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BUILDING OUR FUTURE



M1 Pacific Motorway extension to Raymond Terrace

Frequently Asked Questions – Submissions Report

Transport for NSW | May 2022

Where can the submissions report be viewed?

The report is published online via nswroads.work/M12RT and is available on the Department of Planning and Environment's (DPE) major project portal.

What is the purpose of the submissions report?

The purpose of the submissions report is for TfNSW to provide responses to the 58 community and agencies' submissions that Department of Planning and Environment (DPE) received during the exhibition of the EIS between July and August 2021.

What were the key issues raised by the community groups, organisations, individuals and businesses in the Submissions Report?

The key issues raised included:

- Project design and development, including support for the identified alignment and traffic benefits it will bring
- Impacts to wildlife, habitats and fauna movements, including koalas
- Noise impacts including the need for noise mitigation during construction
- Impacts and access to properties located in and around the project corridor
- Integration with other infrastructure projects, including the proposed Lower Hunter Freight Corridor and emerging Black Hill precinct
- Support for the refined project design, including improved traffic conditions and road safety

How have the responses been prepared?

Where possible, the responses have been prepared based on the EIS assessments. Where this has not been possible, we've completed additional environmental assessments. Due to the additional assessments, some of the EIS environmental management measures have been revised or new, improved measures prepared in response to the community and agencies' concerns.

Why was this route chosen for the project?

Route options and selection involved extensive stakeholder and community engagement to support the development of the preferred route and concept design. The concept design was displayed for community comment in 2008 with feedback considered to develop a refined design in 2010. In 2014 Transport initiated an extensive review of the concept design with an aim to improve functionality and address the changing needs of the adjoining road network, particularly after the opening of the Hunter Expressway in 2014.

In 2015 Transport displayed a revised concept design for community and stakeholder comment which resulted in a number of positive design refinements, including better access to Heatherbrae from the motorway, improved traffic flow and safety at Black Hill and Tomago and relocating the northbound exit ramp at the Raymond Terrace interchange to the Tomago interchange south of Heatherbrae.

In 2020, Transport provided the community with an update on the project, including a number of

design improvements to ensure the project addresses current and future transport needs and delivers long-term benefits to the community. This updated design

was included as part of the EIS which was on public exhibition from 28 July to 24 August 2021.

What changes have been made since the EIS exhibition?

Community feedback received during the EIS exhibition has been used to improved further refine the project design and update environmental management measures. Further design refinements outlined in the submissions report include but are not limited to:

- **Improving connectivity from the John Renshaw Drive/Weakleys Drive intersection**

We have improved the merge lane for traffic entering the motorway from the John Renshaw Drive/ Weakleys Drive intersection extending it south by about 200 metres. The merge lane extension includes minor widening to the existing M1 Pacific Motorway southbound carriageway and replacement of the existing adjacent noise wall at this location.

- **Developing an improved utility relocation plan that benefits the project and service providers**

We have refined our utility relocation strategy, following further consultation with service providers. These refinements include grouping of utilities into multi-utility corridors that reduce impacts to the environment, provide cost savings and improve construction staging.

- **Minimising flood impacts by refining ancillary facilities**

Refinements to ancillary facilities and site access have been made along the project corridor. Refinements include reducing the size of ancillary facilities to minimise flood and biodiversity impacts during construction.

- **Improving cyclist connectivity**

We understand the importance of incorporating cyclist improvements to the design wherever possible. Our refined design includes improvements to amenity at Tarro and Tomago and will provide connectivity for future cyclists using the proposed Richmond Vale Rail Trail.

- **Implementing improved earthworks management practices**

Refinements to earthworks management practices have been made to improve materials handling,

transport and usage along the project corridor. An earthworks borrow site (area where material has been dug for use at another location) would be established near Black Hill to source and transport materials.

- **Construction staging**

As part of our ongoing consultation with potential construction partners, we have identified the opportunity for a staged opening of the project.

By engaging two major construction partners under two separate packages of work, motorists could access improved road networks earlier. The proposed two packages of work include:

1. Southern package - Black Hill to Tomago
2. Northern package - Heatherbrae bypass.

By carrying out this staged approach, the Northern package (Heatherbrae bypass) would have a shorter construction duration and could be opened to traffic before the Southern package (Black Hill to Tomago).

A temporary intersection at the tie-in point for the Heatherbrae bypass has been designed to accommodate the potential staged opening of the project.

What is your commitment to the environment and the community?

We know building a project of this scale and significance does not occur without impact. Managing risks and reducing the impacts to the community and environment is important to us. We will continue to work with you and our key stakeholders to implement environmental management measures to reduce impacts, improving. the way people move to and from the Hunter

How will you protect wildlife?

