

Newell Highway and Mitchell Highway intersection upgrade

About the project

What is happening?

The NSW Government is investing \$20 million to upgrade the Newell Highway and Mitchell Highway intersection to improve safety and efficiency. This work is being undertaken as part of the \$195 million investment to build a better Dubbo.

The roundabout will be removed and replaced with traffic lights to better regulate traffic flow.

This project was originally planned to be phase one of the New Dubbo Bridge project; however, after consultation with the community, it was clear this intersection was a high priority. It was then developed as an individual project and fast-tracked following community feedback.

How has the community been consulted about the project?

During early development of the project, businesses and residents on each leg of the roundabout were consulted with and advised that the project was being developed.

In late 2018, the project team met with stakeholders and businesses to discuss potential property impacts including possible changes to parking.

Once a more detailed design of the upgrade was complete, the project team met with stakeholders in early 2019 to confirm property impacts and to discuss next steps. These meetings are continuing.

Prior to the May-June 2019 consultation period, the project team consulted with businesses on each leg of the roundabout, regardless of whether they were impacted or not.

Display of the design in May-June 2019 for community feedback

Transport for NSW conducted a combined display between 27 May and 28 June 2019 for projects that are part of the Building a better Dubbo program. The design plans for the Newell Highway and Mitchell Highway intersection upgrade were available as part of the display and the community and stakeholders were invited to provide feedback to help inform the project's design and planning.

The Newell Highway and Mitchell Highway intersection upgrade received 107 responses during the display period.

What feedback did the community provide about the project?

The community identified a number of issues about the Newell Highway and Mitchell Highway intersection upgrade during the display period. Transport for NSW has prepared a Community Consultation Report, which summarises the community and stakeholder feedback received during the display. The Consultation Report is available on the project website and includes Transport for NSW's responses to the issues raised by the community.

Key issues identified through the submissions to the Newell Highway and Mitchell Highway intersection upgrade project were:

- Concerns around the closure of the right turn into and out of Baird Street from the Newell Highway (Whylandra Street)
- Impacts of parking changes on local businesses on the Mitchell Highway (Victoria Street)
- Impacts of access changes on local businesses on the Newell Highway
- Positive feedback about the roundabout being replaced with traffic lights
- Development and growth in West Dubbo.

How has Transport for NSW responded to the community feedback?

In response to stakeholder feedback, Transport for NSW reviewed its traffic modelling and examined other potential options for traffic movements around the upgraded intersection. Transport for NSW listened to the community of Dubbo and modified the design for the intersection of Baird Street and Newell Highway. This includes installing traffic lights on all four legs of the intersection of Baird Street and the Newell Highway allowing a right hand turn onto Baird Street for vehicles travelling north on the highway.

The parking in front of the Victoria Street shops is being retained with the exception of two spaces closest to the intersection. This was an amendment to the project after valuable feedback from the local community.

Has any work started for the construction of the intersection upgrade?

Investigation work is continuing for the upgrade of the Newell Highway and Mitchell Highway intersection.

In June and July 2019, Transport for NSW carried out potholing on the lanes around the intersection and parking areas to identify the location of underground utilities. Further investigation work will take place in 2020.

Building condition assessments have been conducted on properties around the intersection, with some building condition assessments still needing to be conducted in 2020.

The demolition of the former Amber Tiles building is scheduled to be completed early 2020.

What are the key features of the project?

The Newell Highway and Mitchell Highway intersection upgrade includes the following features:

- Traffic lights will replace the existing roundabout
- New pedestrian crossings on all four sides of the intersection, with foot ramps to improve wheelchair and pram access
- Intersection widening to allow for increasing traffic volumes
- Additional merge lane minimising parking loss at Victoria Street shops
- Relocation of underground service utilities and overhead power
- Safer turn paths for road trains (up to 36.5 metres long)
- New stormwater system to improve drainage in a high rainfall event.

What are the project benefits?

The Newell Highway and Mitchell Highway intersection upgrade will:

- Provide a highway intersection that allows safe and efficient movement of heavy vehicles up to 36.5m to the north, south and west
- Reduce congestion and travel times
- Improve safety by reducing conflict between local and through traffic and between vehicles and pedestrians and cyclists.

There used to be lights, then you built a roundabout and now you are putting lights back in – why?

Dubbo is growing rapidly, particularly West Dubbo. The current intersection is no longer able to accommodate the high volumes of traffic or the types of vehicles that use the intersection.

When the roundabout was constructed it was the right solution for that time and served the community well for many years. However, installing signals at the intersection, with additional turning and through lanes, will allow for future growth of Dubbo. They will ease congestion and accommodate the longer, heavier vehicles that use the Newell Highway.

Lights will allow traffic to be controlled efficiently, adjusting to where the highest volumes are and working to keep traffic moving.

Why do we need to provide safer turn paths for B-triple heavy vehicles that are 36.5m long?

The NSW Government recognises the importance of the Newell Highway as the economic backbone for freight and livestock transporters, tourism operators, caravanners and holiday makers, emergency services, government, media and business owners. The NSW Government has invested \$500 million into upgrading the Newell Highway.

The Newell Highway Corridor Strategy was finalised in 2015, with the aim to provide freight, road users and local communities with a safer, more reliable and accessible road. One of the main objectives is making sure the Newell highway can accommodate the increasing numbers of Higher Productivity Vehicles (HPVs) with access points onto the highway and pavement quality works to ensure we can meet the growing demand.

The strategy also recognises it is important to balance these freight needs against broader community and environmental needs.

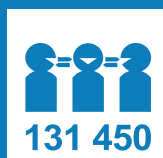
How will the community be informed about the development of the project?

Transport for NSW will continue to engage with the community as the project develops. The Building a better Dubbo campaign is focussed on providing the community with timely and accurate information about what is happening in Dubbo. Visit nswroads.work/dubbo to sign up for updates and to find out more about what is happening in Dubbo.

How can I contact the project team?

If you have any questions or would like more information on Dubbo road projects please contact our project team:

-  1800 803 818 (toll free)
-  dubboprojects@rms.nsw.gov.au
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If you need help understanding this information, please contact the Translating and Interpreting Service on 131 450 and ask them to call us on 1800 803 818 .