



Transport for NSW

# Massey to Amherst Street Noise Wall

Community feedback report

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# Executive summary

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Transport for NSW is planning to build the Massey to Amherst Street Noise Wall to help reduce the impact of traffic noise for residents in Massey, Armstrong and Jenkins Streets, Cammeray.

This Community Feedback Report provides a summary of the community consultation carried out in December 2020 for the proposed concept design of the noise wall. The noise wall design proposal was publicly displayed for community feedback between **2 and 23 December 2020**.

The activities we carried out to inform people about the proposal and invite feedback included:

- meetings with 11 directly-impacted property owners before the public display to discuss specific impacts to their properties and address any concerns
- distributing a project update via letterbox drop to 188 properties and published on the [project web page](#) on 2 December 2020 advising them that the consultation period was open and how to provide feedback
- contacting 20 registered stakeholders who had previously expressed an interest via phone and email
- an advertisement was placed in the North Shore Times print and online editions
- holding an online community webinar on 9 December to provide the community with the opportunity to hear from the project team, ask questions and clarify any issues
- distributing a flyer via letterbox drop on 14 December to remind people about the feedback period.

In total we received eight submissions from the community during the display period. The key topics and issues raised included:

- the design and appearance of the noise wall, including the height, colour and use of transparent panels
- impact to existing trees and vegetation
- noise impact during the work
- construction timing and work schedule
- community consultation.

After considering the feedback received, we will proceed with building the noise wall in line with the proposed concept design. In response to feedback we will review the colour of the noise wall.

## Next steps

The Western Harbour Tunnel and Warringah Freeway Upgrade was approved by the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces in January 2021. The Massey to Amherst Street Noise Wall was identified in the project's Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) as one of a number of measures we will use to reduce the impact of noise on the community.

As the noise wall was identified in the EIS, it has approval to be built in line with the Minister's Conditions of Approval for the project (construction of the Massey to Amherst, Cammeray noise barrier / wall is identified in Condition E91(b), E183 and Appendix C of the EIS). By building the noise wall early in line with these conditions, this will help reduce noise for local residents during the construction phase of the project.

We are on track to start construction of the noise wall in late 2021 and this work is expected to take about six months to complete, weather permitting. Before construction starts, utility works, surveying and geotechnical investigations are required to take place over the next few months. The community will be updated further on these works soon.

We will provide further information before any work on the noise wall starts including what to expect during construction, our work schedule and expected impacts.

# 1 Introduction

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## 1.1 Background

Transport for NSW is planning to build the Massey to Amherst Street Noise Wall to reduce the impact of traffic noise for residents along Massey, Armstrong and Jenkins Streets, Cammeray.

Transport has been engaging with the community about a noise wall in this location since 2018 as part of the Noise Abatement Program (NAP). The noise wall forms part of our three-part strategy to reduce the impact of traffic noise for residents in this area. In addition to the Massey to Amherst Street Noise Wall, our strategy includes providing noise treatment to eligible properties and building the Amherst Street Noise Wall. Construction of the Amherst Street Noise Wall was completed in March 2021 and the delivery of at-property noise treatment is in progress.

## 1.2 Proposed concept design

The proposal involves building a continuous noise wall along the Amherst Street off ramp behind properties on Massey, Armstrong and Jenkins Streets, Cammeray. The new noise wall would be about 174 metres long and consist of steel posts and concrete panels. It would be about five metres high when measured from ground level at neighbouring properties.

We have considered community feedback in developing the concept design, including building a continuous full height noise wall and offsetting it from private properties to retain their existing boundary walls. Based on feedback from previous community consultation and the design of the Chandos and Amherst Noise Walls, we have also proposed to incorporate transparent panels at the top of the noise wall to maximise natural light and minimise overshadowing.

When designing noise walls, we consider the existing urban environment and aim to integrate the noise wall into the local landscape. To keep with the character of the local area we proposed to paint the noise wall grey on the side facing the Warringah Freeway and environmental green on the side facing private properties.

# 2 Engagement approach

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## 2.1 Engagement objectives

We consulted with the community on the concept design for the proposed Massey to Amherst Street Noise Wall to:

- seek feedback, ideas and suggestions that will be considered in finalising the design for the proposal
- provide an opportunity to meet with the community to clarify their questions and understand the matters important to them
- build our relationships and database of engaged community members with whom we can regularly communicate with about the proposal.

