Factsheet: Tree removal – Mulgoa Road, Jamisontown upgrade

The Australian and NSW Governments are planning to widen and upgrade Mulgoa Road / Castlereagh Road to support current and future traffic demands and expected growth in the area.

Transport for NSW propose to widen Mulgoa Road between Jeanette Street to Blaikie Road from two lanes to three lanes in each direction. From August to September 2018, we invited comments from the community and stakeholders on the Review of Environmental Factors (REF) for the proposed upgrade. We received a total of 84 submissions on the proposal. 46 submissions were received about the removal of up to 50 of the 100 mature gum trees on the western side of Mulgoa Road, between Blaikie Road and Wolseley Street, Jamisontown.

Widening Mulgoa Road

To allow for the upgrade of Mulgoa Road, some of the existing vegetation would need to be removed. The proposed design does provide for replanting and replacement of native vegetation as part of the Landscape Character and Visual Impact Assessment and Urban Design Study.

Impact to these trees is required to avoid property acquisition on the eastern side of Mulgoa Road and to allow for construction and road widening. Roads and Maritime has engaged a suitably qualified arborist to provide arboricultural advice relating to the management of the Forest Red Gum trees between Wolseley Street and Blaikie Road.

The Gum Tree Assessment

Transport for NSW carried out ecological surveys of the flora and fauna during September 2017 and March 2018. These surveys found the trees between Wolseley Street and Blaikie Road (outside of the Grey Gums Hotel) are characteristic of River-flat Eucalypt Forest that is found on the flood plains in the local area. As part of the Roads and Maritime environmental
impact assessment, these trees were assessed based on the requirements of the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016*. It was determined that the removal of these trees would not pose a significant impact to these remnant forests across NSW.

**Additional Stakeholder Consultation**

In response to the specific concerns raised in relation to the proposed removal of the gum trees, Transport for NSW developed two alternative strategic design options for the road alignment. These alternative options presented different levels of impact to the Forest Red Gum trees i.e. ‘no impact’ and ‘reduced impact’. Transport for NSW facilitated a series of workshops with Penrith City Council staff and community interest groups which took place over a 5-month period to understand the concerns further.

On 4 June 2019, Transport for NSW undertook an options assessment workshop which considered the existing proposal, the ‘no impact’ option and the ‘reduced impact’ option. The outcome of the workshop recommended proceeding with the existing proposal displayed in the Review of Environmental Factors as the options assessment indicated that the existing proposal would provide the best outcome.

Recommendation to proceed with the displayed proposal was approved by the Minister in September 2019. Planning approval was obtained on 28 November 2019 and the submissions report was published in March 2020.

**How we will restore amenity**

To protect the amenity and the environment along the road corridor, the following strategies will be implemented as part of this project:

- Reduce the impact to the trees as much as practicable during detail design for construction
- Follow clearly identified professional arborist standards during the removal work
• Retain sections of the trees to be removed containing hollows for re-use
• Implement a Nest Box Strategy which includes replacing lost tree hollows with nest boxes and investigating opportunities to relocate and reuse significant hollow-bearing tree features.
• Implement a Canopy Replacement Strategy to progressively replace tree canopy lost along the Mulgoa Road corridor.

We appreciate and understand the community’s strong sentiment towards these trees and the important amenity they provide.

Contact Us

If you have any questions or feedback specifically about the Mulgoa Road upgrade, then please contact the project team on 1800 733 084 or email mulgoaroadupgrade@rms.nsw.gov.au.

For more information on our projects, visit www.rms.nsw.gov.au. Thank you for your patience during this important wor