



Engagement report: Royal National Park road and safety upgrades

Submissions, responses and decision

Transport for NSW | May 2020

In April 2020, Transport for NSW called for public comment on a three stage program of road and safety upgrades in the Royal National Park. This report summarises community submissions and Transport for NSW responses.

About the proposal

On 1 April 2020, Transport for NSW called for comment on a three-stage road maintenance program in the Royal National Park, originally scheduled from May to late-2020. The distribution put particular focus on those most likely affected by the work – the residents and businesses in Bundeena and Maianbar.

The engagement notification gave a description of and called for community comment on each stage of the program, as proposed at the time of publication:

- **Stage 1:** culvert repair and replacement on Sir Bertram Stevens Drive, involving overnight road closures (with detours) for up to 16 night shifts over a two month period from May to June 2020
- **Stage 2:** slope rehabilitation on McKell Avenue, involving 15 day shifts (single lane closures) and 25 night shifts (with overnight road closures and detours) over a 16 week period from 1 July to 16 October 2020
- **Stage 3:** the replacement of the Flat Rock Creek bridge on Sir Bertram Stevens Drive, involving 40 shifts over a 10-week period and requiring the full closure of the road for the duration of work

In all, comment was received from **22 individuals and organisations**. A summary of submissions and Transport for NSW responses is included overleaf. We're grateful to respondents for taking the time to provide their views. Transport for NSW has responded in writing to each submission.

The most common theme was a call for Transport for NSW to replace Flat Rock Creek Bridge earlier in the program. Respondents cited as reasons the coronavirus pandemic and the NSW Government's stay-at-home direction; fewer visitors on the Park's roads; and the cumulative economic impacts on local businesses of the pandemic and the summer bushfire season.

Decision

Transport for NSW is looking at ways to begin the bridge replacement in July, ahead of the busier spring and summer months and, hopefully, as coronavirus restrictions on personal movement ease over time.

Many of the replacement bridge's parts are coming from overseas. Delivery of these parts might be affected by disruptions to international supply chains caused by the coronavirus pandemic.

The staging of the bridge replacement is contingent on the parts' timely delivery and completion of the final design.

Transport for NSW is also working with its contractor to try and reduce the duration of the stage (and the full road closure).

More information on the staging of our work will be available in the coming weeks. People are encouraged to visit the project webpage (nswroads.work/RNPupgrades) or request email updates using the contact details below.

Issues out of scope

Many respondents offered comments about issues beyond the scope of the consultation document. These issues included:

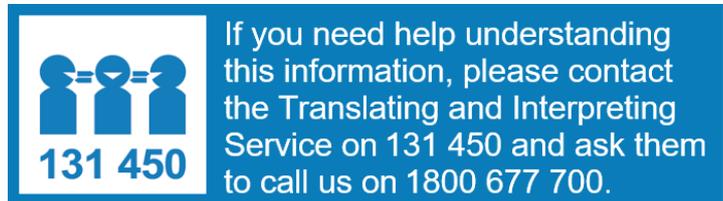
- flooding at Audley Weir
- the condition of the road and road surfaces at other locations within the park
- overgrown vegetation
- management jurisdiction over the Park's roads

These elements are not included in the summary of responses, which is limited to matters relating to the three proposed stages. However, comments on matters out of scope have been forwarded to Transport for NSW Network and Safety Services and Sydney Maintenance divisions for consideration.

Community feedback forms a vital source of information for planning and we thank respondents for their views.

Contact us/future updates

If you have any questions about this report, would like to receive future email updates about the program of work, or require more information, please contact us via our delivery partner, Ventia Boral Amey Joint Venture, by telephone on **1800 677 700** or by email at nswenquiries@vbajv.nsw.gov.au.



Updates will also be published on the project webpage: nswroads.work/RNPupgrades.

Community submissions and Transport for NSW responses in summary

The table below quotes individual, de-identified submissions on the main themes raised in community's responses. As this is a program of essential road maintenance, there are few options to vary the type of work required or its impacts. Our engagement was conducted to advise of the more disruptive aspects of the work (namely full or partial road closures and detours), to determine how these might affect the community and to seek input on the timing of each stage.

Therefore, this report does not provide an exhaustive list of submissions. Comments have been selected both as representative of community sentiment and/or as raising specific matters for our consideration. Also, as noted above, this table does not include comments on matters outside of the three proposed stages.

(To protect individuals' privacy, we've avoided reproducing comments or parts of comments that might identify the respondent. Some comments have been edited for length. Every effort has been made to maintain the author's original intention.)

