

Lawrence Hargrave Drive slope stabilisation project

Consultation report

Roads and Maritime Services | October 2019



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Executive summary

Roads and Maritime Services is planning to carry out essential slope repair work on Lawrence Hargrave Drive at Stanwell Park.

In July 2019 Roads and Maritime announced a proposal to carry out this work in two stages during 2020 and invited the community and stakeholders to provide feedback on the plans.

This report provides a summary and overview of submissions received from the community, customers and stakeholders during the six week consultation period in July and August 2019.

The consultation was carried out to gain a better understanding of the Stanwell Park area and how our customers use this stretch of road. The information received will help inform plans to carry out the essential slope stabilisation and maintenance work on Lawrence Hargrave Drive.

The key issues raised by the community included:

- Extended travel time
- Timing of the works during summer - in peak tourism period
- The effect on traffic on local businesses
- Requests to keep one lane open during this work.

All responses received during the submission period have been reviewed and summarised in this report. This information will be considered in the next stage of planning and consultation for future work on Lawrence Hargrave Drive at Stanwell Park.

Roads and Maritime is now developing options to complete this essential work and will carry out further consultation with the community and stakeholders on these in late November.

While the timing of this work is not yet confirmed, Roads and Maritime has determined that this planned slope repair will not start prior to May 2020. This is to reflect the feedback provided by the community about the impact of work during summer and to ensure that final details of work, including timing, is provided to the community in advance to allow them to plan around this work.

Further consultation with the community, including a survey on alternative options to complete the work, is expected to take place in late November 2019.

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.

Roads and Maritime 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 using a variety of methods
- Cracks in the road surface will be repaired and drainage improved to reduce water pooling
- It will address the risk of a potential long-term closure of Lawrence Hargrave Drive due to slippage.

Early planning works carried out by Roads and Maritime for these essential slope repairs include:

- Engaging specialist contractors to carry out investigations and provide designs which can be constructed with minimum impact on the road network
- Drafting the Review of Environmental Factors for the project
- Carrying out initial consultation with key stakeholders (including emergency services)
- Consulting the community about the proposed work and asking for feedback on plans
- Calling tenders and continuing negotiations with potential contractors.

2. Consultation

2.1 Consultation approach

Roads and Maritime consulted the community for a six week period from July – August 2019 on plans for the project. The community was asked to provide feedback on closing the road to complete the work in two, four week, stages with work taking place 24 hours a day. The first four-week closure was proposed for February/March 2020 and the second in May/June 2020.

The objectives of this consultation were to:

- Build awareness and understanding of the project and potential impacts

- Understand how the community uses Lawrence Hargrave Drive through Stanwell Park
- Obtain the community's feedback on impacts of the proposal
- Consider feedback from the community in further planning for the project
- Identify and manage issues that may impact on road users and the community
- Ensure that project information is distributed in an effective and timely way.

2.2 Consultation methods

Our methods of informing the community about the project and asking them to provide feedback during the consultation period are listed 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 provide feedback on plans to carry out the work.
Key stakeholder briefings	Phone or face to face briefings with key stakeholders including: Emergency Services Wollongong City Council Kennett Homes Stanwell Park businesses
Public Meetings	2508 Stanwell Park / Helensburgh community forum: 14 August Coledale community forum: 28 August Stanwell Park business consultation meeting: 5 September 2019
Media	Media releases were issued to local media outlets to announce the project and invite feedback from the community, to remind the community about submissions period and to communicate the end date of the consultation period and to advise the consultation period was extended.
Website	A web page communicating all project details including Frequently Asked Questions was published at rms.work/lhd-closure
Social Media	A targeted social media campaign was developed to communicate with community members in Northern Illawarra suburbs.
VMS	Electronic message boards were in place on Lawrence Hargrave Drive displaying information about the consultation
Resident and Stakeholder Letter	Distributed to about 4,000 residents between 17 and 18 July
Doorknocking adjacent properties	Project team doorknocked residents adjacent to the affected area to discuss the project

