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## Minister for Transport; Planning

Your ref: Petition 093  
Our ref: 72-17484

Hon M Swinbourn MLC  
Chair  
Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs  
Parliament House  
4 Harvest Terrace  
WEST PERTH WA 6005

Dear Mr Swinbourn

### **PETITION NO. 93 – BUNBURY OUTER RING ROAD**

I refer to your letter dated 14 February 2019, providing details on the above petition regarding planning for the Bunbury Outer Ring Road (BORR). I understand you have also provided this petition directly to the Commissioner of Main Roads. Please accept this response on behalf of myself and the agency.

### **Response to Comments Made by the Principal Petitioner**

The existing road reserve has been protected in the Greater Bunbury Region Scheme for many years to ensure that it has remained sufficient for road construction purposes, to all relevant design standards, and including the provision of any noise mitigation measures required to achieve the requirements of State Planning Policy 5.4 (Road and Rail Transport Noise and Freight Considerations in Land Use Planning). The available width is sufficient to accommodate the BORR, which is being planned while taking into account a future increase in the Greater Bunbury population from the current 70,000 to 200,000 people. The BORR will thus cater for population growth for the foreseeable future.

With regard to the notion of housing being developed too close to the reserve, while the State Government cannot comment on advice previously provided by others, I can confirm that Main Roads has consistently sought to highlight the presence of the road reserve through Gelorup, including activities such as providing signs adjacent to the reserve.

The road reserve needed for BORR varies by location and environment. The road reserve depends on the infrastructure requirements at the specific location, for example grade separation, earthworks, drainage, noise mitigation, principal shared path for pedestrians and cyclists and whether service roads are required. Given a number of uncertainties regarding future rail planning surrounding Greater Bunbury, no allowance for rail has been allowed for within the BORR southern corridor through Gelorup. This is on the basis that alternative rail options are available and provision for various rail scenarios as part of the current planning is likely to come with significant additional project cost, with no guarantee this provision will be utilised in the long term.

It should be noted that the access strategy for the local road connections to the project is still to be finalised and is subject to further community consultation. Current proposals include a bridge to take Yalinda Drive over BORR, the design of this bridge, including any requirements for lighting, is yet to be finalised. In addition, it is proposed to extend Calinup Road southwards to an intersection on Bussell Highway, which provides access to Bussell Highway to travel both north and south, including for trucks using the existing sand mine.

With respect to concerns of bushfire risk in the area, I can confirm that the project team has met with the Shire of Capel and local stakeholders to discuss road access issues and ensure residents have access to both emergency services and a means to escape their homes in the event of a fire. Further discussions will be held, including with the Department of Fire and Emergency Services.

Main Roads is aware that the road reserve for the southern section includes environmental values that are considered Matters of National Environmental Significance by the Commonwealth Department of the Environment and Energy, in particular the recent elevation in the conservation status of the Western Ringtail Possum to Critically Endangered. This is a key consideration in seeking environmental approval for the project.

As part of the environmental referral, it is necessary to consider whether there are feasible alternatives with lesser environmental impact. An alternative southern investigation corridor has been identified and comprehensive environmental site surveys are being undertaken in both this and the existing road reserve to inform the way forward. Main Roads anticipates making a final determination on which corridor will be referred for environmental review in the coming months and will communicate this to the community reference groups, and the wider community, as a matter of priority.

To successfully receive approval from the Environmental Protection Authority, Main Roads will have to demonstrate that it has thoroughly considered and accounted for all matters relating to the environmental and public health impacts of the project. As such, planning for BORR will account for the cogent matters raised in Ms Stone's correspondence, including any potential effects to the water table or rainwater quality.

### **Response to Comments Made by the Tabling Member**

The BORR project will deliver a vital piece of infrastructure that will provide a safer and more efficient road system and ensure ongoing connectivity for the south west of our State. This project is moving through the Infrastructure Australia assessment process and is included on their list of Priority Projects.

Consultation on BORR during its initial planning stages, which included liaising with the Bunbury community, indicates that the project is generally supported. Main Roads understands that the City of Bunbury, and Member for Bunbury, aim to promote the city as a destination, not simply a stopping point on the way further south.

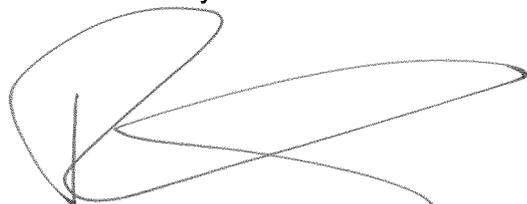
Notwithstanding this, in response to comments made by the City of Bunbury at a recent meeting regarding the interchange layout at Forrest Highway and BORR, Main Roads will investigate the suggestions made to assess whether changes can be made that address the concerns raised, whilst not compromising the wider objectives of the project.

As stated above, the reserve width is sufficient to construct BORR and, following requests from the Member for South West Region, Hon Adele Farina MLC, Main Roads conducted an assessment on the possibility of upgrading existing local roads to achieve BORR's objectives. This assessment concluded that this option would be unsuitable for the project as existing local road reserves, such as Ken Bell Road and Skipplings Road, are typically 20 metres wide and insufficient for construction of a freeway standard road.

The project team is committed to encouraging and considering community and stakeholder views as the project moves forward. The Bunbury Outer Ring Road Southern Community Reference Group is scheduled to meet on several more occasions during 2019 and will help to identify issues and opportunities to inform the project's planning and development process. In addition, community drop-in information sessions have been held with further sessions planned during 2019.

Thank you for writing regarding this matter.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Rita Saffioti', written over a faint, large, stylized watermark or background graphic.

**HON RITA SAFFIOTI MLA  
MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT**

02 APR 2019