

Improving Safety and Access on the Stuart Highway at Pinelands and Holtze

Consultation report (Stage 2) redacted

Prepared by True North Strategic Communication
January 2019

Version No.	Issue Date	Prepared by:	Approved/reviewed:	Date
V1	21 January 2019	B McCue	C Lovelock (review)	10/01/2019
V2	24 January 2019	B McCue	C Lovelock (approved)	06/08/2019
V3 - redacted	21 January 2020	C Lovelock	C Kalase (reviewed)	21 /01/2020

Recipients are responsible for eliminating all superseded documents in their possession

Consultation statement

True North Strategic Communication is guided by the principles of good community engagement, based on people's level of interest and concern as outlined by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2).

Our role is to provide stakeholders and the general public with objective information, so they can provide informed feedback on consultation projects. We give people the opportunity to provide input that is balanced and reflective of the range of community views to independently provide the best possible guidance to decision makers.

Our practice reflects professional standards and ethical standards for human research including anonymity, confidentiality, record storage and keeping people informed.

Table of Contents

Executive summary	1
Background.....	3
Stage 1 consultation	4
Stage 2 consultation	4
Consultation	7
Methodology	7
Key messages delivered to stakeholders	11
Consultation extension	11
Youth Rehabilitation Precinct	11
Media during consultation	12
Findings	13
All stakeholder feedback	13
Key stakeholder meetings	20
Next steps.....	22
Appendix	23

Executive summary

The Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics (DIPL) engaged traffic engineer consultants Tonkin to prepare a concept design to upgrade the Stuart Highway at Pinelands and Holtze to improve safety and access. The local community and industry were consulted to inform the design. True North Strategic Communication (True North) consulted with 34 stakeholders in 2016/17 (Stage 1) and with 83 stakeholders in 2018 (Stage 2). Stage 2 consultation on was open for seven weeks from 14 September to 2 November 2018.

Stage 1 consultation (13 December 2016 – 30 January 2017)

Stakeholders were asked for general feedback on issues in the area and what they would like to see as part of an upgrade to the Stuart Highway in Pinelands. Feedback found stakeholders had concerns with heavy vehicle access to Marjorie Street from Yarrowonga Road, the timing of the Deviney Road signalised intersection and safety at McKinnon Road intersections. Just over half of the stakeholders consulted were in favour of access to Tiger Brennan Drive from Marjorie Street. There were mixed views on the need for another signalised intersection. A number of concerns raised in 2016/17 Stage 1 were echoed in the 2018 Stage 2 consultation.

Stage 2 consultation (14 September 2018 – 2 November 2018)

A concept design was prepared by Tonkin for Stage 2 and presented to stakeholders for feedback. The concept design included:

- the introduction of a new signalised intersection where the Stuart Highway intersects with Mander Road/McKinnon Road
- closing of the median gap on the Stuart Highway opposite to Olive Place and McKinnon Road
- a new local road to link Olive Place and Mander Road in Holtze
- cul de sacs at the end of the service lanes to reduce conflict points at intersections and
- provision for turning lanes off the Stuart Highway into Pinelands industrial area which is frequented by road trains and heavy vehicles.

To target stakeholders and encourage feedback on the design, several methods were used. These included:



- 33 stakeholders lodged feedback via email or telephone
- 42 businesses were doorknocked
- 18 stand-alone meetings were conducted with 39 stakeholders
- 168 letters were sent to landowners advising them of the concept design
- 485 fact sheets were letterbox dropped to businesses in the area
- 562 unique users viewed the dedicated project webpage 658 times
- 3499 people reached by Facebook posts.

Increasing interest into the proposed development of a new Youth Rehabilitation Precinct in Pinelands put extra attention on Stage 2 consultation. There was some confusion with stakeholders on the two being different projects with different teams and different consultation goals. Some stakeholders believed the concept design was designed to cater to the Youth Rehabilitation Precinct instead of to improve safety and access on the Stuart Highway at Pinelands and Holtze.

Key findings

The biggest concern for stakeholders was the proposal to introduce cul de sacs at the end of service lanes to reduce conflict points at intersections followed by the closure of the median gap at Olive Place/McKinnon Road. Of the 83 stakeholders that the project team engaged with, 55 stakeholders and businesses opposed the introduction of cul de sacs.