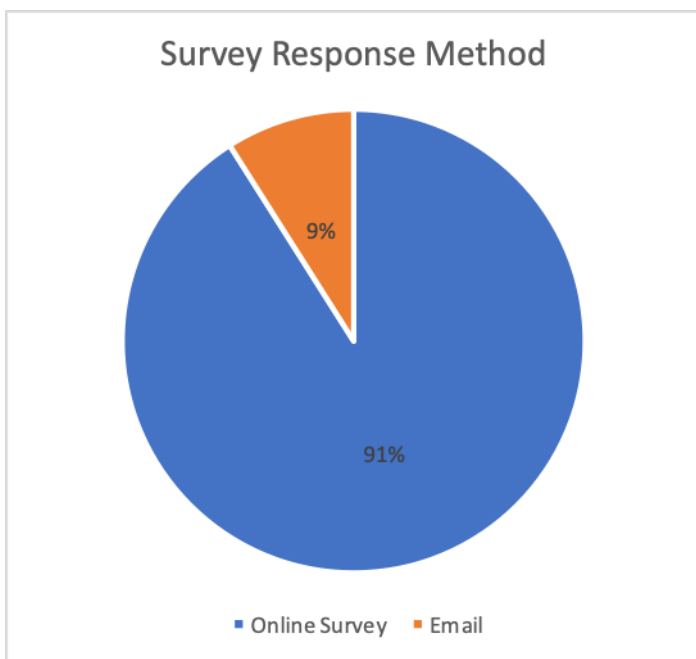
3. Consultation results and summary

3.1 Responses received

There were 1467 responses received during the consultation period from a total of 930 individuals. Most respondents provided feedback across multiple categories. Over 91 per cent of all feedback was received via the online survey, with the remaining received via email and through stakeholder meetings. See Diagram 1 below.

Roads and Maritime responded to this feedback via social media, our website and during face to face meetings with key stakeholders.

Diagram 1: Survey response method



3.2 Analysis of the responses

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

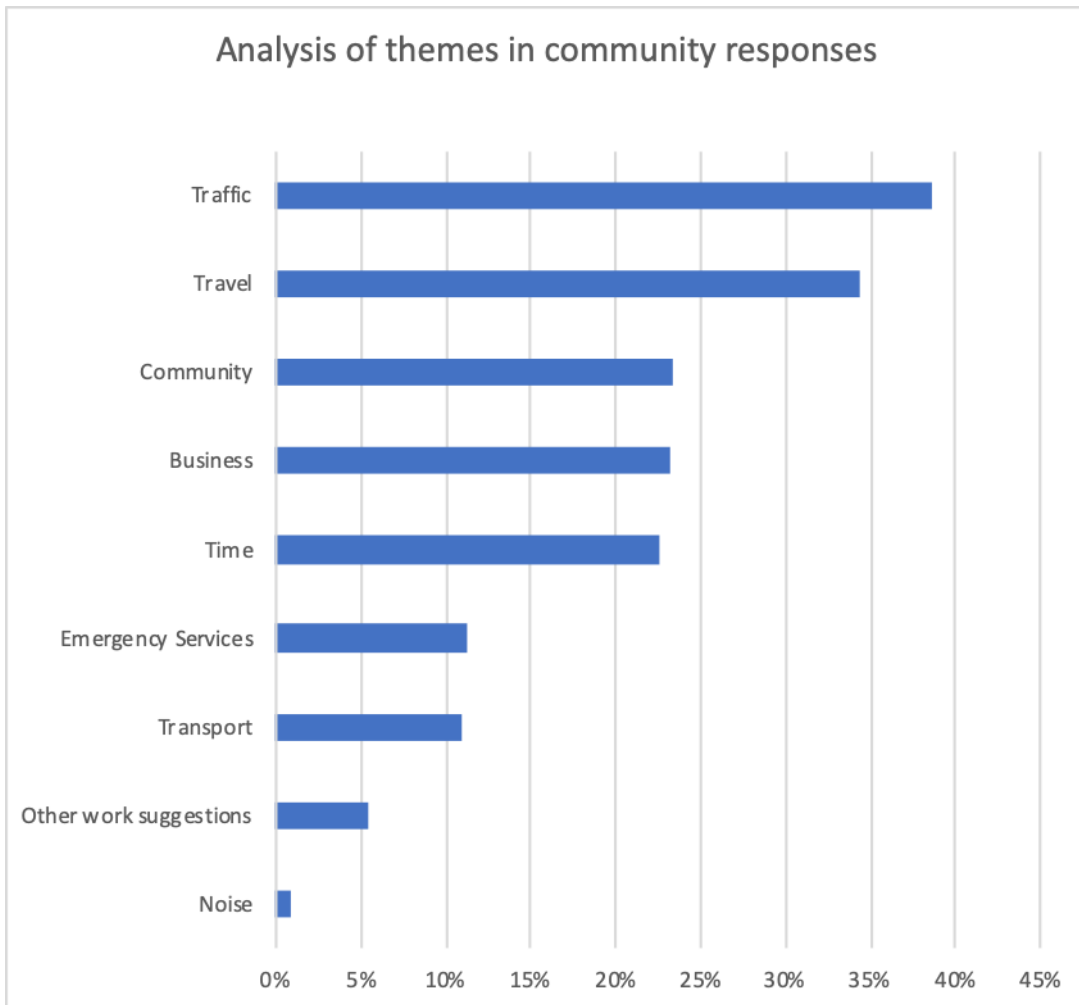
These themes included:

