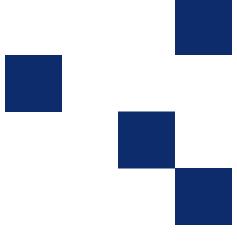


# Prospect Highway upgrade Reservoir Road, Prospect to St Martins Crescent, Blacktown

Access strategy community issues report

**OCTOBER 2013** 

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# 1. Background

Roads and Maritime Services is planning for the upgrade of the Prospect Highway between Reservoir Road, Prospect and St Martins Crescent, Blacktown to meet future traffic demand in the road corridor.

The Prospect Highway (Blacktown Road) between Reservoir Road at Prospect and St Martins Crescent at Blacktown forms the main road corridor connecting the city of Blacktown with the M4 Western Motorway. The upgrade will improve access to Wet and Wild Sydney water theme park development on Reservoir Road and address the expected traffic increase following the opening of Reconciliation Road through to Wetherill Park.

It is proposed to upgrade the corridor to meet future traffic demand, reduce travel times and improve road safety. The upgrade will involve improvements to the existing route of the Prospect Highway. The proposal does not include the Prospect Highway extension through Seven Hills. This may be investigated separately in the future.

Preliminary investigations during 2012 and 2013 for the Prospect Highway upgrade have included development of a strategic concept design and access strategy. The project team is currently developing the concept design and initiating specialist studies including ground surveys, geotechnical investigations, flora and fauna studies, noise monitoring and identification of heritage issues.

Roads and Maritime is currently constructing two projects along the Prospect Highway corridor:

- Upgrade of the intersection of the M4 Western Motorway westbound entry and exit ramps. This work includes a permanent cycle shared path between M4 Western Motorway bridge and Reservoir Road at Prospect. This work started in January 2013 and is scheduled for completion late in 2013, weather permitting. This work is part of the Wet and Wild Sydney development and involves:
  - Upgrading the intersection of the M4 Western Motorway westbound exit and entry ramps at Prospect Highway to traffic lights.
  - Building kerb and gutter to remove the informal truck parking area and improve water drainage.
  - Building a new shared path between the M4 Western Motorway bridge and Reservoir Road for cyclists and pedestrians.
- Construction of a temporary shared path along Prospect Highway at Prospect between Harrod Street and the M4 Western Motorway. This work started in May 2013 and is scheduled for completion in early 2014. This temporary shared path will complete a link in the Blacktown to Prospect Cycleway, creating a safe cycling and walking loop bounded by Bungaribee Road in the north, Prospect Highway in the east and Reservoir Road in the south and west. Work being carried out includes:
  - A temporary path with an asphalt surface which would be replaced with a permanent concrete path when the Prospect Highway is upgraded.
  - Pedestrian activated traffic lights at the Great Western Highway eastbound exit ramp and the M4 Western Motorway eastbound exit ramp.
  - Connection with the shared path currently under construction south of the M4 Western Motorway (see above).

For more information on the M4 westbound entry and exit ramps please visit www.rms.nsw.gov.au/roadprojects/projects/sydney\_region/western\_sydney under

'M4 westbound ramps Prospect' and for bicycle routes around Blacktown and the Sydney metropolitan area, please visit www.bicycleinfo.nsw.gov.au.

# 2. The proposal

The key features of the Prospect Highway upgrade are:

- Upgrading to two lanes in each direction.
- Duplicating the bridges over the M4 Western Motorway and the Great Western Highway.
- Providing a new two way road between the Great Western Highway and the Prospect Highway, with traffic lights at either end of the new road, to improve access.
- Providing new traffic lights at:
  - Stoddart Road.
  - o M4 Western Motorway eastbound entry and exit ramp.
  - o Reservoir Road.
- Changing access arrangements at:
  - o Tudor Avenue.
  - o Roger Place.
  - Vesuvius Street.
  - o Ponds Road.
- Constructing a shared path/cycleway on the western side of Prospect Highway to connect existing paths.
- Improving bus priority.

The primary objective of the proposal is to provide increased capacity in order to cater for forecast transport growth to 2031 on Prospect Highway between Reservoir Road at Prospect and St Martins Crescent at Blacktown.

