

Main Roads says clearing approved

Main Roads WA

Dean Roberts, Spokesperson

THE UPGRADE of Toodyay Road needs to cater for local, commuter, tourist and heavy vehicle traffic.

The key driver for this work is to ensure that the staged development and construction continuously improves the safety performance for the growing traffic along this route.

To ensure these improvements balance the needs of the community, environment and safety of road users, Main Roads WA established a Community Reference Group (CRG) in 2017.

This group was open to all interested parties to join and was advertised in public notices.

It consists of interested groups from across the community, including three environmental groups.

The group is run by an independent facilitator and has terms of reference defined and agreed to by all members.

Safety issues identified on Toodyay Road include its narrow width, significantly substandard horizontal and vertical geometry, and lack of overtaking opportunities.

Very poor sight lines are evident with blind crests and curves, particularly near intersections.

Consequently, the road needs to be

upgraded and realigned in parts to address these safety concerns.

Main Roads presented the CRG with draft designs for each of the proposed upgrade sections, and changes were made to reflect feedback where appropriate.

Over a four-year consultation period, the designs were engineered, presented and explained to the CRG which led to its agreement for the current design.

Main Roads has obtained all necessary regulatory approvals, including a clearing permit from the WA Department of Water and Environmental Regulation, which included opportunities for public input.

As with other projects, Main Roads will continue where possible to refine designs agreed to by the CRG to further mitigate environmental impacts.

This typically considers targeted adjustments to batter slopes and associated earthworks, drainage and use of guardrails.

Main Roads has offered to 'peg out' the design as future funding is allocated and conduct a 'walk through' with interested parties.

Revegetation using local native plant species will make an important contribution to ecological connectivity in the area.

Artificial nesting boxes have been proven to result in more successful breeding and fledgling survival of Black Cockatoos than natural hollows.