

Questions and answers – Heathcote Road upgrade proposal

October 2016

Background

Q: What is the Heathcote Road upgrade proposal?

Heathcote Road is an arterial road that runs between Liverpool and Heathcote, connecting Sydney's southern suburbs to the motorway network in the south-west including the M5 and M7 motorways.

Roads and Maritime Services is planning to upgrade the 2.2 kilometre section of Heathcote Road between Infantry Parade, Holsworthy and The Avenue, Voyager Point, to a four lane divided road to reduce congestion, improve road safety, meet future traffic volumes and improve pedestrian and cyclist connectivity to Holsworthy Train Station and surrounding areas.

Q: Why is it needed?

The existing road between Infantry Parade and The Avenue is a generally four lane road that becomes a two lane undivided road across the three bridges over Williams Creek, the T2 Airport railway line and Harris Creek. At these locations, traffic is required to merge from four to two lanes, causing congestion and delays.

The Macarthur Drive intersection also experiences particularly heavy congestion during the morning peak. These issues are likely to worsen, with intersection movements expected to increase by about 30 per cent in the future. The average crash rate is also expected to increase in the future.

This area is a key link for commuters who drive, walk or cycle to Holsworthy train station and the Holsworthy Army Barracks. There are currently no shared paths connecting to Holsworthy Railway Station, with pedestrians and cyclists using the grassed verge and the road.

Q: What are the key features of the Heathcote Road upgrade proposal?

The key features of the proposal include:

- Widening and upgrading Heathcote Road between Infantry Parade and The Avenue to a four lane divided road
- Upgrading the Macarthur Drive and The Avenue intersections to traffic light intersections
- Duplicating the bridges over Harris Creek, Williams Creek and over the T2 Airport railway line
- Replacing two existing road bridges over Harris Creek and Williams Creek
- Partially removing the existing pedestrian bridge over Harris Creek (Holsworthy Pedestrian Bridge)
- Providing a pedestrian and cyclist shared path along the upgrade, connecting Voyager Point to Holsworthy Station.

Q: What are the benefits?

The benefits of the Heathcote Road upgrade proposal would include:

- Reduced travel time for people travelling along Heathcote Road especially during the morning peak period
- Easing congestion and providing additional network capacity for traffic turning into all intersections, in particular the Macarthur Drive intersection
- Improvements to pedestrian and cycle access and safety, in particular to Holsworthy Train Station and Hammondville Park.
- Overall improved safety for all road users, particularly at the intersections of Macarthur Drive and The Avenue.

Community involvement

Q: How has the community been consulted on the proposal?

Roads and Maritime began consultation with the local community and stakeholders on the proposed Heathcote Road upgrade in June 2015.

In June 2015 we invited feedback from the community and stakeholders on the proposed road upgrade. We received comments from 18 individuals and one organisation. Matters raised by the community included the safety of road users, pedestrians and cyclists, the design of the proposed road upgrade, and construction and operational noise.

Following the consultation period, we prepared a consultation report outlining the feedback received and our responses. Responses were provided to stakeholders and community members who provided feedback and the consultation report was published on the project website.

Consultation with other government agencies and stakeholders has also occurred to develop the concept design, to help identify key environmental and community issues and opportunities, and to discuss potential safeguards and management measures.

Throughout the development of the Heathcote Road proposal we have consulted with Liverpool City Council, the Department of Defence, Sydney Trains and other key stakeholders.

Impact

Q: What is the expected impact of the Heathcote Road upgrade proposal?

Expected impact during construction of the proposal would include:

- Noise and vibration during construction activities including some out of hours work
- Temporary changes to access for cyclists and pedestrians
- Various traffic management activities including temporary speed limit restrictions, lane and road closures, temporary lights and stop-go operations
- Removal of about 6.24 hectares of remnant native vegetation
- Dust generation as a result of ground disturbance and earthmoving activities
- Reduced amenity due to day-to-day construction activities and routine movement of equipment

- Loss of some heritage values when replacing the existing road bridges over Harris and Williams Creeks

We would work closely with any affected residents and businesses to reduce any construction impact and ensure they are notified in advance of the work being carried out.

The operational impact of the proposal would include:

- Minor increase in traffic noise for some nearby residents
- Moderate change to the visual amenity of the road corridor for nearby residents.

Q: How would traffic impact be minimised during construction?

We would prepare a construction traffic management plan to minimise the impact on the road network during construction. This plan would include input from the Transport Management Centre, Sydney trains and utility providers. Under this plan we would:

- Implement traffic controls and signage to regulate traffic movements
- Minimise traffic switching throughout construction
- Coordinate work vehicle movements to minimise traffic delays
- Implement safe traffic zones around the work area
- Implement controls to prevent traffic restrictions during peak periods
- Include detours and signage for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists
- Identify heavy vehicle routes to help minimise impact on local routes
- Maintain access to local roads, properties and for pedestrian and cyclist movements
- Notify the local community about any temporary detours, access restrictions or road closures
- Alert road users about changes in conditions with electronic message signs
- Coordinate with other work in the area to minimise cumulative traffic impact.

