

Arthur Highway – Eaglehawk Neck Safety Upgrades

Consultation Update
September 2021



About the project

The project will improve the safety of the Arthur Highway at Eaglehawk Neck by widening the road, improving the road surface and providing turning facilities at Blowhole Road.

In June 2020, a design was completed. Prior to the start of construction in November 2020, concerns were raised by members of the Aboriginal community about the impact on cultural heritage in the area and construction was paused.

Following a meeting with members of the Aboriginal community, the Department of State Growth agreed to pause construction and revisit the design with the view to reduce the impact on the cultural heritage values of the area.

Consultation was subsequently undertaken with the Aboriginal community and Aboriginal Heritage Council to understand these concerns and discuss options for avoidance and mitigation. The revised design addresses concerns raised by members of the Aboriginal community by removing ground-disturbing activities within identified cultural heritage areas.

In early 2021, the project team prepared a concept plan for the revised design that avoided encroachment into cultural heritage areas by realigning the highway to the west, further into Eaglehawk Bay. To lessen the impact to the bay, the road width was also reduced.

This update summarises feedback received during the 2021 revised design consultation and outlines the outcome and next steps for this project.

2021 consultation – revised design

Consultation summary

Stakeholder and community consultation on the revised design was undertaken from January 2021 to July 2021. A static display at Tasman Council was held between 19 and 30 July 2021. Community feedback was encouraged via the email link on the Department’s Transport website. Feedback was predominately received via email.

The public were notified of the consultation on the revised design through advertisement in the Mercury and on the Department’s Facebook page and Transport website. A letter was also sent to Eaglehawk Neck residents.

Feedback channels

Feedback was made up of 7 submissions via email and 6 comments on the Facebook post. Generally, the community were supportive of the project and the improvements to Blowhole Road junction. The following is a summary of the comments and issues raised in the feedback received.

What did we hear?	Our response?
Requirement for safety barrier 	
Why is safety barrier on the western side of the highway needed, when currently there is no barrier?	Safety barrier is required on the western side of the highway, due to the proximity of the road to a significant drop off to the beach (Eaglehawk Bay). This barrier is a key safety feature of the project.
Reflectiveness of safety barrier 	
Will the metal components of the safety barrier be reflective?	Yes. But it is anticipated the reflectiveness of the safety barrier will fade over time. Additionally, the Department will paint the barrier a colour that tones down the “silver” galvanised look of the safety barrier.
Speed limit reduction 	
Why can't the speed limit be reduced to 70 kph?	The existing speed limit is to be retained as it is consistent with the surrounding road environment and relevant standards. A speed reduction is not deemed necessary with the safety upgrades proposed.

What did we hear?	Our response?
Visual impact assessment 	
<p>Has a visual impact assessment been completed, particularly concerning the safety barrier?</p>	<p>Visual impact was considered during design development. The safety barrier provided adjacent to the road on the bay side will be a mixture of W-beam and flexible barrier to reduce visual impact. Following construction, we will paint the W-beam a neutral colour to minimise its reflectivity.</p> <p>The rock that will be used for the batter will be the type of rock that is found in the local area.</p>
Pedestrian access to Eaglehawk Bay beach from Old Jetty Road 	
<p>Why is there no pedestrian access to Eaglehawk Bay beach from Old Jetty Road?</p>	<p>Old Jetty Road is the responsibility of Tasman Council. The design does not preclude the later construction of a path to Eaglehawk Bay.</p> <p>Any existing informal pedestrian access to Eaglehawk Bay from Old Jetty Road will not be altered by this project.</p>
Rock batter effect on Eaglehawk Bay beach 	
<p>Will there be any beach left at Eaglehawk Bay to access with the new rock batter?</p>	<p>Yes. Eaglehawk Bay beach will still be accessible following construction.</p>
Pedestrian crossing facilities 	
<p>Why is there no pedestrian refuge opposite the Community Hall?</p>	<p>The allocated area to cross the road (in the form of a pedestrian refuge) is in the vicinity of the bus stops and allows for pedestrians crossing the highway to/from Old Jetty Road. Getting on and off buses in this area is safe and accessible.</p>
Wide shoulders for cyclists 	
<p>Will there be wide, smooth shoulders for cyclists?</p>	<p>The new shoulders will be sealed and 1 m wide, complying with State Road specifications.</p>

What did we hear?	Our response?
Access to and from the Community Hall 	
<p>Why is there no dedicated turn lane to the Community Hall for northbound vehicles?</p>	<p>A right turn treatment is included for northbound vehicles to access the Community Hall. This is a widened shoulder on the highway, which will allow northbound vehicles, having slowed, to pass vehicles turning into the Community Hall. The number of northbound vehicles turning into the hall does not warrant a dedicated turn lane.</p>
Noise impacts during construction 	
<p>How much noise will there be during construction?</p>	<p>More information about construction, including how noise will be managed, will be provided by the contractor closer to the start of construction.</p>
Utilisation of existing path at the Dog Line 	
<p>Why is a new path to be constructed instead of a path that connects to the Dog Line?</p>	<p>In the 2019/2020 consultation, two pathway options between the Dog Line and Blowhole Road were presented. The first option included a roadside path alongside the Arthur Highway, and the second option included an off-road path. Following consideration of feedback from stakeholders, the roadside path was chosen. This feature is retained in the revised design.</p>
Location of static display 	
<p>Why was the static display located at Nubeena rather than Eaglehawk Neck?</p>	<p>Notification letters were sent to residents and businesses in the vicinity of Eaglehawk Neck to inform them the revised design was available to view online and at the Tasman Council office. Many residents and businesses of the Tasman Peninsula utilise this part of the Arthur Highway and we wanted an easily accessible location to allow highway users to provide feedback.</p>
Concerns about large vehicles using Blowhole Road 	
<p>Currently larger vehicles cut the corner of Blowhole Road junction when travelling from the south. How is the design allowing for larger vehicles?</p>	<p>Blowhole Road junction has been designed for a 19 m semi-trailer to safely turn.</p>

Outcome

The feedback from community members and stakeholders presented no major objections to the revised design of the project.

The revised design continues to provide safety improvements to this section of the Arthur Highway, while also avoiding encroachment into cultural heritage areas and minimising impacts on Eaglehawk Bay.

Importantly, the revised design addresses the Aboriginal community's concerns, which is why the construction of the project was paused in 2020.

Next steps

The revised design will now progress to the detailed design phase. Construction is expected to begin in late 2021, weather permitting.

Further information

Please email info@stategrowth.tas.gov.au if you have any further queries.