## 2.2 Values

Our values underpin our decisions and behaviours when working with customers, colleagues, stakeholders and partners.

- Customer focus – We place the customer at the centre of everything we do
- Collaboration – We value each other and create better outcomes by working together
- Solutions – We deliver sustainable and innovative solutions to NSW's transport needs
- Integrity – We take responsibility and communicate openly
- Safety – We prioritise safety for our people and our customers.

## 2.3 How engagement was carried out

Before the public display of the concept design, the project team met with 11 directly-impacted property owners in October 2020 who live next to the proposed noise wall. The purpose of these meetings was to update property owners on the design and discuss specific impacts to their properties.

The public display of the concept design was carried out between **2 and 23 December 2020**. We adapted our community engagement in line with health advice regarding COVID-19 to give the community safe and convenient options to engage with us. As a result, no face-to-face community information sessions or door knocking were done during the public display period. Instead, the project team held an online community webinar and kept the community informed via letterbox drop, email and phone.

Our engagement tools are outlined in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Engagement tools

Tool/activity	Description
Project update	We distributed a project update on 2 December 2020 to 188 residents via letterbox drop and published it on the <a href="#">online project web page</a> . We provided a copy of the project update to key stakeholders including North Sydney Council.
Advertisement	An advertisement was placed in the North Shore Times print and online editions on 3 December 2020.
Direct communication with registered stakeholders	We contacted 20 registered stakeholders via email and phone, including 11 directly-impacted property owners.
Online community webinar	We held an online community webinar on 9 December so people could hear from the project team and ask questions. The webinar was attended by seven people who submitted 13 questions and comments, including one piece of positive feedback about how consultation was carried out.
Reminder flyer	A flyer was distributed via letterbox to 188 properties on 14 December to remind people about the display period.
Project contact details	<p>Community members were encouraged to contact us via the project contact details to ask questions and provide feedback:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Phone: 1800 312 772</li> <li>• Email: <a href="mailto:napns@transport.nsw.gov.au">napns@transport.nsw.gov.au</a></li> <li>• Mail: Locked Bag 928, North Sydney NSW 2059</li> </ul>
Web page	Information about the project was made available on the project web page at <a href="http://nswroads.work/m2a">nswroads.work/m2a</a> .

### 3 Feedback summary

During the consultation period we received eight submissions from local residents raising a number of different issues, with a majority of submissions indicating support for the proposed noise wall. The feedback received and Transport’s responses are outlined in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Feedback and responses

Issue category	Comment	Transport for NSW response
Noise wall design		
Use of transparent panels	Supportive of the use of transparent panels at the top of the noise wall to allow natural light into properties and minimise overshadowing.  (3 submissions in support)	Based on feedback from previous community consultation and the design of the Chandos Noise Wall, we will proceed with using transparent panels at the top of the noise wall to allow natural light into neighbouring properties and minimise the impact of overshadowing. The transparent panels will be at least one metre in height and the exact dimensions will be confirmed as part of the detailed design process.
	Transparent panels should not be included to help minimise the view of traffic on the Warringah Freeway.  (3 submissions)	<p>We acknowledge noise walls can have a significant visual impact for neighbouring properties, as well as affecting natural light and we are committed to minimising this impact wherever possible. As identified in Transport’s noise wall design guidelines, noise barriers that are too high can have a negative impact on adjacent properties due to visual intrusion, reduced sunlight and loss of amenity. While the noise wall may help to block the view of traffic on the freeway, this needs to be considered against the potential visual impact of the noise wall on other neighbouring properties.</p> <p>As part of the proposed concept design, we have incorporated transparent panels at the top of the wall to allow natural light into neighbouring properties and minimise overshadowing based on previous feedback. This was implemented in response to feedback received from residents who live directly next to the proposed noise wall as part of consultation carried out since 2018.</p> <p>The proposed height of the noise wall is around five metres in total. The transparent panels will be at least one metre in height and the exact dimensions will be confirmed as part of the detailed design process. The noise wall will still provide some benefit in minimising the view of the Warringah Freeway as the transparent panels will be limited to the top part of the wall only.</p>

