



## **DIRECTOR SHIRE SERVICES REPORT**

10<sup>th</sup> July 2007

**DSS2                      POINT PLOMER ROAD MAINTENANCE**  
**FILE: R POINT PLOMER    APV    {Folio No. \*}**

### **SUMMARY:**

Reporting on Council's current practice for maintenance of Point Plomer Road.

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### **BACKGROUND:**

Council at its meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> June 2007 resolved "*That a report be submitted to Council as to the affect of Council's current practice of grading and maintenance of Plomer Road south of Crescent Head.*"

Council has over the years received numerous complaints regarding the condition of the gravel section of Point Plomer Road and the present maintenance arrangements. The road is currently graded on a needs basis, subject to the funds available for the maintenance of gravel roads.

Prior to 1997, Council's policy for the maintenance of Point Plomer Road was to grade the road before each of the four school holiday periods and at the end of the Christmas school holiday period. In June 1997 Council resolved "*That Council retain its existing maintenance policy for the Point Plomer Road.*"

When this issue was last considered by Council in 1998, Council resolved "*That the grading of Point Plomer Road be as determined by the Director Operational Services.*"

### **DESCRIPTION:**

\$964,000 is provided in the 2007 / 08 budget for the maintenance of 564 kilometres of unsealed rural roads. This only permits one grading per year on lightly trafficked roads and two gradings per year on more heavily trafficked roads.

Traffic volumes on Point Plomer Road vary from 220 vehicles per day (vpd) to up to 1800 vpd depending on the time of year, beach conditions, etc. The road is currently the most heavily trafficked unsealed rural road in the Shire. Following the upgrading and bitumen sealing of sections of the road Council now maintains a length of approximately 6.25 km of unsealed road from Crescent Head to Big Hill.

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Maintenance of the gravel section of Point Plomer Road consists of two main components, viz. gravel resheeting and routine grading. Gravel resheeting is usually undertaken on this road at the beginning of the financial year (July / August) with maintenance grading of the remaining sections of road being undertaken at the same time. An amount of \$83,259 was expended on gravel resheeting of this road in July / August 2006. It is proposed that an amount of \$100,000 be provided in 2007 / 08 for gravel resheeting of Point Plomer Road and that this work be undertaken after the school holidays in July 2007. The continuation of this resheeting program will ensure that the overall condition of this road is improved and that the surface of the road remains in good condition longer following maintenance grading.

Maintenance grading of the road is currently undertaken on a needs basis being 4 or 5 times per year because of the very high traffic volumes on this road. In recent years grading has generally been undertaken before and after the Christmas school holidays, before the Easter school holidays and after the July school holidays (in conjunction with gravel resheeting work). No maintenance grading has been undertaken in the last 2 years before or after the October school holidays. The approximate annual cost for maintenance grading on this road is \$30,000.

The issue as to whether the maintenance grading of this road should be undertaken prior to or after the school holidays has been a contentious issue for a long time. Very high traffic volumes are experienced during the holiday periods. The users of the road in these holiday periods include local residents and ratepayers as well as tourists.

A number of factors need to be considered in determining the timing of the grading of the road. These include the current condition of the road, the prevailing weather conditions, the available budget and the availability of Council's plant and staff. Flexibility needs to be retained in determining the timing of the maintenance grading of this road.

## **REPORT IMPLICATIONS:**

- ***Environmental***

***Nil***

- ***Social***

***Council needs to provide a sustainable, safe and cost effective road system for the movement of people, goods and vehicles throughout the Shire.***

- ***Economic (Financial)***

***An amount of \$964,000 is provided in the 2007 / 08 budget for the maintenance of rural unsealed roads. An amount of \$100,000 is proposed for gravel resheeting of Point Plomer Road in 2007 / 08.***

- ***Policy or Statutory***

***Nil***

- ***Director's Review***

*The current arrangement, whereby the timing of the grading is determined by the Director, provides flexibility and should be retained as it allows a determination regarding the timing to be made on a needs basis after due consideration to the factors described in the report.*

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**That the information be noted.**

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**A P Vermeulen**  
**DIRECTOR SHIRE SERVICES**