

Consultation and Feedback Findings Summary

West Tamar Highway – Duplication between Freshwater Point Road and Acropolis Drive – April 2023

Background

The West Tamar Highway is a key freight and tourist route and offers road users connection for commercial and residential purposes.

In 2022, the Department of State Growth (the department) completed a corridor study along the West Tamar Highway between Launceston and Legana. As a result of the corridor study, a Corridor Improvement Plan was prepared. This plan identified 14 options for improving the safety, traffic efficiency and corridor connectivity of the West Tamar Highway between Launceston and Legana. The projects will be completed on a priority basis. Priority has been decided based on feedback from stakeholders and the community, an engineering review of current and future road demand, an assessment of project benefits, value for money, and how easily the projects can be implemented and/or constructed.

The West Tamar Highway – Duplication between Freshwater Point Road and Acropolis Drive (the project) has been selected as the highest priority for completion.

Project overview

This project aims to improve traffic flow and safety along the corridor by duplicating and widening the West Tamar Highway between Freshwater Point Road and Acropolis Drive. Improvements will also be made at the Bridgenorth Road, Freshwater Point Road, and Acropolis Drive intersections.

Key features of the concept design include:

- two lanes in each direction between Freshwater Point Road and Acropolis Drive
- upgrading intersections at Freshwater Point Road and Acropolis Drive
- a new roundabout at Bridgenorth Road
- two new signalised pedestrian crossings
- a central median island with safety barrier to separate traffic travelling in opposite directions
- new shared path along the highway for cyclists and pedestrians
- on-road bike lanes on both sides of the highway
- new bike paths at the Freshwater Point Road, Bridgenorth Road and Acropolis Drive intersection, for road cyclists to use to negotiate the roundabouts
- removing the ability to park along the road shoulder between Acropolis Drive and Bridgenorth Road to improve road safety for all road users
- changes to parking arrangements outside businesses on the corner of Fulton Street and the West Tamar Highway.

Consultation on the concept design

Between 23 November and 14 December 2022, key stakeholders and community members were asked to provide feedback on the concept design for the West Tamar Highway Duplication between Freshwater Point Road and Acropolis Drive.

A static display at West Tamar Council (both the Beaconsfield and Riverside office) was held during the consultation period, where feedback forms were provided. Community feedback was encouraged via email, phone and the feedback forms. Feedback was mainly received via email.

Notification of the opportunity to provide feedback on the concept design was delivered through the following channels:

- advertising placed in The Examiner newspaper on Wednesday, 23 November 2022 and Saturday, 26 November 2022
- information published on the department’s Transport website
- two social media posts published on the RoadsTas Facebook page
- by letter, phone call and meetings to directly impacted landowners and business owners
- by letter to 2,105 Legana properties (residents and businesses) on 23 November 2022
- by email to key stakeholders including cycling, and transport organisations.

Who participated?

Consultation method	Engagement
Facebook – two posts showing concept design plans	75 comments, 69 reactions and 35 shares
Emails – feedback could be sent via email to westtamaplan@stategrowth.tas.gov.au	33 received
Feedback Forms from Council static displays	2 received
Meetings with key stakeholders and landowners	9

Consultation themes and outcomes

What did we hear?	Our response?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were 21 comments suggesting a grade-separated pedestrian crossing such as a pedestrian overpass or underpass, would be a safer alternative to signalised crossings. These comments included concerns that a signalised pedestrian crossing may impact intersection performance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signalised pedestrian crossings were selected based on consideration of traffic flow, pedestrian crossing frequency and feasibility of design. A pedestrian underpass and overpass were considered as an alternative option, however, were not selected due to consideration of these factors. • The amount of land required to provide accessible ramps for an underpass is significant. Expensive pumping systems and ongoing maintenance would be required as the underpass would be located in an area of low-lying ground.

