

Bunbury Outer Ring Road Frequently Asked Questions

Project Overview

What is the Bunbury Outer Ring Road?

The long term vision for the Bunbury Outer Ring Road (BORR) is a 27km, rural freeway standard road, which will directly connect Forrest Highway to Bussell Highway.

BORR is in three sections – northern, central and southern, as follows:

- The northern section is between Forrest Highway and Boyanup Picton Road.
- The 4km central section was completed in May 2013, and connects Boyanup Picton Road to South Western Highway south of Bunbury (near Bunbury Airport). A 3km extension of the Bunbury Port Access Road (Willinge Drive) was built at the same time.
- The southern section is between South Western Highway and Bussell Highway.

What is BORR designed to achieve?

Constructing the northern and southern sections of BORR will further improve access to Bunbury Port. Travel times, freight efficiency and road safety will be enhanced, with regional traffic better separated from local movements. Access to existing and proposed industrial areas east of Bunbury will also be improved.

Currently, all traffic travelling between Forrest Highway and Bussell Highway has to pass through 13 sets of traffic lights and one rail crossing. By creating a free flowing rural freeway, BORR will:

- Reduce travel time between the north and south of Bunbury by up to 15 minutes
- Create a safer road system
- Reduce local congestion
- Create more reliable journey times for all road users
- Remove a significant number of trucks from local roads
- Improve long term access for the Bunbury Port
- Improve access for visitors to the South West
- Improve safety and urban amenity for local residents and tourists
- Strengthen Greater Bunbury's position as a regional industrial hub for the South West Region and as support to the Fremantle and Kwinana Ports
- Extend the service life of existing arterial roads bypassed by trucks, minimising future local upgrade treatments required
- Facilitate socio-economic growth and integrated development in greater Bunbury and South West Region

Why is BORR needed?

There is already significant pressure on the road network around Bunbury, and this is projected to increase due to a number of factors:

- Population growth in Greater Bunbury;
- Proposed development in Wanju, Waterloo and surrounding areas; and
- Increased freight movements, due to mining activity and associated growth in Bunbury Port activities.



The existing road network in and around Bunbury supports a range of vehicle movements, including freight and light vehicles, regional and local traffic. These combinations of vehicles on local road networks impact on road safety and amenity.

As a Port City, Bunbury plays an important role in the WA economy. Twelve per cent of the world exports of alumina leave from the Port of Bunbury. The current access to Bunbury Port is problematic, and impacts on freight efficiency. Currently, vehicles travelling between Bussell Highway and Forrest Highway have to navigate 13 sets of traffic lights and one rail level crossing.

When complete, between 10,000 and 15,000 vehicles per day on average are expected to use the new road. These regional / port movements would otherwise mix with local traffic on local roads.

Project Overview

What is the planning history of BORR?

The original concept for Bunbury Outer Ring Road was developed in the early 1970s.

The central section was completed in 2013, in conjunction with Port Access Road (Willinge Drive). The central section links South Western Highway (south) to Boyanup Picton Road, and provides improved access to the Port from areas south east of Bunbury.

A northern section alignment was included in the Greater Bunbury Regional Scheme but has recently been reviewed. See 'Why was the BORR moved further east?' below.

The road reserve for the southern section has been protected in the Greater Bunbury Region Scheme for many years, however, it contains Matters of Environmental Significance and, as such, is being assessed along with an alternative investigation corridor. See 'Why is Main Roads investigating an alternative alignment for the southern section?' below.

Project Overview

Project Funding

How is the BORR funded?

In May 2017, \$12.5 million of joint funding was announced by the Australian (\$10 million) and the State (\$2.5 million) governments to complete the planning and project development for the unbuilt sections (northern and southern) of the BORR. This work is to be completed by the end of 2019.

In April 2018, \$560 million of Federal funding was committed towards construction. State Government funding will be provided, subject to normal State Budget processes, with road project costs being determined as part of business case development.

Southern Section Alternative Alignment

Why is Main Roads investigating an alternative alignment for the southern section?

Land for the southern section of Bunbury Outer Ring Road has been reserved within the Greater Bunbury Region Scheme for many years. It contains habitat for the Western Ringtail Possum, Black Cockatoo and Banksia Woodland Threatened Ecological Community which are Federally listed. In May 2018, the Commonwealth changed the status of the Western Ringtail Possum under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act from Vulnerable to Critically Endangered. This is the highest classification level possible before a species is declared extinct.

When referring a project for environmental assessment it is necessary to demonstrate that there are not feasible alternatives with lesser environmental impact. As a result of the reclassification of the Western Ringtail Possum and the other Matters of National Environmental Significance, the project team is undertaking additional investigations to support the environmental referral process.

An alternative corridor has been identified for investigation, within which environmental surveys will be undertaken in addition to those in the existing corridor.

The project team is consulting with landowners potentially affected by this alternative corridor. Following the completion of this consultation and the environmental surveys the findings will be presented to the landowners, the Community Reference Groups established for the BORR project, and the wider community.

Northern Section Alignment

Why was BORR moved further east?

In early 2017, Main Roads commenced an alignment selection planning study for the northern section of the BORR. This involved the investigation of two alignments.

The planning study has now been completed and a preferred corridor that aligns with the proposed future development of Greater Bunbury has been selected. The decision was supported by the Western Australian Planning Commission on 31 May 2018. This corridor, which is further east of the previously considered route, is now the subject of further detailed planning and project development.

The preferred corridor:

- provides an integrated planning solution and defines an outer perimeter for development rather than dividing the future Greater Bunbury footprint;
- more effectively separates high speed regional and freight traffic from local Bunbury traffic improving safety, efficiency and improved port access;
- starts further north and in doing so will improve safety for a number of intersections along the existing Forrest Highway (including Raymond Road, Grand Entrance, and Hynes Road); and

- has the capacity to cater for a future population of up to 200,000 people with 4 traffic lanes whereas previously considered corridors that joined Forrest Highway further south would require more lanes and larger interchanges.

Why can't the red corridor be moved further east?

Moving the red corridor further to the east would increase project cost, increase journey distance and travel times, reduce efficiency and sever land that is proposed to remain rural.

What feedback resulted in the yellow shaded area?

Following feedback from the Shire of Harvey, developers, directly intersected landowners and residents from Meadow Landing, Main Roads proposed the extension of the corridor to include the yellow shaded area. This was supported by the West Australian Planning Commission.

Community engagement

How can people get involved?

The project team is engaging with the community during the planning for the BORR in a number of ways.

Community Reference Groups

There are two community reference groups for BORR, one for the northern/central section and one for the southern section. The membership of the CRGs includes interested community members representing a range of views, who nominated to be part of the CRG. The CRGs meet every month to discuss areas of interest to the group.

Community information sessions

The project team holds community information 'drop in' sessions at local venues within the vicinity of the BORR. These sessions are publicised via the Main Roads website, in the project newsletter, via Main Roads social media pages, by mailouts to the project database, and through print advertisements in local newspapers.

Newsletters and electronic updates

Project updates are sent electronically to the project database.

Information line

Interested community members can contact the project team with any questions by calling the Main Roads Customer Centre on 138 138 and ask to speak with a member of the Bunbury Outer Ring Road team.

Enquiries

Enquiries can be sent via email to the project team at enquiries@BORRteam.com.au, or via 138 138.

Current Project Status

Planning and development to determine the alignment, the interchanges and local connections is currently progressing.

This project is moving through the Infrastructure Australia assessment process and is included on its list of Priority Projects.

