



JERVIS BAY ROAD/PRINCES HIGHWAY INTERSECTION

Report of Public Meeting

7th November 2018 – St Georges Basin Country Club



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Overview

The meeting was called by the residents' community group, Vincentia Matters to bring together and focus the wide-ranging concern in the community about the escalating risk to users of the Jervis Bay Road-Princes Highway intersection.

Prior to the meeting the various residents' and ratepayers' organisations in the Bay and Basin region combined to formulate a statement of concern. Politicians and other interested stakeholders were invited to respond to the community's concerns and identify what urgent actions they would take to address the issue.

A synopsis of the Community Statement, politician responses and meeting attendees' experiences and suggestions are set out below.

There is unanimous agreement throughout the report that the intersection is a high-risk site, a regular location of road trauma incidents, that risk density is rapidly escalating and that grade separation of the roads is essential to resolve this risk crisis.

Vincentia Matters thanks the invited guests at the meeting and the members of the community who attended. Our commitment is to continue to pressure all levels of government and all political parties to honour their promises of bipartisan support for a grade separation at the intersection, and we will continue to keep the community informed through the Vincentia Matters Facebook page.





Community Statement

The Bay and Basin villagers believe that the rapid escalation of the risks associated with the Jervis Bay Road/Princes Highway intersection is being fuelled by the government actions to improve the highway to the north of the intersection. While the improvements are welcomed, the flow-on consequences of the changes - the threats to other road users - have been a critical oversight by the state government. Action is required at the intersection before avoidable road deaths and related traumas also increase.

The intersection was designed to manage much lower traffic volumes than those using it today. A 15% increase in traffic on Jervis Bay Road alone in the last two years should be sounding alert sirens in the Roads and Maritime Services Department. Predictions by the Government's own Tourism authority of 3.5 million tourists in 2018, most of whom will pass through this intersection, should cause urgent action.

The "locked-in" outcome for all settlements on the east side of the highway is denying these communities the increased prosperity promised by the government from the northern improvements. In fact the opposite is occurring as the economic and social life of these communities is strangled by the high-risk access situation.

Vincentia Matters has launched a paper and an online petition (<https://www.change.org/p/jervis-bay-rd-and-princes-hwy-intersection>) demanding the State Government address the crisis before the influx of the 2018/2019 summer season of tourists, and to move as soon as possible to implement a grade-separation solution.

Working together all users of the intersection can initiate the actions necessary to provide greater road safety.



Reponses by Shoalhaven City Councillors, State politicians and candidates for March 2018 State elections, and Federal political representatives

Clr. John Wells

In congratulating the State Government politicians attending the meeting, on their success in gaining funding for the Princes Highway north of Nowra, he noted that Gerringong and Berry both had two grade-separation entrances/exits each to the highway. The bypasses, he stressed, serviced communities with far smaller populations and traffic movements when compared with Jervis Bay Road. The arguments for the Berry and Gerringong entrances must be multiplied many, many times before they are adequate to reflect the safety risks associated with the Jervis Bay Princes Highway intersection. The fact that Jervis Bay would receive an estimated 3.8 million visitors in 2018, growing to 5 million by 2023, plus a steadily increasing resident population, illuminates the rapid escalation of the road risks and the urgency for action. He had no doubt that RMS knew about the problem as in the planning for the Shaolin Temple they were insisting the developer build grade-separation from Forest Road onto the Princes Highway. The issue comes down to political will.

Shelley Hancock MLA

As the Member for the South Coast in the State Government she acknowledged the snail pace of progress to ameliorate the traffic mess at the Intersection. As with everyone else in the room she experiences the trauma associated with the junction, especially in summer months. She emphasised that all road plans must be based on a wide range of studies, which take time to complete. She appreciated the frustration that was being felt in the community with these delays and stated that an extra \$60,000 (with more available if required) had been allocated to speed up the studies. However, she reiterated that environmental studies of endangered species and indigenous lands title claims affecting the junction would take more time to resolve. Ms Hancock referred to the

proposed Island Point Road Roundabout solution and indicated she was aware of the community's annoyance at the absence of consultation and the concerns they had for its long-term value. Her role, in lobbying the Minister, is assisted by strong community commitment to the need and can be expressed through the Petition or letters directly to her. She also acknowledged the value of the bipartisan approach that was being established to address the issue.

Ryan Park MLA

Ryan emphatically declared that he was aware of the risk the intersection posed for thousands of people every day. He maintained that everyone has a right to expect governments to provide safe roads and that there is no place for politics in Road Safety. He assured the meeting that from his perspective the efforts to implement a solution at the junction of JB Road and the Princes Highway would be bipartisan. He and his colleagues would make representations to the Shadow Minister, Jodi McKay MLA, to gain her support and that of the alternative government, to fast track the grade-separation solution.

