

Client

Menangle Pastoral

Project

Moreton Park Road, Menangle

Date

November 2008


Contact

Lucy Greig
9387 2600
lucyg@elton.com.au



Sydney
t +61 2 9387 2600
PO Box 1488
Level 6, 332-342 Oxford St
Bondi Junction NSW 1355
f +61 2 9387 2557
consulting@elton.com.au
www.elton.com.au
ABN 56 003 853 101

Prepared by Janis Tebecis and Lucy Greig

Reviewed by 

Brian Elton

Date 280109

Job number 07/689

Document name Community Workshop Outcomes Report

Version Final

This document is
printed on paper produced
using sustainable forestry
practices and chlorine
free pulp

Contents

1	Consultation process	1
1.1	Community workshop	1
1.2	This report	2
2	Key issues	3
2.1	Question and answer session	3
2.2	Written feedback	8
3	Next steps	9

Appendices

Appendix A – Flyer notification of Community Workshop

Appendix B – Presentation

Appendix C – Verbatim comments

1 Consultation process

This report provides a summary of the outcomes of a Community Workshop regarding a site at Moreton Park Road, Menangle.

1.1 Community workshop

On Thursday 20 November 2008, Menangle Pastoral held a Community Workshop regarding a site at Moreton Park Road, Menangle. The workshop was facilitated and reported by community engagement specialists Elton Consulting and was held at the Menangle House Horse and Jockey Inn, Menangle Park.

The purpose of the workshop was to:

- Introduce the project team
- Provide information on the planning context and process for the site
- Hear from local residents about their aspirations for the local area and issues they would like to see addressed in planning for the site.

1.1.1 Notification

Local residents were notified of the event through distribution of approximately 300 flyers to homes located in the Menangle Village and adjacent Durham Green Retirement Village. Flyers were also made available through the Menangle General Store and Anglican Church. A copy of the flyer notification is attached at Appendix A.

In addition to the flyers, letters of notification were sent to key stakeholder groups and individuals with an interest in the site. Letters were sent to Wollondilly Shire Council staff and Councillors, adjacent landowners, Durham Green Retirement Village, Menangle Action Group, local Member for Parliament, NSW Department of Planning, Menangle General Store and local churches.

1.1.2 Attendance

Approximately 60 community members attended the Community Workshop including representatives of the Menangle Action Group (MAG). The workshop was attended by Councillor Michael Banasik, Mayor of Wollondilly Shire, Councillors Shane Reid and Judith Hannan and Council Officers Peter Wright and Ally Dench.

1.1.3 Format

Welcome and introductions

The Community Workshop commenced shortly after 7.00pm. Brian Elton, Director of Elton Consulting, introduced himself as the independent facilitator for the workshop and welcomed all participants. He outlined the purpose and format of the session and introduced Menangle Pastoral and other members of the project team from MQG, Elton Consulting and Cox Architects / Urban Designers.

Overview of the site

A presentation was made on the planning context and process by Fiona van der Hoeven of Elton Consulting.

This was followed by a presentation on the characteristics of the Moreton Park Road site by Philip Graus of Cox. Philip Graus noted that in their role as master planners for the site, Cox will assess the physical and social environment in relation to the site in conjunction with a team of technical experts. This process will seek to identify the site's capabilities and the community will be invited to provide feedback throughout the study process.

A copy of the above presentation is attached at Appendix B. Please note, the PowerPoint slides presented by Philip Graus show preliminary mapping for the site based on initial assumptions. Further work to be undertaken as part of the next steps in the planning process will include:

- Flood modelling
- Field studies to determine areas of ecological significance
- Bushfire zones and appropriate setbacks, the latter to be determined in relation to proposed uses
- European and Indigenous heritage investigations.

Question and Answer session (facilitated discussion)

The Community Workshop was designed to provide the community with an overview of the site followed by a small group exercise to obtain feedback on community aspirations for the local area and issues to be addressed in planning for the site.

Following the presentations, there was a discussion of issues of relevance to planning and development of the site.

At a number of points in the discussion, the facilitator invited participants to take part in a workshop exercise to hear from local residents about their aspirations and key issues to be addressed in planning for the site.

