

Identifying a corridor for the Bells Line of Road – Castlereagh Connection

Transport for NSW | March 2018

What is the Bells Line of Road – Castlereagh Connection corridor?

- Transport for NSW is identifying land for future transport infrastructure to support growth in Western Sydney and the planned Western Sydney Airport, and linking regional NSW with the Sydney motorway network. This corridor of land is known as the Bells Line of Road – Castlereagh Connection.
- The NSW Government is planning for the long term transport needs of Western Sydney by identifying and protecting a corridor of land for a future motorway.
- A recommended corridor has been identified for the Bells Line of Road – Castlereagh Connection to connect Bells Line of Road at Kurrajong Heights and the existing motorway network at the junction of Richmond Road and the M7 Motorway at Colebee. Transport for NSW is now consulting with property owners, community and stakeholders on this area.
- The corridor will be around 150 metres wide depending on landform and expected operational requirements.

Why are we consulting with the community?

- We are inviting landowners, community and stakeholders to provide feedback to help refine the recommended corridor.
- While the land may not be needed for some years, the NSW Government has to plan and protect the corridor to ensure land is available to deliver infrastructure in the future when it is needed.

When will land be acquired for the corridor?

- At this stage Transport for NSW is only identifying and protecting a corridor of land for a future motorway along the Bells Line of Road – Castlereagh Connection.
- There is no intention or need to immediately acquire land or property for the corridor.
- Acquisition normally occurs closer to when the infrastructure is to be built, and this could be years or decades in the future.
- Once the corridor has been protected, existing uses can continue however there is the opportunity for landowners to consider owner initiated early acquisition under the *Land Acquisition (Just Terms Compensation) Act 1991* before the land is needed by the government.

Why do we need to plan for a future motorway?

- The NSW Government is planning for Sydney's future.
- Transport for NSW has identified a recommended corridor of land in collaboration with the Greater Sydney Commission and Department of Planning and Environment to support population, housing and job growth across Western Sydney.
- Over the next 20 years Sydney is expected to grow by more than one million people.
- By 2056, eight million people will call Sydney home, with 725,000 new homes to be built and 817,000 extra jobs generated.
- To meet this growth the NSW Government is identifying and protecting land to build transport infrastructure in the future.
- The future Bells Line of Road – Castlereagh Connection corridor will:
 - Support the residents and businesses of Western Sydney and provide connections with other key centres.
 - Support the road connections within Western Sydney and between regional NSW.

- Provide for interchanges with major roads like the M7 Westlink Motorway, the proposed Outer Sydney Orbital, Richmond Road, The Northern Road and Londonderry Road, Castlereagh Road and Grose Vale Road that will make it easier to move across the wider road network and to access to the Western Sydney Airport via the Outer Sydney Orbital corridor.
- The need to protect the Bells Line of Road – Castlereagh Connection corridor has been identified in a number of government documents such as *Future Transport 2056* (2018), *District Plans* (2018), *Greater Sydney Region Plan* (2018) and *NSW Long Term Transport Masterplan* (2012).

When is the future motorway required?

- Over the next 20 years further detailed design and environmental assessments will be undertaken to allow for a motorway to be built in the Bells Line of Road – Castlereagh Connection corridor when required.
- Transport for NSW will continue to monitor growth and consult with the community and stakeholders as part of the future planning for the motorway corridor.

How will future operational impacts be assessed?

- As part of the corridor identification process, we are consulting with landowners, community and stakeholders on the recommended Bells Line of Road – Castlereagh Connection corridor.
- Feedback from the consultation will help to refine the alignment of the corridor, and inform future technical investigations such as engineering, environmental and land use planning.
- The future infrastructure in the corridor will require detailed environmental assessment and approvals, and consideration of potential impacts prior to construction.

What is corridor protection?

- Corridor protection is a process to identify and protect an area of land for future transport infrastructure. This will ensure that land is available in the future when it is needed.
- The benefit of corridor protection is that landowners, community and stakeholders have certainty of exactly where the motorway will be built in the future. This will allow affected community members, property owners and stakeholders time to explore available options without pressure.

What is the Outer Sydney Orbital corridor?

- The Outer Sydney Orbital corridor is planned to connect the Illawarra with the Central Coast via Western Sydney.
- The corridor would provide for a future motorway and freight rail line.
- At this stage, Transport for NSW is consulting on a recommended Outer Sydney Orbital corridor between Box Hill in the north and the Hume Motorway near Menangle in the south. The recommended corridor will provide for interchange opportunities with the Bells Line of Road – Castlereagh Connection.

How was the recommended corridor for the Bells Line of Road – Castlereagh Connection identified?

- In 2015, we consulted on a study area for the Bells Line of Road – Castlereagh Connection corridor between Kurrajong Heights and the Sydney motorway network near the M7 at Colebee.
- Community feedback has been considered together with key land use and environmental constraints to identify a recommended corridor. The key constraints which inform the corridor planning process include:
 - The integration of land use and transport planning.
 - Land forms, geology and soils.
 - The environment, conservation areas and ecological communities.
 - Watercourses and flooding.
 - Aboriginal and European heritage.
 - Visual and landscape values.
 - Housing, land uses and potential impacts on amenity.
 - Major utility infrastructure such as electricity, water, telecommunications and gas.

