

Falls Creek Lakeside Development Project – Road Safety Issues (Summary)

Background

My name is Jonathan Spring and I am a member of both the Birkebeiner Nordic Ski Club and Cross Country Ski Association Victoria. I am providing this summary **on my own behalf**:

Summary of Road Safety Audit (RSA) in Response to the Lakeside Project Planning Docs (PA2201858)

I commissioned a Road Safety Audit (RSA) to assess BHP road. Extracts from the RSA include:

“The current ANARE project planning is high-level only with few details of what changes there might be to the road, bus use and stops, interface with major intersections, interface with minor cross-country ski intersections, signage, and so on. Nevertheless, a list of key risks identified by the audit team is provided in Table 1 below. The ratings assume that vehicle travel speed is low, and is a best-case risk-rating, averaging out severities across the whole length, and all ‘scenarios’ such as assuming seat-belts are worn on buses. In reality, these risks could be teased out further, which would result in some risk ratings being higher.”

Risk	Affected User	Risk Rating
Light vehicle loses control and spills down embankment / culvert / tree.	Drivers	Medium
Light vehicle loses control and ends up in the table drain.	Drivers	Medium
Light vehicle loses control and ends up in the table drain, causing other vehicles to pass through narrow road section. Passing vehicle loses control and spills down embankment / culvert / tree.	Drivers	High
Light vehicle loses control and ends up in the table drain, causing other vehicles to pass in the residual road width. Passing vehicle has adverse interaction with pedestrians.	Pedestrians	Medium
Embankment slip, creating narrow sections. Increased risk to passing vehicles, and pedestrians.	Drivers and pedestrians	Low
Embankment slip due to heavy vehicle with vehicle leaving the road down the embankment.	Vehicle occupants	High
Pedestrian struck by vehicle on a straight.	Pedestrians	Medium
Pedestrian being struck by vehicle on a curve.	Pedestrians	Medium
Pedestrians struck by vehicle at toboggan area.	Pedestrians	High
Bowl intersection: skier at eastern trail struck by vehicle due to restricted sight distance to the south.	Skier	Medium
Skier-driver conflict at cross-country trails (manoeuvring and ski-removal at the approaches to the road, some of which have steep approach slopes).	Skier	Low

It appears that ARV is the Delegated Road Authority for BHP Rd from the start of Falls Creek to the Lakeside Precinct however there may be a Government Gazette that is not available that nominates VicRoads (DTP) as the Delegated Road Authority. The State of Victoria (through DTP) would be involved in any case if there is a safety issue however it is also the responsibility of the Delegated Road Authority.

ARV Falls Creek (ARV-FC) is responsible for undertaking a thorough risk assessment for the project and the associated use of BHP road (given the significant increase in traffic volumes and mix). Unfortunately such an RSA does not appear to have been commissioned by ARV-FC. Furthermore, ARV-FC has not responded to the RSA nor contacted Road Safety Audits Pty Ltd to discuss its findings and the associated risks.

Conclusion

A condition precedent for planning approval should be that ALL road safety risks identified in the RSA are addressed including the widening of BHP Rd, installation of safety barriers on road shoulders, safety treatments at all xc ski trail intersections, safety treatments at the toboggan area, remediating road pavement issues, developing a plan to eliminate road safety risks for xc skiers and walkers who may use and/or cross the road and solutions for all other risks identified in the RSA.