

# ADDITIONAL ITEM

26 October 2011  
To the Ordinary Meeting

Director's Report  
Infrastructure Management  
Department

## 4.12 Improvement of Road Safety - Ruttleys Road - Mannering Park

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TRIM REFERENCE: DA/204/2007/A - D02812706

MANAGER: Greg McDonald, Director Infrastructure Management

AUTHOR: Robert Fulcher; Manager Asset Management

### SUMMARY

Reporting to Council on an urgent request for a Traffic Risk Assessment at 464 Ruttleys Road, Mannering Park.

### RECOMMENDATION

*That Council receive and note the report on the Traffic Risk Assessment.*

### BACKGROUND

Council resolved at its meeting of 12 October 2011 in relation to Item U27/11 Motion of Urgency – Improvement of Road Safety in Mannering Park as follows:

*“That Council request staff to undertake and report on a traffic risk assessment at 464 Ruttleys Road, Mannering Park.”*

Council staff have undertaken the particular traffic risk assessment in question.

The Traffic Risk Assessment is attached for Councillors information.

### ATTACHMENTS

- |   |  |           |
|---|--|-----------|
| 1 | Traffic Risk Assessment - Ruttleys Road  | D02813995 |
| 2 | Letter from Eaton Sons to Mannering Park Precinct Committee in relation to the driveway at Ruttleys Road | D02815025 |

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## **STAFF MEMORANDUM**

**To: Mr G McDonald  
Director Infrastructure Management**

**Date: 24 October 2011**

**COMMENTS FROM TRANSPORT PLANNING SECTION ON LETTER FROM EATON BUILDING MATERIALS (EBM), TO THE SECRETARY, MANNERING PARK PRECINCT COMMITTEE, DATED 12 OCTOBER 2011, REGARDING BANNING OF RIGHT TURNS INTO AND OUT OF 464 RUTTLEYS ROAD, MANNERING PARK.**

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The property at 464 Ruttleys Road, Mannering Park is owned by Eaton and Sons Pty Ltd and operates as Eaton Building Materials Pty Ltd (EBM). There is an existing unsealed vehicular access onto the site from Ruttleys Road which is located approximately 800 metres from the Pacific Highway.

Upgrading of the access to EBM's site is a requirement of Development Consent DA/204/2007, which provides that an upgraded access at a new location approximately 135 metres south of the existing access. This new location was required because of the poor sight distance available for southbound vehicles in Ruttleys Road to see vehicles turning into and out of the current driveway. In 2010 there were 8,693 vehicles per day (two-way flow) using Ruttleys Road in the vicinity of the development, with an 85th percentile speed of 86kph. The posted speed zone is 80kph.

A Section 96 application has been submitted by the applicant's consultants requesting a change in the condition relating to the type of intersection identified in the consent conditions. The request is for a lower standard access/intersection than that conditioned in the Consent. That application is the subject of a separate report to Council, for Council to determine. This report does not deal with the Section 96 application.

The proposal from EBM under consideration in this report is the banning of the right turn movements into and out of the existing EBM development on Ruttleys Road. This report deals with that proposal only and then only from a traffic point of view.

EBM identified in its letter to the Mannering Park Precinct Committee that it is prepared to "accept responsibility for Council's reasonable costs of installing the necessary signs (2-3) and the rubber flaps or similar on the centreline."

**Comments on letter from EBM to Mannering Park Precinct Committee**

A copy of the letter is attached.

The placement of rubber flaps to prevent vehicles doing right turns is not supported. A physical barrier, such as a concrete median, is required to prevent right turn in/right turn out turning manoeuvres.

Any proposal to place prohibitions on right turns into and out of the current access to the EBM site involves either:

- a) a demand for safe U-turn facilities at suitable locations, both north and south of the EBM access, in order to accommodate all size vehicles required to approach and depart the development site from all directions, or
- b) a requirement that all vehicles plan and select their approach routes to the site to allow them to access it only by left turn movements.

The attached sketch (Figure 1) demonstrates the likely locations where vehicles may choose to carry out U-turn movements.

One such location is to the south of the EBM site, where there is an informal turning area, approximately half way between the EBM access and the Pacific Highway. The provision for right or U-turning turning vehicles at this informal turning area does not comply with acceptable Austroads standards. Improvements would be necessary on Ruttleys Road, at this location, to satisfy the required standards and to cater for Heavy Rigid Vehicles. This informal turning area is sometimes used by Council as a temporary stockpile area. Articulated vehicles cannot be accommodated within the informal turning area site and therefore these vehicle types, wanting to enter the site from the north and west, will need to stay on Wyee Road and access the site via the Pacific Highway Doyalson traffic signals. The use of this site for U-turns is undesirable without significant upgrade works and therefore an option is to fence the site or otherwise block it off from use for U-turns.

