

Lawrence Hargrave Drive slope stabilisation project

Consultation Report

Transport for NSW | February 2020



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Executive summary

Transport for NSW is planning to carry out essential slope repair work on Lawrence Hargrave Drive at Stanwell Park.

During the initial consultation period in July/August 2019, Transport for NSW (then Roads and Maritime Services) announced a proposal to carry out this work in two stages for four weeks, 24 hours a day during February/March and May/June 2020.

The community raised concerns about the options, including:

- extended travel time
- timing of the works during summer - in peak tourism period
- the effect on traffic for local businesses
- requests to keep one lane open during this work.

Following a review of this feedback, Transport for NSW developed four alternative options to carry out the work and held a second consultation to determine a preferred option to complete the work.

This report provides a summary of submissions received during the five week consultation period in November and December 2019.

The options were:

- **Option A** - Two stages of four-week road closures during winter months
- **Option B** - One eight-week road closure during winter months
- **Option C** - 16-day full road closure (during winter school holidays), plus six to eight months of full road closures on weekdays from 9am-3pm and only one lane open to traffic (under alternating traffic flow) at all other times until work complete
- **Option D** - 16-day road closure (during winter school holidays), plus four to six months of full road closures on weekdays from 9am to 3pm, full road closures from Sunday to Thursday at night from 8pm to 4am and only one lane open to traffic (under alternating traffic flow) at all other times until the work is completed.

The results of this survey have been reviewed and were used to help Transport for NSW select a preferred option to carry out the work.

The key issues raised by the community during this consultation included:

- preference for the work be completed quickly and effectively
- access for emergency services
- request for additional trains and public transport to minimise the impacts of increased southbound traffic
- the impact on local businesses.

Based on feedback, Option B was selected as the preferred option for carrying out this work.

Option B provides a safe environment for workers and allows work to be completed as quickly as possible by avoiding closing and reopening the road daily.

We are working with local residents and businesses, emergency services, Wollongong City Council, Transport for NSW – Trains and schools to minimise the impacts of the proposed works.

During the road closure there will be additional train services provided to help the community access work, school and other activities.

We are planning to operate a small bus to transport members of the community to and from train services at Stanwell Park and Helensburgh and to local schools.

Impacts on businesses may be minimised while carrying out Option B as work will be carried out over the winter months. Community feedback indicated that carrying out work over long periods would impact or reduce tourism and business in the area.

Work will start on Tuesday 9 June for one eight-week period until Tuesday 4 August, weather permitting.

Transport for NSW will continue to provide updates to the community, including detailed information about shuttle bus services to connect with train services and other mitigation measures.

1. Introduction

Lawrence Hargrave Drive crosses the Illawarra Escarpment at a geotechnically unstable location. It is prone to slope movement creating cracking in the road surface and shoulders.

Transport for NSW has conducted in-depth geotechnical investigations and has identified a number of locations on Lawrence Hargrave Drive at Stanwell Park where work is required to stabilise the slope and reduce the risk of land slips. The work on Lawrence Hargrave Drive is located between Chellow Dene Avenue and Otford Road.

This work is essential to keep the road safe and open to traffic in the longer term.

Project benefits include:

- reduced risk of land slips on the downhill slope
- slopes will be strengthened
- pavement repair will stop the cause of the road cracking
- drainage will be improved to reduce water pooling
- addressing the risk of a potential long-term closure of Lawrence Hargrave Drive due to slippage.

Early works carried out by Transport for NSW include:

- engaging specialist contractors to carry out investigations and provide designs which can be constructed with minimum impact on the road network
- geotechnical inspections and monitoring work
- drafting the Review of Environmental Factors for the project
- consultation with key stakeholders (including emergency services)
- consulting the community about the proposed work and asking for feedback on how to carry out the work while minimising impacts
- calling tenders and continuing negotiations with potential contractors.

2. Consultation

2.1 Consultation approach

Transport for NSW carried out two separate consultations with the community:

- A six week period from July to August 2019
- A five week period from November to December 2019.

