Community plays a key role in building better roads

A Construction Reference Group (CRG) has been formed to ensure the community continues to have a strong voice in the design and construction of our local road system.

The panel includes representatives from indigenous, arts, youth, community and environmental groups, along with industry and community representatives. It will work closely with Main Roads and Macmahon throughout the contract, with particular focus on the aesthetic components of the project, such as public art and landscaping.

The CRG continues the valuable work and includes a number of members from the initial Project Reference Group (PRG) and Public Art/Landscaping Focus Group. These two advisory bodies provided valuable assistance to Main Roads to refine the project concept and design.

To date, consultation has identified the new interchange at the Broome turn-off as a major landmark for public art and landscaping and specialists in these fields have worked with Main Roads and the Focus Group to develop a concept that enhances the natural landscape of Port Hedland and pays tribute to the town’s rich history.

Public art and landscaping nodes will also be developed at other key locations including a rest area at the mangrove renewal site along the new alignment.

Project Milestones

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commence Bridge at Interchange</td>
<td>Feb-13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Commence BHP Rail Bridge</td>
<td>Feb-13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete Traffic Diversion at Interchange</td>
<td>Apr-13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commence Box Culverts through South Creek</td>
<td>May-13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commence Temporary Traffic Diversion at Utah</td>
<td>Aug-13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Road under BHP Rail Bridge</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Commence Landscaping Works</td>
<td>Nov-13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project Completion</td>
<td>Jul-14</td>
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</tbody>
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Names help build cultural bridge

We think names are an important part of our heritage and a great way to pay tribute to the people and events that help shape our community.

That is why we will be supporting Main Roads as it develops naming ideas for the four new highway structures:

• At the Broome turn-off.
• Main bridge at the Broome turn-off.
• Over South Creek.
• Across South Creek breakout channel.
• Over the BHP rail line.

In 2012 Main Roads asked the community of Port and South Hedland to provide ideas for bridge names. The submission period has now closed and all suggestions will be closely considered by Main Roads and the CRG. The final recommendations will be submitted to the State Government’s Geographic Names Committee for approval.

Community info line is here for you

If you have any questions, queries or concerns, please call our Community Relations Manager Craig Howarth on 1800 420 722 or email info@gnhrealignment.com.au. You are also encouraged to visit our website for all the latest news www.gnhrealignment.com.au

Highway realignment to smooth peak hour bottleneck

Conflict between heavy vehicles and commuter traffic in Port Hedland will soon be a thing of the past, with the new Great Northern Highway construction team ramping up on-site activity.

A $220 million design and construct contract was awarded to national civil contractors Macmahon in June 2012 to realign the highway around the western edge of the Wedgefield industrial precinct.

Managed by Main Roads WA, this major development will significantly improve access to the port, safety for local commuters between Port Hedland and South Hedland and enable the road transit system to cope with future local and regional growth.

Known as Port Hedland Road, the existing highway between Port Hedland and South Hedland carries an average of 15,000 vehicles a day – from giant road trains to private cars. Traffic volumes have escalated by 25 per cent in the past three years, causing major delays at the T-junction with Wilson Street.

Waiting times at the intersection are becoming progressively longer as busy local traffic between South Hedland, Port Hedland and the airport meets semi-trailers and road trains trying to turn left into Great Northern Highway from Wilson Street.

This traffic load is expected to continue increasing as development at the port’s Utah Point berth and new mines at Abadys, Mt Dove and Pil’s Creek generate an expected additional 360 road trains each day.

Recognising Port Hedland’s significance to the national economy and arterial road network, the Federal Government has provided 75 percent of the project funding. The balance has been provided by the WA Government.

The realignment is expected to be completed in mid-2014.

Project highlights:

• 8km of highway.
• Four new bridges.
• Major interchange over Great Northern Highway at the Broome turn-off.
• New bridge over the BHP Billiton rail line.
• Access to Wedgefield industrial area via a connection to Pinga Street north.
• Access to proposed port development area north of Wedgefield New.
• Access to the western port via a new intersection with Utah Point Road.
• New link to South Hedland via Hamilton Road.
• Major drainage works.
• Street lighting at major intersections.
• Public art, landscaping and revegetation.

www.greatnorthernhighway.com.au
First dirt paves the way for major highway improvement

Detailed design of the new Great Northern Highway realignment has been completed and earthworks are now well underway.

