart Dalziel, AECOM Transport Planning, advised a survey of through traffic was undertaken and approximately 20 per cent of through traffic use Victoria Street, which equates to around 30-40 vehicles per hour. As the local traffic survey company that completed origin-destination (OD) surveys used a manual method to match number plates, AECOM has asked to receive the data in order to validate the findings using computer software, to confirm that the data is accurate and reflects traffic patterns on Victoria Street.

In addition, Stuart Dalziel commented that findings in the Foxground and Berry bypass traffic and transport assessment shows that the northbound off-load ramp and Kangaroo Valley Road intersection is predicted to operate at LOS A in 2037. This intersection is one of the main conflict points where highway traffic will meet the local traffic and suggests that if this location operates at LOS A, then the rest of the local road network should also perform at acceptable levels. This is because highway traffic would dissipate throughout the rest of the local road network after this intersection and up to 85 per cent (varies for AM peak, PM peak, 100th hour and daily) of through traffic (external to the town) would be on the bypass.

Ranking of the options were reviewed. All meeting attendees voiced issues on the individual criteria for the three options.

Rankings:

1. Does not meet criteria at all
2. Meets criteria – low level
3. Meets criteria – basic performance
4. Best meets criteria – to an acceptable level
5. Best meets criteria to a very high level

See below for notes and scores of the considered options.

Meeting Notes



Transport
Roads & Maritime
Services

	<i>Close Victoria Street at the Princes Highway – cul-de-sac. Southbound on-ramp from Queen Street</i>		<i>Two-way access between Queen and Victoria Streets, with southbound on-ramp from Victoria Street</i>		<i>One way access between Queen and Victoria Streets, with southbound on-ramp from Victoria Street</i>	
	Score	Notes	Score	Notes	Score	Notes
Improve road safety	3	Removes conflict points for the majority of movements at Victoria Street & Queen Street on-loads. Acceptable changes to local network – increase traffic to George and Edward Streets. Traffic conflicts are diverted to a slower 50km/h zone.	3	Conflicts at Victoria Street on load & Queen Street on load. Deflection at roundabouts would need to be considered. Speed issues down Victoria Street onto ramp - need to consider roundabout approach.	4	Left in left out Victoria Street. Still have speeding issues related to on-ramp style behaviour.
Improve efficiency of the Princes Highway between Toolijooa Road and Schofields Lane	5	All options allow for improved highway efficiency.	5	All options allow for improved highway efficiency.	5	All options allow for improved highway efficiency.
Support regional and local economic development	5	Queen Street used more frequently.	4	Allows access for through traffic. People who travel northbound to Mark Radium Park still can under this	3	Doesn't keep people on Queen Street or provide access for northbound. People who travel northbound to

Meeting Notes



Transport
Roads & Maritime
Services

	<i>Close Victoria Street at the Princes Highway – cul-de-sac. Southbound on-ramp from Queen Street</i>		<i>Two-way access between Queen and Victoria Streets, with southbound on-ramp from Victoria Street</i>		<i>One way access between Queen and Victoria Streets, with southbound on-ramp from Victoria Street</i>	
	Score	Notes	Score	Notes	Score	Notes
				option (via the Kangaroo Valley Road interchange).		Mark Radium Park still can under this option (via the Kangaroo Valley Road interchange).
Provide value for money	4	Less infrastructure and maintenance costs. Less park loss. Low level of differential between all options – note item is based on value for money, not direct costs.	3	Greatest impacts on amount of parkland required. Low level of differential between all options – note item is based on value for money, not direct costs.	3	Impact remains to park. Low level of differential between all options – note item is based on value for money, not direct costs.
Enhance potential beneficial environmental effects and manage potential adverse environmental impacts	4	Smallest footprint. Allows for greatest options for future use of park. Changes to local traffic network. Minimises impacts to trees south of Victoria	3	Largest footprint. Maintains closest to existing access arrangements. On-ramp has impacts to trees south of Victoria Street.	4	Mid-range footprint. Changes access arrangements On-ramp has impacts to trees south of Victoria Street.

