Executive summary

This report provides a summary of Roads and Maritime Services consultation with the community and stakeholders on a proposal to install a permanent electronic message sign for northbound motorists on Pacific Highway, Gordon approaching the intersection of Ryde Road/Mona Vale Road.

The NSW Government is funding this proposal as part of its $300 million Urban Roads Pinch Point Program, which aims to reduce congestion and improve travel time on Sydney’s busiest road corridors. The works associated with this proposal include:

- investigating ground conditions and locating underground utilities
- excavating and installing foundations
- installing the electronic sign
- trenching and installing power and telecommunications cables
- testing the sign.

Roads and Maritime invited feedback on this proposal in December 2016. We distributed about 2300 letters to local residents and businesses inviting feedback on the proposal, from which we received comments from eight people, with five supporting the proposal and three not supporting it.

Key points raised by the respondents included support for the proposal, usefulness of the sign, the visual impact of the sign, and, the sign would distract northbound motorists and prevent exit and entry from Merriwa Street onto Pacific Highway.

We would like to thank everyone who took the time to consider the proposal and provide feedback.

The decision

After reviewing the feedback we have decided to proceed with the proposal without change. Roads and Maritime will start work on the permanent electronic message sign in March 2017. Work will take four months to complete, weather permitting.

We will continue to keep the community and stakeholders informed as the project progresses.
Contents

Executive summary ........................................................................................................................................... 1
Contents .......................................................................................................................................................... 2
   Figures and tables .................................................................................................................................... 2
1. Introduction ............................................................................................................................................... 3
   1.1. Background ....................................................................................................................................... 3
   1.2. The proposal ..................................................................................................................................... 3
2. Consultation approach ............................................................................................................................. 5
   2.1. Consultation objectives ..................................................................................................................... 5
   2.2. How consultation was done ............................................................................................................. 5
3. Consultation summary ............................................................................................................................... 5
   3.1. Overview .......................................................................................................................................... 5
   3.2. Feedback summary and Roads and Maritime’s responses ............................................................. 5
4. Decision .................................................................................................................................................... 12
5. Next steps ................................................................................................................................................ 12
6. Appendices ............................................................................................................................................... 13
   6.1. Appendix A – Have your say letter ................................................................................................. 13

Figures and tables
Figure 1 – Proposed map location .............................................................................................................. 3
Table 1 - Feedback summary and Roads and Maritime’s responses ......................................................... 6
1. Introduction

1.1. Background

Roads and Maritime has identified the Pacific Highway as a critical corridor for the movement of goods and vehicles. It currently experiences heavy traffic and delays, which increase when there are unplanned incidents along the highway and surrounding corridors. As a result, a location northbound on the Pacific Highway corridor approaching the intersection of Ryde Road/Mona Vale Road was identified as a critical decision making location that required a permanent electronic message sign.

This section of the Pacific Highway is three lanes in each direction and acts as a major urban arterial road linking North Sydney with the M1 Motorway and suburbs along the North Shore. The general surroundings are urban, with a mixture of residential apartment buildings and commercial properties.

As this is a busy urban environment with limited space on the kerbside of Pacific Highway, the location on the corner of Merriwa Street was identified as the most suitable location for the electronic message sign. Part of the works would involve the relocation of the existing directional sign to the centre median for motorists travelling northbound on Pacific Highway.

1.2. The proposal

Roads and Maritime is proposing the installation of a permanent electronic message sign on the Pacific Highway, Gordon, about 250 metres south of the intersection with Ryde Road/Mona Vale Road and the relocation of the existing directional sign into the central median. Both signs will service northbound traffic.

The proposed installation of a permanent electronic message sign would improve the ability of the Transport Management Centre (TMC) to manage daily traffic conditions and flows, especially during planned and unplanned incidents that occur along the route.

The sign would allow real time information to be relayed to motorists and enable them to make better and more informed decisions in response to any unplanned incidents that may occur. Providing this information to northbound motorists using Pacific Highway allows them to make a decision on their route as they approach the Ryde Road/Mona Vale Road intersection.

The new permanent electronic message sign would enhance the ability of the Transport Management Centre (TMC) to:

- allow the display of important information to help northbound drivers avoid delays caused by planned or unplanned incidents such as road works or crashes in the vicinity
- monitor, direct and control day-to-day traffic
- disseminate real-time traffic information to road users
- provide northbound motorists with information about planned and unplanned incidents on Pacific Highway, M1 Motorway, Mona Vale Road, Ryde Road, Bobbin Head Road, Kissing Point Road and Eastern Road.