Issue category	Comment	Transport for NSW response
	<p>The transparent panels should start from the height of existing boundary fences to minimise overshadowing.</p> <p>(1 submission)</p>	<p>Concrete is generally the most effective at reducing noise when compared to the plexiglass material used in transparent noise wall panels. For this reason, we are proposing to incorporate transparent panels in the top section of the wall only (about one metre) and this is not expected to have a discernible impact on the overall noise benefit provided by the noise wall.</p>
	<p>The section of the noise wall near the corner of Jenkins and Armstrong Streets should be fully transparent from ground level.</p> <p>(1 submission)</p>	<p>We will proceed with incorporating transparent panels at the top section of the noise wall only and the lower part of the wall will be made of pre-cast concrete panels. The transparent panels will be at least one metre in height and the dimensions will be confirmed as part of the detailed design process. The majority of the noise wall will be made of concrete to maximise noise reduction and for constructability reasons.</p> <p>The noise wall will be designed in line with Transport’s design guidelines to improve the appearance of noise walls in NSW (RMS, March 2016). It will also be in line with the condition of approval E182 and Noise wall design guidelines which apply to all noise walls in NSW to meet our engineering and acoustic requirements.</p>
<p>Height of the noise wall</p>	<p>Supportive of the proposed height of five metres.</p> <p>(1 submission)</p>	<p>After considering the feedback received, we will proceed with the proposed noise wall with a height of about five metres. The average height of the noise wall is approximately measured from the ground level of neighbouring properties but varies throughout the length of the wall depending on the incline of the ground.</p> <p>We will confirm the exact dimensions of the noise wall as part of the detailed design process.</p>

Issue category	Comment	Transport for NSW response
	<p>Request for the height to be increased to eight metres.</p> <p>(1 submission)</p>	<p>As identified in Transport's noise wall design guidelines, noise barriers that are too high can have a negative impact on adjacent properties due to visual intrusion, reduced sunlight and loss of amenity. When designing noise walls, it is important to consider the potential visual impact they have in balance with the noise benefit provided.</p> <p>Noise modelling carried out at the options assessment stage for the Massey to Amherst Street Noise Wall proposal in 2018 showed that building a four metre noise wall will achieve the minimum noise reduction required in line with Transport's Noise Mitigation Guideline. An eight metre high noise wall may provide additional noise reduction, however it would have an unacceptable visual impact for local residents. We are delivering at-property noise treatment to eligible properties as an additional measure to reduce traffic noise for residents who will remain above our thresholds after the noise is built.</p> <p>In response to community feedback, the height of the noise wall was increased to about five metres (from around four metres) as part of the concept design with transparent panels to be incorporated at the top part of the wall. This is expected to provide a significant noise benefit while also balancing the potential impacts to local residents in terms of visual amenity and overshadowing while also meeting the minimum criteria for noise walls.</p>
<p>Artist's impressions</p>	<p>In the artist's impression the noise wall looks thin and not acoustically sound.</p> <p>(1 submission)</p>	<p>The noise wall will be made from steel wall posts, pre-cast reinforced concrete panels and plexiglass panels. The panels that make up the noise wall will be about 120 millimetres thick.</p> <p>The noise wall will be designed in line with Transport's design guidelines to improve the appearance of noise walls in NSW (RMS, March 2016). It will also be in line with the condition of approval E182 and noise wall design guidelines which apply to all noise walls in NSW so they meet our engineering and acoustic requirements.</p>
	<p>Request for an artist's impression of the noise wall from the view of private properties.</p> <p>(1 submission)</p>	<p>We will consider this request as we develop the detailed design and urban design and landscaping for the proposal.</p>

Issue category	Comment	Transport for NSW response
Noise wall alignment	<p>Why has the noise wall been offset from property boundaries and why was this solution not identified previously.</p> <p>(1 submission)</p>	<p>Feedback received from the community in 2018 and 2019 has been considered in developing the concept design for the proposal. As part of community consultation carried out in 2018, we informed the community that private property adjustments would be required to build the noise wall along the boundary of private properties on Massey, Armstrong and Jenkins Streets. Since this time we have carried out further detailed investigations into how the noise wall can be constructed while minimising impacts to these properties.</p> <p>As part of our concept design, the noise wall is offset from private property boundaries by about one metre. This means we can avoid the need for property adjustments and the existing boundary walls can be retained. This is also beneficial for future maintenance purposes as the rear of the noise wall will be accessible without needing to enter private properties.</p>
Drainage	<p>Consideration should be given to existing drainage gutter on the freeway side of the existing boundary wall.</p> <p>(1 submission)</p>	<p>Drainage is an important consideration in designing the noise wall. This will be considered as part of the detailed design process to ensure appropriate drainage infrastructure is in place once the noise wall is complete.</p>
<b>Environment</b>		
Impact to existing trees and vegetation	<p>Existing trees and vegetation must be retained.</p> <p>(3 submissions)</p>	<p>We will make every effort to avoid impacts to existing trees and vegetation. We may need to remove or trim some existing trees and vegetation to build the new noise wall and this will be confirmed as part of the detailed design process. We will update the community before construction starts about any impacts to existing trees and vegetation.</p>
	<p>The dead tree located on the land at the corner of Jenkins and Armstrong Streets should be removed as part of the work.</p> <p>(1 submission)</p>	<p>The removal of the tree will be considered in finalising the proposal. We will keep residents informed about any planned tree removal.</p>

