James Ruse Drive, Rosehill to Clyde
Proposal to reduce congestion and improve traffic flows

Community issues report

MAY 2013

RMS 13.258
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1. Background

This project is fully funded by the NSW Government as part of the $125 million Pinch Point Program. The program aims to reduce delays and manage congestion on Sydney’s main roads, as well as improve road safety for all road users. James Ruse Drive is a road corridor in Sydney where remedial projects are planned to improve traffic flow and reduce peak hour delays.

James Ruse Drive is an important urban arterial road that runs for almost seven kilometres from Parramatta Road at Clyde to the Windsor Road interchange at Northmead and provides a major crossing over the Parramatta River. A critical section of James Ruse Drive is between Rosehill and Clyde. This section of road experiences long queues and delays during peak hours.

Average travel speeds along James Ruse Drive can be as low as 37km/h during peak times. This can be partly due to cars and trucks trying to access industrial areas, the M4 Motorway, Parramatta CBD and Rosehill Racecourse.

Some congestion problems in this area are caused by:
- Vehicles queuing to turn right obstructing through lanes.
- Vehicles overflowing out of right turn bays and obstructing through lanes.
- Vehicles waiting to turn left from shared left/through lanes obstructing through movements

There are also limited pedestrian facilities and a safety problem with trucks mounting the kerb when trying to turn corners.

2. The proposal

The key features of the proposal are:
- Provide a dedicated left turn lane on James Ruse Drive southbound to Grand Avenue.
- Provide a dedicated left turn lane on James Ruse Drive northbound to Hassall Street.
- Provide a third right turn lane from Hassall Street eastbound to James Ruse Drive.
- Extend the right turn bay on James Ruse Drive northbound into Grand Avenue.
- Extend the right turn bay on James Ruse Drive southbound into Prospect Street.
- Extend the right turn bay on James Ruse Drive southbound into Parramatta Road.
- Close the central median to prevent right turns into and out of Hope Street and the Rosehill Racecourse access opposite Hope Street.
- Reconstruct corner kerbs to facilitate truck turns.
- New and improved pedestrian crossing and access facilities, into Rosehill Racecourse.
- A landscaping plan developed in consultation with affected businesses and Parramatta City Council.
- Utility adjustments.
- Other associated works including drainage, line marking and sign installation.

The proposal would improve the congestion at James Ruse Drive. This would reduce traffic delays and congestion by reducing the queue lengths for traffic at James Ruse Drive, which is often blocked by extensive queuing during peak traffic periods.

The benefits of the project would be:
- Reduced delays and improved safety
- Improved pedestrian facilities
- Safer truck manoeuvrability
- Improved road surface at the intersection of James Ruse Drive, Hassall Street and Grand Avenue
3. Consultation with residents and businesses

Approximately 750 local residents, businesses and stakeholders were sent a community update that invited their comments and feedback on the James Ruse Drive, Rosehill to Clyde proposal during November 2012. Comments on the proposal were requested by 30 November 2012 (Appendix A – community update James Ruse Drive, Rosehill to Clyde, November 2012).

Advertisements were published in the Parramatta Sun on 5 and 12 November 2012.

Residents of Hope Street were doorknocked to make them aware of the proposal to ban the right turn at Hope Street into and out of James Ruse Drive. Generally the residents supported the proposal and the right turn ban due to safety concerns.

Details of the project were provided on the RMS webpage, with contact details for feedback.

Five submissions were received. Three submissions supported the proposal and two submissions raised issues, both within and outside the scope of the proposal.

Meetings were held with the Australian Turf Club, Hooters Restaurant and Parramatta City Council representatives. The Australian Turf Club raised a number of issues which are addressed in this report.

4. Community issues

Requests for information, suggestions, concerns and issues raised by the community and RMS responses are summarised below:

SAFETY

Install an overhead pedestrian bridge over James Ruse Drive between Prospect Street and Hassall Street.

An overhead pedestrian bridge has not been included as part of this project as the current desire lines for pedestrians crossing James Ruse Drive are at Hassall Street and Prospect Street at the existing signalised pedestrian crossings. These crossings do not contribute to congestion on James Ruse Drive and a pedestrian bridge would not improve operation of the corridor.

The pedestrian volumes are low (67 pedestrians per hour during the morning and 43 pedestrians per hour during the afternoon) except during special event days which have special traffic management plans in place, so safety benefits would be minimal.

Install permanent pedestrian fencing along the western side of James Ruse Drive from Virginia Street to Weston Street to improve the safety of pedestrians attending events held at Rosehill Racecourse.