Other objectives of the upgrade include:

- Improve safety and access for both through and local traffic.
- Improve safety for cyclists and pedestrians by providing an off-road shared path.
- Improve travel times and reduce congestion along the Prospect Highway between Blacktown and the M4 Western Motorway.

# 3. Purpose of consultation

Roads and Maritime carried out consultation activities between March and May 2013. The display of the proposed access strategy for the Prospect Highway upgrade aimed to:

- Seek comment, feedback, ideas, and suggestions from the community for consideration when developing the proposal.
- Build a database of interested and concerned community members who Roads and Maritime can continue to engage with during development of the proposal.

## 4. Method of consultation

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

The community could contact Roads and Maritime and leave comments and submissions by:

- Email ProspectHighway@rms.nsw.gov.au
- Phone 1300 660 275
- Mail Prospect Highway upgrade

Roads and Maritime Services

PO Box 973

Parramatta CBD NSW 2124

Roads and Maritime provided information about the proposed access strategy by producing a diagram (see Appendix A). A dedicated 1300 project phone number was provided for those wishing to make comment. The community were asked to provide comments by 10 May 2013, allowing a six week consultation period.

The community was provided information about the proposed access strategy and where to see it, and invited to comment through:

- Local media newspaper advertisements (see Appendix D):
  - o Blacktown City Sun, 2 April 2013.
  - o Blacktown Advocate, 3 April 2013.
- Media release:
  - Blacktown Advocate, 3 April 2013 (see Appendix F).
- Community update newsletter (see Appendix C):
  - o 4,000 distributed 30-31 March 2013 to local residents (see Appendix E).
  - o 37 mailed and emailed to key stakeholders including government agencies, emergency services, local community groups, schools, transport providers and utility providers.
- Project webpage (see Appendix B) www.rms.nsw.gov.au/roadprojects/projects/sydney\_region/western\_sydney/prosp ect\_highway/index.html
- Stakeholder briefings:
  - o Blacktown City Council, 25 March 2013.
  - Residents of Blacktown & Seven Hills Against Further Traffic, 22 April 2013.

# 5. Review of community comments and feedback

Many community members raised some common issues and these have been summarised below with Roads and Maritime's comments.

Issue	Summary of community comment	Roads and Maritime's comments
Access	Removal of the service road will leave left in/left out access only to property.	The installation of a median along the length of the proposed upgrade would restrict access for properties directly fronting the Prospect Highway to left in/left out. RMS has investigated this issue and has found alternative routes are available through the local road network via intersections with traffic lights at Keyworth Drive and Lancelot Street.
	Keep right out access from Roger Place, during off peak periods.	The access at Roger Place, as shown in the access strategy, is proposed as right in, left in and left out. An alternative option for Roger Place of left in/left out only was considered. Right turn access out of Roger Place was not considered a safe option, and alternative access for right turns from Roger Place can be achieved by using Keyworth Drive and Tudor Avenue.
	Keep right in access to Tudor Avenue with a right turn bay for two cars and clear way across Blacktown Road.	The access for Tudor Avenue, as shown in the access strategy, would be restricted to left in/left out. The access strategy investigations and traffic modelling have indicated the proposed upgrade of Prospect Highway would significantly reduce travel times along the route; and that the savings will offset the slight extra travel distance generated by the turn bans.
	Changes to access will increase travel distance.	Travel distance for some residents would be slightly increased as a result of the proposed access strategy. Access to existing uncontrolled intersections would be restricted to improve road safety and traffic flow. RMS has investigated traffic modelling and alternative routes and has found travel times generated by the turn bans would be offset by reduced travel times along the Prospect Highway. In some cases the proposed improvements are expected to reduce travel times compared to the existing situation despite the access restrictions.

