
Lawrence Hargrave Drive – Coalcliff to Clifton

The Roads & Traffic Authority (RTA) signed an alliance agreement with private sector companies on 8 December 2003 to re-connect Lawrence Hargrave Drive between Coalcliff and Clifton. The alliance and the RTA have already begun developing a range of options for repairing the road.

Background

The LHD Alliance team of Barclay Mowlem, Coffey International and Maunsell Australia comprises specialist geotechnical engineers, civil and structural designers, civil engineering contractors and other experts who are working with the RTA to find a 21st century solution to a century old problem.

Options

The team has already developed a number of broad options to repair Lawrence Hargrave Drive. The options currently under investigation are:

Bridge options

This could include bridges either above the road, at the existing road level, seaward of the headlands or between the headlands.

Nearshore options

Such as a breakwater between the headlands.

Combination of options

A combination of one or more of the following – short tunnels through headlands, bridges between headlands, cut and cover tunnels, rock shelters and slope stabilisation techniques.

Slope stabilisation techniques may include rock anchoring, catch fences, slope contouring, rock embankments, catch ditches, retaining walls, drainage modifications and mesh lining.

Expected timetable

In the next month, the alliance team will reduce these broad options to a shortlist of three or four more detailed options. Towards the end of January, these options will be displayed publicly and the community invited to provide feedback on the options.

In March/April it is expected that a preferred option will be publicly displayed as part of an environmental impact assessment process. Construction will begin as soon as possible after this process has been completed. The road will reopen in early 2006.

Key dates

Late January 2004 – short list of options displayed publicly

March/April 2004 – preferred option displayed publicly

Current works on site

Work is continuing on the site, in preparation for the start of major work on the project next year. Several cranes are currently being used to complete further geotechnical drilling and testing of the cliff faces. Drilling will also take place on the rock platforms.

Embankment crack

The RTA has been monitoring a crack found in the under-side of the road opposite the area known as

the Southern Amphitheatre since it first appeared following heavy rain in June. Electronic monitoring and regular surveys have revealed the crack is progressively widening, on average, 5-10mm a day.

Over time, it is expected the materials underneath the road will dislodge and slide into the crack causing the bitumen surface to collapse. When the crack was measured recently, it was more than 50 metres long, 12.5 metres deep and now about one metre wide. This area of instability will be addressed as part of the project.

Public transport

Extra train stops have been organised to assist with travel north and south of the road closure. Train timetable information is available by calling the Transport Infoline 131 500 or Transport Infoline Website www.131500.com.au.

A Greens Northern Coaches express bus service is operating on weekdays between Coalcliff and Helensburgh railway station to meet trains. Buses leave Paterson Rd, Coalcliff at 8.50am, 9.50am, 11.50am and 1.50pm. Buses leave Helensburgh Railway Station at 9.30am, 11.30am, 1.30pm and 4.25pm.

Community and business survey

The RTA engaged Illawarra Regional Information Service (IRIS) to undertake a survey about the effects of the road closure on local businesses and on residents' day to day activities. A report is expected in January. The results will be used in the environmental assessment process and will help guide the use of the community support fund.

Community Consultative Committee

A committee of 16 Northern Illawarra residents and business representatives was formed recently and will meet until the project is completed. The CCC will function as a discussion forum about the different stages of the project as well as considering ways to support the local community throughout the closure.

Community support fund

These funds will be managed by the RTA. The \$2 million fund is currently being used for the following initiatives:

- extra bus services
- advertisements encouraging tourists to the area
- a survey of community impacts of the closure
- design and construction of tourist information bays.
- promotional support for the local events.

Other community support

The RTA has been working consistently with Northern Illawarra business operators and Tourism Wollongong to encourage both tourists and Illawarra residents to the area. The following initiatives have been developed by the partnership and funded by the RTA:

- Development of information bays at Bald Hill and Symbio Wildlife Park highlighting tourist attractions and services in the Stanwell Park area.
- An additional information bay at Bulli Tops to attract visitors to villages south of the closure.
- A new billboard display at Heathcote.
- Provision of 'shop local' promotional materials in Thirroul.
- Promotion of the Centenary of Flight Festival at Stanwell Park.

F6 Freeway

Improvements are taking place on the F6 Freeway between Waterfall and Mt Ousley, to make lane markings more visible.

More information

If you would like more information about the project, contact the Project Manager, Alex Dunstan on 4221 2473 or visit the RTA website at <http://www.rta.nsw.gov.au/lhd>.

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