Clr Jo Gash (representing Ann Sudmalis MP)

Clr. Gash reported that the member for Gilmore had made and continues to make representations to appropriate Ministers in the Federal Government to secure additional funding for implementing the State's solution to the issue. A portfolio of letters between Ms Sudmalis and her federal colleagues, about the Intersection, was made available to the meeting. She explained the different responsibilities of the tiers of government and the areas of funding that could be used. She supported the Petition as a powerful way to express the community's concern and keep the issue firmly in front of politicians, especially during the rapidly approaching period of electioneering, both in NSW and nationally.

Gareth Ward MLA

Gareth's electorate includes the Princes Highway from the Albion Park roundabout in the north to Turpentine Road. Tonight, he said that even though he has been concentrating on the northern section of his electorate, in particular the section of the highway from Kiama to Bomaderry and the Albion Park bypass, his commitment to roadworks does not stop at the Shoalhaven River. He stated that he and Shelley Hancock had called on the Federal Government to fund the Princes Highway at the same 80%-20% rate as the Pacific Highway. He also committed to putting pressure on the bureaucrats to ensure the solutions to the problems we face south of the river are implemented in a timely manner. Finally, he wanted the audience to take away three main points from this meeting, the commitment, understanding and unity expressed by all the relevant political groups represented tonight.

Fiona Phillips

Fiona is the Labor candidate for the Gilmore electorate and lives at Callala Beach. She spoke about her fears for her daughter when she needs to drive on the Princes Highway, especially in her work as a caterer. She believes that the need to fix the Jervis Bay Road intersection is an issue that is above politics and if elected will fight tooth and nail to fix the problem. She informed the meeting that at the Senate Estimates Committee meeting on the 22nd of August, in response to a question about the highway, the committee was told that there had been no application by the NSW Government for Federal funding.

Annette Alldrick

Annette is the Labor candidate for the State electorate of South Coast. She is concerned for those members of the community who have no choice but to use the intersection. People with work, school or health commitments are not able to reschedule the time they intend to use the intersection and therefore are at greater risk. She believes that because of increasing resident and tourist numbers it's time to fix the problem now.

Grant Schultz

Grant is seeking the Liberal nomination for the Federal electorate of Gilmore and is active in the Fix It Now Campaign, begun by Fairfax Media. He agreed with Gareth Ward that the funding model for the Pacific Highway should be adopted here. He said that a bipartisan approach is needed and believes that the Jervis Bay Road intersection is the gateway to all the problems faced on the Princes Highway. He finished by saying that, even though a solution needs to be found for this intersection, it should be part of a bigger programme to solve all the issues.

Clr. Patricia White, South East Australian Transport Strategy (SEATS) chairperson

SEATS is seeking an 80/20 split on funding between the Federal and State Government and asking for a commitment at the upcoming elections. There are \$9b in funds available from the Pacific Highway upgrade which will become available in 2020. SEATS encourages everyone to support John Hanscombe and the Fix it Now campaign: john.hanscombe@fairfaxmedia.com.au

Amanda Findley, Shoalhaven Mayor

The mayor reiterated the reverberating impact on villages and intersections down the Princes Highway as changes and incidents happen in the north. Specifically, any changes and/or incidents at the Jervis Bay intersection impact down the line to villages in the south.

We need to ensure that the RMS focuses on intersections first when planning upgrades to the Highway. We need an interim solution for a short period of time to ensure the safety of road users.

Letters of Support

Kennedy's Bus and Coach

Increasing congestion that impacts daily on more than 50% of timetabled trips through the intersection.

NRMA

The NRMA support a review of safety issues at the intersection and reiterate that 'band-aid' solutions are not suitable. The NRMA continues to support a flyover option as the only safe solution.

Questions and Comments spoken by Meeting participants

Driving Instructor

Merging from the right lane into left lane once on the highway is problematic and dangerous for Learner Drivers who can only travel at 90km maximum

Carmel

Over 40 years there have not been significant road and infrastructure improvements in the southern Shoalhaven commensurate with the population increase. In recent upgrades in the north of the Shoalhaven, bridges and overpasses in areas where there are low population numbers. Prevention and safety should be paramount and improvements not based on the number of deaths as claimed by Gareth Ward in his response regarding Berry by-pass.



David Borg

Overpass design to ensure access for those on both sides of the highway.

Local resident

Please look to upgrade Jervis Bay Rd to include overtaking lanes to ensure increased traffic is moving safely and efficiently to and from Jervis Bay.

