

**Enclosure for
Item 477 Pacific Highway, Wyong – RTA Preferred Option
Submitted to Ordinary Meeting of
12 November 2008 at Wyong Council**

Results of questionnaire distributed to business operators and owners in Wyong township to ascertain preferences between the RTA's "preferred option" and the Wyong Chamber Of Commerce's "cut and cover" option

Following the RTA's briefing to the Councillors on 22 October 2008, Council staff carried out a questionnaire of the Wyong Township business operators and owners to ascertain their preference between the RTA's "Preferred Option" and the Wyong Chamber of Commerce's "Cut and Cover" option.

A draft copy of the questionnaire was forwarded to the RTA Central Coast Manager and the President and CEO of the Wyong Chamber of Commerce for their comments prior to it being circulated to the owners and operators. Some modifications were consequently carried out to the questionnaire before they were distributed / dispatched.

Council staff hand delivered the questionnaires to the business operators and returned to collect them. Questionnaires were also sent by mail to the relevant property owners. A total of 96 questionnaires were distributed to the shopkeepers, 82 were collected / returned. 106 questionnaires were sent to property owners with only 8 being returned. It is highly likely that a lot of the property owners are also shopkeepers and consequently only submitted one questionnaire and their response has been listed as a shopkeeper.

The results of the questionnaire were as follows:

55 % were in favour of the RTA's "Preferred Option" (Option 1) with modifications,
31 % were in favour of the Chamber of Commerce's "Cut and Cover" (Option 2),
11 % said they did not like either and wanted the through traffic to go along Howarth Street and,
3 % said that they didn't favour either Option 1 or Option 2.

At the Councillor briefing the RTA said that it had considered two Howarth Street options. One was with Howarth Street having two through lanes in each direction. The other was with the Pacific Highway being one-way north and Howarth Street one-way south with bridges over the railway line at the northern and southern ends to connect to and from the Highway. However, as well as being very costly, affecting the adjoining businesses, eastern commuter carpark and requiring the removal of the Race Club stables, there were other major problems with the vertical alignment ie clearance over the railway line and trying to tie back into the existing roads. The RTA advised that it will not be pursuing the Howarth Street options any further.

Comments received from those in favour of the RTA's "Preferred Option" (Option 1) were as follows:

- Will maintain the historic character of the town
- Option 2 will cause problems for traffic and will cost more
- Length of time to construct - affect on businesses
- Cost! Cannot see any major disadvantages in RTA "preferred" option (saving additional \$65-\$70m)
- Option 1 more consistent with the needs of the local community and businesses. It would be a great disappointment for any of the Heritage buildings to be demolished.
- This option allows full exposure to business by passing traffic
- Make Commuter carpark multi level

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- Direct access required at intersection of Rose St and Highway. Church St and Margaret St to Alison Rd become one way.
- Reinstate kerb side parking on west side of Pacific Highway between Robley Lane and North Road. Demolish current Rose St bridge and construct new Anzac bridge opposite Anzac Ave to make one major intersection - better traffic flow.
- Option 2 will take away the basic character and look of the town
- Existing problem with parking
- Through traffic better for business
- Wyong needs people to come through the town not around it. Widening will ease congestion that makes people bypass town at present. Better access to businesses in the centre and not on the Main Street would be great.
- Cost. Maintaining viability of Wyong. Less damage to Heritage buildings
- Direct access from Highway to Anzac Avenue and Church Street
- More traffic equals more business
- Least disruption to traffic
- Any other alternative will kill off business in Wyong
- Retains clear and simple access to Wyong
- Better intersections on existing Highway
- Ensuring customers drive directly through town
- Cost

Comments received from those in favour of the Chamber of Commerce's "Cut and Cover" (Option 2) were as follows:

- Will improve the amenity of the town centre. Through traffic will go "through"
- Parking available on western side of Highway
- Concerned with pedestrian safety and access to Town Centre
- Too much through traffic clogging up the Highway for residents and businesses.
- Should be thinking of long term solution
- Through traffic not interrupted by traffic lights at railway vehicular access.
- Choose Option 2 although much more expensive.
- Option 2 has significant long term advantages
- Option 1 would create major loss of business and disturbance to the area
- Existing Lack of Parking
- Eventual reduction of through traffic in business precinct, improve amenity of Wyong Town Centre, alternate access to F3 West of Wyong, Heritage buildings at Railway Square are no significant loss, Option 2 more "people and pedestrian friendly"
- Retaining existing parking on both sides of Highway through Wyong Business Centre
- Option 2 addresses the long term requirements of the CBD more thoroughly. Improves through traffic!
- Better accessibility, parking and in longer term
- Option 1 only short term. It will cause destruction of town ambience and quality of life
- Best long term strategy

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Other comments received, generally from those in favour of a Howarth Street option were as follows:

- Howarth Street over pass
- Neither option considers the real economic future of Wyong Business or Wyong Town Centre
- Construct bridge over railway at southern end and down Howarth St and bridge back on to Highway at northern end.
- Both proposals are short term thinking without imagination. Wyong is important and these proposals are destructive i.e. loss of parking, loss of heritage buildings. Loss of character of the town, traffic volume and dangerous roads. Negative effect on local business due to difficulty of stopping. A proper by-pass or tunnel would resolve this short term solution and save Wyong for generations to come.
- Howarth St could be used as a better alternative route.
- Howarth Street is only option that will keep the town alive for businesses, residents and passing traffic.
- Only option Howarth St. Four lanes, reduced parking, planting trees in parking spaces and limited access to side streets will not keep Wyong and its businesses viable.
- Not happy with survey format and short timing for completion of the questionnaire.