

## MINUTES

### PUBLIC MEETING – WARRINGAH FREEWAY NOISE WALLS

14<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2010 6pm – North Sydney Council, 200 Miller St North Sydney

**CHAIR** - Mayor Genia McCaffery

**AGENDA SPEAKERS –**

Gladys Berejiklian MP – Member for Willoughby

Peter Crosby - RTA Sydney Region Manager

Joseph Fanous - RTA Sydney Environmental Manager & Manager of RTA Noise Abatement Program

Graham Webster – Resident

Kathy Bisits – Resident

**APOLOGIES** – Jillian Skinner MP – Member for North Sydney

**ATTENDANCE** – approximately 200 in total – 165 residents signed petition - other residents who could not attend advised support to Council by email

**GENIA McCAFFERY** - welcomed all and particularly RTA representatives and State MP and then briefed meeting -

- Council has lobbied RTA for many years for noise abatement
- Warringah Freeway (WF) carries all city traffic from other newer freeways all of which have walls
- Traffic has consistently increased since freeway opening in 1968 and now carries 200,000 vehicles per day – 30% increase since Lane Cove Tunnel opened
- If built today WF would automatically include noise wall – could not be built without noise walls
- RTA has a Noise Abatement Program (NAP) which prioritises noise affected properties for treatment
- Funding for NAP is only \$1.7 m per year for whole of Sydney
- A Bus holding area is now being constructed (near Miller St) which involves moving traffic lanes closer to residences and removal of many trees – RTA refuses to include basic noise walls as part of construction
- WF should not be included under the NAP but should be a “Special Case” to bring WF up to the same standard as other freeways – fast track of funding is required now

**GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN MP**

- Is well aware of noise impact on the area from WF – sister lives in WF area
- Has always fought for constituents - has lobbied State Govt for years – has put forward many resident petitions – assures residents of continuing support in future
- Highlighted lack of transparency by RTA in the NAP process and priority setting
- NAP list is growing each year – WF area is going down the priority list
- RTA is not at the table to discuss the WF noise issue
- This is not a retrospective action case for NAP – this is a “Special group” of residents requiring action
- RTA needs to liaise with residents when issues are highlighted – need to deal with “communities” not just individuals - needs to deal with the issues as they arise - not after the work is finished. When RTA construct/modify – noise levels after the work should be no higher than before the work
- Units above second level also need to be considered

Later was asked what policy and actions will be taken as part of a future Government – response included -

- Will strongly support residents for noise walls along WF in or out of Government
- Future transport and road projects must include cost of noise barriers within their budget - this will ensure NAP list does not grow longer
- As Minister of Transport would strongly push for retrospective noise walls for WF - i.e. would work with Council and Minister for Roads to push for WF noise walls to be promptly actioned and funded as an “exceptional” case

**GRAHAM WEBSTER** – Resident of Sexton Place

- Thanked all involved - Council for hosting and arranging meeting, Mayor for Chairing, Gladys Berejiklian for support, Peter Crosby and Joseph Fanous from RTA for attending
- Thanked all residents for coming out on such an inhospitable evening – shows strong support
- Clearly 200 residents attending on such a poor night shows high community concern about Freeway traffic noise, and strong support for action to address the W F traffic noise problem
- Best action is through the “Special Case” being pursued by Council for noise walls from Naremburn to North Sydney – NAP is another action means which we should all use to support the Special Case
- Our case is strong – in addition to points noted by the Mayor, other support includes – WF is understood to be the widest and busiest in NSW and likely in Australia – Noise levels are high – impacts particularly on the lives of children and elderly – noise levels are above draft Govt standard for freeways and above level for NAP registration
- We should not have to wait to be prioritised under NAP – should receive noise abatement now – both noise walls and low noise road surfacing for WF
- We call on RTA to act – we call on our MPs Gladys B and Jillian S to take the case for funding to Govt – we call on Council to continue to pursue RTA on residents behalf as a “special case”
- We request all Residents to support the “Special case” and other actions by lobbying of – (1) – sign petition (will be delivered to RTA, Minister, Parliament) – (2) – write letters to Minister and RTA (addresses are at end of Minutes) – (3) - Register on NAP to show RTA how many properties are affected
- GW offered to help any resident with registration under the RTA NAP process – information is on RTA web site [www.rta.nsw.gov.au](http://www.rta.nsw.gov.au) - then - Environment- Noise Abatement
- Persistence will win through – please continue with support of all actions

**KATHY BISITS** – resident of Morden Street

- Affirmed thanks to all involved
- Bus Layover is example of RTA missing a perfect opportunity to install noise walls whilst construction is in progress and equipment is on site – now would cost a fraction of the cost of doing it retrospectively
- WF is part of Sydney Orbital – the 110 km ring road around Sydney – WF is the widest and busiest part of the Sydney Orbital but notably the only major section without noise walls – WF deserves noise walls
- We ask to be treated equally with other freeways with noise walls
- NAP has achieved nothing for our area over all these years – except wall in Cammeray Avenue
- Message to RTA – treat us fairly – bring us up to standard - devise a plan to implement over coming years – please all lobby hard for this