- Transport related feedback
- Community impacts
- Travel impacts
- Timing of work

- Business and tourism feedback/impacts
- Traffic and road safety
- Emergency services
- Other comments

See Diagram 2 below for detail on the percentage of responses under each general theme.

Diagram 2: Analysis of themes in community responses



Within these general themes, all responses were further categorised into 26 specific issues or concerns.

These categories are detailed in Table 2 overleaf, along with the percentage of the responses received that were concerned about each issue/ topic.

Table 2: All topic/ issue categories and percentage of total responses.

Topic/Issue	Percentage of total responses
Travel time	29%
Request to undertake the work in winter	18%
Request to undertake the work with one lane open	13%
Business impacts	13%
School travel	12%
Request for additional trains	9%
Sports and other commitments	8%
Night work request	7%
Access to surf club	7%
All emergencies	6%
Open morning and evening peak times	5%
Other work suggestions	5%
Emergencies – bushfires	5%
Request to undertake the work school holidays	5%
Work commitments	4%
Childcare	4%
Emergency access to medical/aged care and hospital	4%
Request to do the work as is	4%
Compensation	2%
Cost of petrol	2%
Request for detailed plans	2%
Request for shuttle buses	2%
One six, seven or eight week closure	2%
Weekends	1%
Tourism	1%
Noise impacts	1%

Note – Percentages do not add up to 100 as most responses from the community covered multiple themes/ issues/ concerns, each type of comment was recorded and categorised.

As shown in Table 2, the most frequent type of responses/ four issues were:

- Extended travel time
- Rescheduling works to winter
- Requests to undertake the work with one lane open
- Impact to local businesses.

The top issue raised was the extension of travel times by approximately 45 minutes per trip around commuting to work, school and other activities. The community also raised concerns about the strain on their personal and work lives that the extended travel time will cause, and the potential impacts upon the surrounding road network.

The second highest issue was with the suggested timing of the proposal, with a preference for works during winter to avoid impacts upon tourism, businesses and reducing the emergency risks around bushfires.

Feedback was also received about the extended travel time for volunteer members travelling to local surf clubs for lifesaving patrols and also emergency rescue operations.

The third most common feedback topic was to request for work to be carried out with one lane open, allowing residents access to the road under modified traffic conditions and not adding significant travel time.

The fourth highest issue raised was the impact on the operation and viability of local businesses during the closure period. The community raised concerns that local businesses rely on passing traffic on Lawrence Hargrave Drive for trade. Some businesses commented that the impact to their trade would be reduced if work was completed in one stage, rather than divided into two stages. Others also commented that having two stages of work would potentially discourage tourists to travel along Lawrence Hargrave Drive for an extended period and impact their businesses.