Theme	Transport for NSW response
<p>Flat Rock Creek Bridge replacement stage:</p> <p><i>“Replacing Flat Rock Creek Bridge first would mean less disruption later in the year when hopefully life returns to normal, people return to work and local business owners are back in operation.”</i></p> <p><i>“[M]y feedback is that Stage 3 should be the first stage commenced.”</i></p> <p><i>“If the closure and upgrade could be done while Bundeena (and the rest of Sydney) is in isolation, then it would not be an issue.”</i></p> <p><i>“... the need to replace Flat Rock Creek Bridge is not disputed. However, a further 10 week closure of our main access road to the outside world is likely to have a disastrous effect on our local economy and we will be pressing strongly for solutions which will minimise both the period of the closure and its impact on visitor numbers... Given the beginning of the quieter winter period and the current restrictions on movement due to COVID-19, the next few months present a unique opportunity to complete the necessary works with a minimum of disruption.”</i></p> <p><i>“... closing Sir Bertram Stevens Drive for ten weeks would impact the least amount of people ... if the work was to be undertaken whilst these [coronavirus shutdown] measures are in place.”</i></p> <p><i>“If [the bridge replacement] could be brought forward from ‘later in 2020’ we, the park residents, would be very grateful.”</i></p> <p><i>“... the most concerning [part of the proposal] is Stage 3 requiring total road closure over 10 weeks ‘later in 2020’. It is to be hoped that later in 2020 is just when people will be trying to get back to normal economic activities, work, school etc, so that would be terrible timing. Assuming it is not possible to begin Stage 3 of the work now, while there is very much reduced travel through the RNP, it would make sense to delay it until 2021</i></p>	<p>We’ve had a big response from the community, with most submissions calling on us to bring forward the bridge replacement work. So, we’re going to try and do that. Some important parts of the bridge are coming from overseas, so we won’t be in a position to start this work in May. Also, there’s a chance delivery of the parts might be affected by the coronavirus pandemic, which has disrupted international supply chains.</p> <p>We should have a clearer picture on this in the coming weeks and we’ll keep the public up to date, accordingly.</p> <p>If delivery comes on time and we can complete the necessary design work, we’ll aim to start the bridge replacement in July, as the project’s second stage. This will help ensure the bridge is finished ahead of the busier spring and summer months.</p> <p>In the meantime, we’ll keep the public informed.</p>

<p><i>when we hope that social and economic activity will be more settled.”</i></p> <p><i>“The sooner the [bridge replacement] works proposed are undertaken, the better.”</i></p>	
<p>Impact on local businesses:</p> <p><i>“... [It] would be of more benefit to the people and businesses of Bundeena/Maianbar to have the road closure happen at the least inconvenient time. We are hoping, along with the rest of the world, that we may be able to return to normal activities, work etc, within a few months. That being the case, it would be a relief to know we do not have to experience added stress and delays when that happens... As a local business owner and parent, it would certainly make my life easier to have that out of the way first. I'd also like to say that my family and I are very pleased that this work is being undertaken, it has been needed for a long time.”</i></p> <p><i>“We do understand the Bridge does need replaced but doing it at that time [later in 2020] has not taken in any consideration of the small Business of Bundeena... Our suggestion would be to do the bridge either first or second stage through the 2020 winter period so it can be opened by the next spring/summer period...”</i></p> <p><i>“[Leaving the bridge replacement] to 'later in the year' would be absolutely devastating for Bundeena and Maianbar business owners already suffering huge impacts because of this summer's bushfire danger and COVID restrictions. It would also create further unnecessary stress for people returning to work outside the park. Please make Flat Rock Creek Bridge replacement project the first priority ...”</i></p>	
<p>Personal financial and time costs of road closure to Bundeena and Maianbar residents:</p> <p><i>“If the weather is bad works will be pushed back and it will be longer than 10 weeks. Travelling via McKell Avenue is an additional 30kms each day, which is an extra 180 per week and 1800 over a 10 week period. Is there any</i></p>	<p>With regard to the closure of Sir Bertram Stevens Drive, the consultation notification said we were anticipating work would take about ten weeks to complete. We're continuing to look at how we might shorten this timeframe. We'll know more when the full structure has arrived and we can complete the final design.</p>

<p>suggestion/recommendation on compensating us for this huge inconvenience, greater wear and tear in our vehicles and the additional fuel?”</p> <p>“I am concerned about the time it is going to take to complete this task. ... With a job that is going to adversely affect 2 suburbs I would have hoped that you would have rostered workers on over a 6 or 7 day week, or as in the case of the other two stages why not have some overnight shifts to complete the works as quickly as possible. Over a 10 week period the residents of Bundeena and Maianbar would be forced to travel an extra 1500 km to go to work (30km per return journey). With public transport not an option for many local residents this will be a massive inconvenience not only with the amount of extra km to travel but also in the time involved. This will increase if we have any adverse weather conditions.”</p>	
<p>Width of the replacement bridge:</p> <p>“The traffic lanes in both directions on the existing bridge are rather narrow and sometimes it is rather disconcerting when driving on the bridge and there is a vehicle travelling on the bridge in the opposite direction, particularly if [it’s] a van, truck or even a tradie’s large utility. There have been many accidents on the bridge... We certainly hope that the new bridge will have wider traffic lanes in both directions as this would reduce the risk of future vehicle collisions.”</p> <p>“[The existing bridge] is narrow, which causes problem when large trucks coming into Bundeena use it, as they tend to be over the centre lines, which necessitates caution when approaching the bridge.”</p>	<p>Transport for NSW can advise the replacement bridge will be two-metres wider than the current structure, which was built in 1945. This will allow extra space for all users.</p>



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