The NSW Government is funding this proposal as part of its $300 million Urban Roads Pinch Point Program, which aims to reduce congestion and improve travel time on Sydney’s busiest road corridors.

The proposal includes:
• investigating ground conditions and locating underground utilities
• excavating and installing foundations
• installing the electronic sign
• trenching and installing power and telecommunications cables
• testing the sign.

Map of the proposed permanent electronic message sign on Pacific Highway, Gordon

Looking northbound on Pacific Highway, Gordon
Figure 1 – Artist's impression of permanent electronic message sign on Pacific Highway, Gordon.
2. Consultation approach

2.1. Consultation objectives

We consulted with the community and stakeholders on the proposal to:

- seek comment, feedback, ideas and suggestions for Roads and Maritime to consider when developing the proposal
- build a database of interested community members who Roads and Maritime could continue to engage during the development of the proposal.

2.2. How consultation was done

The community and stakeholders were encouraged to provide feedback via mail, email or phone.

We distributed about 2300 letters to local residents and businesses inviting feedback on the proposal (Appendix A). Copies were also provided to the NSW Member of Parliament for Ku-ring-gai, Ku-ring-gai Council, State Transit Authority, Ausgrid, Jemena Gas, Sydney Water, PIPE Networks, Optus, Telstra, Bike NSW and emergency services.

3. Consultation summary

3.1. Overview

We received comments from eight people, raising 15 different matters.

There were five people who supported the proposal and three that did not.

Key points raised by the respondents included support for the proposal, the sign would be useful, the visual impact of the sign, and, the sign would distract northbound motorists and prevent exit and entry from Merriwa Street onto the Pacific Highway.

3.2. Feedback summary and Roads and Maritime’s responses

Roads and Maritime has provided responses to all feedback received on this proposal. The responses are provided directly to the person who commented along with a summary in this report, which will be made available to the public.

