

# **Community Consultation Report**

Alfords Point Road Southern Approach Georges River to Brushwood Drive

**DECEMBER 2012** 

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#### 1. Background

Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) is currently investigating the upgrade of Alfords Point Road between the Georges River and Brushwood Drive at Illawong (Alfords Point Road Southern Approach project) to help improve traffic flow and road safety in the road corridor.

Earlier work completed by RMS to upgrade the corridor includes the duplication of Alfords Point Bridge in 2008 and the opening of Alfords Point Road Northern Approach project in late 2011. Minor works will continue until the end of 2012 to complete noise walls and landscaping for the Northern Approach.

The preliminary investigations during 2012 for the Alfords Point Road Southern Approach project (APRSA) involved undertaking ground surveys, geotechnical investigations, flora and fauna studies, noise monitoring, examination of heritage and assessment of Aboriginal cultural significance issues.

The project proposes to:

- Widen Alfords Point Road between the Georges River and Brushwood Drive from two lanes to three lanes in each direction.
- Improve traffic flow to and from Brushwood Drive on and off ramps using the new lanes.
- Install a central barrier to improve safety by dividing the northbound and southbound carriageways.
- Relocate the northbound bus bay at the Alfords Point Road on-ramp near Eucalyptus Street, to a location approximately 100 metres to the south.
- Construct a new road surface and improved drainage system.
- Install a new breakdown bay along the southbound carriageway located approximately mid way between the Georges River and Brushwood Drive.
- Relocate the formal truck inspection area along the southbound carriageway to beneath Old Illawarra Road bridge, approximately 900 metres south of Brushwood Drive.
- Realign the pedestrian path on the eastern side of Alfords Point Road.
- Make adjustments to existing noise wall and, where required, provide new noise walls and/or architectural treatments to address existing acute noise.

#### 2. Purpose of consultation

RMS undertook consultation activities during July and August 2012 on the preliminary concept design for the upgrade of Alfords Point Road to:

- Seek comment, feedback, ideas, and suggestions from the community for RMS to consider when developing the proposal.
- Build a database of interested and concerned community members who RMS can further involve in project planning work.

#### 3. Method of consultation

Local media Newspaper advertisements

- St George and Sutherland Shire Leader 26 July and 2 August 2012
- Bankstown Torch 25 July and 1 August 2012

Community update newsletter

- Delivered to residents in Alfords Point, Menai and Illawong on 25-26 July 2012.
- Additional 300 newsletters delivered to Illawong peninsula on 3 August 2012.

Webpage

 Project webpage updated 26 July 2012 with latest project information including community update newsletter.

Information sessions

- Shopping centre displays held at Menai Marketplace on Thursday 26 July and Thursday 2 August from 3pm to 7pm. A total of 120 people visited these RMS staffed displays.
- Information session held at Menai Community Centre on Saturday 4 August from 10am to 1pm in conjunction with Bangor Bypass noise wall project team. 19 people visited.

Static poster display

 Project posters were on display during the comment period at Sutherland and Menai Libraries and Padstow Motor Registry.

Stakeholder briefings

- Sutherland Shire Council
- Office of Environment and Heritage NSW
- Department of Planning and Infrastructure NSW
- Department of Primary Industries Fisheries NSW
- Heritage Council of NSW
- Department of Sustainability, Environment,
   Population and Communities (Commonwealth)
- Gandangara Local Aboriginal Land Council

Community members were encouraged to provide their feedback, leave comments and make submissions at the information sessions or via mail, email or phone contact with the project manager.

#### 4. Review of community comments and feedback

#### Issue

# Traffic congestion

#### **Summary of community comment**

 Widening will only move the bottle neck south on Alfords Point Road where it will still only be two lanes.

#### Road safety

 New central barrier is a good safety measure given the road width and the speed limit.

#### Noise

#### Noise wall location - Alfords Point side / western side

 Either a noise mound or wall will block the distant city view from homes in Alfords Point (and affect property values).

