Dongara-Geraldton-Northampton Route: Alignment Selection Study

Why do we need a new route?
The stretch of Brand Highway and North West Coastal Highway between Dongara, Geraldton and Northampton is a key link in the state’s road network, providing connectivity between Perth, the Mid West region and northern WA, as well as access to key towns, airports and ports. Traffic growth, access requirements, flooding, alignments that cut through townsites and sections with poor horizontal and vertical geometry present safety and freight efficiency concerns. Many of these issues cannot be addressed with localised upgrades and need a strategic approach to plan for an ultimate road corridor.

Previous planning and consultation
Given the projected future growth of the region, Main Roads launched an Alignment Selection Study to identify a road corridor that could provide a long-term solution for the movement of people and freight, safely accommodate the largest heavy vehicle combinations and remove high numbers of heavy vehicles from townsites throughout the Mid West region. This study identified three possible routes between Dongara and Geraldton, and a further three between Geraldton and Northampton.

We received comprehensive feedback from the community and stakeholders in the first phase of this study.

HAVE YOUR SAY
You are invited to provide feedback on a preferred road corridor for a future Dongara-Geraldton-Northampton (DGN) route.

What we have done
Considering this feedback, we reviewed our planning in the context of the current economic and development climate. This resulted in further changes to the proposed corridors, which have been assessed against a range of environmental, social, economic and engineering factors, as well as input from stakeholders. This assessment has now informed selection of a preferred single corridor between Dongara, Geraldton and Northampton.
Dongara to Geraldton
A new inland corridor starting near the Brand Highway / Midlands Road intersection which links up with the current Arthur Road alignment to the south of Geraldton. Further investigations will focus on ways to minimise impacts on existing lifestyle and heritage properties, manage floodplain interactions and consider suitable local road connections.

Central link
The northern link and southern options are linked by proposed new road infrastructure within the already planned Oakajee Nanguolu Infrastructure Corridor (ONIC). Further investigations will focus on the road alignment in isolation from planned future rail, without precluding the rail option. This allows flexibility in planning and has no additional impact on landowners within the ONIC.

Geraldton to Northampton
A new road is proposed within a wider corridor near the existing North West Coastal Highway. Minor sections of the existing highway would be retained as local service roads. This corridor avoids major impacts on large farming properties and has the potential to be staged. Further investigations will consider management of services and access to properties. This route allows for Northampton Bypass to be delivered as an independent stage.
The preferred corridor
Revised planning assessments indicate that the preferred corridor most effectively balances environmental, social and economic considerations and will deliver the best value-for-money strategic solution to improve safety, enhance freight efficiency and reduce travel times for all road users, including the largest heavy vehicle combinations. It will provide for the separation of traffic on busy sections of the road, while minimising construction and maintenance costs where vehicle numbers will be significantly lower.

This study is supported by the Mid West Development Commission, which has secured Royalties for Regions funding for the planning phase. There is currently no funding for project development, detailed design, land acquisition or construction.

Provide your feedback
We are now inviting community and stakeholder feedback on the preferred corridor. You can have your say in one of the following ways:

- View a detailed plan, complete our survey and subscribe for future project updates at https://www.mysaytransport.wa.gov.au/dongara-geraldton-northampton
  This survey will close on Friday 29 January 2021.
- Send an email to enquiries@mainroads.wa.gov.au.
- Write to DGN Alignment Selection Study, c/- Main Roads, PO Box 6202, East Perth WA 6892.

To allow time for feedback and further engagement with landowners, consultation will continue into early 2021.

What next?
All feedback will be reviewed and will inform further changes to the preferred corridor, which will then be presented to the Western Australian Planning Commission (WAPC) and local government for endorsement and inclusion in strategic planning documents.

We will then commence an Alignment Definition Study to define the road alignment within the selected corridor. This will allow us to protect the land, provide certainty for landowners and local government and inform further regional development opportunities. It will include further consultation with directly affected landowners and stakeholders to mitigate property, business, environmental, heritage or lifestyle impacts.

What has changed to inform our planning process?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2015 planning</th>
<th>Change in situation</th>
<th>2020 planning</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assumption that road and rail would be built together in the Oakajee Narrgulu Infrastructure Corridor (ONIC) before the rest of the DGN route.</td>
<td>Rail construction in ONIC is a longer-term proposition than previously contemplated.</td>
<td>Road element of ONIC to be considered as part of DGN planning, in conjunction with the Department of Jobs, Science, Tourism and Innovation (the lead agency for ONIC planning)</td>
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<td>Planning considered appropriate design standards.</td>
<td>Updated safety and efficiency expectations.</td>
<td>Amendments to grades, overtaking provision and expected levels of connectivity.</td>
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<td>Considered feedback received during consultation with stakeholders and community.</td>
<td>Additional feedback received since original consultation.</td>
<td>Consider and assess revised corridors in context of further stakeholder feedback. Engagement ongoing.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assessment undertaken on proposed corridors.</td>
<td>Corridors amended in response to other changes.</td>
<td>Objectives for route updated in line with relevant strategies. Updated criteria, in line with route objectives, used in assessment.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
The planning process

2020
Consultation Round 2
We are here

2021
Recommend a preferred corridor to WA Planning Commission and local government for endorsement and inclusion in strategic planning documents. Alignment Definition Study gets underway to define route.

2016-2020
Analysis of feedback, further stakeholder engagement and planning assessments considering changing economic and planning context.

2015
Consultation Round 1

2015
Alignment selection study gets underway to select a preferred corridor.