All comments have been considered to help Roads and Maritime make decisions on this proposal. Matters raised during consultation that are not within Roads and Maritime’s area of responsibility have been forwarded to the relevant party.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Matters raised</th>
<th>Roads and Maritime’s response</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Safety</td>
<td>The sign will cause a distraction for motorists.</td>
<td>The sign is designed to be read by northbound motorists on the Pacific Highway well in advance of the Merriwa Street intersection, which is consistent with the current directional sign at this location.</td>
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<td>Northbound motorists will be distracted and prevent exit and entry from Merriwa Street onto the Pacific Highway.</td>
<td>Motorists would also be informed of planned and unplanned incidents happening along the Pacific Highway northbound and it is considered to have little adverse impact to the current vehicle movements at Merriwa Street and the Pacific Highway.</td>
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<td>Roads and Maritime has guidelines for the placement of permanent electronic signs to help ensure a sign does not distract drivers or create a safety hazard. These include:</td>
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<td>• visibility of the sign as motorists approach and a clear line of sight</td>
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<td>• distance from where motorists can see the sign to the point where they can change their journey</td>
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<td>• distance to an intersection where lane changing and braking is common</td>
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<td>• distance to other signs and traffic lights.</td>
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<td>Following the selection of this site, a visual impact assessment of the proposal was carried out in December 2016, which confirmed Roads and Maritime’s guidelines had been met at the proposed location.</td>
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(2 Comments)
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<td>Sun blinds drivers in the afternoon and the sign will not be visible.</td>
<td>All electronic message signs used on the NSW road network are fitted with a light sensor, which adjusts the brightness of the message in accordance with the ambient lighting level. Additionally, these signs have a protective sheet of polycarbonate to protect against impact and environmental damage. These sheets also reduce reflection of sunlight and increase the transmission of light from LEDs to improve visibility. The sign would also assist in screening the afternoon sun.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose of electronic message sign</td>
<td>Usefulness of the sign.</td>
<td>This location on the Pacific Highway was identified for an electronic sign as it: • provides information to drivers in advance of a decision making point • provides a sign location away from existing signalised intersections • was the least impact on residential properties (visual and physical) • has enough space to construct the sign and maintain it • has no requirement to remove mature trees • avoids underground utilities impacts. The benefits to be gained from the proposed installation of a permanent electronic sign relate to the improved ability of TMC to manage daily traffic conditions and flows, especially during planned and unplanned incidents that occur along the route. The proposed installation of a sign at Pacific Highway approaching the intersection with Ryde Road/Mona Vale Road is aimed at assisting northbound traffic along Pacific Highway.</td>
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<td>(3 Comments)</td>
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<td>Category</td>
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<td>The sign would inform motorists travelling northbound of any planned and unplanned incidents on Pacific Highway, M1 Motorway, Mona Vale Road, Ryde Road, Bobbin Head Road, Kissing Point Road and Eastern Road as well as advise motorists of safety issues.</td>
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<td>In addition, the sign would also allow various types of information to be relayed to motorists that would enable them to make better and more informed decisions or choose an alternative route in response to any incidents that may occur.</td>
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<td>The proposed sign has been placed to work with other electronic message signs across the road network in this area.</td>
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<td>Congestion</td>
<td>The sign will increase traffic flow down Merriwa Street.</td>
<td>This proposed sign is part of a broader electronic message sign network. Information on incidents would allow motorists to avoid the area, alter their journey or take alternative routes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3 Comments)</td>
<td>The sign will cause motorists to rat run through local streets.</td>
<td>The sign placement at this location is intended to allow motorists to make a decision regarding alternative routes such as Mona Vale Road and Ryde Road.</td>
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<td>However, it can, on occasions, potentially add traffic on local roads as motorists try to navigate around a nearby incident or delay.</td>
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<td>In the event of an incident on the Pacific Highway at Gordon, other electronic signs on the network are also likely to be activated to warn motorists away from this area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental</td>
<td>The sign will remove the Eucalyptus tree on the western side of the Pacific Highway.</td>
<td>The installation of this sign at the proposed location will use the foundation currently used for the static directional sign. No Eucalyptus tree will be removed.</td>
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<td>(1 Comment)</td>
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| **Visual impact**      | The sign is not visually appealing.                                             | Permanent electronic messages signs across NSW use a standard structural design and message display. The electronic message sign is being installed in the location where the directional sign is currently in place. The visual impact is expected to be comparable. In December 2016, we also conducted a visual impact assessment and considered the local landscape and other elements to confirm the suitability of this location for permanent message sign. We also took into account environmental and urban design considerations including:  
  - vistas or panoramic views  
  - the existing streetscape  
  - other major signage, traffic signals and intersections  
  - heritage items  
  - location of businesses and residential properties  
  In considering the above, the proposed location was chosen to minimise the impact on the local area while delivering the objective of the sign.  
  Artist impression is misleading as no dimensions are provided.  
  The artist impression is indicative of the sign size. The proposed sign will provide a minimum of 5.5m clearance from road levels. |
<p>| <strong>Outside of Scope</strong>    | Need for traffic lights at Merriwa Street and Pacific Highway for motorists turning right. | The request for traffic lights at Merriwa Street is out of scope of this proposal and will be forwarded to Roads and Maritime Services Network and Safety Team for consideration.                                                                                      |</p>
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<td></td>
<td>Can the sign be double sided to assist southbound motorists.</td>
<td>All other approaches to this important intersection have an electronic message sign. There is an existing sign for southbound motorists on Pacific Highway approaching Mona Vale Road/Ryde Road and an existing sign for westbound motorists on Mona Vale Road approximately 320m east of Pacific Highway. There is also a sign for eastbound motorists on Ryde Road approaching Yanko Road.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Can the northern side of Merriwa Street be made ‘No Parking’ zone.</td>
<td>The request for a ‘No Parking Zone’ at the northern side of Merriwa Street is out of the scope of this proposal. It is noted and will be forwarded Ku-Ring-Gai Council for consideration.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Proposed alternative location of Cecil Street, Killara.</td>
<td>We appreciate the suggested alternative location. However, the proposed sign at the intersection on Pacific Highway approaching Mona Vale Road/Ryde Road has been identified as a key journey decision point to provide real-time updates to road users travelling northbound on Pacific Highway.</td>
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<td>The proposed location will allow road users to make more informed decisions about their route and can improve travel time by giving them the right information at the right point on the network so they can avoid delays and pick an alternative route.</td>
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<td>This new sign location is part of a broader network of permanent message signs. It is complimented by the following existing signs in the area:</td>
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<td>• Ryde Road (eastbound) approaching Yanko Road</td>
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<td>• Pacific Highway (southbound) approaching Mona Vale Road</td>
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<td>• Mona Vale Road (westbound) approaching Pacific Highway</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Further electronic message signs across the Sydney road network will continue to be considered. The suggestion provided has been noted.</td>
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4. **Decision**

We thank everyone who took the time to consider our proposal and provide feedback.

