

Questions and answers

September 2016

Project need and benefits

Q: Why are you upgrading Showground Road?

Roads and Maritime Services is upgrading Showground Road to reduce congestion and increase traffic capacity to meet predicted growth from development in the area.

Q: What are the benefits of the road upgrade?

- Reducing congestion
- Increasing traffic capacity to meet the predicted growth from development in the area
- Improving safety at several intersections.

Q: What are the key features of the road upgrade?

- Widening of Showground Road to at least four lanes between Carrington Road and Old Northern Road with additional turning lanes at key intersections
- Upgrading the intersection of Showground Road and Pennant Street to include additional turning lanes and bus priority measure
- Installing new traffic lights at the intersections of Showground Road with Rowallan Avenue and Cheriton Avenue
- Changing the intersection of Showground Road and Britannia Road to left-in/left-out access
- Installing a central concrete median with landscaped planter bays at a number of locations along the road
- Providing a concrete footpath to both sides of the road between Carrington Road and Pennant Street.

Q: What is the background of this project?

Showground Road is one of the main access roads to the Castle Hill town centre, which includes the Castle Towers Shopping Centre (Castle Towers). The road upgrade is needed to address the existing congestion experienced by motorists, especially during peak times and Saturdays. It is also needed in response to the projected growth in local and regional traffic, as well as the additional traffic generated by development in the town centre, which includes the expansion of Castle Towers by Queensland Investment Corporation (QIC).

The upgrade is needed to satisfy condition number 34 of Development Consent 297/2008/HB for the expansion of Castle Towers. It is also the subject of a Voluntary Planning Agreement executed on 12 September 2013 by QIC, Roads and Maritime, and The Hills Shire Council.

A Review of Environmental Factors (REF) was prepared for the proposal and placed on public display from 26 March 2014 until 2 May 2014 at two locations (The Hills Shire Council office and Castle Hill Library).

Roads and Maritime finalised the detailed design of this 1.5 kilometre upgrade between Carrington Road and Old Northern Road, Castle Hill and invited tenders to construct the upgrade in October 2015. There have

been some changes to the project as a result of community feedback and an Addendum to the Review of Environmental Factors.

Roads and Maritime received 16 submissions and overall there was general support for the upgrade. There were a number of requests to start the project as soon as possible because of commercial development and increasing traffic in the area. None of the submissions objected to the proposal.

Funding

Q: What is the cost of the project?

The estimated cost of the project is \$41 million.

Fast facts

- **Contractor:** Seymour Whyte Constructions
- **Cost:** \$41 million
- **Start of investigation work:** April 2016
- **Start of major work:** May 2016
- **Expected completion:** mid 2018
- **Length:** 1.5 kilometres
- **Number of workers:** Over 50 workers
- **Current traffic volumes:** 37,000 Average Daily Traffic.

Construction

Q: When did construction start?

Construction work started in May 2016 and will take about two years to complete, weather permitting.

Q: What are the upcoming project milestones?

- Start construction (mid- 2016)
- Open to traffic (mid-2018).

Q. Why will it take two years to complete the work?

It is expected the upgrade will around two years to complete, weather permitting. One of the major challenges with this upgrade is the relocation of a large number of utilities such as power, gas, water and phone/data lines within a narrow corridor width.

Q. What early work has been carried out?

Early work started on Tuesday 26 April and included:

- Implementing a 40km/h speed limit during construction hours as the corridor is further reduced in width for construction
- Installing fencing and signage
- Establishing the site compound
- Removal of impacted vegetation.

Q. What are your constructions hours?

Construction will generally be carried out during standard construction hours including 7am to 6pm Monday to Friday, and 8am to 1pm Saturdays when required.

Some work will need to be carried out at night to maintain safety, lessen impact on the road network and maintain the service continuity of utilities when they are being relocated. All work outside of standard construction hours will be carried out in accordance with the relevant approvals. Residents and businesses will be notified in advance of any night work being carried out.

Q. How will you manage construction impact?

There will be disruption while we complete this work including changed traffic conditions, noise, vibration, dust, lighting during night work and access to property. Construction activities will be carried out in accordance with the project's Construction Environmental Management Plan. We will make every effort to minimise impact by:

- Notifying residents in advance of work
- Carrying out work during standard construction hours wherever possible
- Servicing and maintaining machinery and equipment to limit noise and emissions
- Temporary, electronic message signs will also be installed to inform motorists of upcoming work and changed traffic conditions.

Q. Can you carry out more work at night to reduce congestion on the road?

A combination of day and night work is required to balance the impact to nearby residents and motorists however, most work will be carried out during standard construction hours.

Q. Why are you implementing a 40km/h speed limit 24 hours per day?

Concrete barriers will be installed in preparation for major construction for the protection of road workers. Once the concrete barriers are in place, traffic lanes will be narrowed and the 40km/h speed limit implemented 24 hours/day to provide a safer environment for motorists and workers. As wider lanes cannot be returned at the end of each day, the lower 40km/h speed limit will apply 24 hours a day.

Q. Why are we replacing the road shoulder and not just line-mark the space that is already there?

During detailed design, Roads and Maritime assessed the existing pavement area in the shoulder and found it to be too weak to support the volume of traffic required. As a result part of the design incorporated replacing the underlying existing pavement with a stronger, more durable treatment.

Q. Why aren't you providing a shared path along Showground Road?

Due to the narrow corridor width, there will now be a two metre wide foot path instead of a 2.5 metre wide shared path on the northern side of Showground Road between Carrington Road and Pennant Street. Cyclists are recommended to use the dedicated on-road cycleway on Castle Street. The Hills Shire Council will consider options for connectivity between their shared paths as development continues along the corridor which may allow for a wider pathway in the future.

Q. How will the development plans for the Castle Towers shopping centre affect the road upgrades between Kentwell Avenue and Old Northern Road?

The section of Showground Road between Kentwell Avenue and Old Northern Road was part of the initial design. Since then, QIC (owners of Castle Towers) has received approval for one development application with another one pending approval. Once we are aware of their expansion plans, we will work together with QIC to develop a treatment for that area. We will keep residents and businesses informed as the design for this area is refined.

Q. How will the road upgrades affect other infrastructure development in the area?

Over the next five years there will be a lot of infrastructure development taking place around Showground Road. As well as the Sydney Metro Northwest development, residential development will impact the area. In addition, the increasing population of areas to the west will place extra demands on the area's infrastructure. Roads and Maritime will work with all stakeholders, including developers and other government agencies to ensure coordination. Roads and Maritime currently participates in two local coordination groups and this will continue for the duration of the upgrade.

Q. There is a lot of work happening around Showground Road with the Sydney Metro North West and QIC, how will you work together?

Roads and Maritime has set up a monthly meeting between Sydney Metro Northwest, QIC and The Hills Shire Council to coordinate our work and reduce the traffic impacts along Showground Road.

Q. Will there be parking restrictions?

Parking restrictions will be in place from 27 June 2016 with the closures of the Showground Road shoulders.