



# Bunbury Outer Ring Road Frequently Asked Questions

## Why do we need the Bunbury Outer Ring Road?

As a port city, Bunbury plays an important role in the WA economy. Its annual exports continue to increase. In 2018, approximately 1.5 million tonnes of woodchips, 800,000 tonnes of mineral sands and 950,000 tonnes of other trace minerals left the state via Bunbury Port. More information on Bunbury Port trade can be found [here](#).

This activity puts significant pressure on the road network that will increase with:

- population growth in Greater Bunbury
- proposed development in Wanju, Waterloo and surrounding areas
- increased freight movements from mining activity and associated growth in Bunbury Port activities.

The existing road network in and around Bunbury currently accommodates a range of vehicle movements, including freight and light vehicles, regional and local traffic.

This combination of vehicles on local road networks impacts on road safety and amenity.

The new road will separate these vehicles, providing a safer environment with improved travel times.

## Will this road adequately cater for increased traffic?

Yes. The project has been designed to cater for the long term planning needs of a future population of 200,000 people living in the Greater Bunbury area.

When complete, we expect between 10,000 and 15,000 vehicles per day, on average, to use the new road. These regional / port movements would otherwise mix with traffic on local roads.

## Will southbound travellers be able to access Bunbury at the northern interchange?

The proposed northern interchange will provide a gateway to the Bunbury region, giving drivers two dedicated lanes from Forrest Highway to access Bunbury.

## Will local businesses in Bunbury be adversely impacted by the reduced traffic going through the city?

Surveys of current traffic patterns found that around 60 per cent of travellers already drive through without stopping. Around 30 per cent stop for one hour and another 10 per cent for more than one hour.

The interchanges at each end of the project have been specifically designed for easy access into Bunbury for travellers who would like to stop there or enter the city centre.

## What is the planning history of Bunbury Outer Ring Road?

The original concept was developed in the early 1970s with the land for the southern section reserved for a Primary Regional Road in the Greater Bunbury Region Scheme. The land was acquired as part of the subdivision process for the southern part of Gelorup in the early 1980'

The central section was completed in 2013, in conjunction with the Port Access Road (Willinge Drive). This section links South Western Highway (south) to Boyanup Picton Road and provides improved access to the Port from areas southeast of Bunbury.

During 2017 and 2018, we reviewed the northern section alignment, included in the Greater Bunbury Regional Scheme. An alignment further east was determined as preferable. See 'Why was the alignment for the northern section moved further east?' below.

In June 2019, the Government announced the southern section of Bunbury Outer Ring Road will be constructed in the existing road reserve. A detailed study found that while construction in an alternative corridor would have comparable environmental impacts, this would result in significantly greater impacts to local amenity, costs and would jeopardise the project's objectives.

Find out more about the [Bunbury Outer Ring Road South Alignment Selection Report](#).

## Does Main Roads already own all the land that is required?

All affected landowners are aware of the requirement for Main Roads to acquire land for the project. Discussions are continuing to ensure any land needed will be in the care and control of the Commissioner of Main Roads by October 2021.

## What about the impact of traffic noise for nearby residents?

We will carry out noise modelling as part of the design process to determine an appropriate mitigation strategy. This may include noise walls or bunds close to residential areas. Landscaping works will visually soften the impact. We will construct the road in accordance with State Planning Policy 5.4 – Road and Rail Noise Considerations in Transport Planning. Acoustic treatment of a building may be required and this is generally through providing acceptable glazing thicknesses and improving insulation to walls, roofs and above-ceiling space.

## What will the surface of the road be?

It is usual for rural sections of the State Road Network to be finished with a sprayed or 'chip' seal along the majority of the main alignment. We need to consider the best option for creating a stable road surface for the type and volume of traffic that will be using the road into the future. For the main alignment through Gelorup, we are proposing a Stone Mastic Asphalt finish as this is quieter surface. We will closely monitor performance so we can identify any problems and treatments early.

## Why was an alternative alignment investigated for the southern section?

Land for the southern section has been reserved within the Greater Bunbury Region Scheme for many years. However, it also contains habitat for the federally listed Western Ringtail Possum, Black Cockatoo and Banksia Woodland Threatened Ecological Community.

In May 2018, the Commonwealth changed the status of the Western Ringtail Possum under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act from 'Vulnerable' to 'Critically Endangered'. This is the highest classification level possible before a species is declared extinct.

When referring a project for environmental assessment it is necessary to demonstrate that there are no feasible alternatives with lesser environmental impact.

As a result, the project team undertook additional investigations to support the environmental referral process. These investigations also included the consideration of other Matters of National Environmental Significance.

We identified an alternative corridor for investigation and undertook environmental surveys in addition to those in the original GBRS corridor.

The project team consulted with landowners potentially affected by this alternative corridor.

Following the completion of this consultation and the environmental surveys, the findings were published in two separate Environmental Impact Assessment reports that are publicly available: the [GBRS alignment](#) and the [alternate alignment](#).

We made the decision to proceed with the southern section of Bunbury Outer Ring Road in the original Greater Bunbury Region Scheme (GBRS) alignment through Gelorup and in early June 2019, the Minister for Transport endorsed the decision.

## Why was the alignment for the northern section moved further east?

In early 2017, an alignment selection planning study began for the northern section. This involved the investigation of two alignments.

The planning study is now complete and we selected a corridor that aligns with the proposed future development of Greater Bunbury. The Western Australian Planning Commission supported the decision on 31 May 2018.