41 stakeholders and businesses opposed the closure of the median gap at Olive Place/McKinnon Road.

The Mander Road/McKinnon Road signalised intersection attracted a mixed response with seven stakeholders opposing the lights, 16 in favour of the lights and two stakeholders suggesting they should go at the Olive Place/Mander Road intersection.

The Olive Place/Mander Road connection was generally supported with four stakeholders specifically noting they support the connection. One stakeholder opposed the connection and five questioned whether the road was wide enough to accommodate heavy vehicles.

The proposed slip lanes were not a point of conversation during the consultation and were accepted by stakeholders.

A number of other themes were brought up during the consultation including issues with the Stage 1 and Stage 2 consultation approach, timing of the Deviney Road lights, suggestion to continue service roads towards Darwin, safety access and congestion issues, perceived connection to the Youth Rehabilitation Precinct, the McKinnon Road name and request for an exit from Marjorie Street onto Tiger Brennan Drive.

Of the total 83 stakeholders engaged with, 41 stakeholders and businesses were in favour of an exit from Marjorie Street onto Tiger Brennan Drive. The exit from Marjorie Street onto Tiger Brennan Drive was not included in the concept design and was brought up independently by stakeholders.

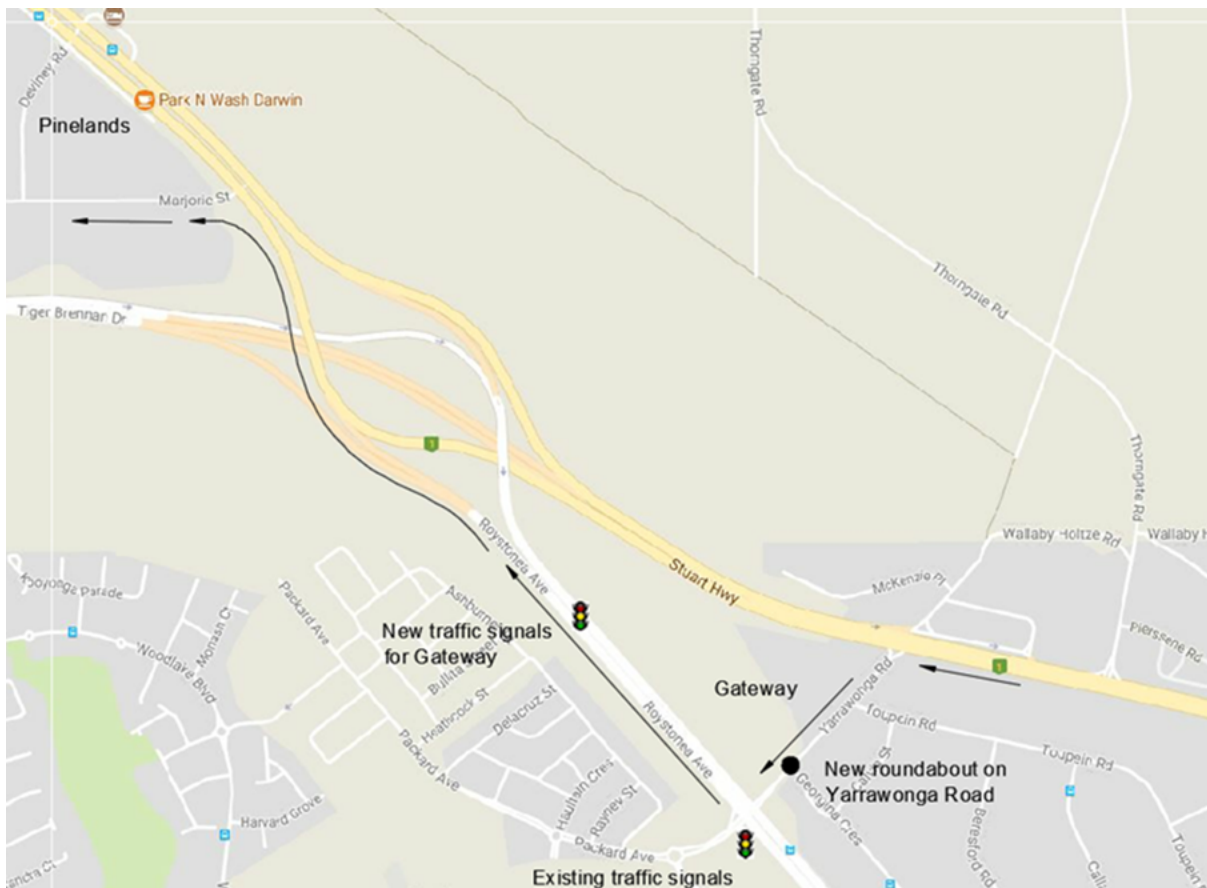
Next steps

When developing the next iteration of the concept design, consideration should be given to an exit onto Tiger Brennan Drive, lights at the Mander Road/McKinnon Road intersection and the timing of the Deviney Road lights. Stakeholders generally did not support the creation of cul de sacs and closure of the Olive Place/McKinnon Road intersection so alternatives to these measures should be considered.

Background

The Pinelands and Holtze precincts are busy industrial and commercial areas southeast of Darwin, where businesses are serviced daily by heavy vehicles and road trains. Prior to the opening of the Gateway Shopping Centre in Yarrowonga, heavy vehicles travelling from the south were able to safely access Pinelands area by turning left into Marjorie Street. This route allowed sufficient distance for heavy vehicles to manoeuvre to the outside lane when approaching Pinelands to make the left turn into Marjorie Street (see image 1).

Figure 1 – Typical path for heavy vehicles accessing Pinelands from the south.



The opening of Gateway Shopping Centre has led to an increase of pedestrian and light vehicle activity of Yarrowonga Road, an environment no longer conducive with heavy vehicle traffic. An alternative safe access for heavy vehicles to access Pinelands is required.

Further to this, with the increase in commuter and business traffic between Darwin and Palmerston, and the number of uncontrolled access points in and out of Pinelands and Holtze industrial precincts, the conflict between through and turning traffic in and out of these precincts has increased.