The group opted not to participate in the workshop exercise, expressing a preference to continue the whole group discussion about the project, facilitated by Brian Elton.

1.2 This report

This report outlines the key issues and themes raised in feedback obtained from the Community Workshop. A project team member from Elton Consulting took notes of verbal feedback from members of the community during the workshop. In addition to this feedback, a small number of participants provided written comments to the project team at the conclusion of the workshop.

2 Key issues

2.1 Question and answer session

This section of the report outlines the key issues and themes raised by members of the community during the Community Workshop.

2.1.1 Questions and comments in response to presentation on the planning context and process

Comment (Peter Wright, Wollondilly Shire Council (WSC)): Wollondilly Shire Council's Growth Management Strategy (GMS) is part funded by DoP and is expected to be completed by the end of 2009. The document will outline Council's growth strategy for residential and employment uses across Wollondilly Shire.

Response (Fiona van der Hoeven): The project team is seeking to work with Wollondilly Shire Council (WSC) and the Department of Planning in parallel with Council's Growth Management Strategy (GMS).

2.1.2 Questions and comments in response to presentation on the site characteristics

Question (participant): Are there any listed heritage items in Menangle village?

Response (participant): The Menangle General Store.

Response (Peter Wright, WSC): The whole of Menangle is a heritage sensitive area which includes sites of local significance. See Menangle Development Control Plan (DCP) No. 51.

Response (participant): The Menangle Rail Bridge may be listed as a State significant heritage item.

Question (participant): Is mine subsidence an issue for the site?

Response (Brian Elton): Coal and gas mining issues will be investigated.

2.1.3 Question and answer session (facilitated discussion)

Comment (participant): As a resident of Moreton Park Road I would have expected to receive a flyer notifying me about this meeting.

Response (Brian Elton): The flyer distribution area will be expanded to notify the wider community as the process of consultation for this project continues. The flyer notifying people about this first Community Workshop was distributed to all

homes in Menangle village and copies were also left at the Menangle General Store and local church.

Comment (participant): Employment lands may be more appropriately associated with the piggery and rotolactor. The site [at Moreton Park Road] may be more suitable for residential purposes.

Response (Brian Elton): The site has been identified for potential high quality employment land. Other areas in Wollondilly and the South West sector have been identified by the government for residential development.

Response (Peter Wright): The site is nominated in the Draft South West Subregional Strategy (SWSRS) as a possible site for employment lands and is also identified in Council's Vision 2025 document. The reason for this is that proposals put forward over the last decade have been for employment uses.

Response (Brian Elton): The planning framework identifies the site as potential employment lands. However the planning process would consider investigating uses that are appropriate, with a potential view to rezoning of the land.

Question (participant): What if we do not want any development on the site?

Several other participants demonstrated their support for this view.

Response (Brian Elton): That is a valid position and is noted.

Question (participant): Why does the site need to be used for employment lands?

Response (Brian Elton): The planning framework identifies the site as potential employment lands. However the planning process may investigate other uses for the site. The project team first has to work with Council to establish what is appropriate for the site. The owners of the site would then seek to investigate potential uses, in liaison with Council and the outcomes of the community engagement process.

Question (participant): I disagree. Maybe we need to think about doing nothing. I do not think employment adjacent to the river would be an appropriate outcome for the site.

Response (Brian Elton): The project team is here to understand the types of uses that you (the community) believe are appropriate for the site, whether they be recreational, residential or other types of use.

Question (participant): What is the project timeframe? The local area has been identified in planning documents as having a lack of infrastructure. This project seems like a 'fait accompli'.

Response (Brian Elton): We would be led by Council's GMS process which is anticipated to be completed in approximately one year's time.

Comment (participant): Sydney's Metropolitan Strategy (Metro Strategy) and the Wollondilly Shire Strategy state that the local area will be considered for urban development in 2031. We are concerned that developing the site too early may lead to industrial development.

Response (Brian Elton): The planning and consultation process for this project need to mesh with Council's GMS process, with the proponent working closely with Council and the NSW Department of Planning (DoP).

Comment (participant): The Menangle area is very special. We would really like Council to consider all the critical elements that exist in the area.

Response (Brian Elton): The session tonight is about hearing what the local community believes those critical elements are and ensuring these elements are respected.