	Will the intersection of Ponds Road and Prospect Highway be upgraded? Currently limited space for turning.	Ponds Road would be restricted to left in/left out as part of the proposal. A new two way road between the Great Western Highway and Prospect Highway is proposed as part of the upgrade to provide access to the Prospect Highway from all directions (in addition to the existing eastbound exit ramp from the Great Western Highway). More details about this new road will be provided when the preliminary concept design is displayed for community comment in October/November 2013.
	How will we access Wet and Wild Sydney?	Access to Wet and Wild Sydney will be from Reservoir Road at Prospect.
Design	How many lanes will there be for regular vehicles and how many lanes for buses?	The proposed upgrade provides two lanes for general traffic northbound and southbound. An additional lane for buses would be provided between Roger Place and Blacktown Road in both directions.
	Too many signalised intersections in the plan.	Additional traffic lights are needed to improve intersection operation and control at the M4 Western Motorway would be provided by converting the existing roundabouts. New traffic lights would also be installed at Stoddart Road to improve road safety and access. Further assessment of the impact of the proposed traffic lights will be carried out in the traffic and transport specialist study which will be commissioned as part of the review of environmental factors.
	There are existing drainage issues on Keyworth Drive/Blacktown Road.	RMS is carrying out drainage and utility investigations as part of the design process. Any drainage issues identified within the project footprint would be addressed as part of the proposed upgrade.
	Will there be a right turn arrow and right turn lane from Blacktown Road into Keyworth Drive?	The traffic lights at Keyworth Drive would be upgraded as part of the proposal. A right turn bay and right turn arrows would be included in the modified traffic lights at Keyworth Drive. More details will be provided when the concept design is displayed for community comment in October/November 2013.

Traffic congestion	Additional traffic lights will interrupt traffic flow.	Traffic lights along the corridor would be coordinated to provide optimal traffic flow along the route. Traffic modelling completed for the access strategy has indicated operation of the existing and proposed traffic lights as a result of the proposal would be better than existing conditions.
	Concerns traffic lights will interrupt traffic that currently flows on the M4 Western Motorway westbound entry ramp.	Traffic lights are under construction at the intersection of the M4 Western Motorway westbound exit ramp and the Prospect Highway for the opening of Wet and Wild Sydney. The site would be further reconstructed as part of the proposed Prospect Highway upgrade. RMS has carried out traffic modelling and assessment of the proposed access strategy and new traffic signals along the corridor. Additional specialist traffic and transport studies will be commissioned as part of the review of environmental factors. Provision of a slip lane with pedestrian activated lights will be considered to allow westbound M4 Western Motorway traffic to bypass the intersection traffic lights.
	Phasing of lights from Harrod Street onto Prospect Highway allows minimal vehicles at a time. Concerned congestion will worsen with the upgrade.	Existing traffic lights will be reviewed and any improvements to their operation would be considered and implemented as part of the proposal, if required.
	Corridor is at capacity during the day, would like existing signal phasing reviewed and updated.	Existing traffic lights would be upgraded as part of the proposal.
Noise/pollution	Upgrade will increase traffic noise and pollution.	Noise impacts resulting from the project will be addressed appropriately. Properties along the corridor already impacted by traffic noise are, and can be, placed on the RMS Noise Abatement Program for investigation and treatment.
	What is being done for residents both within and outside the catchment area regarding noise?	RMS will commission noise specialist studies as part of the review of environmental factors. The noise studies will consider properties directly adjacent to and surrounding the proposal and identify properties that would be further investigated for noise mitigation measures.

	Will residents be given a choice of noise treatments?  Signage on Prospect Highway for brake compression noise	The results of the noise assessment and proposed treatment strategy would be discussed with affected property owners. The detailed design process will consider which noise mitigation measures are feasible and reasonable. Urban design would be considered in the design of any noise mitigation measures.  Requests for signs will be referred to the RMS Environmental
	and load limits.	Section for assessment.
Road safety	Concerns for safety with increased traffic.	RMS is committed to improving road safety. The project objectives are to improve road safety for all road users and to reduce travel times and congestion for motorists, cyclists and heavy vehicles.
Heavy vehicles	What measures are being taken by RMS to deter heavy vehicles avoiding the M7 and instead using Prospect Highway, Leabons Lane and surrounding streets?	The traffic and transport specialist studies will consider the impact of the proposal for trucks using the Prospect Highway and surrounding roads.
	<ul> <li>Concerns about heavy vehicles using corridor to access M2, M7 and Wetherill Park industrial areas, particularly when Reconciliation Road opens.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Suggestions and comments regarding police enforcement along the road corridor are noted and will be forwarded to NSW Police through local traffic committee meetings.</li> </ul>
	Would like truck inspection stations.	A truck inspection facility has not been identified as part of this proposal. The project team is working with the Vehicle Regulation section of RMS on a strategy to identify the need for truck inspection facilities.
Pedestrians and cyclists	Concerns about lack of a safe pedestrian crossing between two bus stops at Roger Place. Suggested pedestrian activated lights and detector.	Pedestrian facilities are provided at the traffic lights at Prospect Highway and St Martins Crescent and Keyworth Drive. Further investigations into bus stop locations and pedestrian access will be carried out as part of the concept design.
	Concerns the cycle path ends at M4 Western Motorway.	RMS is constructing a shared path along the Prospect Highway which will connect to Reservoir Road.
Flora/fauna	Concerned about the forest red gum tree on the eastern side of Prospect Highway near the intersection of Lancelot Street.	The location of this tree is outside the area of road upgrade.  Landscaping and flora along the route will be investigated as part of the review of environmental factors.

