



Nelson Bay Road Upgrade Williamtown to Bobs Farm Duplication

Transport for NSW

December 2020

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Introduction

The Hunter Business Chamber (the Chamber) appreciates the opportunity to provide feedback on the Nelson Bay Road upgrade route options and comment on the project.

The Hunter Business Chamber is the largest regional business Chamber in Australia. We independently represent more than 2,500 member organisations across the Hunter region to all levels of government. The Chamber is the peak business and industry association in the Hunter, reflecting the interests of the region's diverse business sector.

The Chamber has long advocated and championed regional and sub-regional infrastructure projects and appreciates the opportunity to consider and comments on this particular project. The Chamber would like to take this opportunity to;

1. provide general feedback on the project from our perspective and
2. comment based on the feedback we have received from member organisations influenced by the proposal.

Comments

The Chamber is extremely supportive of Transport for NSW's plans and proposals to upgrade important infrastructure links across the Hunter Region including this section of main road.

Not only is Nelson Bay Road the main link servicing the community and businesses of the Tilligerry and Tomaree Peninsulas, in this instance it takes on regional and higher order significance as a consequence of its confluence and proximity to the Newcastle Airport, RAAF Base Williamstown and the emerging Special Activation Precinct (SAP) recently declared in this locality.

It is anticipated that the SAP will generate collaboration across government and make the airport precinct a true global gateway and significant economic driver for the region and the state of NSW. Infrastructure linkages of the future need to recognise, respect and accommodate this and this road is no exception.

It follows that planning and funding for the duplication of Nelson Bay Road should be a high priority project within the region in difference to projects such as the recently proposed Fingal Bay Link Road. The Chamber makes this comment recognising that Transport for NSW and its contractors are not an unlimited resource. We would not like to witness high priority projects such as this stall for the lack of resources to design, procure, manage and build the finally agreed outcome.

We are appreciative that funds are or will be allocated to respective projects however, in view of significant push by all levels of government to focus on infrastructure projects in the Covid environment, resourcing should be allocated and maintained accordingly.

At the local level, we are aware that stakeholders including Newcastle Airport have some concerns in relation to the route options detailed. For a project as significant as this, we believe it is vitally important to as far as practical achieve a consensus among the range of stakeholder groups in the area to ensure the project design achieves the respective objectives of these interests and Transport for NSW.

We have noted the subject section of road will play an important part in the road network linking the Tilligerry and Tomaree peninsulas. It will also accommodate links to the M1, south to Newcastle and north to the growing areas around Medowie. We have no doubt the traffic modelling will highlight the significance of the local and broader network. The importance of this area well into the future can not be overstated. The consideration of the options needs to overtly recognise the bigger picture and ensure the upgraded infrastructure does not reach redundancy in the short term.

Recommendations

We respectfully request that Transport for NSW take the following actions in relation to the project:

1. Ensure the project receives priority in terms of allocation of resources to support the design, procurement, construction and management so that it proceeds as soon as practical;
2. Recognise and acknowledge the regional and broader significance of the project and ensure it can address the needs over the long term.
3. As far as reasonable, accommodate the objectives of respective stakeholders noting the significant impact of road infrastructure in this precinct.

We thank you for the opportunity to comment and welcome further engagement on this submission if required.

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