Safety and access improvements to the Stuart Highway in Pinelands and Holtze is in line with the Northern Territory Government's vision under *Towards Zero Road Safety Action 2018-22*: to create a safer road transport system where no person is killed or seriously injured.

Stage 1 consultation

In 2016, the Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics (DIPL) commenced planning to improve road safety and heavy vehicle access in these areas, to and from Stuart Highway. As part of this process, DIPL gathered feedback from some businesses and road users of Pinelands about how they used local roads, intersections and service lanes, what issues existed, and what improvements they would welcome. 34 resident businesses were consulted with during Stage 1 of the project.

The engagement between 13 December 2016 to 30 January 2017 revealed the following reoccurring themes:

- access to Marjorie Street – many stakeholders said they illegally merge across three lanes of traffic to access Marjorie Street from Yarrowonga Road
- Deviney Road signalised intersection – some comments were received on the efficiency of the traffic lights, particularly the short timing of the right-turn signal from Deviney Road on the Stuart Highway. Some stakeholders suggested a longer slip lane onto the Stuart Highway would help ease the traffic turning left from the Stuart Highway onto Deviney Road.
- concern with McKinnon Road/Mander Road and McKinnon Road/Olive Place intersections – safety was a key concern and feedback revealed many stakeholders would prefer a signalised intersection at the McKinnon/Mander Road intersection
- Tiger Brennan Drive – 51 per cent of stakeholders said Tiger Brennan Drive was underutilised and they would like to see access to Tiger Brennan Drive from Marjorie Street
- signalised intersections – stakeholders had mixed views on the need for signalised intersections as they felt it would slow traffic down, however, people realised that signalised intersections were necessary for safety.

Stage 2 consultation

The goal of the consultation program was to:

- clearly communicate the benefits of the proposed infrastructure improvements, with a specific focus on the safety benefits
- show how previous feedback has informed the preferred concept
- seek feedback on the potential impacts of the preferred concept
- help develop and manage realistic expectations about the project and minimise concern about the proposed changes.

As part of Stage 2 of the project, a concept design was prepared by Tonkin Consulting and released to the public. The concept design included:

- new traffic signal at the Mander Road/McKinnon Road intersection
- new median strip at the Olive Place/McKinnon Road intersection
- connecting Olive Place and Mander Road
- cul de sacs at the end of the service lanes to reduce conflict points at intersections
- creating turning lanes off the Stuart Highway at Deviney Road (inbound only), McKinnon Road South (inbound only) and at the intersection of McKinnon Road North and Mander Road.

