



SUBMISSION NO. 77

BEGA VALLEY SHIRE COUNCIL

Council Chambers: Zingel Place, Bega NSW 2550
ABN 26 987 935 332

Our Ref:
Contact No: J. Clifton 6499 2192

26 May 2005

The Chairman
Standing Committee on Transport and Regional Services
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Secretary: *J. L. Mow*

RECEIVED

2 JUN 2005

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STANDING COMMITTEE ON
TRANSPORT AND
REGIONAL SERVICES

Faxed 30/05/05

Dear Mr Neville,

Council at its meeting on 26 April 2005 considered a report relating to the Inquiry and resolved as follows:

RECOMMENDATION

1. That Council endorse the preparation of a submission to the House of Representatives Transport and Regional Services Committee in relation to the completion of the western end of the Imlay Road which, when completed, will provide connectivity with the southern road network to the Eden Multi-purpose Wharf, and further that the submission also take to account the Princes Highway – in particular the Bega Bypass and Brogo Pass proposals.
2. That a copy of the submission be forwarded to the local member, Mr Garry Nairn, MP for his support and endorsement.

In considering this matter Council has identified three issues: the Imlay Road, the Bega Bypass and the Brogo Pass.

Given that the inquiry is looking at the connectivity of regional road and rail networks with ports it would be aware that the only route servicing the South Coast is the Princes Highway. There is no rail access south of Bomaderry, and for this reason alone it is essential that the route be of a standard that has good serviceability and safety for the communities along its length.

The Princes Highway is the major coastal road from Sydney to the Victorian border. The Highway passes through Eden and down to the border and its upgrade is essential to the development and future economic growth of services using the Eden Multi-purpose wharf. According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics about 25 million tonnes of freight is transported along the Princes Highway each year. However, in a recent survey conducted by the RTA they found that the crash rate on the Princes Highway is worse than rates recorded on the Pacific, Hume and New England Highways.

All correspondence to be addressed to: PO Box 492 Bega NSW 2550
Tel: 02 6499 2222 Fax: 02 6499 2200 Bega Web: www.begavalley.nsw.gov.au Email: council@begavalley.nsw.gov.au DX: 4904

Bermagui
14 Young Street, Bermagui 2546

Eden
116 Imlay Street, Eden 2551

Merimbula
103 Main Street, Merimbula 2548

Unlike other areas of Australia, the south eastern corner of Australia relies almost entirely on road transport. The Princes Highway provides the only corridor for regional industries within this area to move their product to metropolitan and export markets. Therefore the development of the Princes Highway as a freight route linking producers, communities and markets needs to become a priority for the three levels of government. The Princes Highway needs immediate action that allows for the removal of all identified black spots and the expansion of the highway into double lanes where possible. Currently accidents at certain sections of the Highway can result in closure in both directions for long periods of time.

The towns of the Bega Valley rely on the trucking of produce and supplies into the area. Currently these supplies are transported using heavy vehicles travelling either the Princes Highway or the Snowy Mountains Highway.

In August 2000 Council recommended the amendment to the Bega Valley Local Environmental Plan 1987 to permit uncoupling/coupling areas for B-Doubles on the Snowy Mountains Highway at Brown Mountain. B-doubles today cannot travel north of the Snowy Mountains Highway along the Princes Highway. All B-double transports must travel over Brown Mountain and then onto the Hume for transport of goods to Canberra and beyond. However, the B-Double driver on this route is still required to couple and uncouple to travel over Brown Mountain.

The Eden multi-purpose wharf was opened in October 2003. The Navy will use the wharf facilities for 60 days and for the remaining 300 days it is open to commercial freight. The Wharf is a 200 metre multi-purpose wharf, dredged berth, dual land 560 metre long jetty between the wharf and shore and an access road between the shore and the existing Edrom Road.

The multi-purpose wharf can accommodate larger ships than the present wharf at Eden and provides great flexibility for cargo handling, enabling exporters of timber and other primary producers to increase sales into the Asia-Pacific region. The main cargoes to use the facility are various forms of softwood products from Eden, Bombala and East Gippsland. However, from November 2005 to January 2006 six cruise ships will berth at the wharf.

The cost of transport infrastructure means that State and Territory borders are irrelevant and Eden's port has great economic growth potential through use by the Victorian export and import markets.

Imlay Road

The completion of the Imlay Road to a level where the use of B-Doubles and heavy vehicles on a regular basis does not impede the use of this road for other vehicles.

Bega Bypass

The blueprint for the Bega By-pass has been in existence for many years and according to Council sources the RTA have purchased land as part of their forward planning for construction of the bypass.

The main reason for the Bega By pass is to remove heavy vehicles from the CBD of Bega. The construction of an alternative road link will allow for the movement of heavy vehicles and in particular B-doubles around the outside of Bega's CBD. Currently there is no B-double

route in both directions. South bound and north bound B-Doubles have to uncouple and couple outside Bega's CBD. The movement of heavy vehicles through the centre of the Bega Township raises concerns for pedestrians and vehicle drivers. Heavy vehicles have to negotiate a tight turn from Gipps Street onto Carp Street or vice a versa. This traffic movement quite often means that other road users are required to back up or move to the side of the road to allow the heavy vehicle to negotiate the turn. The noise levels of the heavy vehicle gear changes and breaking has been raised, plus the wear and tear on Bega's main street. Another argument for the construction of the bypass is to stop heavy vehicles having to travel past St Patricks School on Gipps Street together with several churches.

In recent months the Southern Council's Group has called for the long talked about Bypass being given a higher priority by the New South Wales Roads and Traffic Authority. As part of this move Council made calls to have the government look at the fast-tracking of construction of the Bypass.

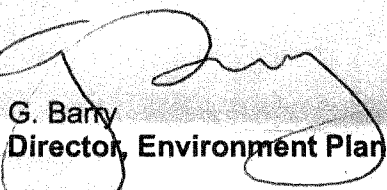
Brogo Pass

The Brogo part of the Princes Highway is a winding, narrow and patched surfaced section of the Princes Highway. This winding gorge road has rock falls that can close the Highway for several hours. During certain months of the year drivers will encounter fog and icy patches along its length.

The Brogo bridge is a two lane bridge which is approached by a tight corner. Heavy vehicle drivers will radio ahead to other truck drivers to advise when they will be on the bridge. Both the section the Princes Highway at Brogo river bridge and Narooma Wagonga Inlet are delaying the use of B-doubles along this southern section of Highway.

In conclusion, Council ask that the Transport and Regional Services Committee make inquiry in the issues identified in this submission.

Yours faithfully



G. Barry
Director, Environment Planning and Development

c.c.: Mr Gary Nairn MP