Meeting Notes



Transport
Roads & Maritime
Services

	<i>Close Victoria Street at the Princes Highway – cul-de-sac. Southbound on-ramp from Queen Street</i>		<i>Two-way access between Queen and Victoria Streets, with southbound on-ramp from Victoria Street</i>		<i>One way access between Queen and Victoria Streets, with southbound on-ramp from Victoria Street</i>	
	Score	Notes	Score	Notes	Score	Notes
		Street.				
Optimise the benefits and minimise adverse impacts on the local social environment.	3	Optimises potential future use and opportunities for expansion of Mark Radium Park, which is currently believed to be used by local residents of the Arbour and BUPA who are active in its upkeep as well as other users. Might attract an uninviting crowd due to reduced visibility/ accessibility.	3	Greatest impact to park. May impact duck pond. Keeps access to park.	4	Better for pedestrians to cross- one traffic leg only for the southbound on-ramp at the Queen St intersection. Moderate impact to park.
Manage the upgrading of the route in accordance with ecologically sustainable development (ESD) principles.	4	Least amount of pavement. Maintains park area.	3	Largest amount of pavement. Greatest impact on park.	4	Less pavement. Moderate impact on park area.
Strategic Justification	3	No substantial	3	No substantial	3	No substantial

Meeting Notes



Transport
Roads & Maritime
Services

	<i>Close Victoria Street at the Princes Highway – cul-de-sac. Southbound on-ramp from Queen Street</i>		<i>Two-way access between Queen and Victoria Streets, with southbound on-ramp from Victoria Street</i>		<i>One way access between Queen and Victoria Streets, with southbound on-ramp from Victoria Street</i>	
	Score	Notes	Score	Notes	Score	Notes
(against state plans, etc.).		difference.		difference.		difference.
Project Justification The environmental, social and economic impacts of the project. The suitability of the site. Whether or not the project is in the public interest.	3	No substantial difference.	3	No substantial difference.	3	No substantial difference.
Traffic and Transport Changes to local road connectivity and access and impacts on local traffic arrangements and local road capacity/safety from traffic rerouting and modified access to the upgraded highway, including direct impacts from the replacement of the existing highway that currently passes through	2	80% of turn movements to and from the western end of Victoria Street eliminated. Does not retain 40% movement, which is left out of Victoria Street. No exceptions for emergency vehicles. Largest impact on local traffic movements. Would enable	4	Maintains current local traffic movements. Best maintains existing turning movements, left in and out, plus right out at Victoria Street. Emergency vehicles have no special conditions. Provides roundabout (therefore turn	3	Maintains the majority of existing turning movements, left in and out at Victoria Street. Roundabout caters for garbage trucks and buses etc.

Meeting Notes



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	Score	Notes	Score	Notes	Score	Notes
<p>Berry. The assessment must take into account potential interactions with local traffic associated with the residential sub-division at Huntingdale Park, Berry (including future growth) and any severance impacts on local connectivity within Berry as a result of the proposed route. Consideration must be given to potential impacts of changed traffic arrangements on local and/or school bus services, access for emergency services and garbage trucks routes.</p> <p>Opportunity for the provision of cycle way connections along the highway and to adjoining communities</p>		access for school bus & garbage truck at cul-de-sac.		facilities) for buses, garbage trucks etc.		

Meeting Notes



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	Score	Notes	Score	Notes	Score	Notes
Noise and Vibration	2	Distributes more traffic through local network. Moves moderate amount of noise impacts to surrounding local road network.	4	Minimises but does not eliminate changes to current noise profile.	3	Moves moderate amount of noise impacts to surrounding local road network.
Flora and Fauna	4	Least impact on park and vegetation removal. Minimises impacts to trees south of Victoria Street.	2	Most impact to Mark Radium Park. Most vegetation removal. On-ramp has impacts to trees south of Victoria Street.	3	Some impact to Mark Radium Park, duck pond not impacted, few trees impacted. On-ramp has impacts to trees south of Victoria Street.
Surface and Groundwater	4	No impact on duck pond. Least amount of pavement and drainage infrastructure needed.	2	Some impact on the duck pond. Greatest amount of pavement and drainage infrastructure required.	3	No impact on duck pond. Roundabout drainage needed.
Landscape and Visual Amenity	4	Reduces footprint and creates potential to improve visual	2	Largest footprint and greatest visual impact.	3	Moderate footprint and visual impact.

Meeting Notes



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	Score	Notes	Score	Notes	Score	Notes
		impact. Retains most of the park.				
Aboriginal and Historic heritage	3	No substantial difference.	3	No substantial difference.	3	No substantial difference.
Land Use/Property	4	Lesser footprint and acquisition/ land take.	2	Largest footprint and most acquisition/ land take.	3	Moderate footprint and acquisition/ land take.
Social Economic	3	Benefits for the retirement village residents by reducing conflict points on Victoria Street. Allows easier pedestrian movements - one traffic leg only for the southbound on-ramp at the Queen St intersection plus no conflict between pedestrians and traffic at the western end of Victoria Street. Greatest opportunity to	3	Maintains existing traffic flows and access/turning movements but greatest impact on Mark Radium Park.	4	Allows good compromise of both.

