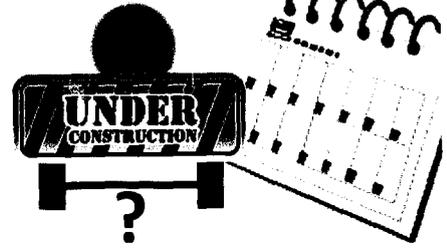


ROADWORKS



Gnangara Road Upgrade

NO MORE EXCUSES OR DELAYS

Hon S O'Brien MLC
Chairman
Standing Committee on Environment & Public Affairs
Parliament House
PERTH WA 6000

10 September 2014

Dear Sir

PETITION 50 – UPGRADE TO GNANGARA ROAD

I refer to your letter dated 19 August 2014 inviting us to make a Submission to the Committee.

I confirm that we have not referred our concerns to the Parliamentary Commissioner for Administrative Investigations.

I attach our Submission for your consideration.

Yours faithfully

Rod Wahl
PETITION PROMOTER

SUBMISSION TO COMMITTEE

BASIS OF PETITION

This Petition arose out of community concern regarding delays to the upgrading of Gngangara Road into a dual carriageway. A Facebook¹ page was developed to explore community views and it quickly achieved over 2000 likes. It also brought many comments from community members as to the inadequacy of the current single lane configuration given the large volume of traffic that uses this road.

OUTLINE OF ISSUES

Gngangara Road has a west to east aspect and commences at the intersection of Alexander Drive in the west and terminates at West Swan Road in the east. Our understanding is that Gngangara Road is classified as an "Other Regional Road" which places it jointly as being the responsibility of the Western Australian Government and the City of Swan.

As early as 15 October 2008 the City of Swan made a Submission to Infrastructure Australia setting out the case for the upgrade of Gngangara Road (see http://www.infrastructureaustralia.gov.au/public_submissions/published/files/454_cityofswan_SUB2.pdf). In that submission the City stated that, at that date, the road was carrying some 18,988 vehicles per day and referred to the expansion of the areas of Ellenbrook and Aveley.

At a meeting of Council on 4 February 2009 the Council endorsed an application for funding to the State and Federal Governments to upgrade the road (see www.swan.wa.gov.au/files/7b364745-5351-41b0-8347.../b7-2.pdf). The report that accompanied that resolution can be found at www.swan.wa.gov.au/files/202abb31-1643-4c75-8ab0.../b7-2att.pdf.

On all occasions the City reiterated the increasing traffic volume issues, the numbers of traffic accidents, the increasing growth of residential areas in the vicinity of Ellenbrook and the need to upgrade the road.

On 3 April 2011 the RACWA issued a media release detailing the top ten riskiest roads (see <http://rac.com.au/cs/groups/public/documents/internetcontent/raccont023575.pdf>). Gngangara Road came number 1 in both Top Ten riskiest intersections and Top Ten riskiest Roads.

Finally on 22 November 2012 Premier Barnett issued a Media Statement announcing that the Government had allocated \$14m to complete the upgrade of Gngangara Road (see <http://www.mediastatements.wa.gov.au/Pages/StatementDetails.aspx?StatId=6818&listName=StatementsBarnett>). In this media Statement Premier Barnett (2012) acknowledged that the traffic volume had increased to over 25,000 vehicles per day and that there were nearly 300 crashes per year.

POSITION LEADING TO COMMUNITY CONCERN

The communities of Ellenbrook, Aveley and surrounding areas continued to increase thus adding to traffic density on Gngangara Road however, the residents were unable to get clear guidance as to when the upgrade would commence. Letters to various Ministers finally elicited a response from the Office of the Minister for Transport when we were advised that the commencement depended upon Motions for excision of portions of the State Forest passing both Houses of State Parliament. No timetable was given for this Motion. After the Tabling of our Petition the Motions were Tabled in both Houses and following the Committees letter dated 19 August the Motions passed both Houses. Subject to Gazettal the work can now commence.

With the passing of the Excision Motions it could be said that our Petition has been answered however there were a number of issues that still concern the Petitioners. In the various documents referred to it was not clear if the Project was fully funded for the whole length of the upgrade, exactly which segments were included in Stage 1 and Stage 2 and what Stage was to be completed first. The community view was that Beechboro Road/Drumpelliar Drive was more important segment to be completed first.

