

SUBJECT: CCL 23/07/24 – ADOPTION OF PUBLIC OUTCOMES - WESTERN CORRIDOR ROAD UPGRADES: TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT ANCILLARY WORKS AND FIXING OF ROAD LEVELS

REPORT BY: CITY INFRASTRUCTURE
CONTACT: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR CITY INFRASTRUCTURE / EXECUTIVE MANAGER PROJECT MANAGEMENT OFFICE

PURPOSE

To approve traffic management ancillary works and fixing of road levels, post public exhibition, to improve traffic flow, reduce congestion, and increase safety for all roads users prior to construction commencing on the Western Corridor Road Upgrades, which consist of two projects, Minmi Road Wallsend and Longworth Avenue Wallsend.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1 Approves the proposed scope of the (Western Corridor) Traffic Management Ancillary Works (TMAW) presented in **Attachment A**, which includes adjustments to the exhibited plans following public exhibition.
- 2 Endorses consultation for the fixing of road levels on Longworth Avenue Wallsend between Newcastle Road and Minmi Road, and at Minmi Road Wallsend between Maryland Drive (east) and west of the Summerhill Road roundabout.
- 3 Authorises the Chief Executive Office to make an Order under Roads Act 1993 Part 3 Division 3 Section 31 to give effect to the changing of road levels in Longworth Avenue Wallsend between Newcastle Road and Minmi Road, and at Minmi Road Wallsend between Maryland Drive (east) and west of the Summerhill Road roundabout, with a notice to be published in NSW Government Gazette and local newspaper.

KEY ISSUES

- 4 The construction of Longworth Avenue Wallsend requires vehicles to utilise the adjacent road network for long periods during construction. Therefore, adjustments to the adjacent network are necessary to minimise traffic delays and improve safety.
- 5 To minimise traffic delays and constriction of traffic, the westbound right-turn lanes into Minmi Road requires extension, which requires alterations at the existing intersection of Nash Street and Cameron Street. The connection of Nash Street to Stapelton Street allows the closing of three of the four movements at the intersection while still providing access to the Wallsend Health Campus.

- 6 The existing Tillie Street cycleway crossing on the northern side of Cameron Street is compromised and is necessary to remove, considering the additional traffic during construction. An alternate route for the cycleway along the southern side of Cameron Street to Nash Street, and on-road along Stapleton Street provides safer amenity by eliminating the conflict.
- 7 Amendments have been made to the Traffic Management Ancillary Works exhibited plans as shown in **Attachment A** to accommodate the following community, internal and external feedback outlined in the Engagement Report (see **Attachment C**):
 - i. Maintain the left-out exit for all vehicles from Nash Street (northbound) to Cameron Street (westbound). Maintain the proposed closure of existing movements of left-in, right-in and right-out of Nash Street are maintained.
 - ii. Shift the shared path along Cameron Street, west of the existing Nash Street intersection closer to private property and include parking bays on the verge.
 - iii. Shift the relocated bus stop on Cameron Street further west to the eastern corner of Neals Park to minimise impact on parking for private dwellings with a footpath connection to Nash Street.
 - iv. Extend the shared path to the western side of Nash Street to provide off-road, safer connectivity for cyclists who use currently use Stapleton Street.
 - v. Include a cycle lantern on the eastern leg of the Longworth Avenue, Cameron Street, Cowper Street intersection signals to connect with the proposed shared path to the south side of Cameron Street.
 - vi. At the north-east corner of Stapleton and Douglas Street intersection, shift the shared path off-road onto the footway with ramps as exhibited on the northwest corner.
- 8 The TMAW must be implemented prior to the commencement of construction of the Longworth Avenue upgrade project which is scheduled to commence in early 2025.
- 9 The Minmi Road Wallsend and Longworth Avenue Wallsend upgrades require changes to road levels adjoining existing properties due to the widening and provision of additional traffic lanes. Public notification and exhibition were completed 31 May to 1 July 2024.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

- 10 The TMAW are valued at approximately \$2 million. The works will be funded through the Road Rehabilitation Program in the capital works program.
- 11 The Minmi Road and Longworth Avenue Wallsend Road Upgrades received \$7,607,400 in Grant funding from the Department of Planning and Environment under the Accelerated Infrastructure Fund - Round 3 for completion of works by 30 June 2026.

NEWCASTLE 2040 ALIGNMENT

- 12 The Western Corridor Road Upgrades and TMAW are consistent with the strategic directions of the Newcastle 2040 Community Strategic Plan.

Liveable

- 1.2 Connected and fair communities
 - 1.2.1 Connected communities
- 1.3 Safe, active and linked movements across the city
 - 1.3.1 Connected cycleways and pedestrian networks
 - 1.3.2 Road networks
 - 1.3.3 Managed parking

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN/IMPLICATIONS

- 13 The proposed Minmi Road and Longworth Avenue projects change road levels. The Roads Act 1993 Part 3 Division 3 Section 29 requires Road Authorities to exhibit and place notice and signage advising of proposals to change road levels at properties adjoining public roads to allow owners to make submissions. This process was completed with exhibition through July 2024. Discussions and meetings were held with relevant landowners however no submissions were received.