A breakdown of the concept design is below:

Image 1: New traffic signal at the Mander Road/McKinnon Road intersection



Image 2: Closure of median gap at Olive Place/McKinnon Road intersection

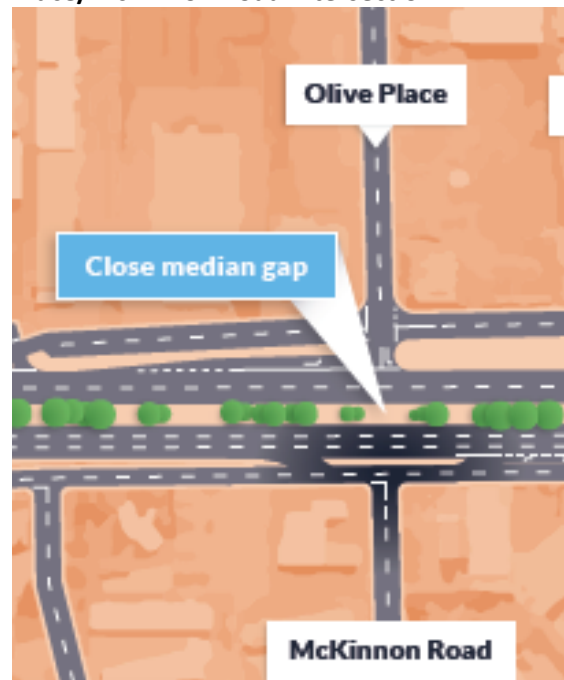
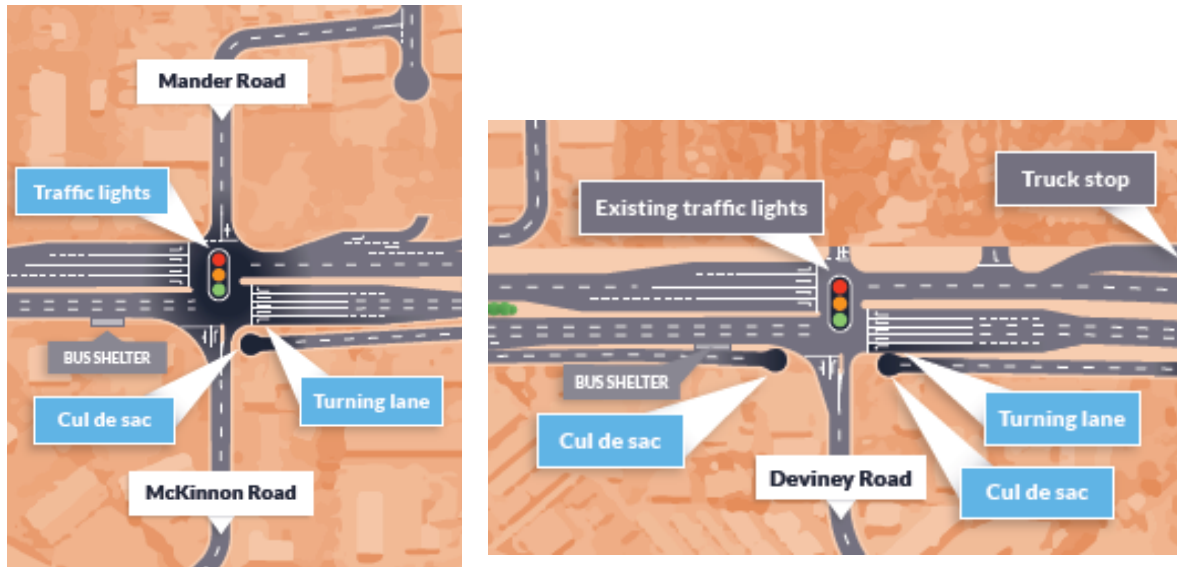


