



# WILLIAM HOVELL DRIVE UPGRADE

## REPORT ON WHAT WE HEARD

**Detailed design work is underway to duplicate the final 4.5 kilometre unduplicated section of William Hovell Drive between Drake-Brockman Drive and John Gorton Drive.**

The William Hovell Drive upgrade will support the growing regions of Molonglo Valley and West Belconnen including the new suburbs of Strathnairn and Macnamara. More than 20,000 vehicles per day travel on this section of road and this will increase as the area continues to grow. This project will improve safety for all road users with on-road cycle lanes and an off-road shared path included in the design.

A draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Development Application (DA 202138722) were submitted concurrently in July 2021 with public notifications open until 30 September 2021. Additional community consultation on this project was undertaken from **8 November to 19 December 2021**.

### Key features of the designs

- Duplication of 4.5 kilometres of William Hovell Drive to complete its duplication from the Glenloch Interchange through to Drake-Brockman Drive.
- A new nearly seven-kilometre, three-metre wide asphalt off-road shared path along William Hovell Drive between Drake-Brockman Drive and Bindubi Street.
- On-road cycle lanes in both directions.
- A new signalised intersection of Drake-Brockman Drive/Kingsford Smith Drive and William Hovell Drive.
- Formalising access into the Old Weetangera Cemetery.
- Improving and enhancing the Bicentennial National Trail underpass and approaches to minimise conflict between users, particularly in areas where the BNT interacts with the shared path.
- Construction of nine architecturally designed retaining walls ensuring works remain within the road reserve and limit impacts on sensitive environmental areas.

## THE CONVERSATION

**We held a conversation online and face to face from Monday 8 November to Sunday 19 December 2021.**

The online engagement was via a feedback form and live question and answer forum on YourSay. Feedback was particularly sought in relation to the alignment of the off-road shared path and the use of open space (including the off-leash dog area) adjacent to the road reserve near Hawker

The community were invited to meet the project team at two pop-ups on **Saturday 27 November** (for the wider community) and **Monday 29 November 2021** (for Hawker residents). These pop-ups provided opportunities for questions to be asked and discussions to be held about various elements of the project.

Members of the local community also provided feedback via email.



## WHO WE ENGAGED

**Feedback was received primarily from local residents and those who regularly use the recreational corridors alongside William Hovell Drive (the green space in Hawker as well as the two nature reserves).**

We also received submissions from key stakeholders including the Belconnen Community Council, Conservation Council ACT and the ACT Equestrian Association. A presentation was given to the Belconnen Community Council on **Tuesday 14 December 2021**.

We received 50 completed feedback forms. 54 per cent of those who filled out the feedback form told us they use the green space located between the back of Hawker and William Hovell Drive. Of those who use it, 80 per cent are there for exercise/informal sport with 32 per cent making use of the off-leash dog area.

The majority of respondents were in the 35-54 age group (50 per cent).

In addition to the feedback forms, we received 15 emails and spoke to around 60 people at the pop-up sessions.

### Key insights from the community

#### Location of the shared path

1. The majority of feedback from the community was in relation to the proposed location of the shared path. There was support for moving the path further away from the dog off-leash area and Hawker residences.
2. There was a preference for the shared path to be relocated to the western side of William Hovell Drive.

#### Road upgrades

3. The need to signalise the intersection of Drake-Brockman Drive was queried with some respondents believing it to be unnecessary with the potential to negatively impact traffic flow.
4. A barrier separating the two directions of traffic was preferred to improve road safety.

#### Access to the nature reserves

5. There was concern about the removal of public access to the dirt carpark on the eastern side of William Hovell Drive with the community eager to understand more about the proposed alternate access to the Kama Nature Reserve from Whitlam.

#### Environmental impacts

6. There was strong support for ensuring the alignment of the road and the shared path minimised impact to and loss of trees and native vegetation with any new plantings to be natives with a variety of sub-species.
7. A number of pieces of feedback referenced the importance of wildlife corridors so wildlife could move freely and safely between the two nature reserves.
8. Local residents were interested in noise mitigation and the noise monitoring undertaken to date with a desire to see noise monitoring undertaken during a period more reflective of 'normal' traffic conditions.



## WHAT'S NEXT?

**The project team has reviewed all feedback and will be individually responding to those who asked questions as part of the engagement process.**

In addition, we have updated the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) section of the YourSay page to respond to the main questions and concerns raised by respondents.

The following changes have been made to the design in response to feedback received:

- the alignment of the off-road shared path between Drake-Brockman Drive and the underpass adjacent to Hawker has been relocated to the western side of William Hovell Drive (away from residences and the off-leash dog walking area). The ACT Government will mitigate the conflicts on the Bicentennial National Trail and equestrian users in the design as much as possible.
- following further discussions with the ACT Conservator of Flora and Fauna, additional measures will be implemented to facilitate movements of wildlife between The Pinnacle and Kama nature reserves.

Still to be finalised are:

- additional noise monitoring activities were undertaken in February 2022 with the analysis currently underway ahead of confirming the necessary noise mitigation treatments
- a landscaping plan which will include trees required for removal and how they will be offset with additional plantings (noting 59 mature trees have been identified for removal and will be replaced with 590 new trees, at a ratio of 1:10)
- a construction methodology to minimise traffic disruption which will be undertaken as part of the procurement for a construction contractor.

The next step for this project is the submission of the revised EIS to support the Impact Track DA. Progress of this project is subject to both planning approval processes. There is an investment of \$63.25 million for construction, jointly funded by the ACT and Australian Governments. Updates will continue to be provided via the YourSay page.



## Key Timings

**July 2021:** the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Development Application (DA 202138722) were submitted with public representations invited until 30 September 2021.

**19 October 2021:** presentation given to the Belconnen Community Council.

**8 November 2021:** further engagement commenced with the local community via YourSay.

**19 December 2021:** the YourSay engagement closed.

**March 2022:** What We Heard report released [**We are here**].

**March 2022:** submission of the revised Environmental Impact Statement.

## THANK YOU FOR YOUR FEEDBACK

**1,900+**

We reached 1,961 people via YourSay Conversations.

**2**

We held two pop-ups for the local community.

**50**

We received 50 completed feedback forms.

**15**

We received 15 emails containing around 50 items of feedback.

**50**

We sent emails to 50 key project stakeholders.

**29,000+**

We reached 29,315 people via social media.

**60+**

We spoke to around 60 people at our pop-ups.

**<2000**

We delivered letters to around 2000 local residents.