Comment (participant): They do not want disparate developments in Macarthur South. A major concern is that development of the [Moreton Park Road] site may reduce the potential for urban development in this area.

Response (Brian Elton): I think that Council and the DoP acknowledge this point and that is part of the reason they are undertaking the GMS.

Question (participant): Is there an opportunity to provide input to the GMS? How can this be done?

Response (WSC): Yes, Council's process for preparing the GMS will include consultation with the community, through a number of activities, to be determined. The consultation process for the GMS will include activities such as public meetings, a call for submissions and a website.

Question (participant): Council's GMS process is a more appropriate channel for consultation. How can we have confidence in this consultation process [for the Moreton Park Road site]?

Response (Brian Elton): The community consultation process for the site is robust. Elton Consulting is a firm that specialises in community engagement and we are committed to best practice consultation. The outcomes of this meeting will be posted on the project website and the meeting notes will be sent to participants, in line with best practice principles. Elton Consulting ran the consultation process for the Bingara project in Wilton, and I encourage you to talk to the Wilton Progress Association and residents of Wilton about how that process was run. It was a transparent process that involved working closely with a project reference group through each stage of the planning process. I encourage the Menangle community to work with us as part of the consultation process for this site, and to work with Council on the Shire-wide GMS consultation process.

Question (participant): This process is like a Subsidence Management Plan (SMP) process for a mining development. My investigations have revealed that the rail port is still on the agenda for the proponents. I think this process is just a setup.

Response (Brian Elton): The rail port proposal is no longer on the agenda. The project team and technical consultants will conduct investigations to determine the capabilities of the land.

Question (participant): Why has it already been labelled 'employment lands'?

Response (Brian Elton): What we are hearing is that members of the community here tonight would like a much broader investigation of the site, than just an investigation of its potential for employment lands.

Question (participant): What is the proposal for the site? We have all seen extensive plans for a rail port/intermodal/some type of port, which was a significant and scary proposal.

Response (Brian Elton): The project team will make a request to Council to commence a rezoning process and a Local Environmental Study (LES), which would lead to a Local Environmental Plan (LEP).

Question (participant): What is the proposed date for submission to Council?

Response (Brian Elton): The rezoning process would commence with a request by the proponent to rezone the land and a Section 54 resolution by Council. A request has not yet been lodged.

Response (Peter Wright, WSC): Council has not yet received any proposal from the proponent. A Section 54 resolution is a significant commitment by Council, as it represents an in principle decision for Council to support the proposal.

Question (participant): Will the proponent pursue an approval through Part 3A with the State Government?

Response (Brian Elton): The proponent seeks to pursue a Part 4 process with WSC.

Comment (participant): I do not believe the proponent does not presently have an idea about what they want to do with the site.

Response (Brian Elton): Other than commencing site investigations, there is no plan for the site. There have been no detailed studies undertaken to date. The site investigations and outcomes of the consultation process will lead to a proposal for the site.

Question (participant): Can you guarantee the site will not be developed as employment lands after the meeting tonight?

Response (Brian Elton): That decision is not ours to make. Council will ultimately decide what is an appropriate use for the site. I am hearing that some members of the community would like

alternative uses (other than employment) to be investigated.

Question (participant): Is Council considering rezoning the land? Why is Council represented at this meeting?

Response (Peter Wright, WSC): Council is not considering rezoning the land at this point in time. Council is developing a GMS for the Shire which will provide a framework to enable decision making for proposals on sites such as this. Council is not currently considering a proposal for this site.

Comment (Cr Judith Hannan): We are hearing that you (the community) do not want the site to be used for employment land. I encourage you to provide your input about what you do want and what you do not want on the butcher's paper, as part of the workshop exercise. Feedback from the Wilton community suggests that Elton Consulting is a trustworthy company. Council staff are here at the session to hear what members of the community have to say, first hand.

Comment (Cr Michael Banasik): There has been no application made to Council for this site. Council was invited to attend this meeting by Elton Consulting and we are here to hear what the proponent and the community have to say about the site.

Comment (Participant): The proponent wants to make money.

Question (participant): What will happen to the notes from this meeting?

Response (Brian Elton): A report summarising the outcomes of the meeting will be provided to Council and will also be posted to the project website.