#### Noise wall location - Illawong side / eastern side

- There is not an existing noise barrier on eastern side between Old Illawarra Road South bound off ramp and Menai Road intersection. Concerns noise will increase if noise barrier is not implemented.
- Sound barriers are required for both sides of the road.
- Illawong side of Alfords Point Road from the truck parking area to the Brushwood Drive off ramp needs a noise wall.
- Plant copious numbers of trees/shrubs along the corridor (especially between Maxwell Close and Fowler Road). 15 metres high and dense species will also help prevent graffiti on private fences.
- Trees removed from Brushwood Drive off ramp to build the cycle path would create noise impacts for the Thomas Mitchell nursing home.

- Widening Alfords Point Road to three lanes northbound will allow traffic to flow more smoothly due to additional capacity for traffic entering the road to merge.
- Three lanes southbound will provide a dedicated exit ramp to Brushwood Drive, allowing two lanes traffic on Alfords Point Road to flow freely past the exit.
- For these reasons, traffic is not expected to queue as much, reducing the bottle neck.
- Traffic modelling shows also that less vehicles use Alfords Point Road south of Brushwood Drive.
- Noted.
- It is RMS' responsibility to treat noise impacts resulting from the project appropriately. Consultation would occur with the directly impacted property owners and urban design would be considered in the design of any noise walls.
- Noise investigation work will be completed in the first half of 2013. Detailed design of the project will further consider which noise mitigation measures are feasible and reasonable for both sides of Alfords Point Road.
- Urban design investigations are underway to assess where landscaping (like trees) and structures (such as noise walls) could work together to address noise and visual issues along the project.

#### <u>Issue</u> Noise

#### **Summary of community comment**

#### Noise wall construction / design

- Ensure the noise wall construction and design does not interfere with drainage behind homes.
- Ensure the noise wall allows access for the fire brigade in case of bush fires.
- Do not put up any new noise walls unless they are 100% graffiti proof.
- Noise walls will shadow homes and gardens from sunshine.
- Trees need to camouflage the noise walls on the residential side.

#### **Architectural treatment**

- Architectural treatment is not suitable how do residents get fresh air in their homes?
- Double glazing homes is better as noise walls will stop access for fire brigades to bush areas. Noise walls would leave gaps for fire access and therefore not stop noise.

#### Other noise mitigation options

- Use natural bush noise reduction hump instead of an unnatural noise barrier. Will eliminate graffiti.
- Noise wall is a must for homes level with the road. Noise seems to echo to homes below the road level and a new wall for that area is not going to alleviate much. Double glazing is therefore needed.
- Consider all double storey houses as well when looking at noise issues.

- A drainage investigation is being undertaken for this project. This investigation would address potential impacts from the project, including the impact of noise walls if they were proposed.
- Further consultation will be undertaken with Fire and Rescue NSW and the NSW Rural Fire Brigade to gain their assistance in planning access.
- Should noise walls be required the design of the walls would consider potential graffiti deterrence.
- The potential impact of noise walls shadowing houses and gardens would be considered during design of the walls and the selection of materials to construct the wall.
- A landscape design would be prepared at the detailed design stage and would determine the plantings required including consideration of visual impacts and maintenance requirements.
- Should architectural treatments be recommended after further noise investigations, RMS is required to provide fresh air ventilation systems that meet Building Code of Australia requirements with the windows and doors shut.
- Further noise investigation will determine the most appropriate noise mitigation approach along Alfords Point Road, taking emergency access into consideration.
- Urban design investigations are underway to assess where landscaping and structures (such as noise walls) could work together to treat noise impacts.
- Noise investigations will be completed in the first half of 2013.
  Detailed design will further consider which noise mitigation
  measures are feasible and reasonable. The results of the noise
  assessment and proposed treatment strategy would be
  discussed with affected property owners.
- Further investigations into noise mitigation are underway. Both single and double storey homes are considered in noise investigation studies.

#### <u>Issue</u> Noise

#### **Summary of community comment**

#### Truck noise

- Trucks powering up the hills and using exhaust brakes on either side of Alfords Point Bridge during the night is very loud – idea to install warning signs.
- Signs to minimise loud exhaust truck brakes are needed at both the northern and southern approaches to Alfords Point Bridge.

