



Transport for NSW Q&A

18 October 2019

Coonabarabran Bypass

Q. Why is a bypass necessary in Coonabarabran?

The Newell Highway through Coonabarabran has been identified as a pinch point on the network and a bypass is necessary in the future to improve access for high productivity vehicles and to improve safety for all road users.

The existing Newell Highway crosses through the town of Coonabarabran, through high pedestrian areas near shops and school zones. The bypass will not only reduce travel times for all road users, it will remove around 900 heavy vehicles from the town centre to improve safety.

Q. What are the benefits of the bypass?

Benefits of the bypass include:

- Reduced travel time
- Remove around 900 heavy vehicles from the town centre, the majority of which are B-doubles
- Improved motorist and pedestrian safety
- Improved traffic flow in Coonabarabran, particularly east-west travel
- Improved the amenity of the retail district for shoppers, residents and workers
- Reduced heavy vehicle noise and stock-created odour
- Removal of conflicts between local traffic and heavy vehicles
- Reduced maintenance costs and disruption to traffic due to maintenance activities.

Q. How many route options were considered?

Three options were provided for community feedback in May and June 2019. These included upgrading the existing Highway through town and two options to the east of town.

Q: What is the timeline for the project?

Further studies will be carried out and a Review of Environmental Factors (REF) and concept design will be displayed. These are expected to be displayed in mid-2020.

Q. Why was Option 3 selected over the other routes?

The preferred option was selected after extensive community consultation. It is the most direct bypass route for through traffic of the three options displayed to the community.

The preferred option takes the bypass away from town and will affect less property owners than the other two options.

The preferred option will improve safety by removing trucks from the centre of town, while improving access for freight vehicles and reducing travel times for all road users.

Q. What are the next steps in the process?

Now that a preferred route has been selected, Transport for NSW will develop a concept design for the project. Further investigation work will now take place, including: environmental assessments, surveying, geotechnical studies, noise monitoring, and heritage studies.

Transport for NSW will continue to liaise with the community and stakeholders during the planning process to complete a Review of Environmental Factors (REF) and concept design. Once these are completed, they will be displayed and the community will be encouraged to provide feedback. The REF and concept design is expected to be completed and on display in mid-2020.

Q. Did the community have a say in deciding on the preferred option for the bypass?

Three options for the Coonabarabran Bypass were on display between 16 May and 13 June and during this time the community and interested parties were encouraged to have their say on the routes.

During this time, Transport for NSW actively engaged with the community and key stakeholders on the options for the Coonabarabran Bypass.

Four community drop-in sessions were held in Coonabarabran in May 2019 and Transport for NSW liaised directly with potentially impacted property owners throughout the display period.

The community feedback is considered alongside the program objectives in deciding on the preferred route.

Q. How many property acquisitions will be necessary for the bypass?

Transport for NSW has previously identified and contacted properties potentially impacted by each option. Individual meetings will be held with all impacted owners on the preferred route (option 3) and owners on options 1 and 2 will be contacted directly and advised of the preferred option route.

There are a total of 13 properties affected, this equates to two government-owned properties and 11 privately-owned properties.

Q. Why are land acquisitions necessary?

The land acquisitions are necessary to accommodate future development of a new and improved road that bypasses the town of Coonabarabran.

Q. Have landowners who may be subject to acquisitions been contacted?

There has been extensive communication with all owners on all of the proposed routes and with the wider community.

Face to face meetings will be held with all impacted owners on the preferred route prior to or shortly after the announcement of the preferred route.

Q. How are owners subject to acquisitions compensated?

Acquisitions are mandatory, however the Land Acquisition (Just Terms Compensation) Act 1991 encourages authorities to acquire land by negotiated agreement instead of compulsory process. The largest percentage of acquisitions are completed by agreement.

Owners are compensated fairly using the principles laid down in the Land Acquisition (Just Terms Compensation) Act 1991 and taking into account a range of factors including market value.

Q. What is the mix of property types being acquired?

70 % of land acquisitions are Large Lot Residential (R5) and 30% are Primary Production (RU1).

Q. Are there any owners already opposed to the bypass (If so, what is the main objections/opposition to the bypass)?

There is a mix of opposition and support from affected owners. Those opposed are due to individual property impacts and those in favour see the benefits of traffic safety and efficiency, including removing large trucks from town.