

# OLYMPIC HIGHWAY INTERSECTION UPGRADES

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### Review of Environmental Factors

#### What is the Review of Environmental Factors?

The Review of Environmental Factors (REF) is a report that defines the construction footprint of the project to protect the environmental and cultural factors of the area. As part of the investigation we have assessed potential environmental impacts such as noise, vibration, contamination, traffic, flooding and surface water, landscape and visual impacts, biodiversity, land use, heritage, air quality, flora and fauna.

The environmental assessment identifies and assesses the potential social, economic and environmental impacts, and can be viewed and downloaded at [nswroads.work/ohiu](https://nswroads.work/ohiu).

#### When is the display period?

The REF is open for public display from Monday 20 September to Friday 22 October. This is an opportunity for the community to read the report, view the concept plan and submit their comments. Submissions made from the community during the display period have the potential to alter the construction of a project.

#### Where can I view the REF?

The REF is available to read online on the project website and in our digital engagement room that can be found at [nswroads.work/ohiu](https://nswroads.work/ohiu)

#### How do I make a submission?

Submissions can be made via:

- email: [SouthProjects@transport.nsw.gov.au](mailto:SouthProjects@transport.nsw.gov.au)
- phone: (02) 6923 6571
- mail: Olympic Highway intersections upgrade, PO Box 484, Wagga Wagga, NSW 2650
- online via the digital engagement room at [nswroads.work/ohiu](https://nswroads.work/ohiu)

#### What happens if I don't have internet access?

If you don't have internet access you can call the project team on (02) 6923 6571 who will arrange a hard copy of the report be sent to your address.

#### How will my comments be used?

The feedback will be collated and summarised into a submissions report. The report will respond directly to the feedback received and notes any changes to the proposal due to the community's feedback. The report will be released on our project website and we will inform the community when it is ready to view.

### Will the community's comments bring about any project change?

Submissions made by the community during the REF display period have the ability to alter the design and construction of a project. Any changes made due to feedback received will be presented in the submissions report.

### Have you considered the impact on the environment?

The REF is an environmental assessment that identifies and assesses the potential social, economic and environmental impacts. As part of the investigations, we will assess potential environmental impacts such as noise, vibration, contamination, traffic, flooding and surface water, landscape and visual impacts, biodiversity, land use, heritage, air quality, flora and fauna.

### I live near Old Narrandera Road. Is noise expected to increase following the installation of traffic lights?

A noise impact study has been undertaken to evaluate any changes that may arise during and after construction of the upgrades. The assessment has found that there will be no significant increase to road traffic noise.

### Will Transport carry out noise treatments for noise-affected properties?

A traffic noise assessment has been carried out to measure noise once the intersection upgrades have been completed. The assessment has found that there will be no significant increase to road traffic noise. Therefore the proposal will not require the inclusion of operational noise mitigation measures to any properties. You can read the full noise report in the REF.

### How will noise be monitored during construction?

A noise and vibration management plan will be prepared as part of the construction and will outline potential significant noise and vibration generating activities.

Significant construction noise and vibration will be measured and monitored to ensure allowable limits aren't exceeded. If allowable limits are exceeded, then control measures are implemented.

Noise control measures would include consultation with affected neighbours, including notification and complaint handling procedures, and limiting the use of noisy plant and equipment to certain times.

### What will be the impact on native animals in the area?

Habitat assessments and field surveys have been carried out by ecologists to identify local flora and fauna in the project area.

Field studies within the project footprint identified five species that are listed as endangered and includes the Squirrel Glider (*Petaurus norfolcensis*), Eastern False Pipistrelle (*Falsistrellus tasmaniensis*), Grey-headed Flying-fox (*Pteropus poliocephalus*), Yellow-bellied Sheath-tail-bat (*Saccolaimus flaviventris*) and Southern Myotis bat (*Myotis macropus*).

The Gobbagombalin Lagoon is considered part of the threatened Lower Murray Aquatic Ecological Community that has some key fish habitat. Assessment concluded the proposal would not have a significant impact, as the proposed works would be avoiding impacts to the lagoon with an indicative exclusion area and the placement of appropriate mitigation measures.