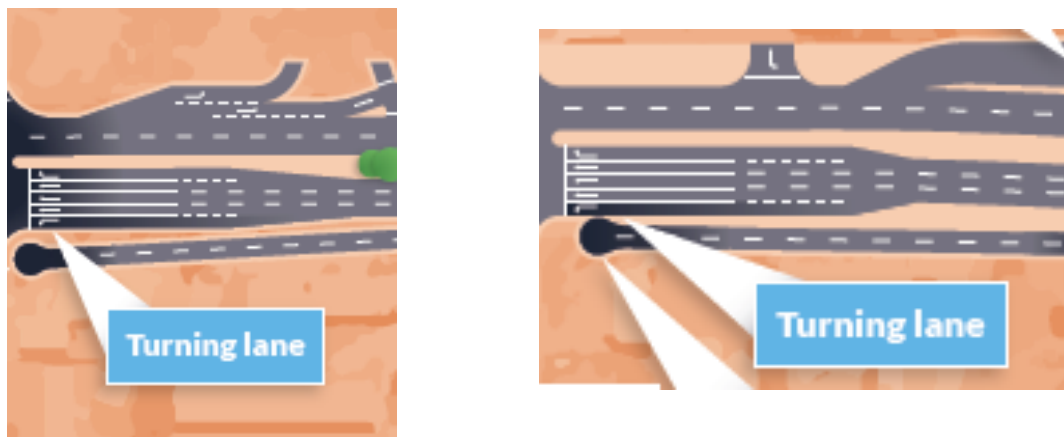
Image 3: Connecting Olive Place and Mander Road



Images 4 and 5: Cul de sacs at the end of the service lanes to reduce conflict points at intersections



Images 6 and 7: Creating turning lanes off the Stuart Highway at Deviney Road (inbound only), McKinnon Road (inbound only) and at the intersection of McKinnon Road and Mander Road



Reporting

True North submitted a weekly report each Friday to DIPL including information on media and communication, summary of work taken, feedback received, and meetings held during the week. Copies of all seven weekly reports is available at Appendix A.

Stakeholder list

A comprehensive stakeholder list was maintained throughout the consultation to keep track of stakeholders and their contact details. The stakeholder list is available at Appendix B.

Consultation

Methodology

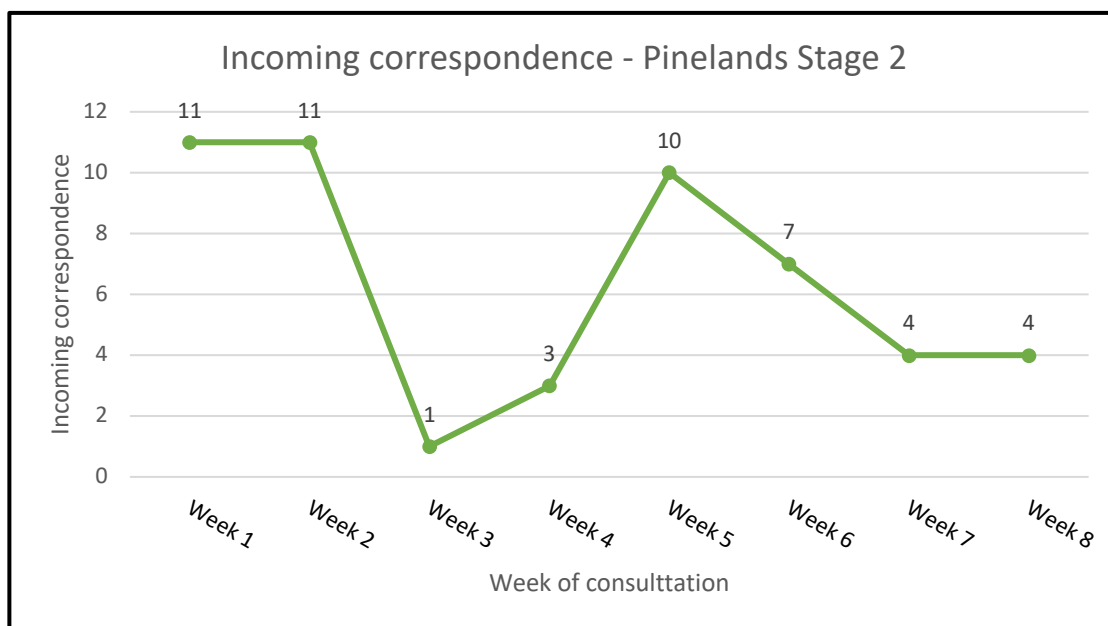
Using the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) principles that guide good community engagement, this engagement was conducted mostly at the level of consult and some at inform.