What did we hear?	Our response?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There were six comments asking why a roundabout had been selected at Bridgenorth Road, rather than signals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2022, the Department of State Growth carried out a corridor study along the West Tamar Highway between Launceston and Legana. The Bridgenorth Road roundabout option was selected as a result of community feedback received during the study, engineering assessments, considerations of traffic flow, and crash history. Alternative options, such as signals, were also considered as part of this assessment.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There were two comments asking if the single lane north of Freshwater Point Road be duplicated to improve traffic flow. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The dual southbound lanes will be extended between Bindaree Road and Freshwater Point Road as part of this project.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There were two comments asking if the merge lane on the eastern side of the highway from Fulton Street will be extended as part of the duplication project. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Treatments at Fulton Street will be confirmed during detailed design phase.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We received four comments from community members and key members stating that the bicycle lanes and shared pathways are a welcome addition. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On both sides of the highway, a bicycle lane is proposed for cyclists who wish to ride on the road. Alternatively, cyclists will be able to use a new off-road shared path on the eastern side of the highway. This project focuses on the area between Freshwater Point Road and Acropolis Drive. Provision of additional cycling infrastructure was recommended as part of the improvements within the Corridor Improvement Plan. To view the plan visit: www.transport.tas.gov.au/westtamarplan
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There were five comments asking if traffic accessing the new primary school will negatively impact on safety and traffic flow on this section of the West Tamar Highway. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Department of State Growth will continue to work with the Department for Education, Children and Young People to ensure access points are designed to provide safe pedestrian and vehicle access.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There was one comment that expressed concern for electric wheelchair users, that when crossing Outreach Drive there is an existing barrier that impacts visibility and requesting that this be addressed through the project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A signalised pedestrian crossing facility has been proposed in the new design to improve the safety for pedestrians crossing the highway.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We heard one comment that Outreach Drive residents will be 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A median barrier is proposed along the highway to separate traffic travelling in opposite directions and to improve safety. Median

What did we hear?	Our response?
<p>inconvenienced by the right turn ban when accessing the shopping centre and receiving assistance from emergency services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There was one comment that turning out of Outreach Drive is currently dangerous and has poor visibility. 	<p>barriers reduce the severity of crashes if motorists lose control and veer into the path of oncoming traffic. These barriers will prevent traffic from turning right to enter and exit the highway, other than at controlled intersections.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The roundabouts at Freshwater Point Road, Bridgenorth Road and Acropolis Drive, will allow road users to make U-Turns. Some road users may need to travel further to access properties and businesses because of the median barrier.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There was one comment requesting that the department progress previous plans put to West Tamar Council for a link road between Sunrise Drive and Outreach Drive. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both Outreach Drive and Sunrise Drive are local roads, owned by West Tamar Council. The suggestion for a link road connecting Sunrise Drive and Outreach Drive will be provided to the West Tamar Council.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We received one comment from nearby property owners expressing opposition to a bus stop being relocated to outside their property. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The relocation of bus stops has been proposed to help improve the accessibility to buses for residents along the West Tamar Highway, and for school children attending the new Legana Primary School. Location of bus stops will be confirmed during detailed design.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There was one comment asking if there would be more frequent bus services or a park and ride service. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A review of West Tamar Highway bus services occurred in 2018 and resulted in increased service frequencies for this corridor. There are currently no plans to review the bus services operating along the corridor. The proposed upgrades account for the needs of current services.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There were two comments requesting bus shelters be upgraded to ensure users are protected from the weather while waiting for the bus. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some bus shelters will be provided. New bus stops will comply with the <i>Disability Discrimination Act 1992</i>.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There were four comments stating that the area would benefit from a speed limit reduction. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There will be a speed limit review during the detailed design phase.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There were four comments about the potential for the project to increase noise in the area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This project will follow the Tasmanian State Road Traffic Noise Management Guidelines (2015). Noise modelling and monitoring will be done before construction to predict changes to noise levels, and any potential mitigation measures will be discussed with impacted residents and landowners.

What did we hear?	Our response?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There were three comments from community members wanting to know when the project will be built. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construction for this project is expected to start in 2024. The duration of the construction period will be determined, following completion of the detailed design.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There were 14 comments in support of the project, stating that it is an improvement and much needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Department appreciates and thanks the community for taking the time to provide feedback.

What's next?

This report has been provided to the project team for consideration. Once finalised, a copy of the Summary Consultation feedback report will be available for community members to view on the RoadsTas website. Community members who provided feedback via email will also receive a link to the report.

The project has progressed to the detailed design phase.

The final design will be published on the department's website in late 2023.

Construction is expected to begin in 2024.

Contact

If you have any questions regarding this report, please contact our Stakeholder Engagement Consultant, Kate Reilly on 6210 0662 or westtamarplan@stategrowth.tas.gov.au.

For more information on our projects, visit transport.tas.gov.au.