



**Deputy Premier
Treasurer; Minister for Transport; Tourism**

Our ref: 72-50183

Dr A St John
info@SASTR.com.au

Dear Dr St John,

TOODYAY ROAD UPGRADES

Thank you for your email dated 5 February 2024, addressed to the Minister for Mines and Petroleum; Ports; Road Safety, Hon David Michael MLA, regarding the proposed upgrades to Toodyay Road. As this is a matter for the Transport Portfolio, your email was forwarded to the Deputy Premier; Minister for Transport, Hon Rita Saffioti MLA, for consideration. The Deputy Premier has asked that I respond.

I understand that the Safe and Scenic Toodyay Roads (SASTR) group has engaged extensively with Main Roads regarding these matters for several years; this has included meetings with Main Roads' Managing Director, Mr John Erceg, and multiple site visits with three Wheatbelt Regional Directors.

As you will be aware, the project is required to address significant safety risks associated with the Wheatbelt section of Toodyay Road following 30 major crashes in the decade between 2011 and 2021, which resulted in death or serious injury.

The design, which has evolved over more than seven years, comprises road widening to meet current standards with realignments where necessary to improve sight lines and remove sub-standard curves. Intersection improvements include turning pockets and enhanced sight lines, and additional overtaking lanes to reduce conflict between heavy and light vehicles. The location is constrained by private landholdings on both sides of the road and a combination of native and non-native vegetation, which will necessitate some clearing.

Where possible, Main Roads has incorporated design feedback from community groups and stakeholders, including SASTR, to reduce the vegetation clearing requirement. Most notably, this includes a reduction of the proposed cut depth at the Sandplain Road and Salt Valley Road intersections by approximately 50 per cent, which will enable retention of several mature wandoo trees and cockatoo breeding trees.

Other changes include incorporation of a single span bridge over Jimperding Brook to retain water flow, a reconsideration of the design at the intersection of Fernie Road to retain a mature wandoo tree and modifications to the design of the section of road between Dryandra and Morangup Roads to retain a population of sun orchids.

I have been advised that the agency has reviewed your alternative proposal for the upgrades. However, with the suggested major realignment and the splitting of carriageways this potentially introduces additional safety risks, which undermines the safety-driven objective of

the project. In addition, as your proposal is well outside the current project boundary, extensive additional land acquisition and new environmental assessments and approvals would be required.

Furthermore, your proposal does not consider the technical aspects of road design and construction, including but not limited to current Australian guidelines and standards, horizontal and vertical geometric changes, sight distances, various services impacts, ground conditions and other constructability considerations.

Please be assured that the State Government acknowledges your longstanding interest in this project and are committed to improve Toodyay Road to permanently address the safety risks on one of the most dangerous sections of road in the Wheatbelt Region.

Thank you for writing regarding this matter.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Hay-Hendry". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

DAVID HAY-HENDRY
SENIOR POLICY ADVISER

22 APR 2024