Meeting Notes



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	<i>Close Victoria Street at the Princes Highway – cul-de-sac. Southbound on-ramp from Queen Street</i>		<i>Two-way access between Queen and Victoria Streets, with southbound on-ramp from Victoria Street</i>		<i>One way access between Queen and Victoria Streets, with southbound on-ramp from Victoria Street</i>	
	Score	Notes	Score	Notes	Score	Notes
		maintain and possibly enhance Mark Radium Park.				
TOTAL SCORE						
	60		52		58	

Attention: Department of Planning and Infrastructure

Re: Victoria Street Options, Berry

I am appalled by the RMS decision to submit Option 1, i.e. the closure of Victoria Street, to the Department of Planning and Infrastructure as their preferred option.

I feel that Option 3 brings greater benefit to the township of Berry than closure, even more so if the following modifications were made:

1 Extend Queen St, as a local two-way street linked to an open Victoria Street, past the Vannini residence and on to BUPA. The benefit of direct access in and out for both the Vanninis and BUPA is obvious but the benefit to the Arbour would be much greater. BUPA traffic currently travels through the Arbour, often at unsafe speed. With more Arbour residences being built along Pepperfarm Drive, BUPA traffic poses a far greater risk to the Arbour residents than any traffic along Victoria Street. In case of major emergency at BUPA the upgraded access road and bridge through the Arbour could still be used. The cost of this street would be offset by not having to construct an access road for the Vanninis under the Bypass and up to Huntingdale estate.

2 South of the BUPA entrance close the north bound lane, changing the road into a one way southbound access ramp for the highway. This would remove the acceleration noise of the access ramp from town, thereby improving the amenity of Mark Radium Park, lower Windsor Drive and Victoria Street homes, as well as the Arbour residences and BUPA. A living sight screen (shrubs, trees) between the extended Queen St and the highway would further mitigate the impact of the highway. **A major noise and amenity issue would be better addressed!**

3 Ensure that the Queen St extension and the roundabout* at Victoria Street are of a size compatible with Berry's historic street grid. I ask that RMS seek precedent and special consideration to mitigate what they concede will be an area of high visual and physical impact on the town and on Mark Radium Park. Only after BUPA, where it would become the southern access ramp, should the road be built to RMS highway standards. * Would it be necessary to have a roundabout? Motorists from the western side of the bypass will have had to travel through two already. I ask that consideration be given to the placement of a stop sign at the bottom of Victoria St. This would have the added advantage of forcing traffic on Victoria St to slow down.

Further arguments in support of Option 3

1 A stated RMS goal was to preserve Mark Radium Park. It serves as an important tourist gateway to the southern end of town but is rarely used by locals. RMS hopes to reconfigure it as a local park. Parents with young children and strollers look for parks nearby, preferably with access to cafés for coffee. The western end of Victoria Street has become the “senior” end of town with two over 55's villages, with generous recreational space, and few families with young children. There would be little amenity in the park for families or other residents with the bypass and access ramp adjacent to it (Option 1).

Under Options 1 and 2 access to the park would be unavailable or limited for travellers. If Option 3 is adopted, Victoria Street remains open with a **two-way local street** linking Queen Street and Victoria Street. Highway signage could include signs for Mark Radium Park. The park would be visible and easily located by those looking to break their journey with obvious access back to the highway. This two-way access, on new RMS figures, takes only 4-5% more (even less if built to council standards) of Mark Radium Park than the other options. RMS states in the EA that where currently the Princes Highway takes 55% of southbound traffic and the Sandtrack 45%, by 2037

the figures will be 84% and 16%. Even more reason to preserve this traveller rest and revive point! **RMS could achieve another of their goals with Option 3!**



2 The western end of Victoria Street is currently the most densely populated area of town. There are 48 dwellings, 60 and 113 residences well underway in the Grange and the Arbour respectively, and 101 beds now occupied in BUPA with approval to expand to 142. All attract visitors, employees and tradespeople. Closing Victoria St and forcing all this traffic to travel “backwards” up the street to reach Queen St defies logic and will place an unnecessary burden of extra traffic on George Street in particular. It would be much more logical to allow this lower end traffic to access the Queen Street roundabout via a two way street adjoining Mark Radium Park. The RMS statement that little traffic will make a right hand turn out of Victoria Street is easily disproved once BUPA traffic, the traffic generated by west Victoria St and travellers making a rest stop are considered. With no right turn into Victoria St possible from the new highway, traffic on Victoria Street will be considerably reduced. Why unnecessarily increase it again by forcing all west Victoria St traffic up the street when they could simply exit in their chosen direction at the duck pond? RMS traffic engineers have not considered the traffic generated in this area in their calculation of future traffic volumes.