The second location is a U-turn area on the Pacific Highway, just south of the intersection with Ruttleys Road. This U-turn area provides for vehicles travelling south along the Pacific Highway. It does not accommodate 12.5 metre long Heavy Rigid Vehicles nor articulated vehicles.

The third location is identified in the letter to the Mannering Park Precinct Committee, by EBM, as a turning area to the north of its site, at the Unnamed Road (adjacent to the Vales Point Power Station) which leads to The Chain Valley Colliery. This turning area allows for safe movements from Ruttleys Road but is on private property and in its current state is unsuitable for vehicles to do U-turns. Also, the owners have made an application to the Department of Planning & Infrastructure (DOPI) for an extension of their mining operations for five years, which will allow it to increase the amount of coal extracted each year. Council requested in its submission to the DOPI that changes/improvements to this intersection be provided in conjunction with the proposed application. These works include physical closure of the old road so that vehicles, particularly the coal trucks, have to use an upgraded

"Unnamed Road" intersection with Ruttleys Road and not the remainder of the old road. This request, therefore, is in conflict with the area being used as a formal U-turn facility.

Traffic may choose to use yet other locations to carry out U-turns along Ruttleys Road. Any unsatisfactory sites that are found to be used for that purpose will need to be considered for the erection of physical barriers to prevent those turns if necessary.

The other option of selecting alternative approach routes would require all vehicles visiting the site to access it by way of Wyee Road and the Pacific Highway.

A proposal by Mannering Colliery involves upgrading work on Ruttleys Road, at its access point (see attached Figure 2). That work impacts on Ruttleys Road at the current access point to the EBM site. If Council did agree to the proposal to prevent right turn movements to and from the EBM site, it would be possible to retain the current location of the access to the EBM site and then incorporate the design of the necessary median strip into the design for the Mannering Colliery access, generally as shown on the attached aerial photograph (Figure 3). A detailed engineering design would be required. Isolated sections of central raised median strips at access locations, although not mandated by the relevant standards, sometimes benefit from appropriate street lighting and this matter would need to be considered by the applicant's engineering design consultant as part of an associated road safety audit.

Access to the site has been the subject of complaints. In March 2009, Wyong Local Traffic Committee considered the matter and recommended that warning signs be erected "200m before the entry and exit to the building supplies development site". These "truck warning signs" were erected by Council in May 2009. The erection of the warning signs does not eliminate the need for improvements to the access as discussed in this report.

It is understood that, in 2007, the applicant approached the RTA to review the speed limit on Ruttleys Road in the vicinity of the EBM access. The result of that request is unknown.

### **Summary**

If council chooses not to require the implementation of the current condition of consent involving an upgraded access catering for left and right turn movements to and from the EBM site, the following comments apply.

If right turns into and out of the EBM are prohibited, a concrete median with appropriate signs is required. Further, sealing and widening of the existing access for a distance of approximately 15 metres from the edge of the existing Ruttleys Road pavement is also required, as the current edge is gravelled and slopes up to the existing road pavement.. Associated sealed widening of the western shoulder of Ruttleys Road, for the length of the median strip, together with sealed tapered areas is also required.

It would be preferable to direct delivery vehicles to access the site via routes that require only left turn movements to and from the site and to limit the need for U-turn movements.

The prevention of U-turns at the existing informal areas, south of the EBM site on Ruttleys Road will need to be ensured by means of physical barriers.