The concept design has been developed to avoid and minimise impacts on biodiversity wherever possible. The final route avoids important areas of biodiversity and is closely aligned to existing development resulting in minimal fragmentation of highly valued wetlands and bushland.

How have you assessed potential impacts to the Port Stephens koala population?

Targeted koala surveys were carried out in 2015, 2016 and 2019. There were no observations of koalas during these surveys, and no evidence of koala activity in potential habitat areas within the construction footprint. The project has been designed to avoid bushland areas, resulting in minimal impacts on the movement and existing core habitat of koalas. The project is not expected to significantly impact on the local koala populations.

How have you assessed noise?

The potential noise and vibration impacts during construction and operation of the project have been assessed in accordance with relevant NSW noise and vibration guidelines.

A detailed noise assessment was carried out to evaluate and predict the potential impact of construction and operation. Noise monitoring and traffic counts were carried out to measure traffic noise from the existing road network. A computer-based noise model was used to simulate the existing noise environment, predict future traffic noise levels and assess the need for noise mitigation measures.

Will I be eligible for noise treatment?

Some properties would be eligible for consideration of at house noise mitigation. These properties are identified in the EIS's noise and vibration assessment and further refined in the Submissions report. Eligible property owners would be contacted by the project team to discuss possible mitigation measures before construction starts.

Will the removal of trees increase noise levels?

No. Trees do not generally provide an effective noise barrier unless there is a substantial width of vegetation. While trees can help provide a visual barrier against the source of noise, and this effect alone can be a powerful mitigation tool, it cannot be relied upon to reduce measured noise levels.

Will there be trucks on my local road?

Visit our interactive web portal which maps out potential construction traffic routes. There is also more detailed information in Chapter 7 and Appendix G in the Submissions report.

Will construction work create more traffic delays during peak periods and school start/finish times? There could be some localised delays on existing roads at peak times during construction. However, the completed project is expected to reduce existing traffic demand which would improve travel times and reliability.

When would construction of the project start?

Timing of construction will be dependent on planning approval. We expect to start construction in 2023 and be completed in 2028.

How have you considered the impacts to businesses in Beresfield, Tomago and Heatherbrae?

We understand the concerns of business owners and operators in the project area. In addition to carrying out business surveys to understand potential impacts to businesses, the proposed extension has been designed to provide motorists with access to key community areas and businesses along the alignment.

Interchanges at Black Hill, Tarro, Tomago and Raymond Terrace allow motorists to access business within these areas, including at Heatherbrae. The project will also include signage to inform motorists of the available service facilities at these locations.

How will I get on and off the new Motorway if I live in Newcastle / Maitland / Raymond Terrace?

The project has been designed to allow for motorists to enter and exit the motorway at key locations, including for those travelling from Newcastle.

Motorists travelling to and from Newcastle will continue to use the existing Hexham Bridges, with entry and exit ramps to the new Motorway provided north of Tomago Road on the Pacific Highway.

Our interactive web portal includes several videos which show how the project and the interchanges would work.

Will there be any tolls on the road when completed?

There are no plans to implement a toll on the completed road.

How many jobs would the project create?

The project would create and support about 2700 jobs during construction, including employment for about

1050 workers and about 1650 indirect jobs with businesses that supply goods and services to support construction.

What will be the posted speed limit of the new road?

The new motorway will have a posted speed limit of 110km/h.

Upgrades of existing roads such as the New England Highway at Tarro and Pacific Highway at Tomago and Heatherbrae would remain the same speed limit as they are now.

How much time will I save off my journey once the project is built?

The project is expected to save you up to nine minutes of travel time during peak periods.

Will there be any traffic lights left between Sydney and Brisbane after this project is finished?

No. When both this project and the Coffs Harbour bypass are completed there will not be any traffic lights for motorists travelling the M1 Pacific Motorway and A1 Pacific Highway from Sydney to Brisbane.

What is happening with other projects in the area?

Transport is continuing to develop the concept design and environmental assessment for the Hexham Straight project. The environmental assessment was on public exhibition in 2021 and a submissions report will be published over the coming months. The report will be accessible on the Hexham Straight webpage [here](#).

Timing of construction for the Hexham Straight project is not confirmed and is dependent on a range of factors including planning approval.

We are also working closely with the team planning the Lower Hunter Freight Corridor. You can contact the team by emailing corridors@transport.nsw.gov.au

Contact us

If you have any questions or would like more information on the M1 Pacific Motorway extension to Raymond Terrace project, please contact our project team:



1800 094 895 (business hours)



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