

# WARRUMBUNGLE SHIRE COUNCIL

## Ordinary Meeting – 21 May 2020

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### Item 16 Update Report - Coonabarabran Mungindi Road Upgrade Project

<b>Division:</b>	Technical Services
<b>Management Area:</b>	Technical Services
<b>Author:</b>	Director Technical Services – Kevin Tighe
<b>CSP Key Focus Area:</b>	Public Infrastructure and services
<b>Priority:</b>	P13 Roads throughout the Shire are safe, well-maintained and appropriately funded.

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#### Reason for Report

The reason for this report is to review the current status of the Coonabarabran Mungindi Road Upgrade Project for Council Resolution No 198/1819 and determine if further action should be taken.

#### Background

A report on the Coonabarabran Mungindi Road project was considered by Council on the 15 November 2018 (see *Attachment 1*) and the following resolutions were made:

***'198/1819 RESOLVED that:***

- 1. Funding submissions are prepared for the Coonabarabran Mungindi Road Upgrade Project subject to a partnering agreement with both Walgett Shire Council and Narrabri Shire Council.*
- 2. The objective for Warrumbungle Shire Council in any funding submission made for the Coonabarabran Mungindi Road Upgrade Project is to upgrade the road between Coonabarabran and Baradine to road train access standard.*
- 3. A budget allocation of \$15,000, funded from the Regional Roads Block Grant, is made for the cost of preparing funding submissions for the Coonabarabran Mungindi Road Upgrade Project.'*

#### Issues

A partnering agreement has not been reached between the three Councils. Narrabri Shire Council has indicated that their road upgrade priorities lay elsewhere and Walgett Shire Council did not respond to Council's invitation. It is understood that several sections of the road between Pilliga and Collarenebri in Walgett Shire have recently been sealed.

To access funding for the works, the upgrade project must be 'shovel' ready. A concept design or even a detailed scope of works for upgrading the Warrumbungle section of the route has not been completed. A general description of the scope of works was provided in the 15 November report, *"The 2013 report described the scope of works as "Rehabilitation of existing seal, realignment of high embankment and widening of shoulders to 1.5m both sides plus a full width pavement overlay of*

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150mm. 7.5km requires rehabilitation between Gwabegar and Baradine, 30.0km between Baradine and Coonabarabran” (Western NSW, Regional and Local Road Plan, February 2013).” This description alone is unlikely to be successful in a funding application with either the State Government through the Fixing Country Roads Programme, or the Australian Government through the Heavy Vehicle Safety and Productivity Programme.

In relation to NSW Government grant programs, the Minister for Regional Transport and Roads, the Hon Paul Toole recently advised the Mayor (see Attachment 2) that funding assistance may be available under either ‘Fixing Country Roads, Fixing Local Roads and REPAIR Programs’.

Funding under the Fixing Local Roads is limited and Council has previously determined priorities for the five (5) year life of this program. While detailed concept plans are not required for the REPAIR Program, funding here is limited to \$400,000 per year.

### **Options**

In relation to the resolution made by Council on the 15 November 2018, Council may want to continue to seek a partnering agreement with both Narrabri Shire Council and Walgett Shire Council, or Council may want to abandon the resolution. If the resolution is abandoned, Council may want to continue to seek funding to have the road between Coonabarabran and Baradine upgraded to a standard suitable for road train access.

Council may wish to progress the Baradine Road Upgrade Project in a two step process by refining the scope of works and then developing design plans to concept stage. The assistance of a consultant will be required to develop the project to design stage particularly for the task of developing a scope of works.

### **Financial Considerations**

It has previously been reported that the cost of upgrading the road between Coonabarabran and Gwabegar is around \$13,125,000. The cost of refining the scope of works and then preparing concept designs to upgrade the road between Coonabarabran and Baradine has not been determined.

### **Attachments**

1. Business Paper Report 15 November 2018 – Coonabarabran Mungindi Road Upgrade Project.
2. Letter from Minister for Roads dated 23 April 2020 – Coonabarabran Mungindi Road Upgrade Project.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

That:

1. Council Resolution No 198/1819 of 15 November 2018 seeking funding for the Coonabarabran to Mungindi Road be abandoned by Council.
2. A report be prepared on the cost of preparing concept designs for a project to upgrade the road between Coonabarabran and Baradine to road train access standard.