Q: What trees would be affected?

To build the proposal, about 3.4 hectares of threatened ecological communities would need to be removed, including:

- Castlereagh scribbly gum woodland
- Castlereagh shale-gravel transition forest
- Castlereagh swamp woodland
- Cumberland river-flat forest.

The removal of vegetation would be replaced by the appropriate amount of replanting once the proposal is built, in line with the urban design strategy for the project, which outlines the proposal for replanting and revegetating along the road corridor. The planting proposal, as noted in the Review of Environmental Factors is to:

- Mark upgraded intersections with feature planting
- Select grasses, low groundcovers and groups of native trees that adhere to sightline and stopping distance standards

- Ensure the drainage swales are planted with appropriate wetland vegetation, integrating water sensitive urban design where possible.

We would also provide biodiversity offsets for the removal of Castlereagh scribbly gum woodland as the proposal would remove more than one hectare of this threatened ecological community.

Q. What will be the noise impact after the proposal is built?

Twenty four properties have been identified within the Review of Environmental Factors as eligible for consideration for noise mitigation. Appropriate mitigation measures will be investigated during detailed design, and implemented if the proposal is built, including:

- Lower noise pavement surfaces
- Noise barriers
- Specific at-property treatments

Q: Would any properties be acquired for the proposal?

No. Roads and Maritime is not expecting to acquire any property or land to build the proposal based on the concept design. This includes the site compound and laydown areas which will be located in the existing road reserve.

Construction

Q: Would night work be needed during construction?

While most of the work would be carried out during our standard construction hours, including 7am to 6pm Monday to Fridays and 8am to 1pm on Saturdays. Some night work would be required for certain construction activities to minimise traffic disruptions and for safety reasons.

Activities that would need to be carried out at night include:

- Removing the Macarthur Drive roundabout and raised median islands
- Other intersection work including installing signal posts and electrical work
- Final round surfacing and line marking.

Sydney Trains and Transport for NSW have restrictions on doing work inside the rail corridor because of train operations and worker safety concerns. As such, most of the work to build the railway bridge would be restricted to when trains are not operating. These track ‘possession’ periods are normally scheduled for three or four weekends every year.

The following work activities would take place during track possession periods, including both day and night work:

- Installing the bridge abutments and batters within the railway corridor
- Lifting and installing various parts of the bridge deck.

All work outside of standard construction hours would be carried out in accordance with the relevant approvals and residents and businesses would be notified in advance of any night work.

Q: How long would it take to build the proposal?

The proposed Heathcote Road upgrade, if approved, would take about 24 months to complete, weather permitting.

Display of the Review of Environmental Factors

Roads and Maritime has prepared a Review of Environmental Factors and is seeking feedback by **Monday 14 November**.

Q: Where can I view the Review of Environmental Factors?

We will host two community information drop in sessions where you can view the Review of Environmental Factors and ask questions of the project team. Feel free to drop in any time:

Thursday 3 November, 5pm to 7pm or Saturday 5 November, 10am to midday
St Christopher's Catholic Primary School Hall
205 Heathcote Road, Holsworthy

Copies of the Review of Environmental Factors are available to view in person at:

Liverpool City Council Service Centre
Ground Floor, 33 Moore Street, Liverpool

Moorebank Library
Corner Maddecks Avenue and Nuwarra Road, Moorebank

You can also view or download it online at www.rms.nsw.gov.au/heathcoteroad.

Q: How do I provide feedback?

Roads and Maritime is seeking community and stakeholder feedback on the Heathcote Road concept design and Review of Environmental Factors by **Monday 14 November**. Written comments should be sent to:

Email: heathcoteroadupgrade@rms.nsw.gov.au

Mail: Heathcote Road upgrade
Roads and Maritime Services
PO Box 973, Parramatta CBD NSW 2124

Next steps

Following the display of the Review of Environmental Factors, Roads and Maritime will prepare a submissions report outlining the feedback received and our responses. We will consider all comments in finalising the proposal and will continue to keep the community information as it progresses.

If the project proceeds, the next step will be to finalise the detailed design and invite tenders for construction.

Q: How can I find out more information?

For more information about the project, please contact:

Phone: 1800 749 119

Email: heathcoteroad@rms.nsw.gov.au

Post: Heathcote Road Upgrade
PO Box 973, Parramatta NSW 2124

Web: Visit www.rms.nsw.gov.au/heathcoteroad