Coastal Waters Resident

A solution now - traffic lights should be installed at the intersection. Elderly residents find the intersection overwhelming.

Local resident

It's not the first car exiting from Jervis Bay Rd on to the highway that you need to be concerned about it is the second car. Please leave politics out of the process and let's work collaboratively on a solution.

Local resident

Articulated traffic has difficulty using roundabouts - caravans, buses, trucks. Suggest using temporary lights utilised at peak times only as a temporary solution. Concerns that a stop-gap solution leads to a stall in providing a long-term solution.

Local resident

Request for RMS to provide details about all options so residents can be informed.

Bob Proudfoot, Shoalhaven Councillor - Closing remarks

Shoalhaven Council passed a motion in January to request State government attention to infrastructure in Shoalhaven.

A further motion passed recently that general infrastructure needs an injection of funds because of increase in tourism. The motion sought application for \$50m in funds. The number of tourists visiting Shoalhaven is greater than Gold Coast.

Vote for those who get us the funds.



Next Steps

The meeting called for all residents and visitors to join the campaign through signing the petition and recruiting other intersection users to sign.

Developments as they occur will be posted to the community through the Vincentia Matters Facebook page, which is also available for Bay and Basin residents to continue to tell their story and provide further suggestions to achieve safe outcomes for all.

A further public meeting is anticipated for early in 2019 when road engineers will be invited to inform us about the options, costs and preference for the grade separation solution. Notice of the meeting will be circulated through the Facebook page and posters in public places.

Individual experiences and suggestions: written submissions by meeting attendees

- “ Works all right as long as everyone is patient; although at peak/holiday times there are very long delays (more patience required). Long term – needs *a grade separated treatment*. I have experienced delays of 35 minutes from Woollamia Road.
- “ So much trouble accessing Princes Highway from JB Rd – especially at peak times
- “ In school holidays I would love to be able to take my grandchildren into Nowra for activities, but I cannot cross the road safely without a long, long wait.
- “ It is so unsafe the way it is and something needs to be done immediately, before somebody is tragically killed. I do not want it to be a member of my family or anyone else.
- “ *An overpass* appears to be the ideal solution
- “ The number of people at this meeting is in no way a reflection of how many people are affected as far more people are from out of town! The time delay is an issue but the safety is by far the greater concern
- “ This intersection has a history of serious accidents and fatalities and needs action to prevent further incidents of similar or worse nature.
- “ *Overpass or underpass* is the ONLY solution for the longer term. I have seen over 3.5 Km of traffic all stopped and growing.
- “ Action must be taken immediately to save lives on this section of the Princes Highway. Between Nowra and Milton could be the most dangerous section of highway on the South Coast, and this intersection would be without a doubt the most dangerous section of the highway.
- “ JB Road needs *an overpass*, please. Cars with boat trailers are really hesitant at this intersection.
- “ Radical improvement and *increase in public transport*, in the area towards Nowra, would reduce the number of cars using this intersection!
- “ This past weekend (Sun 4.11.18) we saw the ridiculously long queue of cars at the intersection (due to the Husky triathlon). Can only imagine how bad it will be this summer. Drivers are impatient and it is an accident waiting to happen.
- “ It is great to see huge sums of money being spent on infrastructure in Sydney, like football stadiums, but we cannot even get out of our local area to get to Sydney!

- “ The volume of traffic coming from the north has increased significantly and will continue to do so as the road north of Nowra improves. I am concerned that the intersection is inherently unsafe especially towards weekends and holidays, where many drivers (having left Sydney on a mission to get further south) and having negotiated Nowra, have a reduced care for those coming from JB. Significant risk of a serious accident.
- “ Flyover essential.
- “ Lower the highway speed limit
- “ Put in temporary lights
- “ Pursue the 80/20 funding agreements
- “ Comprehensive concept planning re duplication of the Princes Highway, south of Nowra. Do not continue to address matters in a piecemeal way. *A long-term plan with priorities* attached to section upgrade.
- “ I travel to Nowra from Sanctuary Point each day for work and I hate going past Jervis Bay Road on my way home each night. It is because of cars turning out of Jervis Bay Road onto the highway that is always a worry for me, as they do not realise that I am travelling at 100 km/hr towards them. I have almost hit 3 cars in the last 4 months and I am sick of it. We need *an overpass* built ASAP to stop these “idiots” risking other people’s lives. On big events at Huskisson and in Easter, Xmas holidays it is always more dangerous, as the bank up of cars waiting to get on the highway is longer and the drivers take more risks to get onto the highway. The Basin area is growing and this problem will only get greater. Please build *an overpass* now, forget about how much it will cost as it is the only way to solve this problem.
- “ I live at Falls Creek and I have travelled this road twice a day working split shifts at a club in Huskisson for over 10 years. I have found since the STOP sign has been put in at the end of JB Road the traffic trying to get out is banked up further, where usually it was safe for 2 cars to exit, now with having to stop, only one car at a time can go, increasing the congestion. At Christmas time, instead of being able to go home between shifts and cook dinner for the family and get other things done, I will have to stay at Huskisson and fill in the time between shifts as it will take too long to exit JB road.
- “ Perhaps distribute names/emails/postal addresses to people of who to write to.
- “ Need long term solution to the JB road/Princes Highway intersection not short term
Did I hear that the Berry bypass was built because there has been fatalities in that area?
There will be fatalities in this intersection, this is just a matter of time
- “ I don’t care which political party is voted, they all have a responsibility to keep the community safe on and off the roads.