Eight kilometres of highway will be constructed, comprising single lanes in both directions, extending in an arc to the west of the Wedgefield industrial area. This will improve access to the port and separate commuter traffic from industrial and heavy haulage vehicles.

The realignment will also help relieve mounting pressure on the main Great Northern Highway turn-off to Broome and the airport, where a new bridge will be constructed to route traffic on Port Hedland Road over the top of the existing highway near the Wilson Street T junction.

The new grade-separated interchange will be a key focus of the works and the largest of four structures in the development, including overpasses above the BHP rail line, with provision for future expansion, and at South Creek and the South Creek breakout channel.

The new highway will also connect to another new intersection being constructed to the south of Hamilton Road, providing more efficient traffic flow to the residential areas of South Hedland.

The new route will create fresh access into Wedgefield, via a connection with Pinga Street north, as well as to the proposed port development area north of Wedgefield near, where BHP reclaimed dredged spoil has been deposited. A new intersection at Utah Point Road will increase access to the western port area, making it easier for heavy vehicles to access the Horizon Power Hedland Terminal, BHP Billiton Rail Maintenance Depot and FMG Rail Facility, as well as Landcorp’s Transport Development Area, east of Wedgefield.

A comprehensive traffic management plan is in place to assist trucks and road trains traversing the highway and keep disruptions to a minimum. All motorists are encouraged to remain vigilant while driving through the construction zones and observe signage advising of any road modifications.

For the latest roadworks updates, check the local newspaper or project website.

Temporary traffic lights for Broome turn-off

Temporary traffic lights are being installed at the Broome turn-off to ensure motorists and construction workers are safe while the intersection is being developed.

The signals are expected to be in place in April to guide traffic heading between Port Hedland and South Hedland. They will remain in operation until the new interchange is completed, expected in December, when a shared cycle and pedestrian path will also be incorporated.

Macmahon Project Manager David Idd said the new signal would minimise traffic disruption as vehicles would be diverted to a new alignment around the worksite.

“This is a busy intersection which currently handles around 2,500 vehicles a day and we have detailed plans in place to keep that traffic flowing as smoothly and safely as possible,” he said.

The temporary works form part of the overall design, which requires the relocation of more than 140,000 cubic metres of earth to build up the grade-separated interchange.

There will be no change for traffic turning from the highway and the airport.

New Wedgefield camp home away from home

Construction of a new work camp has been completed off Boodarie Road, south of Wedgefield.

The new facility is home for members of the Macmahon construction team working on the new Great Northern Highway project.

The camp is designed to house 200 people on a fly-in, fly-out roster. Accommodation includes single-room dongers, each with their own separate bathroom facilities plus a dining room and recreation facilities.

At its peak, the project workforce is expected to number around 200 employees, including staff and sub-contractors.

Performance partners together again

The Great Northern Highway project continues the award-winning relationship which Main Roads and Macmahon have built over the past 10 years.

Team members from both organisations have worked closely together on a number of projects, winning numerous industry awards for outstanding results in engineering innovation, construction management, communication and environmental performance.

These include many of Perth’s landmark roads, such as the extension of Perth’s Mitchell Freeway, at Joondalup, the connection of Roe and Reid highways over the Swan River, in the Swan Valley, and the major intersection at Great Eastern and Roe highways, in the heart of Midland.

Headquartered in WA, Macmahon is a leading Australian construction company with extensive experience in the Pilbara. Its contract mining operations extend throughout Australia, New Zealand, Asia, Mongolia and Africa. For more information visit www.macmahon.com.au

Mulgara residents are quiet as a mouse

The Pilbara desert can seem very empty to the uninitiated, but it is teeming with wildlife and the Great Northern Highway crew has been on the lookout for some of its lesser-known residents.

So far, investigators have failed to catch any glimpses of the Mulgara - a tiny carnivorous mouse-like mammal that has been known to inhabit the area and other parts of the desert in WA and central Australia.

Weighing an average of 130 grams, the mulgara tend to gather in small colonies - hiding in burrows and coming out at night to avoid the heat. Classified as “vulnerable” their numbers fluctuate with the quality of each season. They eat small rodents, reptiles, spiders and tend to need little additional water.

A number of important environmental surveys are currently being finalised to ensure there is no detrimental impact on the local environment when construction begins. These include a study of local mangroves and testing for acid sulphate soils.

The team has also been working closely with the Department of Indigenous Affairs and traditional owners from the Kariyarra group, to identify and relocate any Aboriginal heritage artefacts in the works area.

For the latest roadworks updates, check the local newspaper or project website.