## Road maintenance

- Regular trimming of trees at the Brushwood Drive off ramp / Old Illawarra Road roundabout is important for clear sightlines and safety.
- Why wasn't the asphalt on the 1950s Alfords Point Bridge replaced with the rest of the work? Will this proposal replace the old asphalt?

#### Road design

- Additional/improved lighting is needed for improved safety of vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists.
- Ensure outside shoulder is wide enough so as not to compromise safety by limiting space between vehicles (wide lanes and wide shoulder needed).
- Remove the current traffic island at Brushwood Drive on ramp to Alfords Point Road and replace it with a roundabout. Removes the 'give way' arrangement where there are frequent crashes. New intersection can keep the left slip lane for vehicles leaving Alfords Point.

- As Alfords Point Road is an important heavy vehicle route, noise reduction signs will be considered as part of the Alfords Point Road Southern Approach upgrade.
- Noise generated from truck operations will be reduced with the removal of the informal truck parking area.
- Comments about tree trimming are noted and have been forwarded to RMS maintenance teams.
- Road work like the replacement of asphalt on state roads is scheduled with funding allocations on a priority needs basis across NSW. It is based on road strength and condition of the road pavement surface.
- The proposed upgrade will provide a new asphalt pavement surface between the southern side of Alfords Point Bridge and Brushwood Drive (including the on and off ramps).
- Lighting requirements for the project have been assessed based on RMS policies and guidelines. New street lighting would be provided for the on and off ramps to Brushwood Drive for safety reasons. No street lighting would be provided for the rest of Alfords Point Road or for the shared use path.
- The proposed lane widths are 3.3 metres, the proposed shoulder width is 2.5 metres, complying with Austroads Guidelines and RMS design standards.
- RMS will investigate options to make the intersection at Brushwood Drive safer, although crash data investigations are inconclusive. Further traffic modelling work will be undertaken as part of the review of environmental factors (REF).

#### Issue

#### Northern Approach project

#### **Summary of community comment**

- Unfinished works on northern exit to Clancy Street (safety issue and an eye-sore).
- Traffic lights at Clancy Street off ramp need phasing adjusted – traffic queues on Alfords Point Bridge in the mornings.

#### **Bus stop**

#### Safety

- A pedestrian fence is needed for safety near the bus stop.
- Current bus stop location is unsafe for buses (due to their slow speed).
- Safety issue where pedestrians walk down the road of the Brushwood Drive / Alfords Point on ramp to reach the bus stop – instead of via Eucalyptus Street.

#### **Privacy**

- Privacy behind homes where the bus stop is currently located and where the new bus stop is proposed.
- Bus stop behind homes will increase noise for residents bus engine and braking noise.
- Rubbish thrown over fences from bus stop / Alfords Point Road.

#### **Proposed location**

- Moving the bus stop means trees will be removed from behind homes.
- Moving the bus stop means an increase in pollution for homes nearby.
- New location 100 metres towards Brushwood Drive is not safer as vehicles still need to get around the bus. Better location is 100 metres north of current location.

- Work recommenced in July 2012 to complete the Northern Approach. Up to date information about Alfords Point Northern Approach is available on RMS's website www.rms.nsw.gov.au/roadprojects.
- Comments about Clancy Street traffic lights have been forwarded to the RMS traffic team for investigation and treatment.
- The suggestion for pedestrian fencing will be investigated.
- It is acknowledged that the current bus stop location is not suitable as buses need to merge with high-speed traffic and vehicles need to slow suddenly for buses.
- Pedestrians would be encouraged to access the northbound bus stop through Eucalyptus Street.
- The proposed new location for the bus stop is not closer to homes. The existing noise wall would be retained in its current position. The proposed relocation of the bus stop is unlikely to reduce current privacy levels or increase the amount of rubbish being thrown.
- Some vegetation would be removed between the road and noise wall.
- The proposed location is not considered to add pollution to the area when operating.
- Other locations for the proposed bus stop were investigated and not considered suitable. Buses would stop within the bus bay/ wide road shoulder of approximately 3.3 metres which would allow other traffic to pass.