Following the first consultation Transport for NSW returned to the community with reviewed options for carrying out the slope repair work. The options were:

- **Option A** - Two stages of four-week road closures during winter months
- **Option B** - One eight-week road closure during winter months

- **Option C** - 16-day full road closure (during winter school holidays), plus six to eight months of full road closures on weekdays from 9am-3pm and only one lane open to traffic (under alternating traffic flow) at all other times until work complete
- **Option D** - 16-day road closure (during winter school holidays), plus four to six months of full road closures on weekdays from 9am to 3pm, full road closures from Sunday to Thursday at night from 8pm to 4am and only one lane open to traffic (under alternating traffic flow) at all other times until the work is completed

The objectives of this second community consultation were to:

- obtain the community's feedback on the proposed options and impacts
- understand how the community uses Lawrence Hargrave Drive through Stanwell Park
- use the community's feedback refine work plans to minimise the impact of the work, identify and manage issues that may impact on road users and the community
- build awareness of the noise impacts, and planned mitigation measures
- build community awareness and understanding of the project and potential impacts
- build a stakeholder database for better community engagement around the work.

2.2 Consultation methods

How we informed the community about the project and asked them to provide feedback is summarised below in Table 1.

Table 1: Consultation and engagement method

Consultation and engagement method	Details
Online survey	Community members were directed to an online survey to indicate their preferred option for work and to provide detailed feedback.
Key stakeholder briefings	Phone or face to face meetings with stakeholders including: Emergency Services Transport NSW - Trains Wollongong City Council Local businesses and associations Community forum Local aged care facilities
Community drop-in sessions	Revised options community drop-in sessions Session 1: CWA Hall - 15 The Drive, Stanwell Park: 26 November 2019 Session 2: CWA Hall – 15 The Drive, Stanwell Park: 9 December 2019
Media	Media releases were issued to announce the revised options, invite feedback and announce the provision of additional train services during the project

Website	A web page outlining project details including Frequently Asked Questions published at rms.nsw.gov.au/lhd-closure
Social Media	Social media posts were published to inform the community about public meetings, announce the additional train services and the extension of the consultation period.
VMS	Electronic message boards were placed on Lawrence Hargrave Drive displaying information about the consultation
Resident and stakeholder Letter	Distributed to about 4000 residents, businesses and key stakeholders between Helensburgh and Coledale
Doorknocking adjacent properties	Project team doorknocked residents next to the affected area to discuss the project and potential impacts including noise
Stakeholder emails	Emails were distributed to stakeholders advising them of updates, including requesting further feedback.

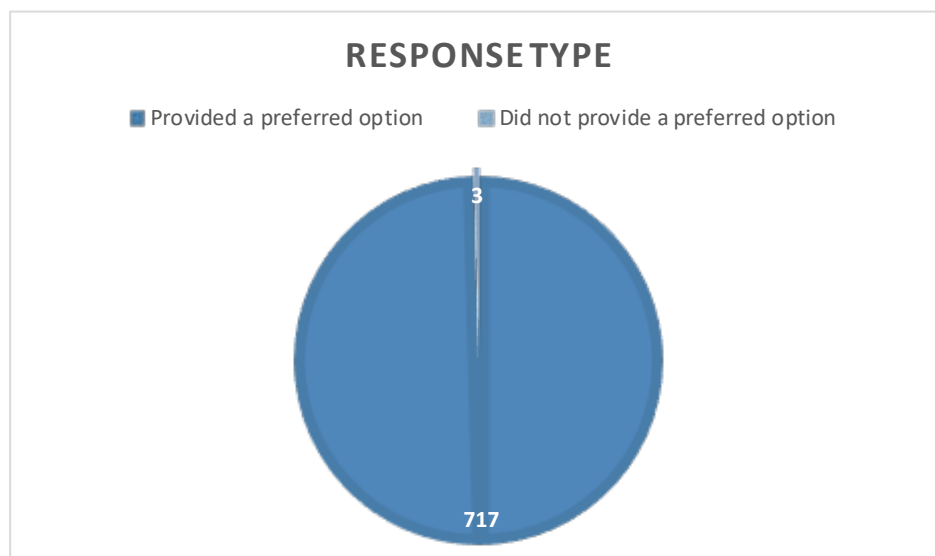
3. Consultation results and summary

3.1 Responses received

There were 720 survey responses received during the consultation period, with 717 of these respondents selecting a preferred option to carry out the work (as indicated in Diagram 1).