### Will you be clearing any vegetation or removing trees?

The REF identifies some vegetation will need to be removed as part of the relocation of the Travers Street intersection further south and along the Olympic Highway around the Old Narrandera Road intersection.

The effects of this clearing would not be significant and can be mitigated through the implementation of safeguards that includes the re-establishing of vegetation.

### Will you be carrying out any offset revegetation?

The project will require some biodiversity offsets due to vegetation removal. Biodiversity offsets may include credit retirement, payment to the Biodiversity Conservation Fund, conservation measures such as revegetation planting. The potential suitability of each option will be investigated.

### Can I suggest a location for offset plantings? Will you involve the community in these plantings?

Transport is happy to receive location suggestions for offset plantings. Subject to the nature of the biodiversity offsets carried out, the community would be involved as appropriate.

### Has Aboriginal Cultural Heritage been considered?

Transport has carried out consultation with Aboriginal stakeholders in accordance with the Transport for NSW *Procedure for Cultural Heritage Consultation and Investigation (PACHCI)*. Two members of the Wagga Wagga Local Aboriginal Lands Council inspected the site and provided cultural information relating to the area. A Transport for NSW Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Officer also attended the site visit. There was found to be no potential for Aboriginal objects to be present within the proposal area on or below the ground surface.

### The project is near a flood plain. What will you do to ensure likelihood of flooding is not exacerbated?

Hydraulic modelling results indicates changes will be unlikely to any flood levels outside of the project area for both proposed intersections. The results also identified no additional flooding impacts to any occupied land.

### Will the project impact local waterways?

There would be no release of dirty water into drainage lines and waterways. Water quality controls will also be in place to prevent materials such as sediment and concrete entering drainage pipes and waterways. These measures would also be incorporated into the road drainage system design.

### Will you do any landscaping to improve visual amenity?

Some landscaping will be carried out to improve visual amenity. Landscaping will involve identification of proposed landscaped areas, including plant species, retaining walls, pedestrian, cyclist and horse paths, seating, lighting, fencing and signs. One such area is the expanse of open space that would remain once the Travers Street alignment has been relocated.

### I live very close to the project zone. How will you minimise dust entering my property from construction work?

Dust will be minimised during construction by watering or covering exposed areas, covering truck loads during transport, timing dust-generating work to avoid high wind conditions, stabilising exposed areas progressively, having controls at site entry and exit points to minimise the tracking of materials onto the road, implanting soil erosion and sediment control measures.

### How will the Murrumbidgee Turf Club be impacted during construction?

The existing horse underpass under the Olympic Highway at Travers Street will be retained. As the relocated Travers Street will block the existing path to the MTC, it is proposed to re-direct the existing horse path towards the Wiradjuri walking track then along behind the levee bank and to the existing at-grade signalised horse crossing. Transport is continuing to engage with MTC regarding a suitable permanent alternative horse path solution.

Construction work will not impact the existing MTC entrance driveway. Construction noise may affect horses using the MTC. Transport will consult with MTC about appropriate noise management.

The existing pedestrian and cycle path adjacent to the MTC will be temporarily impacted by construction work but access will be maintained during construction.

There are heritage protected structures located within the Murrumbidgee Turf Club (MTC) adjacent to the Travers Street intersection, so safe working distances will have to be maintained from vibrating construction plant such as rollers, including a structural assessment and a dilapidation survey, with regular inspection throughout the construction activities.

#### I'm a horse trainer, how will I access the MTC during construction?

Transport will minimise where possible impacts to the horse access track during construction, however these impacts are yet to be determined. We will engage with stakeholders to identify issues and address potential impacts for horse trainers accessing the MTC during the construction stages.

#### What happens after the REF display period?

Following the display period, the REF will be finalised and all submissions will be collated and reviewed by the project team. The feedback received will be responded to and published in a submissions report that will be publicly available.

#### What are the next steps in the project?

Once the REF has been finalised, the project will move to the detailed design stage, then the construction of the project will go out for tender.

#### When is work expected to start?

It is anticipated construction on the intersection upgrades will start in early 2023. With both intersections being worked on at the same time, upgrades would take around 12 months to complete.