3 Victoria Street is an important arterial road in Berry. It is not an “unofficial bypass” or a “rat run”. Closure would mean that there would be only one exit route to the south via the Queen Street roundabout. This roundabout will experience high demand at peak periods under Option 1. Should the roundabout or Queen St be blocked for any reason, an open Victoria Street would provide an alternative exit route. It will also relieve the pressure on the Queen Street roundabout on a daily basis, thereby reducing the likelihood of accidents there or traffic back up. The nearest hospital and ambulance are to the South. A congested or blocked Queen Street roundabout would either hinder or prevent access or exit by emergency services. The Berry Bypass is already taking one of our three connecting East-West routes, it shouldn’t be allowed to take a second!

I ask that careful consideration be given to these reasons for considering an improved Option 3. With an access road extension to BUPA followed by the on-ramp, the two way road of Option 3 maintains current traffic connectivity, removes unnecessary traffic from Victoria St and N-S streets such as George Street, helps preserve the true function of Mark Radium Park, reduces pressure on the Queen Street roundabout, increases safety for residents of the Arbour, and reduces noise and improves amenity by moving the access ramp out of town.

I acknowledge that this has been a painful process for both the town and the RMS. The pain results from the fact that this is a through pass, with its attendant disruption to local residences and traffic, not a bypass. I would be happy to present further to you my belief that Victoria Street Option 3 with an extension of Queen St as a two way street to BUPA minimises disruption to the town and caters best for the interests of all Berry residents.

Thank you for your attention,


Berry, 2535


12/12/12

Foxground and Berry Environmental Assessment Report

Submission by [REDACTED]

I submit to the Director General that the preferred northern Berry bypass option has failed its own environmental assessment.

The following statement in Volume 1 of the EAR is just one of many strategic justifications for the act of vandalism that will be inflicted by the State on the township of Berry when the poorly named "bypass" is built.

The preferred option was considered to provide the best outcome for the local environment and community. It performed the best against the project objectives of providing value for money, supporting regional and local economic development, traffic efficiency and maximising the benefits to the local social environment and road safety. p.40

The truth is that any of the considered routes would improve traffic efficiency and road safety. With an option selected on cost alone, the RMS now hopes to convince the Director General and the Berry community in the EAR that a highway placed in a 20 metre wide 7.5 metre deep gouged out cutting across the middle of Berry, causing an irreversible physical and social separation of the town into two sections, maximises the benefits to the local social environment. The severed section, growing rapidly in the only flood free zone available to Berry, will be larger than the original township. It will have no localized access to shops, schools and services. One overpass will be its only link to "downtown".

The RMS has coined a new term for this area, **West Berry**. It is used so often throughout the EAR that one wonders whether it is a deliberate ploy to legitimize their division of the town or whether, despite all the years of their presence in the town, they still do not understand its social and physical cohesion. This is despite Appendix M-11 stating:

Existing physical connections and linkages between the different parts of Berry are instrumental in shaping current community cohesion. Existing paths of travel by vehicle, bicycle and on foot are seen as critical to maintaining this current community cohesion. This also contributes to the community character of the town.

Locals refer to this area as "up off Kangaroo Valley Rd". There are currently two connecting roads with unobtrusive level access with roads of compatible width and design. The RMS plan to sever one of these roads and to replace the intersection of the other with two large roundabouts either side of a wide concrete bridge with a four lane highway and off ramp flowing under it. I refer you to Figure 4-13 on p. 78 Volume 1 of the EAR, an artist's impression of the 21st century horror that is to split our important historic rural town. In addition there will be a 200 metre long 4 metre high sound barrier adjacent to the highway. RMS strive to persuade in the EAR that a wide bridge with footpaths, cycleways and plantings will maintain existing physical connections and mitigate the physical and visual impact on this area and that only one access to and from town to Kangaroo Valley Rd and beyond is adequate. They argue their measures will successfully mitigate any perceived severance. RMS sees only a road, and not existing land contours, as a physical connection. Only a covered cutting at this point to replace the bridge and extending well down towards Mark Radium Park would remove the

physical and visual impact of the bypass here and increase the amenity of the area for motorists, pedestrians and cyclists. **I ask that this suggestion be investigated.**

The Director General required the RMS to address in the EAR:

Changes to local road connectivity and access and impacts on local traffic arrangements and local road capacity/safety from traffic rerouting and modified access to the upgraded highway, including direct impacts from the replacement of the existing highway that currently passes through Berry. The assessment must take into account potential interactions with local traffic associated with the residential sub-division at Huntingdale Park, Berry (including future growth) and any severance impacts on local connectivity within Berry as a result of the proposed route.
p.164 Volume 1 EAR.

