

Community Update

Ingham to Cardwell Range Highway Planning Study



Looking southwest to where the zones of interest commence.

The Department of Transport and Main Roads is undertaking a \$5 million federally funded planning study to identify possible improvements to highway connectivity during the wet season, between the southern approach into Ingham and the foothills of the Cardwell Range.

In June 2009, the department refined the study area into two “zones of interest” based on preliminary engineering, flooding, environmental and cultural heritage assessments.

Both zones of interest deviate west of Townsville Road near Rutledge Street (see left) and connect back to the existing highway at the foothills south of the Cardwell Range.

Since June, the zones of interest have undergone detailed investigation and are now being refined into alignment options. Activities and investigations have included:

- **Cognitive mapping** – Community engagement liaisons from Environment and Behaviour Consultants (EBC) met with landholders identified within the zones of interest to gain their input on the location of potential alignments. Landholders provided information about water flow patterns, flood heights, flora and fauna, soil conditions and land use on their properties and this has been fed back to design team.
- **Landholder workshops** – Landholders identified within the zones of interest recently attended workshops where they met key members of the project team, gained further information on the planning study process and provided feedback to the department.
- **Flood studies** – Flood modelling specialists have developed a model to help determine the number of culverts, bridges and other structures required through the road embankment. Information from the community has been fed into the model to validate it against the 2009 flood.
- **Engineering** – The study team carried out engineering, design and traffic investigations, including an assessment of the John Row Bridge.
- **Indigenous and historical (European) cultural heritage assessments** – A preliminary survey of the zones of interest has been undertaken to identify any sites of cultural heritage significance.
- **Environmental fieldwork** – To lessen the impacts on areas of environmental significance, environmental scientists have conducted flora and fauna surveys and water and soil analysis.
- **Economic impact assessment** – The economic impact assessment report is currently being finalised. It investigates the potential economic impacts of realigning the Bruce Highway, as well as the impacts of construction. The outcomes of the report will be workshopped with the Chamber of Commerce and business community in 2010.
- **Key stakeholder meetings** – The study team has met, and will continue to work closely with, many key stakeholders, including Hinchinbrook Shire Council, CSR, the Tyto Wetlands Steering Committee, aerodrome operators, the Cane Harvesters' Association and sporting clubs within the zones of interest.
- **Public displays** – The department has held public displays at several locations and events around Ingham. More public displays will be held after the alignment options are announced.

When will the alignment options be announced?

The project team hopes to develop the alignment options into distinct corridors by the end of the year. The alignment options will be announced in early 2010. It is anticipated there will be at least one alignment option identified within each zone of interest.



Ripple Creek- Sharp bends will be reduced in the new highway design.

What will happen then?

An extensive consultation period will follow as the department seeks feedback on the alignment options from potentially impacted landholders, key stakeholders, industry representatives, other government and regional bodies and the broader Ingham community.

- All landholders within the zones of interest will receive a letter advising of the location of the alignment options.
- Community engagement consultants from EBC will meet with landholders to obtain feedback on the options.
- The department will undertake further detailed investigations of each of the alignment options.
- On finalisation of the alignment options the department will hold a value management workshop which will help decide the preferred alignment.
- It is anticipated that the preferred alignment will be announced by early 2011.
- The community will continue to be informed about the progress of the planning study through public displays, community updates, websites, workshops and the media.

What is the planning study?

In October 2008, the department commissioned the \$5m federally-funded planning study, which is anticipated to take up to three years to complete. It is the first step towards improving the performance of the highway during the annual wet season.

The primary aim of the study is to find the best option to improve the flood immunity of the Bruce Highway without significantly increasing flooding problems on nearby land. The department is not attempting to "flood proof" the highway, but rather reduce the frequency and duration of road closures caused by flooding.

The study will also look at improving the safety and level of service of the Bruce Highway to accommodate current and future traffic needs (see left). Initially only a two-lane corridor will be required. However, the department will plan for a four lane highway corridor, so an additional two lanes can be built in the future when traffic volumes increase.

Funding has only been made available for the planning study. The timing of any construction work will be determined in the future.

Need more information?

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Email: ingham@ebc.net.au

EBC Website: www.ebc.net.au/ingham

Background information on the study is also available at: www.tmr.qld.gov.au

Preferisci leggere in Italiano l'informazione sullo studio della pianificazione urbanistica da Rutledge Street a Cardwell Range? Per una traduzione in lingua Italiana degli ultimi aggiornamenti per la comunità, contatta il Team-Studio ai numeri sopra indicati.

Please slow down – roadworks safety is your responsibility too.