A number of briefings were also held with key stakeholders during the consultation, including business chambers, local business owners and medical/ aged care facilities.

Diagram 1: Responses received during consultation

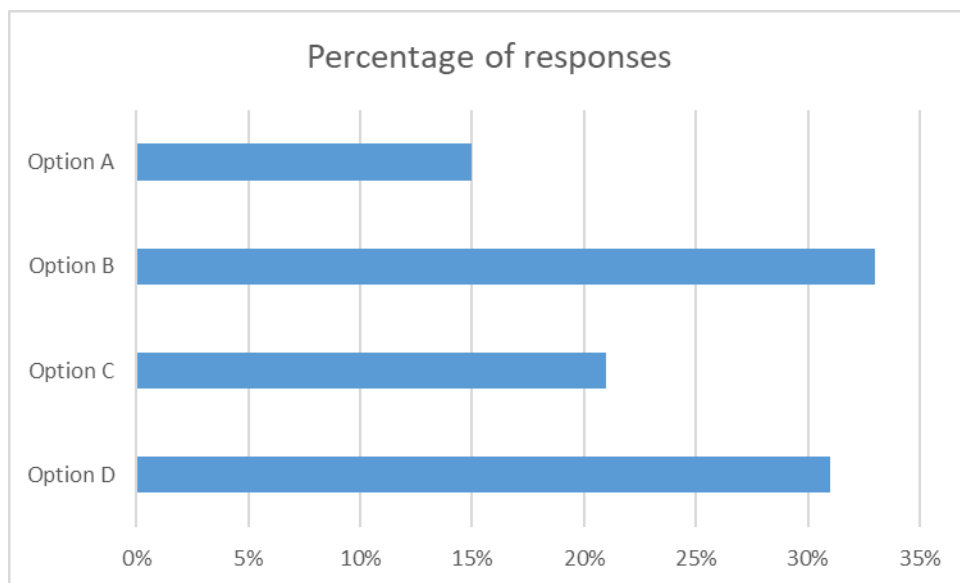


3.2 Analysis of the responses

Survey and email responses/ submissions

As part of the consultation, the community were asked to select the option they preferred to complete the work (see Diagram 2).

Diagram 2: Option selected in responses



Based on the responses to this question, the most popular option (33 per cent) of responses was Option B. The second highest response was Option D (31 per cent), with Option C preferred by 21 per cent of respondents and Option A selected in 15 per cent of responses.

In addition to the responses provided to this survey question, the community were invited to provide feedback, to help Transport for NSW to minimise the impact of this work.

All responses provided by the community were reviewed, with comments identified under nine general themes.

These themes were:

- least impact option (19% of responses)
- safety and efficiency (16% of responses)
- travel impacts - work, school, sports and other commitments (12% of responses)
- resident concerns (7% of responses)
- business impacts (6% of responses)
- request for additional trains (6% of responses)
- emergency services/ medical access (5% of responses)
- positive responses to the consultation/ options (3% of responses)
- night work concerns (2% of responses)

The two key issues raised during consultation were for the work to be completed in a way that had the least impact on the community, and in a safe and timely manner.

The responses generally acknowledged the need for the slope repairs to be completed. These comments noted that conducting this essential work in an eight-week period during the winter months would have the least impact on the community, compared to keeping one lane open during the peak spring/summer period.

The impact work would have on travel times was also highlighted. Additionally the impact additional southbound traffic would have on the surrounding road network was raised.