Local road network	Issues raised on local roads – Leabons Lane, Ellam Drive, Vesuvius Street, Columbia Road and Tudor Road.  Suggested immediate implementation of a clearway across the intersection of Tudor Avenue to allow access into Tudor Avenue during peak congestion of northbound traffic.  Concerned about impacts on local roads when extension goes	Concerns regarding issues such as load limit signs, traffic calming, local access, and speeding on local roads will be referred to Blacktown Council for consideration and RMS will work with Council to seek a solution to the concerns raised.  Suggestions for immediate implementation of signs and traffic management issues will be forwarded to RMS Traffic Engineering Services for consideration. Tudor Avenue will become left in/left out access only as part of the proposal.  The Prospect Highway extension through to Seven Hills is not part
	in.	of this project and there are no plans to construct this link. This project may be investigated in the future.
Project scope/timeline	Project should cover the whole of Prospect Highway, not be treated in sections.	<ul> <li>The proposed project is for the section of Prospect Highway between Reservoir Road at Prospect and St Martins Crescent at Blacktown.</li> <li>RMS is committed to carrying out a corridor study of the Prospect Highway (including Reconciliation Road) between the M2/Abbott Road intersection (Seven Hills) and Victoria Street (Wetherill Park) after Reconciliation Road opens to traffic. The study will highlight corridor priorities in the short, medium and long term.</li> </ul>
	When will construction start and finish?	<ul> <li>There is no confirmed timetable for construction of the proposed Prospect Highway upgrade. The proposal is in the planning phase.</li> <li>The work being carried out at the intersection of the Prospect Highway and the M4 Western Motorway westbound entry and exit ramps is funded and expected to be completed before the opening of Wet and Wild Sydney.</li> </ul>
Project consultation	It would be preferred that affected residents are directly consulted.	Further community comment will be sought in October/November 2013 when the concept road design for the proposal is displayed to the community. All stakeholders and residents will be given the opportunity to review the proposal and make additional comments at both the concept design and review of environmental factors stages. RMS will consult with directly affected residents.

Property	Concerns about property value decreasing.	If a property is adjacent to a new or upgraded road and would potentially decrease in value, RMS does not provide financial compensation. RMS will identify potential impacts as part of the environmental assessment for the proposal and would seek to avoid or minimise impacts where possible.
	How much, if any, and what land will be acquired for the upgrade? Will the upgrade change address details?	<ul> <li>The road corridor along the Prospect Highway has been identified for the purpose of 'future road upgrade when required', with sections of the corridor being set aside since 1976. The proposal is within the road widening corridor and no private property acquisition has been identified as being required at this stage.</li> <li>The proposed upgrade would not change residents existing address details.</li> <li>If any land acquisition is required RMS will carry out all property valuations and acquisitions in accordance with the RMS Land Acquisition Information Guide (RMS 2012) and the Land Acquisition (Just Terms Compensation) Act 1991.</li> </ul>
Other issues out of project scope	Would like further information about lighting on Great Western Highway ramps.	Concerns about lighting on the Great Western Highway will be referred to RMS Asset for further investigation.
	When will Reconciliation Road open?	The opening of Reconciliation Road is a matter for Holroyd Council. RMS is working with Holroyd Council to finalise and resolve outstanding issues before the road can be opened. RMS will continue to work with Council so the road can be opened.
	There is a crack in the retaining wall on Blacktown Road. Contacted Blacktown Council and RMS.	The concern about the retaining wall has been referred to RMS Asset Management for investigation.