Question (participant): Is this the right time to be consulting on the site? The consultation process has to be a continuing process.

Response (Brian Elton): Agreed. This community workshop represents the start of the consultation process.

Brian Elton invited the group to participate in a workshop exercise to identify the community values and aspirations for the site. Participants indicated they would prefer to continue the question and answer session.

Question (participant): As a representative of a community action group I have been asked this question before. Will we (the community) be seen to be supporting the proposal, by participating in the community engagement process? I have not seen any information that refutes the former rail port proposal. I am also very wary about how feedback from the session this evening will be used by the proponent. We have a four year

history with this site and feel that we are being pushed into a corner. The former proposal was lodged as a State significant proposal, and the lack of infrastructure in Wollondilly was noted. How will the proponents make money in the short term? The decision about whether or not to participate in the community engagement process is an awkward one. This meeting is being run by the proponent. I am interested in hearing from Council how the community's participation or non-participation in the engagement process will be viewed.

Response (Brian Elton): The project team is not asking participants in this forum to support or endorse any aspect of the project. Every individual has the right to walk away from the consultation process should they choose to. If a rezoning application is submitted to Council, there also has to be a statutory consultation process and related notifications by Council. What we are asking you for as part of this process is genuine input, which would be reflected back to you as the project progresses.

Question (participant): Many residents here have been through the SMP process and many submissions made were not given appropriate consideration.

Response (Brian Elton): You have every reason to be cynical about consultation. I encourage you to talk to residents of Wilton, where Elton Consulting was involved in running a similar style of consultation process and discuss their experiences.

Comment (participant): The consultation process was not similar, as the site in Wilton was never threatened with industrial uses.

Response (Brian Elton): Our experience has been that most people value the opportunity to have their say as part of a consultation process.

Question (participant): What is the mandate for this development?

Response (Brian Elton): There is no mandate. The planning process and consultation process will lead to a proposal for the site.

Comment (participant): I do not think there is anyone in the workshop who thinks the proponent has no idea about what they will do with the land.

Response (Brian Elton): The proponent is seeking to commence studies for the site and to determine its appropriate uses. This work will lead to a proposal.

Question (participant): Will the names of people who registered at the entry be used by the proponent to build their case in the development approval process?

Response (Brian Elton): Participant's names and contact details have been collected by Elton Consulting to enable us to provide all those in attendance with a copy of the meeting notes and to notify you of upcoming events. Providing your

name and contact information is completely voluntary and the information will be used in accordance with our privacy policy. For instance, the information will only be used for the purpose it was collected and will not be shared with any third party.

Brian Elton again invited the group to take part in the workshop exercise.

Participants indicated they would prefer to continue the question and answer session.

Question (participant): Why is it important what we think?

Response (Brian Elton): Best practice community engagement is about understanding the values that people believe are important about their local area and addressing the issues raised by the local community in relation to a proposal.

Question (participant): Regarding the contribution of the Menangle Action Group (MAG) to this forum, MAG has previously stated that it would be happy to participate in the consultation process once Council has completed its GMS.

Brian Elton noted that members of MAG previously stated that they would be willing to participate once the outcomes of the Macarthur South Review were announced. He clarified that he has communicated with MAG about the involvement of the group in the community engagement process over the course of the last six months.

Comment (participant): One participant stated that they would prefer to talk to Council about a holistic process of consultation, rather than engage with the project team as part of the consultation process for the site.

Question (participant): A participant requested a show of hands from people who are not ready to participate in the consultation process for the site. A number of people raised their hands ie in the vicinity of 50% of participants.

Comment (participant): We are proud of the heritage of the area. If you put together the history of the area and present it back to the community in 6-12 months that would be a useful contribution.

Response (Brian Elton): As mentioned by Phil Graus in his presentation, the studies to be undertaken will include European and Indigenous heritage studies. Information from these studies will be made publicly available.

Comment (participant): I am not prepared to make a comment to the consultants and would prefer to talk to Council. If the proponent is prepared to conduct studies these should cover the whole area not just the site.

Response (Brian Elton): Elements of all the studies will be provided to the community for review and comment.

