

Community Update

Ingham to Cardwell Range Highway Planning Study

Three draft alignment options are now available for public comment. The Department of Transport and Main Roads released the draft alignment options in early February marking a new stage for the \$5 million federally-funded planning study. The alignment options aim to improve the flood immunity of the Bruce Highway between the southern approach to Ingham and the foothills of the Cardwell Range.

What is the study about?

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 new highway will be designed to at least halve the duration of highway closures during a severe flood, from 5 days to no more than 48 hours, and will reduce average annual closures to no more than 10 hours. The study will also look at improving the safety and level of service of the Bruce Highway to accommodate current and future traffic needs.

Upon completion of the planning study, the department can apply for funding to construct the preferred alignment sometime in the future. There is no start date for construction at this stage.

These alignments fall within the two zones of interest that were publicly released in June 2009. Each alignment option deviates west of Townsville Road near the aerodrome and connects back to the existing highway near Mount Cudmore Road, at the southern foothills of the Cardwell Range (*see overleaf*).

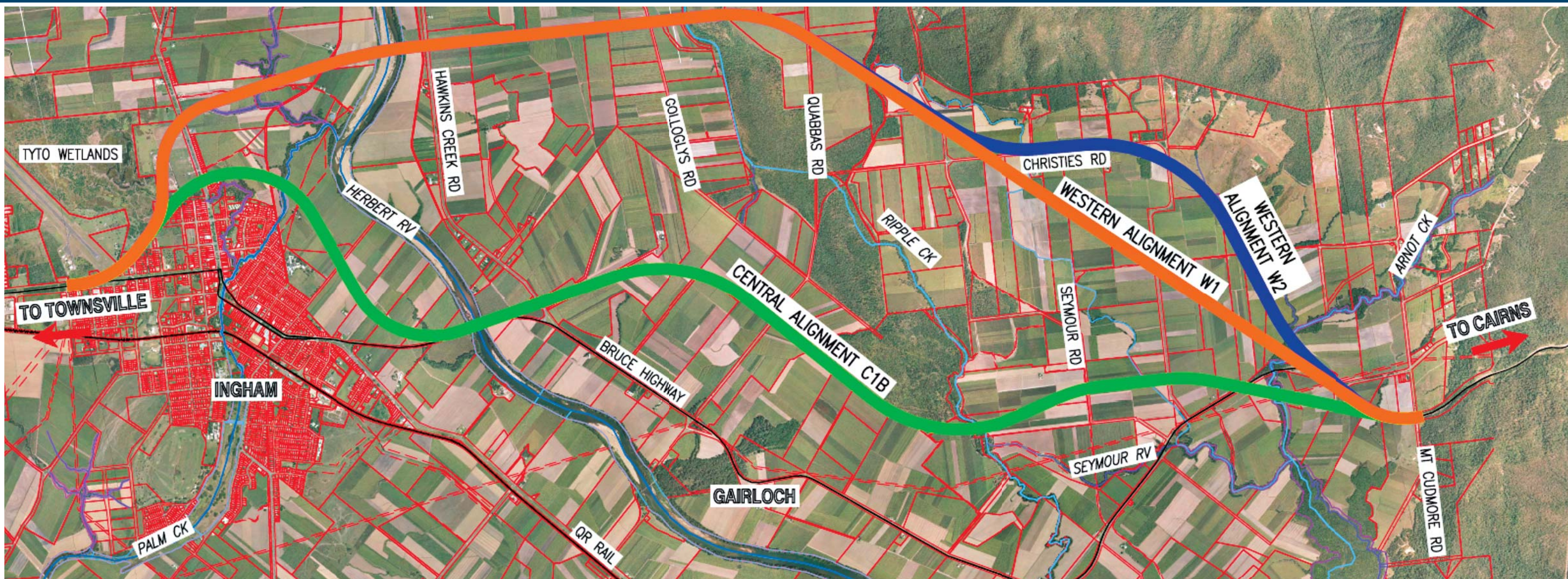
The study team undertook engineering, hydrological, environmental and cultural heritage analysis to refine the zones of interest into alignment options. The alignment options are also the outcome of feedback received from extensive community consultation undertaken in 2009.

This consultation involved public displays of the zones of interest, local stakeholder meetings as well as meetings with landholders identified within the zones of interest. These landholders provided invaluable information about water flow patterns, flood heights, flora and fauna, soil conditions and land use on their properties to assist the design process.



Looking north to where the western alignments cross Ripple Creek near the base of the National Park

Transport and Main Roads



The central alignment (*green*) skirts around the western edge of Ingham, and follows an alignment just west of the existing highway to Ripple Creek. The two other alignment options, Western 1 (*orange*) and Western 2 (*blue*), follow a more western route that heads for the foothills of the National Park near Gangemis Road. From here, the western alignments follow different paths that cross Arnot Creek to connect to the existing highway near Mount Cudmore Road.