During event days at Rosehill Gardens, temporary pedestrian fencing is installed along James Ruse Drive (both directions) between Virginia Street and Weston Street. This fencing restricts unsafe pedestrian movements across James Ruse Drive during special events.

Provide footpaths on James Ruse Drive outside Rosehill Racecourse.

Pedestrian volumes are low except during special event days and on these days, pedestrians are directed to cross James Ruse Drive at the signalised pedestrian crossings at Prospect Street and Hassall Street and use the footpath on the western side of James Ruse Drive.

However, investigations show that there is high usage by pedestrians of a 35 metre section of the
eastern side of James Ruse Drive just north of Prospect Street which connects the bus stop to the signalised pedestrian crossing at Prospect Street. Parramatta City Council have agreed to the construction of a footpath here as part of the proposal.

**There needs to be more done to ensure pedestrian safety and avoid disruption to traffic flows.**
The proposed pedestrian facilities meet current safety standards and are considered adequate to maintain pedestrian safety. The Pinch Point program funds efficient and effective solutions for peak hour traffic hot spots with the proposal modelled as the most effective in reducing the delays with the funding available.

**A collision on James Ruse Drive on the overpass will cause vehicles to fall onto houses.**
The overpass has a safety barrier designed to redirect and contain a heavy or light vehicle when impacted.

**Removing the median strip removes a pedestrian refuge and a safety barrier for drivers.**
The median strip would not be removed, but would be made narrower at some locations and shifted at other locations. Pedestrians are encouraged to cross James Ruse Drive at the signalised crossings at Hassall Street and Prospect Street as it is unsafe to cross at an unsignalised location. The proposed width of the median is designed to contain and redirect vehicles within their lane.

**AMENITY**

**Will there be any improvement to the streetscape or creation of bush regeneration areas at James Ruse Drive, adjacent to the M4 off ramp?**

**James Ruse Drive is a key gateway into Parramatta CBD and beautification is essential.**
RMS provides landscaping and urban design improvements where projects have a direct impact on the surrounding environment. Landscaping improvements would be done at the intersection of James Ruse Drive, Hassall Street and Grand Avenue as the proposal would impact on the nature strips and existing vegetation. No landscaping is proposed at the M4 Motorway off ramp or other areas that are not impacted by the proposal.

**INCREASED TRAFFIC AND NOISE**

**Extending the right turn bay from James Ruse Drive into Prospect Street, and other aspects of the proposal, would cause more traffic in already congested local roads.**
The extension of the right turn bay into Prospect Street is designed to accommodate the extra vehicles turning right when Hope Street is closed off, and prevent vehicles overflowing out of the right turn bay and blocking southbound traffic on James Ruse Drive.

Assuming that half the traffic that previously turned right into Hope Street would then use Hassall Street, it is calculated that the volume of vehicles turning right into Prospect Street would increase by approximately ten per cent.

The provision of the third right turn lane/through lane from Hassall Street into Grand Avenue will allow for less delay for vehicles turning right into James Ruse Drive and could possibly reduce the volume of right turn vehicles using Prospect Street. Also, the provision of a left turn lane on James Ruse Drive at Hassall Street could possibly reduce the volume of left turn vehicles into Prospect Street. These would reduce the overall volume of traffic using Prospect Street as Hassall Street will become a more desirable route for vehicles travelling to and leaving Parramatta CBD.

**Concerns with increased traffic and noise**
The proposal is not expected to increase overall traffic volumes, but it may redistribute existing volumes through nearby streets, as discussed above.
While there would be some construction noise in the short term, residences are not expected to be affected by more noise after construction, as it does not bring traffic any closer to residences. Pre and post construction noise levels would be monitored to confirm this.

While this project is not predicted to increase noise, existing noise levels may satisfy the criteria for noise reduction or mitigation measures through the RMS Noise Abatement Program. Information and an application form for the RMS Noise Abatement Program can be found at www.rta.nsw.gov.au/environment/noise/noiseabateprog.html or write to:
Sydney Noise Abatement Program Coordinator
Roads and Maritime Services
PO Box 973
PARRAMATTA CBD NSW 2124

DESIGN

Change the merge lanes for vehicles travelling northbound on James Ruse Drive over the bridge. Allow the M4 Motorway off ramp and the western northbound lane merge instead, similar to the lane merge arrangement on the ANZAC Bridge.

Vehicles exiting the M4 Motorway eastbound onto James Ruse Drive northbound require their own dedicated lane for safety and efficiency. Due to the high volumes of vehicles both exiting the M4 Motorway and travelling northbound on James Ruse Drive, providing an arrangement where the vehicles on the M4 exit lane have to merge with the west side northbound lane on James Ruse Drive would result in extensive queuing on the M4 exit lane which would likely extend back onto the M4 Motorway.