# 6. Issues summary

Roads and Maritime received 47 different comments on the proposal from members of the community who identified as local residents, commuters, business operators, organisations and pedestrians. Issues raised by the community will continue to be recorded and considered by Roads and Maritime Services as the proposal progresses.

During the comment period Roads and Maritime received/held and reviewed:

- 17 emails.
- 26 phone calls.
- 1310 unique visits to the project website.
- Three letters.
- Two face to face discussions.

The most commonly raised concerns from the community were:

- Road noise increases along Prospect Highway.
- Access issues.

An analysis of all the comments received by the project team shows a general understanding for the need for the upgrade and the access strategy proposed.

Suggestions, comments and queries have informed the concept design which is being prepared.

# 7. Next steps

Comments and submissions received and summarised in this report help Roads and Maritime to develop the concept design.

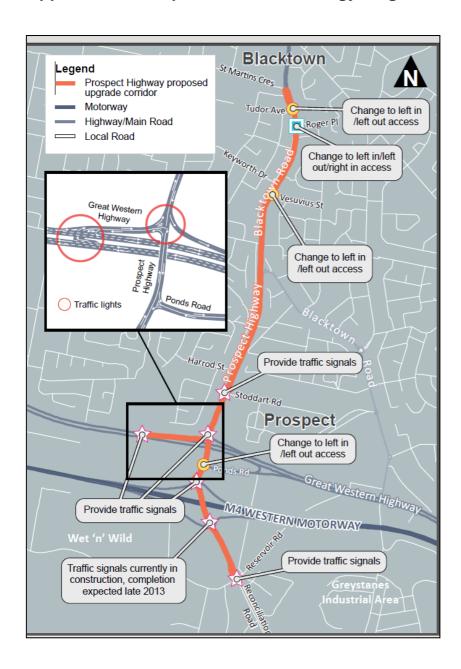
Proposed next steps:

- Continue with the concept design development.
- Prepare a community update to distribute to the community in October 2013 for feedback about the proposed concept design.
- Ongoing meetings with local councils, state government agencies, bus operators and other stakeholders.
- Start specialist studies for noise, traffic utility, drainage, and urban design to inform the environmental assessment for the proposal.

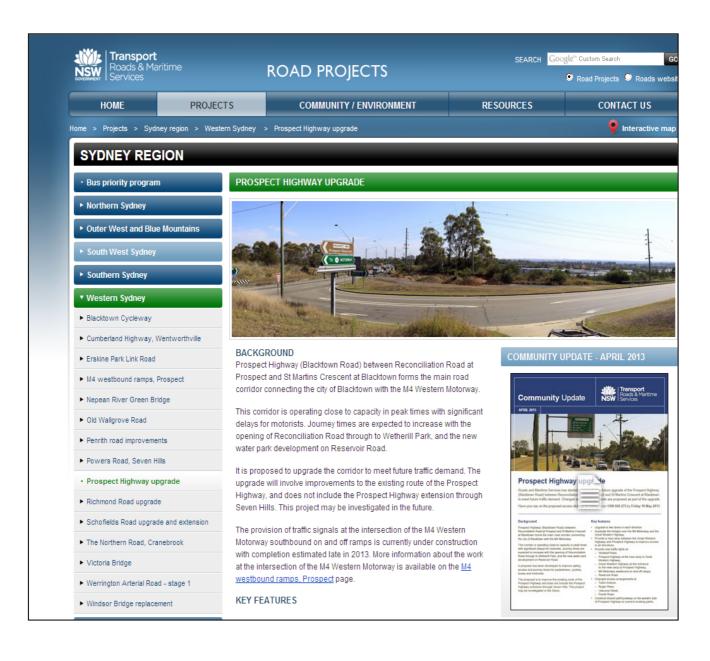
Further community comment will be sought during October/November 2013 when the preliminary concept road design for the proposal and community update are displayed to the community.

