



## About the project

Dedicated school buses to Taroona High School are operating at capacity and the school is growing every year. To improve safety and accessibility for students catching general Metro buses, the crossing facilities and the city-bound bus stop 27 on the Channel Highway will be upgraded.

Once the project is completed, students and the public will have a safer crossing to access bus stop 27 and use general Metro buses that have spare capacity to take more passengers.

Taroona High School has advocated for the upgrade of the crossing facilities. The Department of State Growth and the Department of Education will co-fund the upgrades to the pedestrian crossing and bus stop in consultation with Taroona Primary School and Taroona High School.

Following a road safety assessment, a concept design was developed that included a signalised pedestrian crossing and an upgrade to the existing bus stop on the Channel Highway. During the public consultation period between 13 October 2021 and 5 November 2021, community members were invited to provide feedback on the concept design. Altogether 17 pieces of feedback from 15 respondents were received. The feedback received were considered and incorporated where possible.

As the feedback during the public consultation period was generally supportive of the safety and accessibility benefits of the bus stop upgrade and signalised pedestrian crossing, the concept design progressed to a final design.

The bus stop will be upgraded to:

- be accessible (compliant with *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*)
- include a wider passenger waiting area to improve capacity
- provide new shelters to improve passenger amenity.

The expected benefits of the project are:

- improved safety for students and bus users needing to cross the Channel Highway
- improved safety and capacity for bus users by widening the waiting space at the bus stop
- better accessibility by upgrading the bus stop to meet accessibility standards.

Construction of the bus stop upgrade and signalised pedestrian crossing started in December 2021.

## What we did

Stakeholder engagement started in August 2021 to inform the school and local community, together with Metro Tasmania and affected property owners of the project.

The school community were communicated with directly by the Department of Education. The Department of State Growth met with key stakeholders to discuss the project and work through any queries. During the public consultation period between 13 October 2021 and 5 November 2021, community members were invited to provide feedback on the concept design at the Transport website ([www.transport.tas.gov.au](http://www.transport.tas.gov.au)) via email.

Affected landowners were communicated with directly throughout all stages of the project.

## Feedback

We received 17 pieces of feedback from 15 respondents about the project.

What did we hear?	Our response?
<b>Location of proposed signals</b>	
Can the proposed signals be located closer to the Channel Highway and school road intersection?	The signalised crossing is proposed to be located to the north of bus stop 27. If the signalised pedestrian crossing is moved closer to the intersection, it will limit the sight distance for motorists travelling northbound. The location of the signalised pedestrian crossing has been determined to ensure the vehicle sight distance complies with contemporary road design standards.
<b>Noise</b>	
Will the noise from the signalised pedestrian crossing disturb us at night time?	While the traffic signals will operate 24 hours a day, the signals will only turn red and create a sound when a pedestrian presses the button. The pedestrian crossing sound volume will be turned down overnight. The signals will only make a sound if the button is pushed.
<b>Cyclist safety</b>	
Will the pedestrian crossing intrude into the bike lanes (in both directions) and require cyclists to cross over into the road?	No, the pedestrian crossing will not intrude into the bike lanes and cyclists will not need to cross over into the road. Both northbound and southbound bike lanes will be at least 1m wide. When the red signal is displayed, cyclists will have to stop (along with motorists).  As small stretch of bike lane (on the school side) between the new signalised pedestrian crossing and road to the schools will be wider as the current pedestrian refuge will be removed.

## Pedestrian behaviour

What if students continue to cross the road at locations outside of the new pedestrian crossing?	Provision of road safety education by the schools is recommended to address the issue of students crossing at the wrong location.
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## Residential access

Will access to my residence be affected?	Access to the four properties adjacent to the proposed traffic signals will remain as they are, with modifications to driveways and the retaining wall to enable suitable access to these properties.
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## Alternatives

Could we have done something different such as a UK-style zebra crossing, with flashing yellow signals and road markings with no red signals to stop traffic? What about a pedestrian underpass?	<p>A signalised pedestrian crossing with flashing amber phasing is proposed as the signals and linemarking will encourage students to walk within the crossing lines while still providing an interval for vehicles to drive through and not back up the traffic. A UK-style zebra crossing would provide priority to pedestrians, but vehicles would have to always give way to pedestrians at the crossing. This would back up the traffic if there are a number of students continuously crossing the road.</p> <p>The existing road reserve is not wide enough for an underpass. To accommodate a compliant entry and exit to an underpass, land acquisition from adjacent properties may be required. The expected pedestrian and/or cyclist volumes are not high enough to justify an underpass.</p>
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## Design

Can we do something more ambitious like the Healthy Streets program?	<p>Healthy Streets is a holistic program that encourages better public health outcomes in transport, open spaces and town planning.</p> <p>The aim of this project is to upgrade bus stop 27 and the pedestrian crossing so it is accessible, safe and has adequate space for students waiting for general Metro buses.</p> <p>Our proposed treatment for the upgrade and pedestrian crossing has not been assessed against the program's Healthy Streets Index as the aim of the project makes this assessment too narrow in this instance.</p> <p>Improvements to the bus stop infrastructure and providing pedestrian signals do align with the Healthy Streets program by helping to prioritise pedestrians and public transport on our roads, as well as encouraging more people to use public transport. The proposed design also improves cycling on the road.</p>
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## Bus stop upgrade

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<p>Can the new bus stop accommodate two buses?</p> <p>Is there an issue with encouraging too many students to access the 3:00 pm Metro bus?</p> <p>Could we stagger school finishing times to spread out student numbers accessing buses so all students could access a bus from within the school grounds?</p>	<p>No, the new bus stop cannot accommodate two buses at the same time. Buses along the Channel Highway have a frequency of every 15 minutes (city-bound) on weekdays during the morning peak. Based on this, the bus stop does not need to cater for two buses at once.</p> <p>In the afternoon peak, a bus is scheduled at 2:57 pm and the next bus is scheduled for 3:30 pm. Both buses will have enough capacity to cater for an increase in school boardings.</p> <p>The bus stop footpath area will be widened as part of the project to increase the space available for students to wait for a bus and provide for sufficient manoeuvring area/clear access for persons with a disability.</p> <p>School times for both Tarooma High School and Tarooma Primary School are already staggered. In the afternoon the high school finishes first to allow buses to enter and exit before the primary school finishes.</p>
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## Outcome

As the feedback during the public consultation period was generally supportive of the safety and accessibility benefits of the bus stop upgrade and signalised pedestrian crossing, the concept design has been progressed to a final design.

## Project next steps

The final design for the project has been completed and construction started in December 2021. The bus stop widening and bus shelters have been constructed. The next phase of construction is expected to start in March 2022 and will take seven weeks to complete, weather depending.

The contractor will provide a start of work community notification including details of any potential impact on traffic flow and traffic management measures in place during the construction period.

The Department has increased the number of general buses between Tarooma High School and the Hobart CBD from the start of the 2022 school year as a result of the bus stop upgrade.