**ROADS & TRAFFIC AUTHORITY (RTA) – facts advised by JF and PC and points noted from responses to questions**

- NAP only formally in existence since approx 1998 – there were schemes with other names before 1998
- NAP prioritises noise affected qualifying properties on the basis of noise levels using measurement by Consultants for RTA - reference website - [www.rta.nsw.gov.au](http://www.rta.nsw.gov.au) – Environment – Noise Abatement
- Qualifying Noise level for NAP listing are 65db during the day and 60 db at night – measured by monitoring device over 7 days by consultants
- Residence must have been owned by same owner for 7 years – only properties up to 2 stories high will be considered
- NAP Budget for whole of Sydney is \$1.7m per year
- Budget for RTA for Sydney in total is approx \$500 m per year (excluding Motorways and major infrastructure projects)
- Funds for Project construction are quite different to NAP funding – excess project funds cannot be transferred to NAP
- Noise wall cost installed is approx \$800 per m2 (cost was queried by residents)
- Traffic control cost can be can be high depending on type of traffic control required
- Only 4 properties are now registered under NAP currently in WF area – several others now under test
- NAP prioritising method is now under review – review commenced in Feb 2010 – still no decisions
- RTA will assess noise after bus layover is operating – will then assess requirements for noise abatement
- JF advised - trees were assessed by Council and had to then be cut down
- PC advised later - he could "hear the message" from residents

**RESIDENTS CONCERNS & COMMENTS – Points noted from residents questions and points**

- After 15 or 20 years of complaining about noise by many – no action
- Have been waiting since 1968 – over 40 years – please finish the job
- 15 years lobbying – same answer all the time – register on NAP – results in no action
- Continually suggesting NAP registration is an insult to residents – nothing will ever happen under NAP
- NAP does not have enough funds to achieve anything
- Piecemeal approach by house is inefficient and ineffective – whole noise wall job needs to be done
- WF has been discreetly widened over the years by converting breakdown lanes on the side of freeway to traffic lanes – some sections have widened from 6 lanes to 10 lanes
- WF is now 10 to 16+ lanes wide – is virtually 2 freeways wide
- Cammeray Avenue noise wall was erected in 1996 - 14 years ago and the residents "love" the noise wall – very effective – cost was \$60,000 and was installed by one man
- Traffic levels in 1968 and 1978 are very different to 2010 – where are the update facilities – the barriers
- Cost of \$800 per M2 questioned by many – Hebel supplier indicates \$250 per M2 assuming easy access – thus \$1,000 per linear M if 4 m high – yes must allow for difficult site access but \$800 per M2 is too high
- Who do residents contact in RTA to get action?
- Naremburn residents received a noise wall when Lane Cove Tunnel was constructed – Willoughby Council lobbied very hard and received the funds
- Private developer put in 14 panels of noise wall (4m high) between Brook St and Merrenburn St Naremburn – cost was much less than RTA quote - RTA contribution was only 2 small panels – "a joke"
- If walls are put in later then they will cost 2 or 3 times the amount during original construction

- Many residents have already spent large sums on double glazing, insulation and other measures
- Noise is much worse the higher you go – noise rises – so why consider only 2 levels
- Berry Street in North Sydney stated as worse noise than Cammeray
- Suggest that impact should be assessed from human impact point of view
- Residents at south end of WF in North Sydney should not be left out
- If noise level are measured at a particular residence, it can be assumed that adjacent properties will have similar noise levels – in fact the whole Freeway noise level – “join the dots” – do it now
- Sound proofing houses near WF (seals and double glazing ) is like “putting a bandaid on a gaping wound”
- **Residents at the meeting were very frustrated by lack of any specific responses to noise issues raised previously and by lack of any specific commitment for action**
- BUS LAYOVER - Trees previously provided a visual barrier and a partial noise barrier – trees have been removed for bus layover - where are the replacements (noise barrier)?
- Bus layover – Accepted tender from NACE Constructions was under RTA estimate for the project – funds left over were given to another project – why? (RTA estimate for project was \$16 million. Accepted tender from NACE Constructions – total project cost now stated as \$10 million)

#### **FUTURE ACTIONS & FOLLOW UP**

- RTA “heard the Message” and will take it back to RTA management for urgent consideration
- Council will follow up RTA for formal response to residents requests/concerns at meeting
- Council will continue to lobby the “Special Case” on behalf of residents
- Mayor asked residents to follow the call for support - to sign petition, to write to Minister Hon David Borger MP and Mr Michael Bushby CEO RTA, to Register on NAP
- State Member will - lodge Petition in Parliament - will carry the message to Government – funding now - and seek to question the Minister in Parliament on his response to this meeting and our petition
- GW will submit Petitions to CEO, RTA and Minister for Roads
- Active residents will continue to vigorously lobby RTA by all means – request residents support when requested – request others residents to join in these action

Addresses for complaint/action letters to RTA & Minister are -

The Hon David Borger MP  
 Minister for Roads  
 Governor Macquarie Tower  
 Level 37 1 Farrer Place SYDNEY NSW 2000  
 Email – [minister@borger.minister.nsw.gov.au](mailto:minister@borger.minister.nsw.gov.au)

Michael Bushby  
 Chief Executive Officer  
 Roads and Traffic Authority  
 Locked Bag 928  
 NORTH SYDNEY NSW 2059

RTA website for NAP information - [www.rta.nsw.gov.au](http://www.rta.nsw.gov.au) – Environment – Noise Abatement program

Minuted by Graham Webster

30-9-2010