The impact on local businesses during the closure period was reported as an issue. It was acknowledged that moving the works to the winter months would reduce the impact on businesses however a full closure would still significantly reduce the amount of traffic passing through the area which many local businesses rely on.

Feedback included making additional trains and other public transport available to minimise impacts in the area.

Other feedback included community concerns regarding the ability for emergency services to access the area. It was noted the closest ambulance station was based in Helensburgh and would have difficulty servicing Stanwell Park and the surrounding areas in the event of an emergency.

With the highest percentage of respondents selecting Option B as their preferred option to complete the work, the detailed feedback has provided information of other ways Transport for NSW can work with the community to minimise impacts during these works.

Table 2: Summary of responses and further explanation main feedback categories

Topic/Issue	Comment
Least impact Option	Many respondents acknowledged that regardless of which option was selected, there would be an impact on the community in the immediate area. With this in mind many sought to determine the option which would provide the least long term impact at the sake of short term convenience.
Safety and Efficiency	Many respondents expressed their desire for the work to be completed in a safe and efficient manner that would not be drawn out over an extended period. Respondents felt a total closure of the road would allow workers to complete work in a shorter timeframe and have an overall lower impact on the community in the long term despite the short term inconvenience.
Request for Additional Trains	The community recognised that an increased strain would be placed on the rail and road network in the area and requested additional express train services as an alternative for those community members relying on this route to travel to Sydney for work, education or other activities.
Business Impacts	Comments and concerns were raised about the impact that these works would have on the everyday running of local businesses. Respondents noted that with the work now being conducted during the winter months, impact to businesses would be less severe than if it was to be conducted during the peak tourist season.
Travel impacts - work, school, sports and other commitments	Many respondents were concerned with the extended travel time that would occur during a full closure of Lawrence Hargrave Drive. Issues were raised by the community concerning Lawrence Hargrave Drive's importance as an integral route for school aged children to commute to and from school and weekend sports, increasing the travel time to almost two hours each day.
Night work concerns	A number of residents in the immediate area of the planned works site expressed concern that night works would be too intrusive and disruptive.

Emergency services access	Community members identified Lawrence Hargrave Drive as an integral emergency vehicle route and raised the potential extended response times the closures would pose in an emergency.
Request for Shuttle Buses	The community recognised that an increased strain would be placed on accessing the rail network and its services and requested shuttle buses to and from Stanwell Park train station as an alternative for those community members relying on public transport.

Stakeholder briefings

A number of briefings were held with key stakeholders during the consultation, including business chambers, local business owners and medical/ aged care facilities.

The overall feedback from businesses was a strong concern about the impact of this work on their trading and ability to continue operations. While all options involved a closure and therefore an impact on their passing trade and business, general consensus was that Option B would likely have the lowest impact by getting work done quickly, and would reduce the length of time that tourism and passing trade was reduced along Lawrence Hargrave Drive.

Medical and aged care facilities acknowledged the impact on their operations and concern about the ability for health care service providers to access patients. Transport for NSW will continue discussions with local medical and aged care service providers to find ways to mitigate impacts on this part of the community.

Emergency services will ensure current service levels are maintained during this work.

If required, emergency services will be able access the work site while responding to an emergency incident.

4. Outcomes

Transport for NSW acknowledges the high volume of feedback received through the online survey and stakeholder briefings, and thanks the community for their input into this important process.

Following this second stage consultation, Transport for NSW has continued to review the operational requirements of the planned work in consultation with key stakeholders. It has been agreed that Option B - one eight-week road closure during winter months is the best course of action to minimise long term impact on the community and businesses, while facilitating an environment where the works can be completed safely and efficiently.

Following discussions with Transport for NSW - Trains, Stanwell Park residents will have access to several additional express train services on the South Coast line to/from Stanwell Park Station while this essential safety work is carried out. This announcement took place towards the end of the consultation period, and led to an increase in responses preferring Option B.