The Director General should note that In the Environmental Risk Analysis in Section 9 there is no mention of the severance that would be caused if the Queen St roundabout, the proposed sole access to the south, were closed in a major incident. The risk of the Kangaroo Valley Rd overpass, as the only access to the west is mentioned. **The RMS statement that a serious incident here would be managed with an incident response plan, undeveloped and unspecified, is completely unacceptable.** A second route to the south can be provided through an open Victoria Street. There is no other route to the West. **The above requirements have not been met! I ask that the Director General direct the RMS to address this omission.**

On p. 356 RMS states that in this area:

*the Berry landscape character unit as a whole would experience high to moderate sensitivity to impacts associated with the project and the magnitude of the project within the character unit would be high. Therefore, the overall landscape character and visual impact of the project would be **high**.*

RMS recognizes that the impacts of the highway in the general proximity of Berry would, without mitigation:

amount to a significant deterioration in the cultural landscape values in the cultural values of the SICPH CL and specifically to the Berry landscape setting and that the project would impose a contrasting and modern road form upon the grid dominated nineteenth century character of the existing rural town fringe. p.420

Their mitigation plan is to:

Ensure that the scale and rhythm of noise attenuation, street lighting and ornamental tree planting reflect the Berry street grid and unify the existing local road network with the new bridges and roundabouts.

The reality of the image already referred to, Figure 4-13, demonstrates the inability of any mitigation effort here to “marry” such modern structural components with the existing landscape of Berry. Only avoidance would demonstrate commitment by the RMS to Objective 4 of their Urban design Principles:

Objective 4 – Respect the communities and towns along the highway

- *Minimise the impact of the project on the amenity of Berry residents.*
- *Provide effective and efficient access to Berry.*
- *Design new town access points as an important and integral part of the town, ensuring a clear and consistent access way.*
- *Minimise the disruption and loss of amenity to rural communities in the study area.*

When considering environmental, social and economic impacts on p.579, the EAR states that as far as possible impacts have been avoided. This is not true! Adoption of the alternative Southern Route proposed in December 2011 would have avoided all physical, visual and social impact on the town. The Director General requires that where there are alternatives, they should be subjected to an environmental assessment. In no way does the northern bypass of Berry “pass” its environmental assessment!

The preferred option was also seen as the best for supporting local economic development. Consideration of the early “orange” options, later modified to the preferred northern route, judged them better because they maintained visual connection between the highway and the town. This was considered to offset their higher noise and visual impacts on the town. When was visual connection to the town ever of such importance? Berry is a tourist town of State importance. It is a destination in its own right within easy travelling distance of Sydney and The Highlands. When incorrectly comparing Berry to improved outcomes in other bypassed towns such as Berrima, Karuah and Yass and one could continue with Goulburn, etc., RMS did not mention that these towns have true bypasses and that a visual connection was not seen as necessary. Berry certainly does not need a visual connection and yet we have been given a “through” pass not a bypass. It is hard to see how this will reinforce a sense of community identity and community well being such as has been achieved in Berrima, etc.

The repeated use of the word bypass and references to “the fringe” of town are dishonest and ignore the current size of Berry. What may have been acceptable in the 60’s is most certainly not acceptable now given Berry’s urban spread since then!

There is no denying that the main street of Berry without highway traffic will be good for business and good for amenity. RMS has forgotten though that the amenity of the rest of the town is also important. Any route would optimise the benefits to downtown Berry but **the northern route certainly does not minimise adverse impacts to areas beyond the Queen St shopping district. It causes them!**

I wonder, as motorists quickly speed down the highway admiring our highly valued views of pastoral landscapes and escarpment, whether they will think of the severance of North St and the increased noise levels, high earthen walls and stolen views that the residents and users of North St will have to endure forever. When they go under the Kangaroo Valley overpass will they think of the impact of this modern structure imposed on a town with 19th century traits that *“have not been replaced or overwhelmed by subsequent latter 20th century urban or industrial development”* p. 395. Will they notice that the misnamed bypass actually cuts Berry in half? Perhaps not! After all, this bypass is being built for highway travellers. It is certainly not being built with the best interest of the Berry community in mind! The fine animation on constant show in the RMS office during this consultation period has shown that most clearly.

I strongly believe that the current route and accompanying urban design of the “bypass” does not best meet guidelines set by the Director General. **I request that the history of the consideration of the amended southern option, Dec. 2011, be reviewed and that a full consideration of the key issues covered in the EAR for the northern option be applied also to that southern option. No final decision should have been made without that requirement!**