#### <u>Issue</u>

**Bus Stop** 

#### **Summary of community comment**

#### Secondary bus stops in area

- Build a secondary bus bay area out of the traffic (use the triangle park area on the brochure) for emergencies where community members could be collected and moved out of the area safely (otherwise people need to climb the rock walls etc to reach the road). Also could use for special events such as a bus stop for Easter Show.
- Additional bus stop on the Eastern side of Alfords Point Road south bound needed. Possibly link the existing pathways near Maxwell Close and the retirement home to provide access. Will provide better access for people near Sylvan Ridge Drive and Heritage Drive.

#### **Bus only lane**

- Will vehicles still be able to turn right from Brushwood Drive onto Alfords Point Road (northbound) or is it a bus only lane?
- Will the access ramp to Alfords Point Road now be restricted to buses? If so, the intersection needs to be changed or a roundabout at Eucalyptus Street to allow traffic to turn around and use the left hand turn (to access the on ramp for Alfords Point Road).

## Pedestrian / cycle paths

- What are the cycleway connections to the new cycleway at Davies Road?
- Why are you digging up and moving the recently built pedestrian/cycle path on the eastern side of Alfords Point Road?
- Eastern cycle path doesn't allow access to Alfords Point.
   A crossing of Alfords Point Road between the Bridge and
   Brushwood Drive is needed. One possible solution is to
   provide a shared pedestrian/cycle bridge over Alfords
   Point Road with a connection close to Marlock Place and
   Stringybark Place (western side) for connection to the
   local road network (diagram in submission).

#### **RMS** response

An additional bus stop is not part of the project proposal.
 Concerns about bush fire and other emergencies in the area would be considered during road planning with the help of State Emergency Services (SES) and NSW Fire and Rescue.

- Vehicles will still be able to turn right from Brushwood Drive onto Alfords Point Road (northbound).
- The ramp will not be restricted to buses. Changes at the intersection would provide safer access for buses to the relocated bus stop.
- Changes at Eucalyptus Street would not be required as the existing access arrangements would remain.
- The project proposal includes work to adjust the existing shared path to match the previous widening work on Alfords Point Road. There is no plan under this project to connect to Davies Road.
- The current shared path built along Alfords Point Road within the project area was constructed as a temporary path, the proposed new path will be concrete pavement in a permanent location.
- A crossing of Alfords Point Road would being considered during the design development.

#### Issue

# Informal truck parking area

#### **Summary of community comment**

- How will the design discourage use of the road way for truck/trailer parking as it's an eye-sore.
- Relocation of the truck parking area will remove a distraction to drivers.
- De-facto parking area generates a lot of noise for residents as trucks park and couple trailers during the night (up to 15 in one night).
- Fuel and oil spills on the ground only add to the bush fire risks in the area.

# Formal truck inspection bay

- Trucks will travel on the local roads when the truck inspection unit is operating. Many trucks will turn off at the Illawong turn off simply to save time even if they aren't overloaded or breaking other regulations.
- RMS to install equipment to monitor and enforce road rules (noisy trucks) in conjunction with existing RMS truck monitoring and enforcement operations – including retraining staff to use sound engineering equipment.

## Electronic message sign

- Find a better location for the electronic message sign perhaps before you cross the Georges Rivers so drivers can divert in other directions.
- Move the electronic sign with traffic alerts before Clancy Street for drivers who are travelling south on Alfords Point Road.

## Local road network

 A lot of the traffic around Brushwood Drive, Old Illawarra Road and Fowler Road areas is due to people dropping kids off to school or going to the shops (sometimes delays back to the high school). It affects people getting to Alfords Point Road to get to work (northbound).

# Additional suggestions out of the project scope

- Should build a northbound exit from Alfords Point Road at Brushwood Drive to allow residents of Alfords Point Road and Illawong to use Southern portion of Alfords Point Road.
- Alfords Point Road left turn slip lane to Menai Road needs