There is a significant difference in the road levels at this location, restricting sight distance which would prevent the safe merge of vehicles. In addition, the speed of vehicles on both the M4 Motorway ramp and James Ruse Drive make the type of merge suggested unsafe. Also, large and heavy vehicles would be required to ‘zipper merge’ on an uphill slope approaching Prospect Street which is also undesirable. Similar treatments used elsewhere, such as the ANZAC Bridge, have similar road slopes for a longer distance allowing cars to safely merge.

Based on these investigations it is considered that the current lane arrangement is the most suitable for this site.

Add road marking at the intersection of Prospect Street and Penelope Lucas Lane to prevent eastbound motorists on Prospect Street queuing across the Penelope Lucas Lane intersection.

Installing ‘Keep Clear’ road marking could be used by motorists as a way to jump the queue in Prospect Street from Penelope Lucas Lane which could create delays and increased traffic volumes in Penelope Lucas Lane. Eastbound motorists delayed in Prospect Street can alternatively use Hassall Street north of Prospect Street to access James Ruse Drive.

Keep the right turn from Rosehill Racecourse into James Ruse Drive (at Hope Street).

The Rosehill Racecourse Raceday Operations Manager has confirmed that the gates at Rosehill Racecourse opposite Hope Street are not used for entry into the car park, only for exiting traffic turning left. The proposal will not affect this movement.

Treat the ponding of water at the intersection of James Ruse Drive and Hassell Street.

RMS will investigate and address the drainage and ponding at this intersection during the detail design phase of the project.

Cars turning into Rosehill Racecourse slow down southbound motorists on James Ruse Drive.

Traffic is managed by Traffic Commanders during special events. At present when the car park opposite Prospect Street is nearing capacity, the northbound right turn lane from James Ruse
Drive into the car park is closed to prevent excess queuing of traffic. This concern has been forwarded to Rosehill Racecourse for consideration.

**Improve the entries from James Ruse Drive to Rosehill Racecourse parking area.**
Entries into private properties are the responsibility of the property owner. This suggestion has been forwarded to Rosehill Racecourse for consideration.

**Increase the use of gross pollutant traps within the drainage area into the local waterways.**
Pollutant traps and waterways are managed by Parramatta City Council. This suggestion has been forward to council for consideration.

**Traffic signal phasing issues for vehicles turning left from James Ruse Drive into Hassall Street**
The provision of a dedicated left turn lane from James Ruse Drive southbound into Hassall Street will mean that motorists with a green arrow will not be delayed by motorists in front of them wanting to travel straight through.

**PLANNING**

Improvements will only provide a short term solution that is not cost effective. Master planning and a detailed transport and traffic study should be undertaken (based upon future uses in the area).
While RMS and Transport for NSW undertakes long term planning and strategies to improve transport efficiency, the current level of congestion at this intersection requires immediate measures to improve traffic flow in the short to medium term. The proposal's benefit to traffic flow is modelled based on a 5-10 year timeframe, which would not impede a long term corridor strategy. The current proposal is highly cost effective, under the economic assessment process employed by RMS to develop projects.

The Australian Turf Club (ATC) is currently master planning its site and any access improvements should acknowledge the site in the broader development context including ATC and Shell redevelopment and the broader vision for the Peninsula.
The proposed works are considered of immediate benefit in easing congestion on James Ruse Drive. Following consideration of the broad features of the ATC masterplan, the current proposal is not considered to impact on this longer term plan.

**ENFORCEMENT**

Redesign the kerb and gutter at Virginia Street and James Ruse, to stop motorists performing an illegal left turn from James Ruse Drive into Virginia Street.
Virgina Street at James Ruse Drive currently has narrowing treatment in place to restrict illegal left turns which is supported with regulatory signage. The kerb and gutter cannot be modified as the gap must be maintained to allow safe use for large vehicles turning left onto James Ruse Drive.
This concern has been forwarded to local police for enforcement.

**Concerns with illegal activity including:**
- U turns at the entrance to Rosehill Racecourse car park
- Red light running at Prospect Street
- Speeding vehicles
- Not obeying road signs
- Driving on the nature strip
- Vehicles with overhanging loads
- Littering
Law enforcement is the responsibility of Police, Council and RMS safety inspectors. These concerns have been referred for investigation.

**There is a chain link gate which blocks the footpath on race days.**

It is illegal to block a public footpath. This concern will be passed on Rosehill Racecourse and Parramatta City Council for investigation.