- “ Huskisson and Vincentia have become residential areas with many commuters using the junction now.
- “ Visitors to the area have increased and Jervis Bay is a world-famous tourist hub and huge bottlenecks of visitors trying to exit onto the highway is causing frustration and accidents. This is another example of infrastructure not keeping up with visitor and residential population. We need an overpass or flyover for all cars entering and exiting that Jervis Bay Road and Princes Highway intersection. I have witnessed several near misses and one minor accident at this junction when people take risks after waiting for a long time.
- “ We absolutely need a safe access to the highway – suggest *an overpass* which would also help traffic flow instead of these very long queues of cars waiting for that moment to check both directions to dart out onto the highway – VERY DANGEROUS.
Consider who may be in the queue – someone going to hospital (pregnant woman/medical emergency). We are a major tourist destination and the queues at weekends and holidays are so bad that many locals just can't get out for their commitments.
The situation is CRITICAL!
- “ What is the volume of traffic using the Jervis Bay Road/Princes Highway junction compared to the traffic entering/leaving Gerringong/Gerroa with the overpass?
- “ There has been a large increase in population using this junction over the past 15 years, also an increase in Jervis Bay as a holiday destination in the same period. We need action to be taken ASAP – *an overpass or underpass* would be ideal. I feel unsafe every time I have to complete a right-hand turn from the Jervis Bay Road.
As locals, we find ourselves making the choice not to shop in Nowra because it would mean a long wait at the junction. I know of two people that I work with who have had bad accidents at this Junction and I am sure there have been many. Please do not make us wait for a death before action is taken
NOT TRAFFIC LIGHTS. I did like the idea of *combining a roundabout with traffic lights/overpass* to keep traffic moving.
- “ There is a “Stop” sign but rarely do they Stop.
If we stop we risk someone running up the back of us.
While we have not seen an accident there, we are aware of many and have seen numerous close calls.
The intersection is unsafe and dangerous.
- “ How many deaths on the Princes Highway will it take to make the Princes Highway upgrade worth a financial investment? These access points are part of a larger problem.
- “ We should begin either an *under or over pass* to gain access to the Princes Highway. This would alleviate queuing and dangers of entering the highway that has a speed of 100km/ph.

“ Surely there will be a dual lane highway that will, and should, bypass Nowra. The bypass then would suit such a highway and would assist in the transition to a dual lane highway. The movement south of a dual highway is evident. Population in the Bay & Basin area has increased substantially in recent years and swells to 3 times that in the peak periods in holidays and when national events are held such as the previous weekend (*triathlon*). We are talking of a possible 100,000 or more people and we need to make our roads as safe as possible for such numbers. Good to see our local politicians are on board with this. If we are provided with a short term solution, this could be a reason to stall the actual solution. *We need action NOW!* A stop gap temporary solution will only allow the powers that be an opportunity to stall and inhibit the process of a real long term solution.

“ If the State Government put the 2.2B they are spending on stadiums and put that money towards roads, could we not “fast track” this project? Too many near accidents – never mind serious ones. Traffic lights and roundabouts are not safe on a main highway. 45 minutes wait to get out onto the hwy is far too long. This area is a bushfire risk and most health services are in Nowra and beyond.

Advocates for an Overtaking Lane on JB Road

“ Overtaking lane on JB Road

“ Whether it’s Mum’s money or dad’s money, we need a proactive Government, not a reactive Government and not after, but at the same time, we need an overtaking lane on JB Road as well.

Advocates for Reduced Speed on Princes Highway

“ Reduce the speed limit to 70 or 80 for cars etc, coming towards JB Rd from the north, while we are waiting to get a definite resolution to this awful problem.