- With the proposed widening of Alfords Point Road there will be no road shoulder available to park trucks and trailers, unless using the break down bay in an emergency.
- The existing temporary heavy vehicle inspection bay would be relocated further south on Alfords Point Road beneath the Old Illawarra Road bridge.
- Trucks are able to use local roads where load limits permit.
   RMS will continue to monitor truck operations on the route, including random and formal inspections.
- RMS enforcement operations will continue on Alfords Point Road with the relocated formal inspection area. RMS officers use a range of equipment to inspect vehicles at formal heavy vehicle inspection stations (HVIS). Roadside inspections include checking noise emission compliance. Driver behaviour regarding braking noise is addressed by NSW Police.
- The electronic sign is placed to give maximum viewing time for drivers. Consideration will be given to additional or alternative locations for electronic signage on Alfords Point Road. Comments have been forwarded to RMS's Intelligent Transport Systems branch that coordinates permanent traffic message signs on RMS state roads.
- The local road usage patterns and observations are noted and have been accounted for in the traffic modelling undertaken during project investigations.
- These suggestions will be noted and forwarded to the responsible area of RMS for action where warranted.
- Suggestions to build additional ramps or widening other roads in the area are outside the scope and extent of investigation work for this project.

#### Issue

#### **Summary of community comment**

to be lengthened.

- Alfords Point Road left turn to Menai Road needs two left turning lanes.
- Consider including on and off ramps to the southern side of Brushwood Drive overpass. There is space/land available.
- Are there any other plans for widening Davies Road from Alma Road to the north to alleviate future traffic congestion associated with this proposal?

#### **Enforcement**

- More police patrols of the area are needed to enforce the 80km/h speed limit (especially outside peak hours).
- Fixed or mobile speed cameras are needed on Alfords Point Road.
- Any method / plans to improve traffic flow are needed in the area.
- Continue NSW Police patrols of the road.

- RMS is committed to delivering road infrastructure in line with the NSW Government's Long Term Transport Master Plan and strategies for Sydney, with funding allocations from Transport for NSW.
- There are no plans to widen Davies Road as part of this project.
- Suggestions and comments regarding police enforcement along the road corridor are noted and will be forwarded to NSW Police through local traffic committee meetings.

#### 5. Issues summary

RMS received 53 comments on the proposal, with 9 showing direct support for the proposal. The project received comments in the form of emails, feedback forms and letters. RMS project staff spoke with 139 community members who visited information displays to ask questions and provide feedback to the team.

Of the 53 comments received from the community, Figure 1 below shows the range of issues highlighted. The issue of possible noise treatments was most cited, followed by the proposed bus stop relocation and operations. The figure below shows the key issues raised as a percentage of the overall feedback.

Issues raised by the community will continue to be recorded and considered by RMS as the proposal progresses.

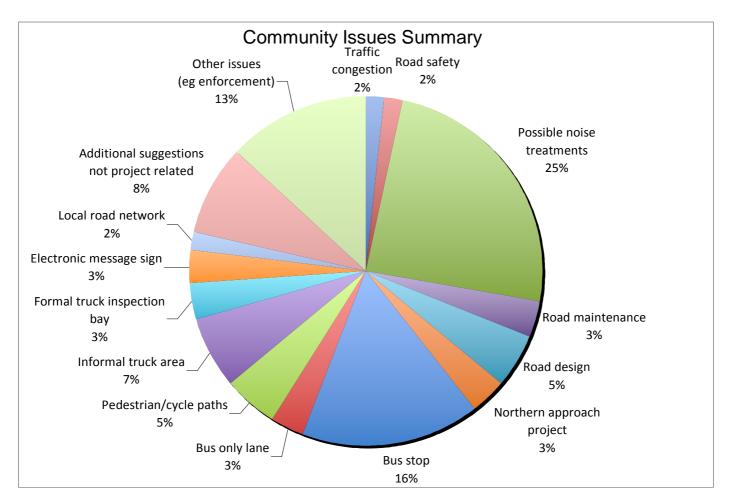


Figure 1 – Range of issues raised by the community.

#### 6. Next steps

Comments and submissions received and summarised in this report will further inform and develop the concept design and environmental impact assessment. Further investigation of the existing and anticipated noise levels may be required for RMS to finalise noise treatment options.

#### Proposed next steps:

- Follow-up meetings to discuss the road concept design with property owners impacted by the proposal. RMS aims to do this by late 2012 prior to writing to affected property owners with specific details.
- On-going meetings with local councils, federal and state government agencies including NSW Fire and Rescue NSW, and with bus operators.
- Finalise the road concept design, including making any amendments as a result of community feedback and environmental assessment.