Level of engagement	Promise to the Public
Inform	We will keep you informed.
Consult	We will keep you informed, listen to your concerns and provide feedback on how the public's input influenced the decision.
Involve	We will work with you to ensure your concerns are reflected in the alternatives developed, and provide feedback on how the public's input influenced the decision.
Collaborate	We will look to you for advice, ideas and solutions and incorporate those into the decisions as much as possible.
Empower	We will implement what you decide.

©International Association for Public Participation www.iap2.org

Several tactics were used to ensure all affected and interested stakeholders were made aware of the consultation and had the opportunity to provide feedback. Refer to Table 1 for the full list of methods used to engage with stakeholders.

True North managed telephone and email enquiries through a generic email account and office number. Refer to Graph 1 detailing incoming correspondence via email and telephone broken down by week of consultation. Week 8 refers to correspondence that was received after consultation had closed.



Graph 1: Incoming correspondence - Stage 2 consultation

The following methods were used to engage with stakeholders.

Table 1: Tactics used to engage with stakeholders - Stage 2 consultation

Date	Method	Target stakeholders	Number of stakeholders engaged	Rationale
20 & 21 September	Letterbox drop of fact sheet	All businesses in Pinelands and Holtze (excluding businesses on the Pinelands side service road who were dropped a fact sheet by the project team). Refer to Appendix C for a copy of the fact sheet	485 fact sheets delivered (note: some businesses took more than one fact sheet)	To ensure all businesses were aware of the consultation and encourage feedback
17 September	Letter to land owners	Land owners of lots in Pinelands and Holtze via list exported from ILIS. Refer to Appendix D for the full list of land owners and Appendix E for a copy of the letter	Of the 182 letters sent to land owners 14 were returned to sender. This is a delivery success rate of 92.31 per cent	To ensure land owners were aware of the consultation and encourage feedback
21 September & 26 September	Door knock with fact sheet	All businesses located in Holtze and businesses on the Pinelands side service road	42 businesses were door knocked by the project team	To ensure those who would be most affected by the proposed changes were aware of the consultation and to provide feedback
Various	Stakeholder meetings	Those who were particularly concerned/affected by the proposed changes, requested a meeting via phone or email and key stakeholders Refer to Appendix F for full list	20 meetings were held with stakeholders and industry. Note: two of these meetings were group meetings with concerned business owners	Meet face to face with the project team to discuss their concerns surrounding the concept design, understand their current access to the area and what they would like to see changed

Date	Method	Target stakeholders	Number of stakeholders engaged	Rationale
17 September	Letter to industry representatives	Industry bodies who represent local business, the transport industry and local government. Refer to Appendix G for full list	Five letters went to industry representatives	To ensure industry were aware of the consultation and concept design and invite feedback
17 September & 18 October	Facebook promotion	General public and those actively engaged on the Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics Facebook page Refer to Appendix H for copies of the Facebook promotion	17 September – 2768 people reached, 298 engagements, 13 likes, six comments and five shares 18 October – 3499 people reached, 393 engagements, eight likes, 11 comments and nine shares	To act as a channel to reach interested people and refer them to the project web page for more information. To advise that consultation was extended
Made live on 17 September	Project web page	General public	The page had 658 page views over the duration of consultation with 562 of these being unique Refer to Appendix I for detailed statistics	Provide more information on the consultation
19 September	NT News advertorial	General public	The NT News has an average week day readership of 47 000. The paper is distributed across the Northern Territory	Advise of the consultation and refer readers to the project page for more information

Date	Method	Target stakeholders	Number of stakeholders engaged	Rationale
Various	Generic email and telephone	Those who wanted more information, request a meeting or lodge feedback Refer to Appendix J for further details	33 stakeholders contacted the project team via email or telephone. 47 calls and emails were received in total. Four emails from four stakeholders were received lodging feedback after consultation had ended. Two of these stakeholders had already been in contact during the consultation period	A mechanism for stakeholders to find out more information, request a meeting or lodge feedback

Key messages delivered to stakeholders

Key messages were developed at the beginning of the consultation. These key messages were used during stakeholder meetings, door knocks and on communication materials. The key messages are below:

The Northern Territory Government has been exploring options to improve road safety and heavy vehicle access to the Pinelands Industrial Precinct.