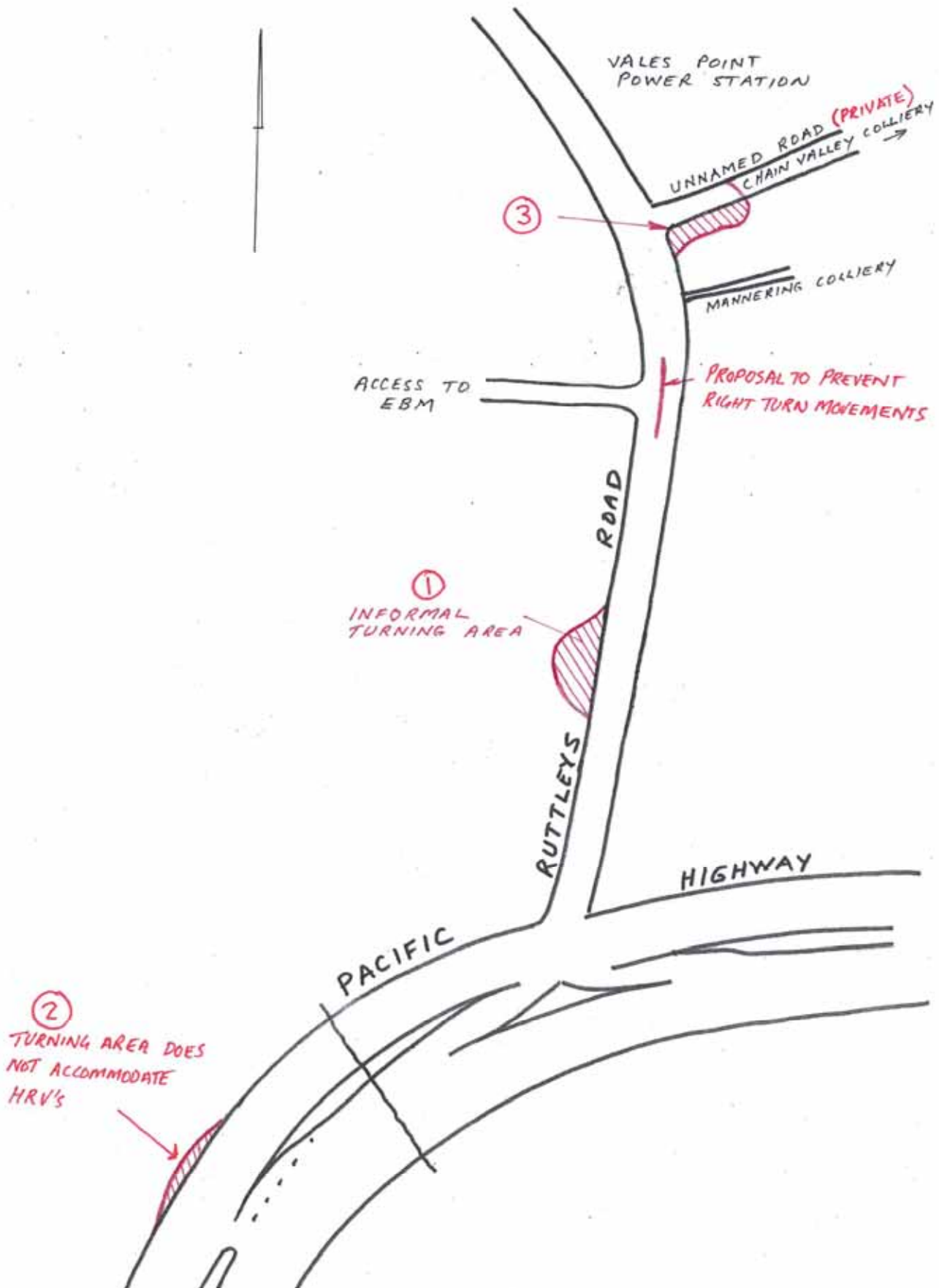
The suggested U-turn facility adjacent to the Vales Point Power Station is not suitable in its current form. Any formal works to provide a U-turn facility is most likely to conflict with Council's request to DOPI in respect to the Chain Valley Colliery application and would require the consent of the private owners of that land. This is not a matter that Council, as a roads authority, should seek to pursue.

If council agrees in principle to support the proposal to prevent right hand turn movements to and from the EBM site, it will be necessary for a further/amended Section 96 application to be submitted for full assessment and consideration by council.

The traffic conditions at the current entrance to the EBM site are below acceptable standards as a result of the activity on the site. The sight distance is not adequate. The limited sight distance is exacerbated by the gravel surface at the entrance which limits the exit speed of trucks leaving the site. There is evidence of vehicles needing to brake hard in Ruttleys Road near the site by way of skid marks on the road pavement.