The project team will keep the community informed as the project progresses through regular updates on the Roads and Maritime website (www.rms.nsw.gov.au/roadprojects).

# Appendix A – Proposed access strategy diagram



# Appendix B - Project webpage



# **Community** Update





# **Prospect Highway upgrade**

Roads and Maritime Services has started planning for the future upgrade of the Prospect Highway (Blacktown Road) between Reconciliation Road at Prospect and St Martins Crescent at Blacktown to meet future traffic demand. Changed access arrangements are proposed as part of the upgrade.

Have your say on the proposed access strategy by calling us on 1300 660 275 by Friday 10 May 2013.

## **Background**

Prospect Highway (Blacktown Road) between Reconciliation Road at Prospect and St Martins Crescent at Blacktown forms the main road corridor connecting the city of Blacktown with the M4 Motorway.

This corridor is operating close to capacity in peak times with significant delays for motorists. Journey times are expected to increase with the opening of Reconciliation Road through to Wetherill Park, and the new water park development on Reservoir Road.

A proposal has been developed to improve safety, access and journey times for pedestrians, cyclists, buses and motorists.

The proposal is to improve the existing route of the Prospect Highway and does not include the Prospect Highway extension through Seven Hills. This project may be investigated in the future.

# Key features

- Upgrade to two lanes in each direction.
- Duplicate the bridges over the M4 Motorway and the Great Western Highway.
- Provide a new ramp between the Great Western Highway and Prospect Highway to improve access in all directions.
- · Provide new traffic lights at:
  - Stoddart Road,
  - Prospect Highway at the new ramp to Great Western Highway,
  - Great Western Highway at the entrance to the new ramp to Prospect Highway,
  - M4 Motorway eastbound on and off ramps,
  - Reservoir Road.
- · Changed access arrangements at:
  - Tudor Avenue,
  - Roger Place,
  - Vesuvius Street,
  - Ponds Road.
- Construct shared path/cycleway on the western side of Prospect Highway to connect existing paths.

# Proposed access strategy

As part of the upgrade of Prospect Highway to a four lane divided road, the following access arrangements are proposed:

- Tudor Avenue changed to left in/left out access.
- Roger Place changed to left in/left out/right in access.
- · Vesuvius Street changed to left in/left out access
- Ponds Road changed to left in/left out access.
   Access to Prospect Highway northbound would be from the Great Western Highway (see the proposed access strategy diagram).

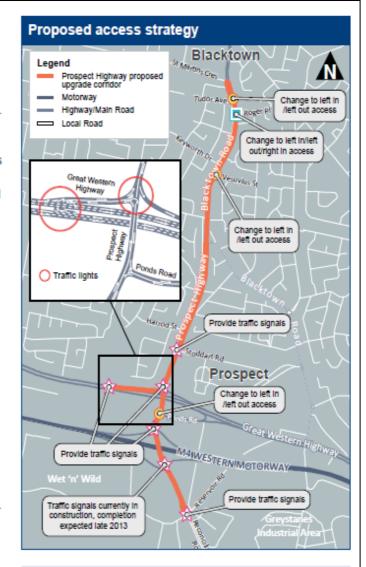
The changes are designed to improve journey times, safety and access for all road users. However, we are aware that the community will be interested and concerned with what the changes could mean for them. If you are potentially affected by the proposed changes, we invite you to contact the project team directly to discuss the proposal. Phone 1300 660 275 or email ProspectHighway@rms.nsw.gov.au by Friday 10 May 2013.

# What happens next?

Community comments on the access strategy will be considered in finalising the preliminary concept design. The preliminary concept design will then be displayed for community comment later in 2013.

The review of environmental factors which documents the likely impacts on the environment and proposed protective measures will be displayed for community comment early in 2014.

If approved, the project will continue to detailed design and construction when funding becomes available. The timing of these activities is unknown at this stage.