Further community comment will be sought in the first half of 2013 when the REF and revised concept design for the proposal are displayed.

The community will be kept informed as the project progresses through regular updates on the RMS website.

## Appendix A

#### Delivery area of the community update



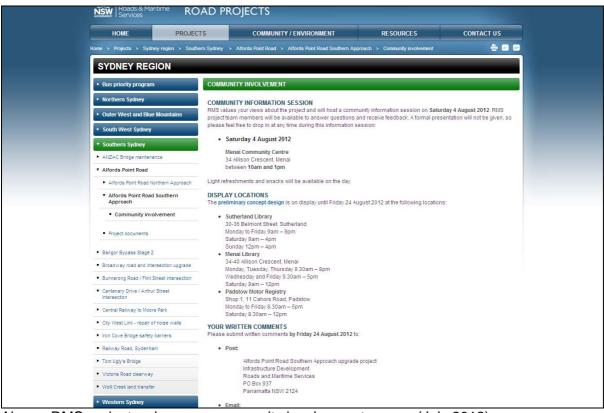
Above: GPS tracking map of hand delivery in Alfords Point, Illawong and Menai.

#### **Appendix B**

#### Project webpage



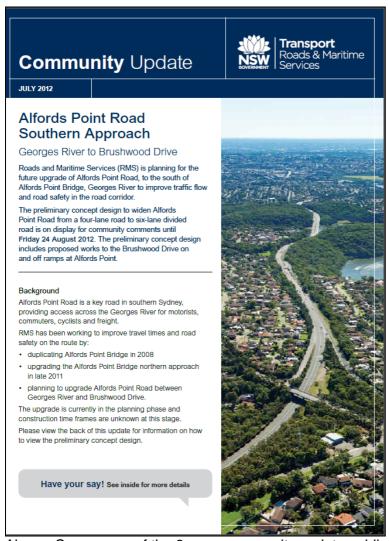
Above: RMS project webpage - main screen (July 2012)



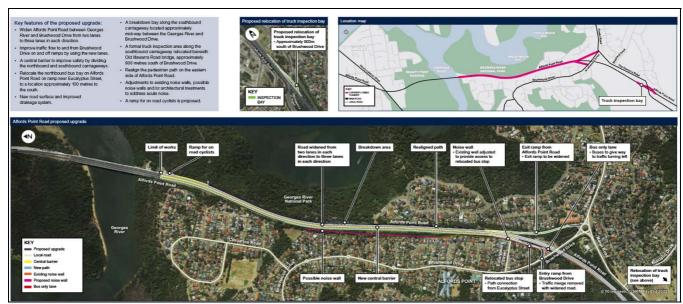
Above: RMS project webpage - community involvement screen (July 2012)

#### **Appendix C**

#### Community update newsletter



Above: Cover page of the 6 page community update public newsletter



Above: Inside 3 page spread of community update public newsletter (July 2012)

## **Appendix D**

## Information session display



Above: Shopping centre display at Menai Marketplace

#### **Appendix E**

#### Newspaper advertisement



Alfords Point Road Southern Approach upgrade – Illawong & Alfords Point display of preliminary concept design

Roads and Maritime Services is seeking community comment on the preliminary design for the **upgrade of Alfords Point Road** between the southern bank of the Georges River and Brushwood Drive at Alfords Point and Illawong. The upgrade aims to improve traffic flow and road safety.

For information on how to give feedback on the preliminary design please visit the project webpage: <a href="https://www.rms.nsw.gov.au/roadprojects">www.rms.nsw.gov.au/roadprojects</a> and navigate to projects in Southern Sydney. A downloadable version of the design is also available online.

You invited to a community information drop-in session on Saturday 4 August 2012 between 10am and 1pm at: Menai Community Centre Hall 34 Allison Crescent, Menai, NSW.

Your feedback is greatly appreciated Please provide your feedback by **Friday 24 August 2012**.

For further information please contact: RMS project manager Kali Gupta during business hours on (02) 8849 2249 or Kali Gupta@rms.nsw.gov.au

For more information visit: www.rms.nsw.gov.au/roadprojects