After the initial stage of consultation, the following solutions have been identified:

- traffic lights at Mander Road/McKinnon Road to improve access and safety, while also helping to control traffic
 - introduce cul de sacs at the end of the service lanes between Deviney Road/Marjorie Street, Deviney Road/McKinnon Road and McKinnon Road/Hardy Place to eliminate conflict points at intersections
 - close the Olive Place/McKinnon Road intersection with a median strip to improve control of traffic and reduce the number of crashes on that section of the Stuart Highway
 - connect Olive Place
 - create turning lanes off the Stuart Highway at Deviney Road (inbound only), McKinnon Road South (inbound only) and at the intersection of McKinnon Road North and Mander Road.
- The Department has released the concept designs for public information and will work with key stakeholders to ensure they are aware of the design features.
 - The final concept will improve road safety and access on the Stuart Highway at Pinelands and Holtze.

Consultation extension

Following a community meeting on Wednesday 17 October 2018 to discuss the Youth Rehabilitation Precinct and concept design, Minister for Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics, Eva Lawler announced that consultation would be extended by two weeks to allow more time for stakeholders to provide feedback. Consultation was originally planned to close on Friday 19 October 2018 but was extended to Friday 2 November 2018. Stakeholders who had already provided feedback or asked to be kept informed received an email advising them that consultation had been extended. The message was tailored to the level of engagement the stakeholder had in the project to date.

During the two-week extension, 11 emails and calls were received from stakeholders providing feedback or requesting a meeting and seven meetings were held. Four emails were received after the consultation closed.

Youth Rehabilitation Precinct

On 8 August 2018, the Minister for Territory Families and Minister for Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics released a joint media release announcing the proposed site of a new Youth Rehabilitation

Precinct in Pinelands. In the weeks following this, the announcement attracted significant media and stakeholder attention with the Stage 2 consultation receiving attention on the back of this. There was confusion among local stakeholders surrounding the two being different projects with different teams and different consultation goals.

Some stakeholders thought the rationale behind the concept design was a guise to distract from the road changes needing to be made to cater for the Youth Rehabilitation Precinct. In some cases, stakeholders contacted the Department or project team to request information or meetings about both projects.

Media during consultation

Due to consultation on the project coinciding with the release of the location for the new Youth Rehabilitation Precinct, the Pinelands area attracted a lot of media attention over the course of the consultation. There were limited reports on the project specifically however the project was referred in some Youth Rehabilitation Precinct related media. See below list of media relating to Stage 2 consultation.

- Thursday 27 September 2018, Mornings with Conor Byrne
Interview with Minister for Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics, Eva Lawler on the Youth Rehabilitation Precinct where the Stage 2 consultation project was mentioned. During talkback Deb Taipale of Top End Sign Sales discussed the need for an off-ramp on to Tiger Brennan Drive.
- Friday 5 October 2018, NT News, *Business in fight on roads*
The article refers to concept design not being suitable for the area, particularly the proposed closure of the service roads. The article includes commentary by local business owner, Owen Pike.
- Thursday 11 October 2018, NT News, *Pinelands businesses vow to fight Gunner Govt's plans to build youth detention facility*
The article was mainly about the Youth Rehabilitation Precinct however mentions the proposed closure of service roads as having a detrimental effect on local businesses.
- Wednesday 19 November 2018, NT News, *Damning survey results for road changes*
Explored the Chamber of Commerce NT's survey of its members and the effects the concept design would have on local businesses if it were to go ahead, particularly surrounding the introduction of cul de sacs.

Findings

Incoming calls and emails

- **33** stakeholders contacted the project team to lodge feedback, request more information or request a meeting
- **47** calls and emails were received in total
- **Four** emails from **four** stakeholders were received lodging feedback after consultation had ended
- **Two** of these stakeholders had already been in contact during the consultation period.

Doorknocks and meetings

- **42** businesses were door knocked by the project team with a range of feedback and levels of interest being expressed during the door knocks
- **18** stand-alone stakeholder meetings were held with local businesses, landowners and industry. A total of **39** stakeholders attended these meetings.

Cul de sacs

The creation of cul de sacs at service roads on the Pinelands side of the Stuart Highway is not accepted by most business owners and industry. Businesses believe the cul de sacs will negatively impact access to their premises, reduce trade, decrease property prices and cause issues for heavy vehicles who frequent the area. Most businesses located on the service roads have heavy vehicle traffic and heavy vehicle traffic manoeuvring within their yards. Concerns were raised about the increase of traffic along McKinnon Road due to cul de sacs, lights and Mander Road and the closure of the median gap at Olive Place, particularly heavy vehicles manoeuvring the 'S' bend.