In the Media Statement by the Premier dated 22 November 2012 it was said:

Mr. Buswell said “the Government’s contribution of \$14million would see the remaining 7.9km of Gnangara Road dualed over the financial years 2013-14 and 2014-15. The Government has already provided nearly \$7million to assist the City of Swan - which owns the road - to provide dual carriageway between Beechboro Road North and Drumpellier Drive. This latest funding will see a 3.7km dual carriageway built on Gnangara Road between Alexander Drive and Beechboro Road, completing four lanes from Pinaster Parade to Alexander Drive.”

In the Minister for Transport’s letter (copy attached) it is stated:

“... the State Government is providing \$22.6m towards delivering the much needed upgrade of this road...” and

“The committed funding will assist Council to dual the road between Alexander Drive and Pinaster Parade and is additional to the \$5m already provided”

In an article published in the Echo Newspaper Hon Alyssa Hayden MLC (see <http://echonewspaper.com.au/newsDetail-cid-1756.htm>) is reported to have said:

“The dualing of Gnangara Rd is the final part of this major road infrastructure project that is being delivered in two stages, jointly funded by the Liberal-led Government and the City of Swan,” Mrs Hayden also said “the first stage of the project was the dualing of Gnangara Rd between Alexander Drive and Beechboro Rd North, estimated to cost about \$14 million.”

Mrs Hayden is also reported to have said:

“ the second stage of the upgrade included the dualing of Gnangara Rd between Beechboro Rd North and Drumpellier Drive, which was estimated to cost about \$12.9m.”

On Monday 8 September 2014 Rita Saffioti MLA agreed to seek clarification of our concerns with the City of Swan. Her efforts brought responses that indicated that the upgrade of the whole road from Alexander Drive to Drumpellier Drive is fully funded and work will commence on the First Stage as soon as the excisions are Gazetted. The First Stage that the City is going to complete is the section Beechboro Road to Drumpellier Drive rather than what we were led to understand. This is a great relief to residents as that section is of major importance in easing congestion for residents at the eastern end of Gnangara Road.

Again with this clarification, assuming work commences and is completed, the relief sought in the Petition appears to have been met however, I wish to make the following points to the Committee and encourage you to provide some clarification and assistance to our concerns:

1. There has been undue delay in reaching this point and a total lack of proper community consultation or communication. The spasmodic communication has been contradictory and appears to totally disregard community interest in the upgrade. Part of this is probably attributable to the shared responsibility for this road.
2. Due to the changes to the nature of the suburban density and consequent increased traffic volumes serious consideration needs to be given to changing the designation of Gnangara Road from “Other Regional Road” to a “State Road”.
3. The current speed limit on Gnangara Road is the same as that on Reid Highway and there will be a great need for flashing amber lights to indicate changes in the traffic lights. Our understanding is that these cannot be constructed on an “Other Regional Road” however can be on a “State Road”. This is a great safety concern particularly due to the large number of trucks that use this road.

Footnote:

¹ Facebook site: “Gnangara Road Upgrade – no more excuses or delays”



Our Ref: 53-02563 **Minister for Transport; Finance**

Mr R Wahl

Dear Mr Wahl

Thank you for your letter of 29 July 2014 addressed to the Minister for Transport concerning the condition of Gngangara Road. Minister Nalder has asked that I respond.

As you are aware, Gngangara Road is a local road under the care and control of the City of Swan. However, in recognition of its strategic regional importance, the State Government is providing \$22.6 million towards delivering the much needed upgrade of this road to address community concerns. The committed funding will assist Council to dual the road between Alexander Drive to Pinaster Parade and is additional to the \$5 million already provided to dual the road and install traffic signals between Drumpellier Drive and Pinaster Parade and construct a roundabout at the intersection of West Swan Road and Gngangara Road.

While the State has provided a funding contribution for the above works in partnership with the City of Swan, Council is responsible for actually delivering the road improvements including undertaking all necessary pre-construction works such as obtaining environment approval.

I am advised that detailed design work for the dualling of Gngangara Road between Beechboro Road North and Drumpellier Drive is complete with approval being sought from both Houses of Parliament for the excision of land from State Forest. The process for the excision of land from State Forest is complex and includes significant stakeholder consultation and approval of a number of Government bodies before being presented to both Houses of Parliament prior to Gazettal.

I am pleased to advise that the Executive Council has recently endorsed the proposed forest excision which will be submitted to Parliament by the Minister for Environment for consideration by both Houses. The next session of State Parliament commences next week. The City of Swan has advised Main Roads that it anticipates that construction work will commence on this section of Gngangara Road within two weeks of the Parliamentary approval.

Thank you for taking the time to write to the Minister regarding these matters.