RISK ASSESSMENT AND MITIGATION

- 14 The TMAW mitigates the risks of traffic constriction within the adjacent road network during construction. The proposed measures have been developed and validated through traffic modelling demonstrating a positive impact both during and post-construction.
- 15 Project specific risks, mitigations and control measures have been considered and identified in respective project management plans, and the proposed works will be undertaken in accordance with the relevant Australian Standards, Austroads and Transport for NSW guidelines.
- 16 A Communications and Engagement Plan has been developed including web pages to inform the community throughout the project.
- 17 A Review of Environmental Factors is being undertaken to identify risks, planning control requirements, and reports required to assess impacts of works, and to propose mitigation measures.

RELATED PREVIOUS DECISIONS

- 18 At the Ordinary Council Meeting on 12 December 2023 Council adopted the Western Corridor Minmi Road and Longworth Avenue upgrades.

CONSULTATION

- 19 The Newcastle City Traffic Committee (NCTC) was consulted in October 2023, with recommendations used to amend the initial plans and subsequently assess the changes with traffic modelling prior to exhibition.
- 20 The NCTC provided in principle support for the ancillary works on Cowper Street, Cameron Street, Stapleton Street, and Nash Street, as well as at the intersection of Cameron Street and Douglas Street at its meeting of 11 December 2023 (Item 555) and 22 April 2024 (Item 508) respectively. It is anticipated the NCTC will endorse the modified TMAW works at the meeting of 21 July 2024.
- 21 Public exhibition was conducted from 30 May 2024 to 1 July 2024 with two community drop-in sessions held at Wallsend Library on 13 June 2024, and Fletcher Village on 20 June 2024 with an estimated 53 attendees. Four staff drop-in sessions were held at Hunter New England Wallsend Health Campus on 19, 21, 25 and 28 June 2024 with estimated 40 attendees. An on-site meeting was held with residents of Robert Street and discussions were held with Wallsend Health Campus Facilities Management.
- 22 Details and proposed changes were published on the Have Your Say Page on CN's website, and copies of the leaflet distributed to approximately 11,300 residents in Ward 4 suburbs of Fletcher, Maryland, Minmi and Wallsend. A copy of the leaflet is shown as **Attachment B**. Letters were sent to property owners directly adjacent to proposed TMAW in Bean Street, Cameron Street, Douglas Street, Longworth Avenue, Nash Street, Robert Street and Stapleton Streets Wallsend. Signage was placed at 14 locations along Minmi Road and Longworth Avenue to advertise the public exhibition.
- 23 The Western Corridor Ancillary Changes Engagement Report (see **Attachment C**) indicates a total of 91 submissions received during the exhibition period (84 online survey, 5 emails and 2 phone) with:
 - i. 67% supportive of proposed changes at Cowper Street and Minmi Road/Longworth Avenue.
 - ii. 49% supportive proposed changes at Nash/Cameron/Stapleton Streets with an additional 30% supportive if changes were made. These changes have been incorporated in the proposed plan.
 - iii. 70% supportive of proposed changes at Stapleton Street and Douglas Street
 - iv. 50% supportive of proposed changes at Douglas Street and Tillie Street intersection.

- 24 Minmi Road and Longworth Avenue road level changes were placed on public exhibition in conjunction with the TMAW from 30 May 2024 to 1 July 2024. A public notice was placed in Newcastle Herald on Saturday 1 June 2024. Signage was placed at 10 locations along Minmi Road and Longworth Avenue advertising the notice of change to road levels and the period for submission. Letters were sent to affected property owners. Plans were placed for exhibition period at Newcastle City Administration Centre and Wallsend Library for public access during the exhibition period. CN staff contacted 6 properties and 1 Strata and held 5 face to face on site meetings with affected property owners to discuss and receive feedback, however no formal submissions and objections were received.

BACKGROUND

- 25 The Western Corridor upgrade of Minmi Road and Longworth Avenue will provide significant benefits to the road network and users. Currently the network is constrained, over-capacity during peak periods, and regularly experiences traffic delays. In the short-term, the TMAW are essential to improve the surrounding network, prior to commencing construction of the Western Corridor upgrades to improve traffic flow, reduce congestion, and increase safety for all roads users. Leaving the existing network as-is, with no improvements prior to major construction will lead to extended delays and potential gridlock to the surrounding network including state roads of Newcastle Road and Thomas Street Wallsend through the construction period.

OPTIONS

Option 1

- 26 Council resolves to accept the recommendation at Paragraphs 1 - 3. This is the recommended option.

Option 2

- 27 Council resolves to not accept the recommendation. This will result in excessive delays for commuters during major road upgrade construction activities.

REFERENCES

CCL 12/12/2023 - ADOPTION OF THE LONGWORTH AVENUE AND MINMI ROAD WALLSEND CONCEPT DESIGNS

ATTACHMENTS

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| Attachment A: | TMAW Modified Plans |
| Attachment B: | Public Engagement Flyer |
| Attachment C: | Western Corridor Ancillary Changes Public Engagement Report |

Attachments A - C distributed under separate cover