Comment (Representative of MAG): If we choose to wait and see Council's GMS, we're not sure if the site will be developed within 10 or 20 years. MAG was invited to be part of the engagement process and we respectfully declined as we were awaiting the outcomes of the Macarthur South Review. How will our non-participation be viewed?

Response (Brian Elton): We would like to share the results of the studies with the community and to work with the community through the next stages of the planning process. The proponent, with the planning team and technical consultants, will conduct the relevant studies of the site and will consult with interested members of the community, with a view to lodging a proposal with Council.

Comment (Cr Michael Banasik): The Mayor commented that this meeting is part of the proponent's process. When the proponent decides to put forward a request for a rezoning, Council would consider this request, in line with Council's legal obligation to consider all submissions. This would be the case whether or not the community participated in the consultation process.

Comment (participant): If the proponent wants to they could lodge an application with the State Government, in line with Part 3A State Significant development.

Response (Brian Elton): We have spoken to Council about progressing with a Part 4 process, with a view to a rezoning. The proponent could choose to pursue the Part 3A process, but that is not their preferred pathway.

Comment (participant): These people (MAG) put a lot of time into supporting this community through the former rail port proposal. If they choose not to participate perhaps we should also not participate.

Response (Brian Elton): That is your right. The project team will continue to consult. This community consultation process is not a substitute for a statutory consultation process. The proponent is not obliged to consult with the community at this stage.

Response (Peter Wright, WSC): In the absence of a GMS, Council's view is that you need a framework to make decisions about future developments. In this respect Council's position is not inconsistent with MAG's view.

Response (Brian Elton): The proponent will continue to prepare a proposal which considers input from the community and to share its ideas and plans for the site with the community. I sense that many people here tonight are not ready to

consider the workshop exercise to identify community values and aspirations for the area.

Following this meeting, we will probably come back to you in the first quarter of 2009 with more information about the site. We anticipate it will take approximately 6-9 months following that to prepare a proposal for the site.

Comment (participant): I do not understand why we cannot say what we think the important issues to be considered are. For instance noise and traffic congestion.

Comment (participant): I cannot understand why there have been such negative views expressed by members of the community this evening.

Response (participant): If we do not participate, we are showing we do not want any development on the site.

Comment (participant): 'Workshop' is a patronising term.

Response (Brian Elton): We would be pleased to hear whether or not people here tonight would like to participate in the workshop exercise. We would be pleased to continue to liaise with MAG into the future.

Comment (participant): We want to meet at a meeting organised by MAG and to provide our feedback on the proposal through MAG.

Comment (representative of MAG): The reason that we are not participating is because we are not convinced that this development will occur in the near future. We would like to be consulted by Council on the GMS because it has been stated by government that Wollondilly Shire currently lacks infrastructure to accompany urban development. We do not feel there is presently a significant mandate or need to develop the site. It was noted that it is a matter of individual's choice as to whether or not they wish to participate in the consultation process being run by Elton Consulting, and people should not feel pressure from MAG.

Response (Brian Elton): The proponent will submit a planning proposal for the site which will be subject to a statutory community consultation process. We are making an offer for the community to be part of the planning process for the site from the initial stage of the project.

Question (participant): Can the community influence the proposal through Council?

Response (Brian Elton): We will continue to try and consult with the community. We have briefed Council about the consultation process for the site.

Response (Brian Elton): We will offer another opportunity to participate in the first quarter of

2009, when we expect to have further information on the site. We would be happy to talk to MAG at any point. Brian reiterated that people's participation in the community engagement process would in no way validate the proposal. In the next stage of the consultation process Elton Consulting would send notifications to residents in a wider catchment area, as well as advertising in local papers.

Comment (Cr Michael Banasik): The Mayor thanked the proponent for inviting Council to participate in the session and thanked participants for their contributions. He stated that Council was at the session to listen and is looking forward to hearing from the community and MAG – to listen to issues and to attend future forums.

Question (participant): What is the total site area?

Response (Brian Elton): It is a large site of approximately 600 hectares.

Question (participant): What is the role of Macquarie Bank in the joint venture?

Response (Brian Elton): The majority of the land is owned by the two proponents seated at the rear of the room. Macquarie Bank is acting as an advisor to the joint venture and is involved in the study process.

