

South Western Highway Upgrade

VASSE HIGHWAY TO WALPOLE

We are working with Walpole and surrounding communities to investigate options to upgrade a 93km section of the South Western Highway between Vasse Highway (Pemberton turnoff) and Walpole to improve safety for all road users.

In March 2016, we completed the 8.5km section of South Western Highway from Ordnance Road to 1.5km north of Centre Road, despite a wetter than usual summer.

We have had positive feedback from the community regarding this first stage of works. Our Community Reference Group (CRG) members said they believed that most people in the community were very happy with the safer road outcome.

CRG member Mike Filby congratulated the work crew on the work and leaving the site in "immaculate condition". He also thanked the crew for removing a large concrete culvert that had been left on the highway for almost 40 years.

"Over the 12 year period I have been cleaning their highway, I have never seen less litter emanating from their workers and contractors - in fact it was virtually zero," Mike stated in the Walpole Weekly.

Shire of Manjimup Councillor Dave Tapley said that the contractor, Fulton Hogan, was very positive in their approach to litter management and set a good example and benchmark for future sections of work.

"The natural appearance of the highway has been maintained in the completed works," Dave said.



Community Reference Group members on a South Western Highway site visit.

We sincerely thank all those who have contributed to our CRG for donating their time to provide valuable input at meetings and during our site visits. We have had six meetings since 2013, and wish to thank Harold Luxton (St John Ambulance), Geoff Fernie (Walpole & Inlet Systems Advisory Committee, Walpole Nornalup National Parks Association), Michael Filby, Anne Pedro, Jan Watson and the late Richard Pedro (all from South Coast Environment Group), Dave Tapley and Michael Leers (Shire of Manjimup), Malcolm Smeathers (Bus Driver), Walpole Police and Department of Parks and Wildlife staff. Special thanks to the Walpole Community Resource Centre for hosting our meetings.

Environment

The CRG considers the needs of road users and the environment in a balanced way to develop a solution that is fundamentally acceptable to all. We investigate various engineering solutions as a compromise in some areas (such as scenic or significant places) to reduce risks to road users, where widening is not practical. The group discusses the impacts and agrees on the final scope of widening works, with the aim of minimising environmental impacts while meeting the community's request that the road be improved.

South Western Highway Vasse Hwy to Walpole Section



The Walpole Wilderness is a unique area, and consequently, road works must meet strict environmental approvals. In preparing for the works, we have conducted a range of environmental and Aboriginal heritage surveys, and continue to do so.



As part of the works, we protected plant colonies including Thelymitra Jacksonii and Lomandra Ordii. To achieve this, we conducted surveys in 2013, 2014 and 2015 to confirm the occurrence of these plants to ensure roadworks could be completed and these plants minimised.

Upcoming Works

While weather limits the potential construction period for future sections, we have started the next section of works, with completion expected in March 2017. This work will involve approximately 5km starting 1.5km north of Centre Road and extending to 2km north of Mandalay Beach Road through several of the Karri sections.

Planning For Future Works

We are also progressing planning in response to concerns raised by the community for the section of the highway south of Pemberton from Vasse Highway to Middleton Road.

Land will need to be excised from the National Parks to allow some of the works to proceed. In addition some sections require land to be acquired from private property, although this is expected to be minimal. The works are likely to reflect the existing highway alignment with no significant realignment or reconstruction proposed. However, these widening works are at least two years away due to time required to complete the land dealings. The initial focus will be on the section north of Middleton Road to reflect business, tourism, safety impacts and traffic volumes with a preliminary design for the 10km section north of Middleton Road to be developed.

Our CRG meeting was held in Walpole on 22 November. We continue to welcome anyone from the community who wishes to join the group. The following meeting will be held in the first quarter of 2017, will involve representatives from this area, including the Northcliffe Environment Group and the Warren Environment Group. We welcome community members from this area to nominate for the CRG.



Previous works: before

About The Works

South Western Highway is the only route that services the town of Walpole, connecting to the South Coast Highway (south of Walpole) to service other coastal areas. The scenic highway is popular with tourists, and visitors to the area enjoy a range of nature-based activities.

The existing two lane highway has a 6m seal width, narrow gravel shoulders and steep batters, and covers a variety of terrain and significant rivers. There is a need to improve road safety and reduce run-off road crashes on this section of highway. Benefits of improving this key regional route will be:

- Reducing the number and severity of crashes by widening some sections of the road to provide a more forgiving road environment for any vehicles straying from the road.
- Providing opportunities to safely pass other vehicles, by increased seal width, which avoids the need to drive on gravel shoulders.
- Improving protection for turning vehicles leaving the highway through key intersection upgrades, such as Beardmore Road.



After construction

WANT MORE INFORMATION?

Please contact us with any comments or suggestions, which we can discuss further with the CRG. For more information, please contact Community Engagement Manager Carolyn Walker either by email at carolyn.walker@mainroads.wa.gov.au or phone (08) 9450 1445.