Does the recommended corridor provide for an additional river crossing?

- Yes. The recommended Bells Line of Road – Castlereagh Connection corridor crosses the Nepean Hawkesbury River for connections to the Bells Line of Road near Kurrajong Heights.

How will the recommended motorway corridor be protected?

- Following consultation with landowners, community and stakeholders, the final corridor will be recommended to the Department of Planning and Environment for protection.
- If the recommended corridor is accepted for protection, property owners, and stakeholders looking to develop or purchase in the corridor will be alerted to the presence of the planned future transport infrastructure.
- Existing uses of the land will be able to continue until the land is required for the future infrastructure.

What community consultation has taken place?

- Community consultation for the Bells Line of Road – Castlereagh Connection corridor was held between 6 June and 7 August 2015.
- There were six pop-up community information stalls and three community drop-in sessions which resulted in more than 1,200 submissions from the community consultation for the Outer Sydney Orbital and the Bells Line of Road - Castlereagh Connection study areas.
- Local councils, other state government agencies and industry stakeholders have also been consulted.
- The consultation was helpful in identifying issues such as:
 - Environmentally sensitive areas and environmental corridors to enable wildlife movements.
 - Rural amenity and significant heritage areas.
 - Existing housing and established communities.
 - Small scale farming and agricultural lands.
 - Opportunities to use the previously identified Castlereagh Freeway corridor and the Driftway at Londonderry.
- Key feedback was that the community wanted certainty and for the recommended corridor to be identified as soon as possible rather than exhibiting a short list of corridor options.

What feedback can I provide?

- We are inviting landowners, community and stakeholders to provide feedback to help refine the recommended corridor for the Bells Line of Road – Castlereagh Connection.

How can I provide my feedback?

Please provide your comments and feedback:

- Using the interactive online map to see the location of the recommended corridor at transport.nsw.gov.au/corridors
- Email corridors@transport.nsw.gov.au
- Write **Corridor Investigation Office**
Transport for NSW
PO Box K659
Haymarket NSW 1240
- Call **1800 837 511**

Will submissions be made public?

- Following the consultation period, all feedback and submissions may be published on the project webpage transport.nsw.gov.au/corridors
- Please advise us if you don't want your submission to be made public.

What is the process following the consultation period?

- All comments and feedback received will be considered by the project team.
- This feedback together with the outcomes of the technical investigations will help to refine the recommended corridor.
- The final corridor will be recommended to the Department of Planning and Environment for protection.

Are there any biobanking schemes for the corridor identification process?

- The NSW Government is investigating a range of opportunities to address the challenging task of balancing infrastructure planned across Western Sydney with conserving our biodiversity for the future. Discussions are underway to:
 - Establish biobanking sites to improve, maintain or conserve important areas of biodiversity.
 - Confirm biobanking agreements established with land owners who commit to enhancing and protecting important areas of biodiversity.
 - Create biodiversity credits for managing, improving or maintaining environmentally sensitive areas to offset the impact of development on biodiversity.
- As part of this work there will be further opportunities identified to protect our biodiversity for the future. Information about biobanking schemes is available on the Office of Environment and Heritage website at environment.nsw.gov.au/biobanking

Will the Bells Line of Road - Castlereagh Connection use the previously identified Castlereagh Freeway corridor?

- The recommended Bells Line of Road – Castlereagh Connection corridor proposes to partially use the previously identified Castlereagh Freeway corridor between the M7 Motorway and Wianamatta Nature Reserve.
- The remaining Castlereagh Freeway corridor is no longer a feasible option due to the large number of endangered species that are now found within the previously identified Castlereagh Freeway corridor.
- The recommended corridor proceeds along the southern edge of the Cumberland Plain Priority Conservation lands to avoid remnant bushland and endangered wildlife.

Does the recommended corridor impact on the Air Services Site at Shanes Park?

- Transport for NSW has endeavoured to limit encroachment into the bushland at Shanes Park as far as practical, given surrounding land uses.
- The recommended corridor will marginally reduce the area of land previously earmarked by the NSW Government for the creation of a conservation reserve at Shanes Park. It is now proposed to transfer 542 hectares or 97% of the site to the Minister for the Environment to create a conservation reserve with 17 hectares set aside, consistent with long-standing planning schemes for Sydney, to provide for the Bells Line of Road – Castlereagh Connection.
- Transport NSW will be working with the Office of Environment and Heritage to ensure there is biobanking to offset the impact of the future motorway on Cumberland Plain Woodlands. Following the current consultation, a referral is proposed to be made to the Australian Government to confirm approval from the Department of the Environment. Information about the proposal will be placed on the Department of Environment's website.

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