Further explanation of the top 10 feedback categories can be found overleaf in Table 3:

Table 3: Summary of responses and further explanation of the top 10 feedback categories

Topic/Issue	Comment
Travel time	<p>Many respondents were concerned with the extended travel time that would be required for commuters travelling to Sydney for work, travelling to local schools and other activities.</p> <p>The community raised concerns that Lawrence Hargrave Drive provides integral access for medical, dental, pharmaceutical services connecting nursing homes and Helensburgh, and changes to road access could have significant impacts on service delivery.</p>
Winter work	<p>The community stated that full access to Lawrence Hargrave Drive was integral in summer months as traffic volumes increased due to participation in beach and other summer related activities.</p> <p>The community raised concerns around the timing of the works – with summer being a busy time for businesses, tourism as well as community activities.</p> <p>Feedback from the community suggested moving the works to winter months.</p>
One Lane open	<p>A high number of respondents requested carrying out work with one lane open rather than through a full closure. Some respondents felt that this would have a lower overall impact on motorists and the community than full road closures.</p>
Business impacts	<p>Comments and concerns were raised about the impact that these works would have on the everyday running of local businesses.</p> <p>The community raised concerns that the delays in travel will be disruptive to businesses that rely on this route to fulfil commitments to their customers, which will result in a negative impact on their income and livelihood.</p> <p>Furthermore, there were concerns that local businesses that rely on passing traffic would be negatively impacted by these works.</p> <p>Additional feedback raised that local businesses rely on the summer months as the busiest time of the year and were concerned about this impact.</p>
School travel	<p>Issues were raised concerning Lawrence Hargrave Drive's importance as an integral route for school aged children to commute to and from school, increasing the travel time to almost two hours each day.</p>
Additional trains	<p>The community requested additional express train services as an alternative for those community members relying on this route to travel to Sydney for work.</p>
Sports and other commitments	<p>Respondents noted that routes to Saturday morning sport in the Northern Illawarra area accessed directly via Stanwell Park will be impacted by the closure, with delays adding on additional travel time.</p>
Night work request	<p>A number of comments were concerned with a 24 hour closures and the impact on road access, and instead recommended completing the work at night.</p>
Surf club	<p>A number of comments were raised mentioning the significant impact on time and economic costs to support the local surf lifesaving club at Stanwell Park. Concerns were raised for volunteers working as local lifesavers, and the extended travel time not allowing them to meet their patrol commitments.</p>
Emergency services	<p>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.</p>

4. Outcomes

Roads and Maritime acknowledges the high volume of feedback received through the online survey, and stakeholder briefings, and recognises the community's concern about the potential impacts of the proposal to carry out this work.

Roads and Maritime has reviewed all comments and summarised the feedback into eight general themes.

Following this consultation, Roads and Maritime has considered the feedback provided and will not proceed with the original proposal to carry out work under the two stages of four week road closures between February and June 2020.

While the timing and methodology of the work will be confirmed following further consultation with the community, Roads and Maritime has determined that this planned slope repair will not start prior to May 2020.

This is to reflect the feedback provided by the community about the impact of work during summer and to ensure that final details of work, including timing, is provided to the community in advance to allow them to plan around this work.

5. Next steps

Roads and Maritime is revising proposed plans to carry out this work. Current activities include:

- Developing alternative safe options to complete this essential work, while minimising impacts to the community highlighted through initial consultation
- Continuing negotiations with potential contractors
- Monitoring and investigations on Lawrence Hargrave Drive at Stanwell Park to ensure the safety of motorists.

Once these options have been determined, the community will be consulted via a survey. The survey will provide several options for how the work can be carried out. We will also meet with stakeholders through the consultation period. It is expected that the community will be consulted about these options by late November 2019.

It is expected that following a review of feedback from the next stage of community consultation on options to carry out this work and awarding the tender, the details to carry out the work will be provided in early 2020.

Further discussions with emergency services and other key stakeholders will take place as planning for this work continues.

Once details about this work have been confirmed, Roads and Maritime will continue to update the community in a timely manner to ensure there is adequate time to plan around this work.



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