Issue category	Comment	Transport for NSW response
Noise	<p>Request for information about what noise data has been used to determine the height of the noise wall.</p> <p>(1 submission)</p>	<p>Noise modelling was originally carried out for the Warringah Freeway noise mitigation options assessment in 2018. Our noise modelling is calibrated using traffic counts and noise monitoring which were carried out at the same time. Using a calibrated model means we can use updated traffic figures to model noise outputs based on those figures. In this case we have produced updated noise outputs using traffic counts taken in 2017 and 2019.</p> <p>To meet Transport's 'reasonable and feasible' assessment, a four metre high noise wall must achieve a noise reduction of 5dBA. The noise modelling carried out in the options assessment phase in 2018 showed that a four metre noise wall in this location would achieve this criteria.</p> <p>After considering community feedback we have increased the height of the noise wall to about five metres, including at least one metre of transparent panels at the top of the wall. This is expected to provide a significant noise benefit while also balancing the visual and amenity impacts for local residents.</p>
	<p>Why has no updated noise modelling been provided.</p> <p>(1 submission)</p>	<p>We will further refine the noise modelling as part of the detailed design process based on the exact dimensions of the noise wall. Once this is complete, noise modelling data will be made available to the community on request.</p>
	<p>Will the noise wall increase traffic noise.</p> <p>(1 submission)</p>	<p>The objective of the noise wall is to reduce traffic noise for local residents. Traffic noise levels will not increase at properties as a result of building the noise wall.</p>
<b>Urban design and landscaping</b>		
Colour	<p>Objection to the use of environmental green on the side of the noise wall facing properties. Request for a light colour to be used instead.</p> <p>(2 submissions)</p>	<p>We appreciate the community's feedback on the colour of the noise wall and will review the proposed colour for the side of the noise wall facing properties. We will seek further feedback from the community on the colour of the noise wall later this year before we start construction.</p>
	<p>Support for the noise wall being painted environmental green on the side facing properties.</p> <p>(1 submission)</p>	<p>We will review the proposed colour for the noise wall following community feedback.</p>

Issue category	Comment	Transport for NSW response
	<p>Request for expert input on the colour and advice on how to best integrate it into the local setting and minimise the visual impact for residents.</p> <p>(1 submission)</p>	<p>The urban design and landscaping elements for the proposal will be consistent with the recently-completed Amherst Street Noise Wall.</p>
<b>Construction</b>		
<p>Timing and work schedule</p>	<p>Support for construction starting in late 2021.</p> <p>(2 submissions)</p>	<p>We are committed to building the noise wall as early as possible so residents benefit from reduced noise. The noise wall has been approved for construction as part of the Minister's Conditions of Approval for the Western Harbour Tunnel and Warringah Freeway Upgrade. We are on track to start building the noise wall in late 2021 and work is expected to take about six months to complete, weather permitting.</p>
	<p>The section of the noise wall near the corner of Jenkins and Armstrong Streets should be prioritised for construction to mitigate impacts to residents for the remainder of the construction period.</p> <p>(1 submission)</p>	<p>Construction activities will be carried out in stages. The first stage of construction will involve preparing the foundations for the noise wall and include activities such as earthwork and piling. Once the foundation work is complete and steel posts have been installed to support the wall, work to install the noise wall panels is generally carried out quickly.</p> <p>We will work closely with the contractors to plan their activities so that impacts to the community are minimised. This will include staging work activities to minimise extended impacts to residents where possible.</p>
<b>Community engagement</b>		
<p>Consultation</p>	<p>Positive comment about the engagement carried out with local residents to date.</p> <p>(1 submission)</p>	<p>We appreciate this feedback and thank the community for their ongoing cooperation and input as the proposal progresses.</p>