Roads and Maritime has considered the feedback and has decided to proceed with the proposal without change.

5. **Next steps**

Roads and Maritime will start construction work in March 2017 weather permitting.

The community and stakeholders will be kept informed as the project progresses.
Have your say – Proposed installation of a permanent electronic message sign on Pacific Highway, Gordon

The NSW Government is funding a proposal to install a permanent electronic message sign as part of its $300 million Urban Roads Pinch Point Program, which aims to reduce congestion and improve travel time on Sydney’s busiest road corridors.

Roads and Maritime Services is seeking community and stakeholder feedback by Thursday 22 December 2016 on the proposed location of a permanent electronic message sign on Pacific Highway, approaching the intersection of Ryde Road.

The sign would provide northbound road users with advance notice of planned and unplanned incidents on Mona Vale Road, Ryde Road, Bobbin Head Road, Kissing Point Road and Eastern Road.

We have included a map to explain the location of the proposed sign.

Installation work for the sign would include:

- Excavating and putting in foundations
- Installing the electronic sign
- Trenching and installing power and telecommunications cables
- Relocating directional sign to centre median island
- Testing the sign.

In the first instance, we would need to carry out early field work to help us develop a final design. This includes investigating ground conditions and locating underground utilities at the proposed site.

How can you give feedback?

We encourage you to send us your comments on the proposed permanent electronic message by Thursday 22 December 2016 to:

LT Joint Venture
PO Box 380
Rockdale NSW 2216
or email info@ltjv.com.au

We will carefully consider your feedback and continue to keep you updated as the proposal progresses.

How do message signs improve traffic flow?

There are about 200 permanent electronic message signs throughout NSW. They are programmed by the Transport Management Centre (TMC), which manages and monitors the road network 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.
We place electronic message signs before key journey decision points to provide real-time updates to road users. This allows them to make more informed decisions about their route and can improve travel time by giving them the right information at the right point on the network so they can avoid delays.

For more information on our permanent electronic message signs, please visit our website at rms.nsw.gov.au and search on ‘electronic message signs’.

![Map of proposed permanent electronic message sign on Pacific Highway, Gordon](image)

**Artist’s impression and map of the proposed permanent electronic message sign on Pacific Highway, Gordon**

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**Translating and Interpreting Service**

If you need an interpreter, please call the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National) on 131 450 and ask them to telephone LT Joint Venture on 1800 735 563.

**Arabic**

إذا كنت بحاجة إلى مترجم، يرجى الاتصال ب TIS الوطنية على الرقم 131 450 وأطلب منهم الاتصال ب LT Joint Venture على هاتف رقم 1800 735 563. ساعات العمل الخاصة بنا من 9.00 am-5.00 pm.

**Greek**

Αν χρειάζεστε διερμηνεία, καλέστε την Ελληνική Υπηρεσία Διερμηνείας και Μετάφρασης (TIS National) στο 131 450 και ζητήστε να καλέσουν το LT Joint Venture στο αριθμό 1800 735 563. Οι ωρές λειτουργίας μας είναι 9.00 am-5.00 pm.

**Mandarin**

如果您需要口译员，请拨打TIS National的电话131 450。请他们打电话给LT Joint Venture，电话号码：1800 735 563。我们的营业时间是9.00 am-5.00 pm。

**Spanish**

Si necesita un intérprete, por favor llame a TIS Nacional en el 131 450 y pídale que se comuniquen con LT Joint Venture en el 1800 735 563. Nuestro horario de oficina es 9.00 am-5.00 pm.

**Vietnamese**

Nếu quý vị cần thông dịch viên, xin hãy gọi cho Dịch vụ Thống Phân Dịch Quốc gia (TIS Quốc gia) theo số 131 450 và yêu cầu họ gọi cho LT Joint Venture theo số 1800 735 563. Ghi chú việc qua chúng tôi là 9.00 am-5.00 pm.