
REPORT OF GENERAL MANAGER
EXTRA ORDINARY MEETING OF COUNCIL

TUESDAY, 17 JUNE 2008

STRATEGIC PLANNING

1. Small Lot Rural Subdivisions - Proposed Special Rates for Road Construction - Verons Estate **File 33886**

A meeting was held with landowners of Verons Estate on 22 May 2008. Presentations and notes from this meeting have been provided on Council's website for owner's access and the details of the meeting and submissions received in relation to the Estate are provided as Attachment "A".

Roads Strategy

Council has adopted a draft policy to progressively upgrade the roads in the Small Lot Rural Subdivisions commencing in 2008/09. Such works to be funded from a Special Rate for "Road Construction" and any Special Rate residue from road design.

Council at this time has not determined any changes to its previous resolution to not undertake regular maintenance to the roads in the estates. A further direction in respect of this situation is required as an outcome of this report.

It is evident from the recent public meeting that land owners:-

- would have a greater acceptance of a Special Rate for road works if Council provided additional funds from other revenue sources
- would prefer to have available funds 'spread as far as possible' in the Estate and not restricted to upgrading selected sections to DCP100 standard
- request Council to accept maintenance responsibility for all roads; and
- request Council to liaise with property owners to agree on annual works.

The implications to Council, if it agrees with the above preference and requests of land owners, are outlined below.

The main policy issues are:-

a) Standard of Works

DCP100 specifies the minimum pavement width and also a minimum of 200mm depth of gravel. The current practice for existing gravel roads is to provide a minimum of 100mm of gravel when undertaking the annual Gravel Resheeting Program as this is considered the minimum depth of gravel required to allow for subsequent maintenance grading and a reasonable pavement life.

The minimum width specified in DCP100 for rural no through roads of less than 250 vehicles per day is 4.5m gravel formation. Passing bays should also be considered every 100 to 200m. For 'Rural Residential Streets' the minimum width is 5m for up to 250 vehicles per day.

b) Regular Maintenance Scheduling

It is considered that if Council is to commence regular maintenance of any or a section of the estate roads then capital funding is required to upgrade the road to an all weather gravel standard.

The majority of the estate roads are not to a satisfactory standard and considerable funds would be required to upgrade the roads. Under the adopted Gravel Road Risk Management Procedure the upgrading works would need to be undertaken within 12 months.

There is still the option of Council undertaking minor improvement works to isolated problem locations without commencing regular maintenance.

Verons Estate

A meeting was held on 4 June 2008 with representatives of land owners to review options for expenditure of available funds. There was general agreement to the upgrading of the first section of road to an all weather gravel standard (100mm depth of gravel) and to undertake minor improvement works to several selected locations. It is expected that these works can be undertaken within the available funds. The balance of funds will then be expended to extend the major works of all weather gravel standard.

It is considered that these works will provide improved access and be sufficient for 12 months at which time the rezoning process will be progressed and Council can review roadworks options for subsequent years.

General Comments

It is considered desirable for roadworks to be a minimum standard so that the works will be part of a future final road pavement. The minimum standard is necessary to facilitate access for potential development consents and the overall rezoning process. At this stage the minimum standard required by State agencies for rezoning is not known and a seal or at least detention mechanisms may be a requirement to minimise sedimentation.

Minor works could be undertaken to isolated sections (as determined in consultation with land owners) to a lesser standard. However, it is considered that this should be restricted to a minor portion of available funds and any considerations to commencing regular maintenance only be to sections that have been upgraded to minimum standard. It is also considered that upgraded sections should be contiguous.

The suggested minimum standard is recommended as 100mm depth of gravel, minimum width of pavement of 5m and drainage installed as required. It is also to be noted that a REF is required for any works and this may determine the necessity to undertake other works in conjunction with the formation of gravel pavements and associated drainage.

At this stage rezoning investigations have not been finalised. However, in Verons Estate there is high certainty that the existing entrance road and the north south roads will all be required for access.

No provision has been made in the 2008/2009 Draft Management Plan for contributions from general fund towards road upgrades or maintenance.

It is considered that an appropriate course of action is to undertake roadworks in 2008/09 to the extent of available funds and to review options and funding for 2009/10 in 12 months, at which time there will be advances in the rezoning investigations and a clearer definition of the final road and drainage requirements.

Funding Implications

- Council is proposing to spend about \$130,000 of road design funding on roadworks. Council will need to fund the final road designs (in the future) from either General Revenue or Strategic Project Reserves. Some of this funding will need to be provided in 2009/2010 with the balance in 2010/2011. For Verons Estate, a draft detailed design is available and only minimal funds would be required.
- If Council resolve to provide additional funds in 2008/2009 to 'match' Special Rate revenue then additional funds of \$20,740 will be required. Unless funded from Strategic Project Reserves, this will entail the deferment of advertised capital works
- In addition if this 'matching' funding model is utilised for the funding of all final roadworks then future funding of about \$900,000 will be required. A suitable funding source would be the Strategic Project Reserve and this would have implications on Council's ability to undertake other future major projects.
- If Council were to commence regular maintenance to all roads, then it will be necessary to upgrade the roads to a minimum standard. This would have significant impact on road maintenance budgets unless additional capital funding was provided.

RECOMMENDED that

- a) **Council commence regular maintenance to the small lot rural subdivision roads only once the roads have been upgraded to a minimum gravel all weather standard (2WD)**
 - i) **minimum standard to be:-**
 - **adequate formation**
 - **minimum of 100mm thick gravel pavement to 5m width**
 - **drainage as required**
 - **6m cleared formation**
 - ii) **the section of road to be contiguous or connected to an existing road maintained by Council**
- b) **Council determine that the major proportion of available capital funds be expended to upgrade roads to a minimum gravel all weather standard (2WD) with some funding to be expended on repairs to existing tracks.**
- c) **Council consider the extent of additional 'matching' funding to be provided and that such funding be provided from the Strategic Project Reserve.**
- d) **Council determine to introduce a Special Rate Variation to the Verons Estate for Roadworks as advertised in the Draft 2008/2011 Management Plan.**

Ernie Royston
Director Strategic Planning

John Gould
Assistant General Manager