We selected this corridor because it:

- provides an integrated planning solution and defines an outer perimeter for development rather than dividing the future Greater Bunbury footprint
- more effectively separates high speed regional and freight traffic from local Bunbury traffic improving safety, efficiency and improved port access
- starts further north and in doing so will improve safety for a number of intersections along the existing Forrest Highway (including Raymond Road, Grand Entrance, and Hynes Road)
- has the capacity to cater for a future population of up to 200,000 people with 4 traffic lanes whereas previously considered corridors that joined Forrest Highway further south would require more lanes and larger interchanges

## What is an Alliance?

An Alliance is a collaborative team formed between a Government department and private sector parties. The Bunbury Outer Ring Road construction team is the South West Gateway Alliance made up of Main Roads, Acciona, NRW Contracting, MACA Civil, AECOM and Aurecon.

## How will construction impacts be managed?

Impacts to the travelling public will be minimised and advance notification will be provided to residents, businesses and road users.

Directly affected landowners will be consulted regarding the construction program, sequence and management strategies to address issues such as noise, dust and vibration.

The impact on air quality during construction will be minimised through implementation of a Construction Environmental Management Plan. The Construction Environmental Management Plan will include mitigation measures, such as water spraying to suppress dust.

We will invite directly affected and nearby landowners to have a property condition survey before and after construction.

## Will emergency services still be able to access my property?

Emergency routes will always be maintained during construction and this will be a contractual requirement. The same applies to standpipes and other fire response assets. Additional water tanks and standpipes will be supplied if needed.

Bushfire and other emergency responses will be a prime consideration during and after construction.

## Will construction affect my water supply?

The use of groundwater avoids the need to use potable water sources.

We applied for four licences, from the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (DWER) to extract approximately 1.1 gigalitres of groundwater each year from 10 different bores across the road alignment. The bores are grouped into four sub areas: Kemerton South, Dardanup, Bunbury East and Bunbury Yarragadee.

While we're aware water use for construction is significant, the abstraction is a temporary arrangement for the construction period only and will be from 10 bores along the length of the project.

In the medium term, the abstraction should not have a significant impact on the aquifer due to natural recharge. Rainfall replenishes the aquifers and current models estimate this occurs at a rate of 280 to 340 gigalitres per year. The construction of BORR will only use 1.1 gigalitres per annum over approximately three years.

## Is there a guaranteed level of local content?

A key focus of the project delivery phase is to encourage and maximise local industry participation and Aboriginal employment and business opportunities.

A local business advisory group was established to maximise opportunities for local business content within the project. This group includes Main Roads, South West Development Commission, Bunbury Geographe Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Civil Contractors Federation along with representatives from contractor and business, local government, and the Aboriginal Participation Advisory Group.

The target spend for local content is around \$300 m, out of a likely contract value in the order of \$600 m. Locally owned and operated businesses will be given first preference.

Regular meetings of the Local Business Advisory Group will take place to provide updates, implement recommendations, and report on progress against targets.

## Have all Aboriginal and European heritage elements been investigated and satisfied?

Authorities have been documenting Aboriginal interests in this area for many years with appropriate heritage surveys. We consulted with the Aboriginal Traditional Owners that speak for the area in a number of surveys. We have taken their comments and considerations into account in the highway bridge design.

We investigated and satisfied all Aboriginal heritage elements and the heritage surveys completed include both archaeological and ethnographic studies. There are no European heritage sites registered within the project area.

## What Aboriginal involvement and opportunities are there?

In October and November 2019, we undertook archaeological and ethnographic surveys in the Northern and Central Corridor. Since then, we have completed additional surveys at bridge sites crossing the Preston River and the Collie River and in the southern section at Five Mile Brook. These surveys, undertaken with the Traditional Owners, confirmed that the bridge design does not affect river flow, which is important for cultural reasons. We will work with the TOs to explore the opportunity to give parts of the route and bridges on the highway Aboriginal names.

We have formed an Aboriginal Participation Advisory Group to support the implementation of Aboriginal participation. The Alliance will hold regular meetings with this group, provide updates, implement recommendations and report on progress.

We will target a minimum of 60 full-time equivalent positions for Aboriginal employment with additional targets of \$20,000,000 minimum spend for Aboriginal businesses and 5 per cent of the Alliance's sub-contracts above \$50,000 awarded to Aboriginal businesses.

Preference will be given to local Aboriginal people/businesses first, regional second and WA third.

## After works are complete, what rehabilitation will take place?

We have completed an Urban and Landscape Design Framework. The strategy details the extent of the rehabilitation that will be undertaken. In the past two seasons, we have collected the seeds of local provenance species. We will use this seed in the rehabilitation of land post-construction.

## How will trees and waterways be affected?

Impacts to trees and waterways is managed according to a hierarchical approach of avoid, mitigate, reduce and manage impacts. With careful attention to the design, we have been able to minimise impacts and avoid sites of environmental significance.

If you are looking for more detailed information, the Referral documentation for the Proposal and the Additional Information Requirements is available on the EPA website [here](#).

## What measures will be taken to maintain access for native animals to habitat during construction and post construction?

We have prepared Environmental Management Plans to help conserve significant fauna in the Northern and Central Sections. This includes recommended clearing and construction methodology to reduce impacts as well as providing details on infrastructure to provide connectivity over and under the project.

The Environmental Management Plan is available as part of the Additional Information Requirements documentation available on the EPA website [here](#). For information on environmental offsets, refer to our [Environmental offsets fact sheet](#).