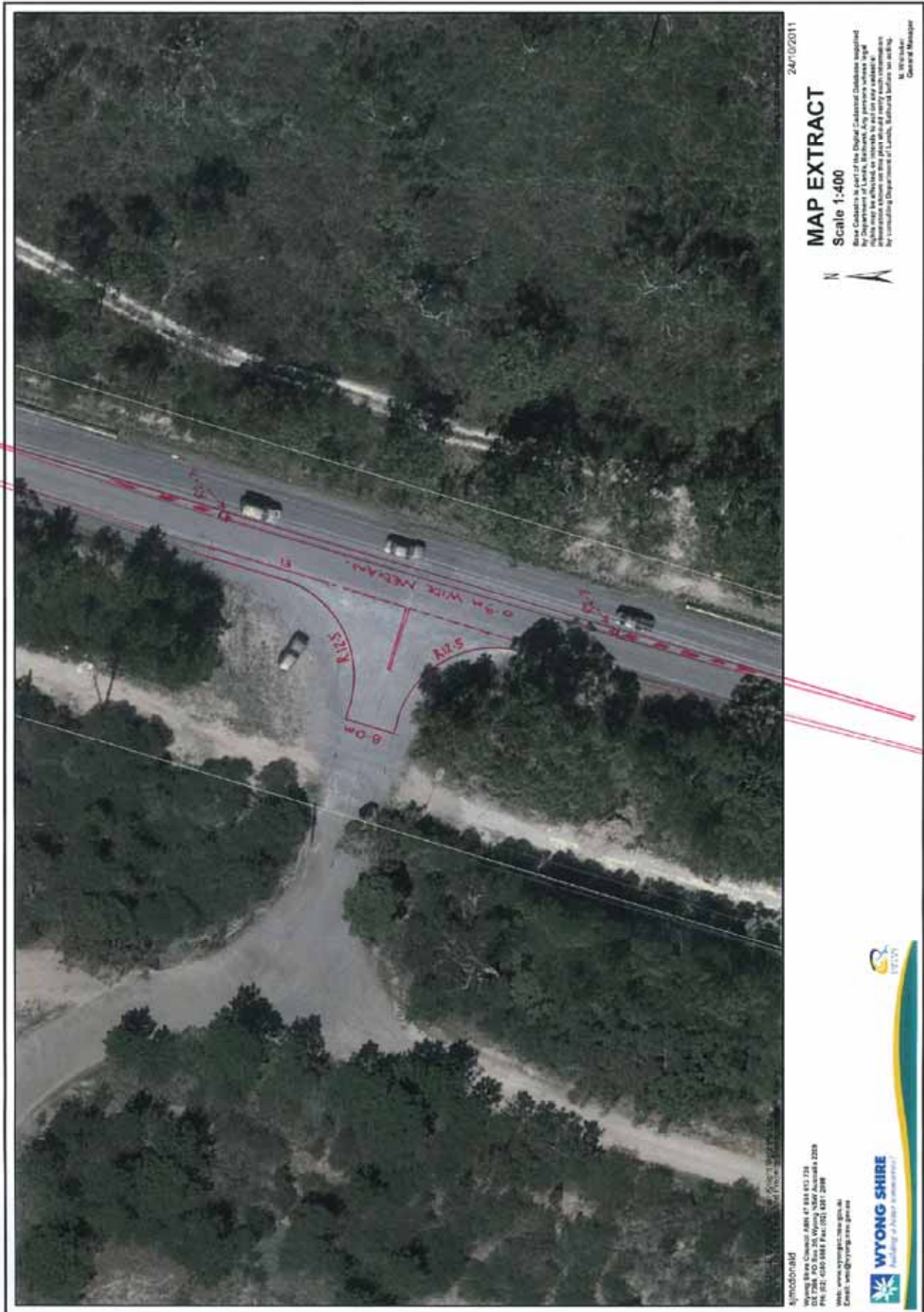
However, there has been only one reported crash at this particular access point since 2006 (with no injuries) and due to the low volume of traffic using this access and the daylight only operation of the facility, the access arrangements are not considered to be of a higher risk than many other business accesses onto local roads. As such, there is no immediate urgency for Council to intervene with the installation of further traffic control measures particularly while the applicant is continuing to work with Council to find a permanent solution.

Attachment 1.





Attachment 3.





12 October 2011  
The Secretary  
Mannering Park Precinct Committee  
By email

Attn Andrew Whitbourne

Dear Andrew,

**DRIVEWAY RUTLEYS RD**

We have been provided with a copy of the minutes of your last meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> September and note the reference to our driveway contained therein.

We agree that a ban on all right turns is the quickest, best and easiest solution to improving safety and have suggested this solution to council on a number of occasions. However they have yet to accept this solution.

The solution would restrict all turning movements to left in left out, and there is ample sight distance eastwards towards the highway and this would in our view be significantly safer than merely relocating the driveway.

We note lighter vehicles can use a turning bay to the east about half way between our factory and the highway and heavy vehicles can use the turning bay on the highway currently used for entry to the ash dam.

To the west the unnamed road along side Vales Point Power station provides a right turn bay and a Y shaped intersection providing a safe turning opportunity.

We would instruct our suppliers and our own trucks to use Wye Rd to Doyalson lights when approaching from the north west, and similarly to use Wye Rd and Hue Hue to depart to the south.

We would accept responsibility for council's reasonable costs of installing the necessary signs (2-3) and the rubber flaps or similar on the centre line.

We note a similar arrangement has been in place for many years on the Pacific Highway for the service station adjoining Wyong Golf Course and appears to work quite well.

We request that you continue to support this proposal in your representations to Council.

Please contact the writer if you wish to discuss the issue further.

Yours truly,

Eaton Building Materials  
Robyn Beton  
Office Manager