**INFORMATION**

**Will the lanes be wide enough to fit a B-double or semi-trailer truck?**

The lanes are designed to be wide enough to accommodate semi trailers and B-doubles.

**Where would the southbound left turn lane into Grand Avenue and the northbound left turn lane into Hassall Street begin?**

The northbound left turn lane into Hassall Street would begin just north of Oak Street, and be approximately 50 metres long. The southbound left turn lane into Grand Avenue would begin south of Grand Avenue North and be approximately 70 metres long.

**Which corners will be reconstructed to suit trucks?**

Both the southeast and the northwest corner of the intersection of James Ruse Drive, Hassall Street and Grand Avenue would be reconstructed to make it safer for pedestrians and allow trucks to turn safely around the corner.

**Where will the new and improved pedestrian crossings be?**

There would be a new pedestrian crossing across Grand Avenue. The pedestrian island would be raised and pram ramps constructed at the crossing of Hassall Street providing an improved pedestrian crossing facility. The pedestrian path on the southeast corner of Grand Avenue and James Ruse Drive would be realigned and resurfaced providing safer pedestrian access connecting Rosehill Racecourse with the pedestrian crossing of James Ruse Drive.

In response to community consultation, a pedestrian path on the eastern side of James Ruse Drive just north of Prospect Street to connect the bus stop to the signalised pedestrian crossing at Prospect Street has been included in the proposal.

**Who will benefit from this project?**

In general terms, the whole community would benefit from the economic savings of reduced travel times and less vehicle emissions. Local residents will benefit from lower volumes of traffic on local roads as the main road becomes a more desirable route for motorists. Pedestrians will benefit from improved safety, access and facilities. All road users will benefit from reduced delays and safer roads.

**5. Outcomes and recommendations**

RMS has considered all of the submissions received and issues raised during the consultation period on the proposed upgrade to James Ruse Drive between Rosehill and Clyde.

While the community is generally supportive of the proposal, broad concerns included safety, design, amenity, noise, increased traffic, planning and illegal activity. These concerns have been addressed above.

Based on the need for immediate measures to reduce congestion at this location, it is recommended that the proposal proceed with the addition of a 35 metre pedestrian path on the eastern side of James Ruse Drive just north of Prospect Street to connect the bus stop to the signalised pedestrian crossing at Prospect Street.
Appendix A
Community update James Ruse Drive, Rosehill to Clyde, November 2012

Design stages

The detailed design satisfies the local project. It includes features, plans and cross-sections features for all elements including:
- Road alignment and geometry
- Road surfacing, pavement, and traffic signs
- Lateral striping, lighting, and pedestrian crossings
- Construction staging and safety
- Drainage and utilities

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What happens next?

Community consultation on the revised design of possible improvements to James Ruse Drive will be continued by RMS.

A community feedback report will be prepared and the issues considered during the review of engineering works.

The detailed design, with any changes as a result of community comments, would be submitted to the approval and would be the basis for the project approval. The approval will be made and the project will be put to the start of construction work.

Have your say

This community is involved in the concept design and environmental factors are considered in detail to ensure adequate and safe

This document will be available online or downloaded from the site. A few questions are provided to assist the community.

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Community Update

November 2012

James Ruse Drive, Rosehill to Clyde

Roads and Maritime Services

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Background

James Ruse Drive is an important road that connects the Ryde local area to the Parramatta local area. It provides a major route to the Parramatta River, a critical road in the James Ruse Drive area in the Region. Clyde Drive is due to the long spans and delays on the southern end of the road.

Average traffic speeds along James Ruse Drive can be as low as 30km/h during peak hours. It can be partly due to low visibility and overloading across residential areas, like the five, Parramatta CBD and Rouse Hill area.

Near-to-missing facilities in this area are missing;
- Pedestrian crossing
- Strategically placed to allow right cut, including
- Traffic lights
- Drivers, politicians and local residents
- Crossings
- Safety

Para, information

Contact: Afrial Mangul, Project Manager, Roads and Maritime Services, PO Box 773, Parramatta NSW 2124

For more information, visit www.mrwa.gov.au/roads/james-ruse-drive

Projects

- Provide a dedicated left turn lane on James Ruse Drive at 300 Rosehill Road
- Reduce the load and improve safety
- Diversify the local area in compliance with effective
- Strategies and programs to plan for the future
- Providing pedestrian facilities
- Establish a comprehensive network

RMS: 2.201

James Ruse Drive, Rosehill to Clyde

Roads and Maritime Services

NSW Transport

Parramatta

November 2012

James Ruse Drive, Rosehill to Clyde

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