How wide will a new highway be? Only two lanes will be built initially; however, the department must plan to acquire a four-lane highway corridor so that an additional two lanes can be built in the future when traffic volumes increase. The land requirement (road reserve) will vary from 80m to 120m depending on the requirements for each alignment option. At this preliminary stage, a nominal requirement of approximately 120m is shown for all options.

What happens now?

Over the next several months, the department will seek feedback on the alignment options from potentially impacted and adjacent landholders, key stakeholders, industry representatives, other government and regional bodies and the broader Ingham community. This feedback will help finalise alignment options and will be used to help decide on the preferred alignment.

Community engagement consultants, EBC, will arrange to meet with all landholders and local stakeholders within the zones of interest. These landholders and local stakeholders will have already received a letter advising them of the location of the draft alignment options. Public displays will be held to obtain feedback from the broader community. The department will also undertake further detailed investigations of each of the alignment options.

How do you choose the final alignment?

On finalisation of the alignment options, the department will hold a value management workshop, which will be attended by members of the study team, key government representatives, technical specialists and other specialists as required.

This workshop will compare the alignment options by bringing together all the information gathered from technical investigations and community consultation. The outcomes of this comparison will help the department to decide on a preferred alignment.

It is anticipated that the preferred alignment will be announced by early 2011. The preferred alignment may be subject to further refinement based on a future detailed design process. **There is no funding for detailed design or construction at this stage.**

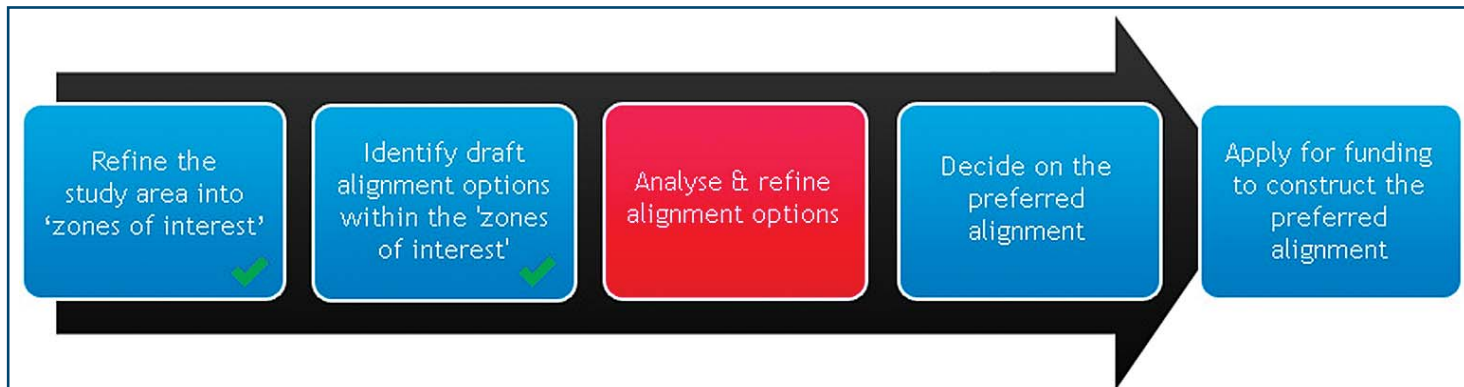
Economic impact assessment

The Department of Transport and Main Roads commissioned an economic impact assessment to analyze the potential economic impacts of realigning the highway out of the centre of town. It compares this to the highway running through town, by using a model of the Ingham economy.

An economic impact assessment report is currently being finalised. It will outline strategies to reduce potential impacts on the business community, as well as identify benefits for the community during and after the construction of a new highway. The outcomes of the report will be workshopped with the Chamber of Commerce and business community in the upcoming months.

Connecting Queensland

The Planning Process



Frequently asked questions (FAQS)

Q. Why can't the existing John Row Bridge be used?

A. The current John Row Bridge does not meet the flooding criteria or current highway design. The bridge remains suitable for local traffic and will be used as part of the existing road network. The only load restriction that applies to the bridge is the movement of a 48 tonne crane.

Q. What will happen to the existing highway?

A. This will be decided in consultation with the Hinchinbrook Shire Council when the preferred alignment is decided. It is likely that the existing highway (or sections of) will be downgraded to a local road but will remain a state controlled road to provide connection to the new highway from other state controlled roads in the area.

Q. How will a new highway cross tram lines?

A. The new highway will overpass (grade separate) any crossing of the cane tramline network; however, all crossing treatments will be discussed in consultation with CSR. Crossings on the existing highway will remain unchanged.

Need more information?

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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