“ Temporarily lower speed limit either side of JB intersection on Princes Highway

“ The most logical solution would be to simply lower the speed limit on the southbound lane of the Princes Highway on approach to Jervis Bay Road, therefore allowing vehicles to enter the highway at a faster rate.

Also, educating road users that Island Point Road is another option for access to the Princes Highway would ease congestion at the Jervis Bay Road intersection.

“ The RMS already own a portion of the property to the immediate left hand side of the first property on the old Princes Highway so why is that not being utilised?

“ Agree with 80 K speed reduction at JB intersection. Please make it happen for Xmas 2018.

Advocates for an Overpass or Underpass at JB Road/Princes Highway

“ (Map of Gerringong highway upgrade with comments below that – not written on our photocopied pages)

“ The best solution:

Tunnel under highway to achieve safe turns

(1) Into highway from JB Road going north

(2) Into JB road from highway when travelling north

“ An Overhead turn for (1) does not provide for (2)

“ With today’s construction technology, a tunnel can be constructed within 1 week

“ The topography west of Highway at JB Road intersection is much lower than the highway. Why not an *underpass*, under the existing exiting around the old highway and merging heading north? Surely easier to manage without highway disruption and lower cost than overpass.

Flyovers

“ Grade separation is essential

“ Traffic lights or a round-about will cause a bottleneck on the highway

“ A tunnel solution will be quick, provide the safest solution, and is proven at the southern Gerringong off-take.

“ Highway # 1 should be kept free of structures/columns that could prove a hazard to travel at 100km/hr

“ The landform lends itself to this solution in this location

“ Also consider a bridge over Currambene Creek at Woollamia to distribute some traffic north of JB Rd, to Kalander St and Terara.

“ An overpass from JB Road to Highway OR An underpass that will use the old Princes Highway

“ Fly over is the only acceptable solution.
Stop advertising the area, enough people know

“ Make southbound highway an overpass (Map drawn)

- “ An overpass is the only way!! Don't slow others up with band aid solutions.
Suggestion: Take the petition to the JB Road and Princes Highway during holidays and during working week and ask people to sign.
- “ I believe the best option is a flyover from JB Road with a merging lane to the north of JB feeds, to south a merge and accelerating lane to approx 400 metres.
- “ Huskisson and Vincentia have become a tourist hub with all the influx of traffic to be expected, BUT none of the infrastructure to support rapid change. If we are to be the cash cows of the Shoalhaven then we deserve decent and safe roads onto the highway before more people are killed, whether they be impatient tourists or residents and their families caught in the chaos that results at holiday periods. Give us an overpass from JB road to the Princes Highway.
- “ The only safe option is to have a flyover from JB road to go over the highway and merge in to go North.
- “ No-one stops at the “stop” sign so you can be run up the back. Xmas and holiday times, one can be in line for 45 minutes before entering the highway. An overpass would eradicate this problem.
- “ All levels of government must commit to a long term solution of an overpass.
Any other solution must be temporary.

Advocates for NO Roundabout or Lights at Intersection

- “ No Roundabout option. This will not solve the problem as cars will still be banked up giving way to the right.
- “ No temporary solution. Takes away the real issue.
- “ No traffic light, please!! (*“I agree” – written by someone else on the sheet*)
A roundabout will not solve the issue (*“I agree” – written by someone else on the sheet*)
- “ No traffic lights at intersection – Princes Highway is a highway
- “ Dangerous.
Long wait to get out.
Don't bother even thinking about traffic lights or roundabouts.

Advocates FOR Traffic Lights or Roundabout at Intersection

- “ Interim solution:
Traffic lights during the holidays.
- “ Traffic lights – as an immediate action until they can put in a more substantial measure as designed by RMS.
- “ Interim solution:
Slow traffic north and south of intersection to 80 km
Also, traffic lights
- “ Related to the numbers of vehicles that need to access the highway from JB road is the feeder road coming from the Basin area, it hits the roundabout at Naval College Rd and that traffic may head to Husky or travel past Bayswood but it would be adding to the numbers at the highway. Currently during holiday periods the roundabout area I just mentioned gets gridlocked SO it needs to be part of the solution.
Yes to temporary traffic lights + 80 km zone on highway at Christmas 2018.
- “ If you install traffic lights at JB/Princes Highway intersection, make them red light/safety lights and also install fixed speed cameras north and south of the intersection. This should help to raise revenue!
- “ Left lane needed south. Lights at highway

Jervis Bay Road and Island Point Road/Princes Highway Intersections

- “ Please treat Jervis Bay Road intersection and Island Point Road intersection with the same urgency and the same suitable solution. Not a roundabout for Island Point Road.

Thank you to all who participated