Issue category	Comment	Transport for NSW response
	<p>Consultation carried out with the community to date has not been adequate and the proposal does not meet community requirements.</p> <p>(1 submission)</p>	<p>We have carried out extensive consultation with the local community about the Massey to Amherst Street Noise Wall since it was proposed in 2018. During this time we have liaised closely with residents to develop a proposal which meets our noise objectives while minimising impact to properties.</p> <p>In late 2020, we carried out the following activities to inform people about the concept design display and invite feedback:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The project team met with 11 directly-impacted property owners before the public display period to update them on the proposal and discuss the proposed concept design</li> <li>• A project update was distributed via letterbox drop to 188 properties near the proposal area and an additional flyer was distributed to remind people about the display period</li> <li>• We contacted 20 registered community members and North Sydney Council, including 11 directly-impacted property owners who live next to the noise wall location</li> <li>• An advertisement was placed in the North Shore Times print and online editions</li> <li>• We held an online community webinar so people could hear from the project team and ask questions. The webinar was attended by seven people who submitted 13 questions and comments, including one piece of positive feedback about how consultation was carried out.</li> </ul> <p>Feedback received during the concept design display period was generally supportive and we will consider all comments received as we finalise the design. We will continue to keep people informed as the proposal progresses.</p>

**Outside the scope of the proposal**

<p>Warringah Freeway Upgrade</p>	<p>How will construction noise be reduced during construction of the proposed Warringah Freeway Upgrade.</p> <p>(1 submission)</p>	<p>Detailed information about how construction noise will be managed as part of the Western Harbour Tunnel and Warringah Freeway Upgrade is available in our managing construction noise fact sheet. Please visit the online portal at <b><a href="https://nswroads.work/whtportal">nswroads.work/whtportal</a></b> for more information.</p> <p>Prioritising the construction of the Massey to Amherst Street Noise Wall in line with the project's Minister's Conditions of Approval, means residents will benefit from reduced noise from construction activities for the Warringah Freeway Upgrade.</p>
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Issue category	Comment	Transport for NSW response
	<p>What will be done to address noise from the Warringah Freeway Upgrade if the noise wall does not proceed.</p> <p>(1 submission)</p>	<p>The noise wall has been approved for construction as part of the Minister’s Conditions of Approval for the Western Harbour Tunnel and Warringah Freeway Upgrade. We are on track to start building the noise wall in late 2021 and work is expected to take about six months to complete, weather permitting. By building the noise wall early in line with the Minister’s Conditions of Approval, residents will benefit from reduced noise during the construction of the project.</p> <p>In addition to building the Massey to Amherst Street Noise Wall, we are delivering at-property noise treatment to eligible properties in the area to further reduce the impact of noise.</p>
<p>Proposal alternatives</p>	<p>The alternative proposal of the Warringah Freeway viaduct noise wall should be built instead.</p> <p>(1 submission)</p>	<p>Noise walls are most effective when built close to properties. We investigated the Warringah Freeway viaduct noise wall option in 2018 and found it would not meet the minimum noise reduction requirements outlined in Transport’s Noise Mitigation Guideline. Our assessment found the viaduct noise wall would deliver a minor reduction in traffic noise from the freeway and no reduction in traffic noise from the Amherst Street off ramp. The Massey to Amherst Street Noise Wall was identified as our preferred solution as it delivered a significant noise reduction due to its proximity to properties.</p>

## 4 Next steps

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We would like to thank everyone who provided comments and feedback about the proposed Massey to Amherst Street Noise Wall. After considering community feedback, we will continue to develop the noise wall in line with the proposed concept design. We will consider the feedback received as we prepare the detailed design for the noise wall.

The Massey to Amherst Street Noise Wall falls within the project area for the Western Harbour Tunnel and Warringah Freeway Upgrade and was identified as part of the project's EIS in 2020. The project was approved by the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces in January 2021. As the noise wall has been identified and assessed as part of the EIS, it has approval to be built in line with the Minister's Conditions of Approval for the project. To view the approval conditions, and for further information about the project, please visit [nswroads.work/whtportal](https://nswroads.work/whtportal).

We are on track to start construction of the noise wall in late 2021 and this work is expected to take about six months to complete, weather permitting. We will provide further information before work starts about what to expect during construction, including our work schedule and expected impacts. Before construction starts, utility works, surveying and geotechnical investigations are required to take place over the next few months. The community will be updated further on these works soon.

We will continue to keep you informed as the proposal progresses, including future opportunities to provide feedback.