Question (participant): Can you explain the Wilton process?

Response (Brian Elton): The Wilton project involved a master planning process which started with a meeting similar to this one. We met with the Wilton Progress Association (WPA) prior to the meeting and set up a reference group involving the WPA and other interested community members. The reference group was involved in the process for developing a plan for the site. At various stages the plans were shown to the broader community through a series of open days and project website, with community feedback invited through these channels. The process for developing the draft master plan took approximately two years, following which it was submitted to Council as part of the rezoning process.

Question (participant): What kind of contributions did the WPA make?

Response (Brian Elton): The WPA provided input into the master planning process on the recreation areas and access to community facilities – with both onsite and offsite benefits for the community. The various consultant studies were summarised and distributed to the reference group.

Question (participant): As part of the original proposal for the Durham Green retirement village, the local community was to have access to Durham Green's facilities, but Council backed

down on this. Will the same situation happen where Council back down again?

Comment (Cr Michael Banasik): Council is involved in ongoing discussions regarding public use of a hall facility. Council has approved the application for the site and it was never a condition of consent that the hall could be used by the wider community.

Question (participant): There has been a history of change in Menangle. Durham Green land was previously put forward for residential development.

Response (Cr Michael Banasik): The proposal for the Durham Green site was lodged under State Environmental Planning Policy No. 5 (SEPP 5), as were proposals for two other retirement villages in Thirlmere and Bargo. Council was then overruled on these developments which were subject to State legislation.

Brian Elton closed the meeting shortly after 9pm.

2.2 Written feedback

As noted previously in this report, the majority of community members in attendance at the Community Workshop opted not to participate in the small group exercise that was initially proposed for the second half of the meeting. The proposed workshop exercise involved two questions for consideration by community members:

- What are the three things you like most about where you live now?
- What are the main issues you would like the project team to consider as planning for the site continues?

Despite the change to the format of the meeting, a small number of participants provided feedback on the two questions via hand written notes (on post-it notes and question sheets) submitted to the project team. These responses are summarised below and are included in full at Appendix C.

2.2.1 What are the three things you like most about where you live now?

The most frequently reported response was that community members enjoyed 'rural living' and the environment around them. Some respondents also commented that they highly valued the peace and quiet of the area.

Several respondents reported that the aspect of Menangle they liked most was the heritage character of the village, with one participant commenting 'we are privileged to live within a

heritage village' and another commenting on the Indigenous values of Menangle.

A few participants identified the environmental value of the natural surroundings as the aspect of Menangle they liked the most. One commented on the importance of flora and fauna of the riparian areas near the Nepean River.

Other aspects of the area that were highly valued included:

- Aesthetic outlooks, vistas, views and "retreat" value of the area
- Open space areas
- It is a friendly town
- Access to the South Coast
- Access to Southern Highlands.

2.2.2 What are the main issues you would like the project team to consider as planning for the site continues?

Community members identified a number of issues for consideration by the project team.

Several participants identified noise pollution as the main issue for consideration.

A couple of community members commented that traffic and transport access are important issues, to be addressed.

A couple of people identified heritage issues as one of the most important issues in planning for the site. One commented that 'Gilbulla has heritage, environmental and religious considerations' and that the project team needs to carefully consider 'curtilage and buffer zones'.

One comment identified the environment as one of the main issues for consideration, commenting on the 'pristine Cumberland woodland, Nepean River frontage and quiet rural residential surrounds and grazing lands'.

A few people commented that the site should not be used for industrial development, with one commenting: 'No rail port'. Another respondent expressed opposition to any development of the site: 'Leave it the way it is!'

Other issues for consideration focused on:

- The type of buildings to be developed
- Water and sewerage issues
- Mine subsidence issues.

3 Next steps

Brian Elton stated that a summary of the main outcomes of the Community Workshop would be distributed following the meeting, with further consultation activities to occur in the first quarter of 2009. The report of the Community Workshop would also be provided to Council and posted to the project website, when established.

He reiterated the open offer to all interested parties, including MAG, the Durham Green retirement village and others, to participate in the community engagement process.

He stated that the proponent would continue to work towards development of a master plan for the site and would like to work with the community, in order to obtain community input to the plan.