### For more information:

There will be more opportunity to comment on the proposal as it progresses. If you would like more information or just want to be kept updated, contact the project team on:

Email ProspectHighway@rms.nsw.gov.au

Call 1300 660 275

Visit www.rms.nsw.gov.au/roadprojects

search 'Prospect Highway upgrade'

Write Prospect Highway upgrade

Roads and Maritime Services

PO Box 973

Parramatta CBD NSW 2124

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RMS 13.218

# Appendix D – Newspaper advertisement



Prospect Highway proposed upgrade – Prospect & Blacktown

Roads and Maritime Services is seeking your comments on the proposed access strategy for the **upgrade of Prospect Highway** (**Blacktown Road**) between Reconciliation Road at Prospect and St Martins Crescent at Blacktown.

The upgrade would provide two lanes in each direction improving road safety, traffic flow and capacity.

As part of the upgrade, changed access arrangements are proposed at:

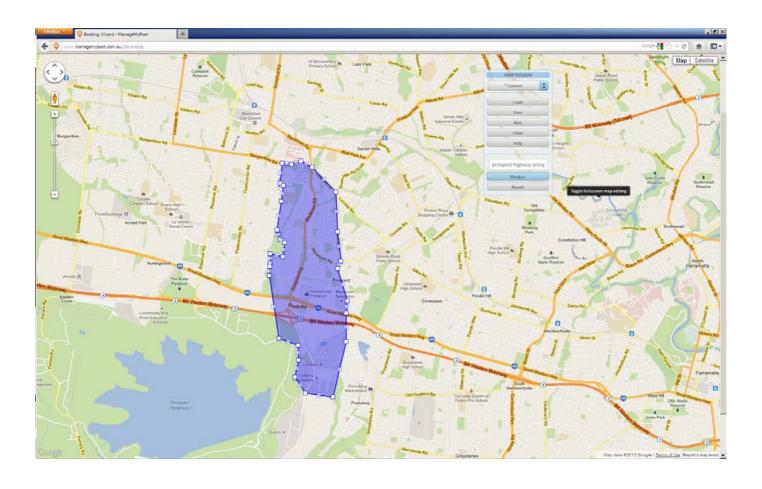
- Tudor Avenue
- Roger Place
- Vesuvius Street
- Stoddart Road
- Ponds Road
- M4 Motorway eastbound on and off ramps
- Reservoir Road

A new ramp with traffic lights will be constructed between the Prospect Highway and Great Western Highway. The traffic lights are at both ends of the ramp (top and bottom), to improve access in all directions.

We appreciate your feedback. Please provide you feedback on the access strategy by Friday 10 May 2013.

For more information call 1300 660 275, email:
ProspectHighway@rms.nsw.gov.au or visit www.rms.nsw.gov.au/roadprojects

# Appendix E – Community update newsletter distribution area



# Appendix F - Newspaper article



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Blacktown Advocate, Sydney 03 Apr 2013

General News, page 9 - 118.00 cm<sup>2</sup> Suburban - circulation 49,788 (--W----)



ID00187889222

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# Upgrade proposed to ease congestion

CONGESTION on the Prospect Highway will be eased if a proposed upgrade of the thoroughfare to four lanes goes ahead.

The Roads and Maritime Services is inviting the community to have its say on a proposed upgrade at Blacktown Rd to improve road safety, traffic flow and capacity.

capacity.

An RMS spokesman said the upgrade between Reservoir Rd at Prospect and St Martins Cres at Blacktown was an important main road corridor connecting Blacktown with the M4 and was already close to capacity in peak times with significant delays for motorists.

"Journey times are expected to increase with the opening of Reconciliation Rd through to Wetherill Park and the Wetn'Wild water park on Reservoir Rd, so improving the road is a priority," the spokesman said.

Community feedback is sought on potential access changes to Tudor Ave, Roger Place, Vesuvius St, Stoddart, Ponds and Reservoir roads and the M4 Motorway eastbound on and off ramps.

A new ramp with traffic lights is also proposed to be built



between the Prospect and Great Western highways to improve access in all directions. Residents will be mailed a copy of the proposal and hard copies are available by phoning the project team on 1300 660 275. Submissions close Friday, May 10 and can be made to ProspectHighway@rms.nsw. gov.au or to RMS Prospect Highway upgrade team, PO Box 973, Parramatta CBD N S W 2124. Visit www.rms.nsw.gov.au/roadprojects for more information.