#### Why are traffic lights considered the best option at Old Narrandera Road?

Our investigations have shown that traffic lights provide the best immediate improvements to road safety at this intersection. Traffic lights improve access between the northern growth areas and the services in Wagga Wagga, and have the potential to be modified to suit expansion of the Olympic Highway in the future if required. Traffic lights would allow motorists to safely turn out of Old Narrandera Road on to the Olympic Highway. Traffic lights at this intersection would also be able to be phased to ensure traffic flows on the Olympic Highway are prioritised. This ensures efficiency of the network in this part of Wagga is optimised.

#### Wouldn't a grade separated interchange be a better solution at Old Narrandera Road?

We investigated a grade separated interchange at this location, but found it was not a viable or safe engineering solution because the distance between this intersection and the existing Boorooma Street overpass and Gobbagombalin (Gobba) Bridge does not allow for safe merging on and off the Olympic Highway. In addition, a grade separated interchange would be quite limiting in the future as it could not be easily modified to cater for expansion of the Olympic Highway or possible duplication of Gobba Bridge.

#### The existing Travers Street roundabout works fine. Why change it?

We have identified a number of safety benefits to relocating the Travers Street intersection and installing traffic lights. The current intersection's location close to the bridge results in traffic slowing down to turn left into Travers Street, which in turn causes safety and efficiency issues for highway traffic. Southbound traffic also slows down on the bridge causing delays to through traffic. Moving the intersection to the south, further away from the bridge, will allow for increased capacity, traffic efficiency and safety by enabling motorists to access two southbound lanes. Traffic lights will also remove the safety issues associated with traffic turning across the highway at Moorong Street at this location.

Traffic lights will also improve traffic flow from central Wagga to the growing northern suburbs and would prevent the current roundabout reaching predicted capacity within a few years. Relocating the intersection

further south would mean it would be easier to accommodate a possible duplication of Gobba Bridge in the future.

#### How much will the project cost?

The NSW Government has committed \$30 million towards upgrading the two Olympic Highway intersections and widening the Sturt Highway at Marshalls Creek Bridge in Wagga Wagga.

#### How did we consult with Wagga Wagga City Council?

Wagga Wagga City Council is a key stakeholder in the Olympic Highway intersection upgrades project and we have met with them numerous times throughout the project's development.

Council staff participated in Safety, Constructability and Value Management Workshops, serving as stakeholders, knowledge experts and community representatives. Transport for NSW will continue to discuss the proposed project with Council to ensure any changes align with Council's Integrated Transport Strategy and Wagga Wagga's wider transport landscape.

All other businesses and residents near the intersection will continue to be contacted throughout the various stages of the project.

#### Is this upgrade part of the northern link road proposed in the Wagga Wagga Transport Plan?

The Olympic Highway intersection upgrades is a separate project to the northern bypass link that was proposed in the draft Wagga Wagga Transport Plan that was released earlier this year.

Transport is currently carrying out a strategic study of arterial road corridors in North Wagga Wagga in relation to a proposed northern link road that will be completed in 2022.

#### Will the upgrades include access for pedestrian access on Gobbagombalin Bridge?

At present there are no active transport plans for the Gobbagombalin Bridge as part of the Olympic Highway intersection upgrades at Old Narrandera Road and Travers Street.

The upgrades will complement existing active transport access around Gobbagombalin Bridge which is managed by Wagga Wagga City Council.

Cyclists are permitted on the Gobbagombalin Bridge and pedestrians can currently access the northern suburbs of Wagga via the Wiradjuri Bridge on Hampden Avenue and the shared travel path on Wall Street, Gardiner Street and Boorooma Street.

#### What measures are we putting in place to protect children's safety in regards to the changed school bus route along Moorong Street?

Transport for NSW will liaise with the appropriate school bus operator about any impacts to school bus stops and make alternative arrangements as required.

These measures may include additional school children warning signs or adjustments to parking areas as needed. We will continue to liaise with stakeholders and the community to ensure that any changes to school bus services on Moorong Street is done safely.