After considering feedback from the community about the impact of this work and extended road closures, Transport for NSW is confident that a number of mitigation measures can be put into place to assist the community to continue their daily activities during the eight-week road closure.

These mitigations include:

Night work mitigations

Transport for NSW is aware of concerns regarding the impact night works would have on residents in the immediate area. To reduce the impact on residents, noisier work such as excavation, drilling and tree removal will be completed before 11pm where possible and machinery will be turned off when not in use. We can also change night work locations every two days to provide respite from noise.

Providing additional transport options

It is planned that during the closure Stanwell Park customers will receive two extra weekday services to Sydney during the morning peak and one extra service from Sydney during the afternoon peak period. On weekends, it is planned that Stanwell Park will receive eight extra services to Sydney and six extra services from Sydney each day. The extra services will mean that Stanwell Park will receive one weekend service to and from Sydney every hour for most of the day.

Transport for NSW will provide shuttle buses in Stanwell Park and Helensburgh to connect with all train services, which will ensure that train services are a more accessible and convenient alternative transport options during the road closure. These shuttle buses will address concerns about parking availability at both stations, and the difficulty in accessing the train stations on foot due to distance and steep ascent/descent.

Avoiding summer/ peak tourism periods

Transport for NSW has determined that this planned slope repair will begin in June 2020 and last eight weeks (weather permitting). This reflects the community's feedback to not see the work carried out during the peak tourism season in the summer months.

Ensuring emergency services can respond to incidents/ emergencies

Transport for NSW has held discussions with local emergency services agencies to discuss details of this project and detours during road closures. All emergency services have confirmed that they will maintain levels of service while this work is being completed and the road is closed.

Emergency services are able to implement a range of measures to ensure they can maintain a level of service which may include:

- On-call roster for staff members living in the area to respond to emergencies
- Relocating resources (including staff and vehicles) to either side of the road closure area

If required during an ongoing emergency such as bushfires or flooding, emergency services will be able to travel through the work site. Carrying out this work during winter also reduces the potential for bushfire emergencies to occur during the road closure.

School access

Shuttle buses will provide services to local primary schools to minimise the impacts of this work on families and students.

Transport for NSW will provide bus services to assist the community travelling to schools in and around the closure area to minimise the impacts to their travel.

Minimising impacts to businesses

Variable messaging boards will provide motorist and tourist information on how to access Lawrence Hargrave Drive via Bulli Pass during the closure. Messaging will be provided on the road status once the work is complete.

We will work with Destination Wollongong and local business chambers on initiatives for advertising the end of the closure.

Traffic impacts

Transport for NSW will work to ensure traffic congestion is minimised during the planned road closures and detours. We have identified key locations on the road network, such as the intersection of Princes Highway and Lawrence Hargrave Drive at Bulli Pass, where we will implement measures such as traffic control or adjusting traffic signals to allow turning traffic safe gaps, ensure motorists' safety and to reduce delays.

In the event of incidents on the traffic network, additional resources including tow trucks will be on standby to respond and ensure delays to motorists are minimised.

We will work with NSW Police and heavy vehicle enforcement teams to implement regular safety-related activities on the M1.

5. Next steps

Work will start on Tuesday 9 June for one eight-week period until Tuesday 4 August, weather permitting.

Transport for NSW is working to determine shuttle bus services, routes and timetables and is inviting the community to register their interest for shuttle bus services by Friday 13 March 2020 at rms.work/lhd-closure.

We will liaise directly with local schools about these arrangements and to obtain their feedback about routes and plans to ensure that impacts to school children are minimised.

Transport for NSW will continue to work closely with key stakeholders and contractors to deliver the project in a safe, timely and efficient manner.

Transport for NSW will continue to work with emergency services to provide assistance and information.

Transport for NSW will be running a community drop-in session in the coming months to keep the community up to date on details of the work including shuttle bus and train timetables and maps.

Transport for NSW will continue to update the community in a timely manner leading up to and during these works.



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