

MOUNT JOHNS FLOOD IMMUNITY PROJECT



The Northern Territory Government allocated funds in the 2015/2016 budget to investigate ways to improve flood immunity in the Mount Johns Valley and Desert Springs areas of Alice Springs.

Currently, when the Todd River floods residents and businesses in these areas are unable to access the Alice Springs CBD or Stuart Highway, as the low level Casino (Taffy Pick) causeway and Tuncks Road floodway are closed.

The only available access to the area is through a Power and Water service road that is opened to the public during critical events. This private service road is designed for access to Power and Water Corporation sites only and is not built to Australian Road safety standards.

Stage One of the consultation was completed in September 2015 and included a number of one-on-one meetings with key stakeholders to obtain a greater understanding of known issues, advice on previous studies and cultural sensitivities.

Key findings and discussion notes from this stage of the consultation were made available to the concept design team to consider when developing suitable options to address flood immunity in the area and contributed to the identification of five technical design options to improve flood immunity, these being:

Connector Road Options

Option 1: Stephens Road to Sadadeen Road - direct route

This option provides improved year round connectivity via a direct road link. It has no impact on flooding and connects the eastern suburbs of Alice Springs during the larger flood events. New land development opportunities are also created. This option complements and supports the recently released Regional Land Use Plan for the Alice Springs CBD. The order of cost is \$25 million.

Option 2: Stephens Road to Sadadeen Road - eastern route

The alignment of the road would provide access to new land development opportunities but would be a longer route for road users in the existing residential areas. It is a more expensive option, as the connector road is longer. The order of cost is \$39 million.

Option 3: Tuncks Road to Sadadeen Road - via the Power and Water access road

The upgrading of the existing temporary access road could be developed over time. The opening of a permanent new road on the alignment is dependent on Territory Generation relocating; therefore in the foreseeable future the route would remain as is with minor upgrades and would only be opened during flood events. The connecting local road network (including Tuncks Road) would have to be upgraded. There would be no land development opportunities created. The initial works (minor upgrades) would cost \$500 000; to open as a permanent road after Territory Generation has relocated the order of cost is \$20 million.

High Level Bridge

Option 4: Stephens Road

A new high-level bridge would replace the existing Taffy Pick causeway. The local road network becomes inundated around an Annual Recurrence Interval (ARI) of 20 years (flood level with a probability of around 1 in 20 years). Even though a bridge would improve access, it would not provide access during any significant flood event, unless significant works are undertaken on the connecting roads. The order of cost is \$28 million to \$40 million, dependent on the final alignment.

Option 5: Tuncks Road

The construction of a high level bridge at the Tuncks Road causeway would create a significant backwater in larger flood events and is therefore the least preferred option. Also, due to the low-lying local road network, there would be limited access beyond a 20 year flood event. The order of cost is \$33 million.

While Option 1 was identified as the preferred technical design option by the project team, the final decision was subject to the outcome of community consultation with the wider community of Alice Springs.

Stage Two community consultation was completed in August 2016.

Community feedback from the consultation indicated that the preferred option for flood immunity is Option 1, a connector road from Stephens Road to Sadadeen Road via direct road link.



Next steps:

While no plans are currently in place to commence work on the connector road, the works will be considered within future funding programs. Sadadeen Connector Road is listed in the 10 year infrastructure plan as a longer term priority.

The key findings from this community consultation, as well as the key recommendations of the Alice Springs Flood Mitigation Advisory Committee will be taken into consideration during the development of engineering concept designs for the duplication of the Stuart Highway through Heavitree Gap.

What you told us:

Stage Two community consultation was held over four weeks and included meetings with key stakeholders, community displays, an insert in the Centralian Advocate, letters to businesses in Desert Springs and Mount Johns, online activity and media engagement.

The five technical design options presented to the community were:

Connector Road

Option 1: Stephens Road to Sadadeen Road - direct route

Option 2: Stephens Road to Sadadeen Road - eastern route

Option 3: Tuncks Road to Sadadeen Road - via the Power and Water access road

High Level Bridge

Option 4: Stephens Road

Option 5: Tuncks Road

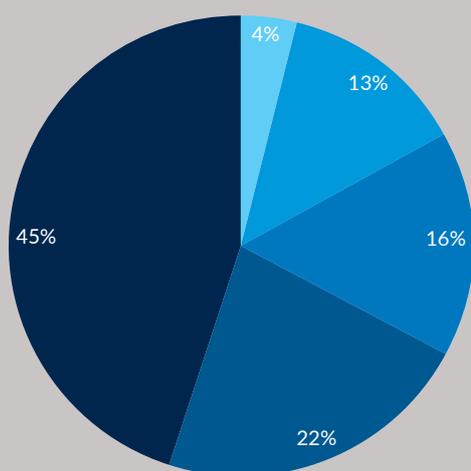
Key Findings

- All key stakeholders preferred a connector road to improve flood immunity
- Members of the public were aware of the project and not surprised by the options
- 119 written response were received
- 45% of written responses indicated Option 1 as their preferred option
- 83% preferred a connector road (Options 1, 2 or 3)
- 44% indicated that they resided within the impacted area, of these 75% preferred a connector road

Approximately 100 people attended the public information displays at Alice Plaza and the Yeperenye Shopping Centre, consistent comments raised by visitors to these displays included:

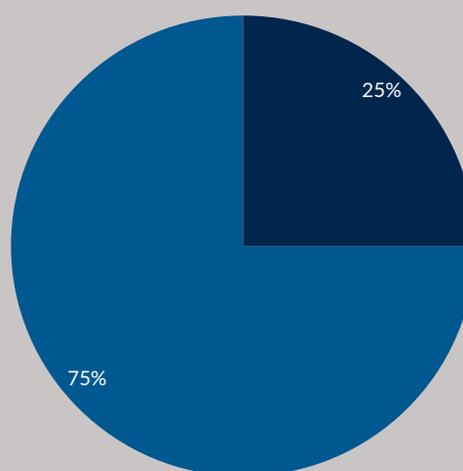
- Concern that the build-up of sand, trees and grass was a contributing factor to the Todd flooding beyond its banks, long term residents recalled a time when the "Todd had steep banks"
- Concern that potential additional traffic from a connector road would contribute to traffic congestion in Sadadeen Road
- Support for the removal of the Tuncks Road floodway, once a solution was in place
- The opportunity for land development and future planning with the opening up of land through the connector roads, Options 1 & 2

Consultation responses



- Option 1: Stephens Road to Sadadeen Road - direct route
- Option 2: Stephens Road to Sadadeen Road - eastern route
- Option 3: Tuncks Road to Sadadeen Road - via the Power and Water access road
- Option 4: Stephens Road
- Option 5: Tuncks Road

Preference of respondents within impacted area



- Option 1,2 or 3 - Connector Road
- Option 4 or 5 - High Level Bridge