- 24 stakeholders submitted feedback via phone or email opposing the creation of cul de sacs
- during stakeholder meetings or doorknocks, 31 businesses, industry groups and landowners opposed the introduction of cul de sacs.

“Truck access to businesses on the service roads will be nearly impossible with the introduction of cul de sacs” –
Marjorie Street

“The proposed road changes will bring property values down, cause businesses to close due to the difficulties in accessing the business especially those on the Stuart Highway service road” –
Stuart Highway

“Closure to the Stuart Highway Pinelands service roads is unacceptable in anyway” –
Stuart Highway and McKinnon Road land owner

Exit from Marjorie Street onto Tiger Brennan Drive

There was overwhelming support for an exit from Marjorie Street onto Tiger Brennan Drive with a number of stakeholders/stakeholder groups believing this alone will solve safety and access issues

Mander Road/McKinnon Road signalised intersection

There were mixed views on lights at Mander Road/McKinnon Road. Some stakeholders felt that the inclusion of lights so close to another set would cause traffic to back up and be slowed down while others thought the lights may act as a mechanism to provide safer access to and from the Stuart Highway from connecting roads.

- six stakeholders submitted feedback via phone or email opposing the installation of lights at Mander Road/McKinnon Road
- seven stakeholders submitted feedback via phone or email in favour of lights at Mander Road/McKinnon Road
- two stakeholders submitted feedback via phone or email suggesting the lights should go at the Olive Place/Mander Road intersection instead
- during door knocks and stakeholder meetings, nine businesses, industry and landowners were in favour of the lights at Mander Road/McKinnon Road
- during a stakeholder meeting, one business opposed the installation of lights at Mander Road/McKinnon Road.

“I agree that lights on McKinnon Road will help traffic flow, but the closure of the service road would be detrimental to all businesses that now rely on it for access to our premises” –

Stuart Highway

“With reference to the proposed plan for traffic signals to be placed at the intersection of Stuart Highway and Mander Road/McKinnon Road Holtze/Pinelands, in my opinion this will be an excellent solution to improve safety and traffic flow. In peak periods it is difficult and dangerous to cross the highway at this intersection. Making this a controlled point of entry and for the area will definitely improve safety and might help to reduce the incidence of vehicles traveling above the speed limit on the Stuart Highway in this expanding area” – J

Mander Road

Closure of the median gap at Olive Place/McKinnon Road

There were mixed views on the closure of the median gap Olive Place/McKinnon Road. Those who were not opposed were generally located on the Holtze side of the Stuart Highway and believed it could help reduce conflicts, especially during peak hour. Those opposed to the closure were generally located on the Pinelands side of the Stuart Highway and were opposed on access grounds. Some suggestions were made to put a curfew in place so that the gap was closed during peak traffic periods. Two stakeholders suggested having a set of lights at this intersection instead of Mander Road/Olive Place.

- eight stakeholders submitted feedback via phone or email opposing the closure of the median gap
- during door knocks and stakeholder meetings, 33 businesses, industry and landowners (opposed the closure of the median gap)
- two stakeholders submitted feedback via phone or email suggesting traffic lights should go at the Olive Place/Mander Road intersection instead of it being closed.

“We totally disagree with the proposed road changes including and, most importantly, the closing of the Stuart Highway median gap between Olive and McKinnon Road South and the closing of the

service lanes. The closing of the Stuart Highway median gap between Olive and McKinnon Road South will directly affect all businesses with any retail component in the southern end of Pinelands, and some may no longer be viable” -
Stuart Highway property owners

“Don’t close median gap between Olive Place and McKinnon Road, happy to see a roundabout or lights on this intersection” –
Marjorie Street

“It is also unnecessary to close the median gap as this intersection will not be a problem once the proposed traffic lights are installed” –
Stuart Highway

Consultation

A number of stakeholders, particularly those on the Pinelands side, felt that they had not been adequately consulted with or consulted with at all during Stage 1 and some who were consulted with did not believe their feedback was incorporated into the concept design. Some stakeholders felt like the consultation approach for Stage 2 was not adequate. There were also several comments made about a similar concept design being released 12 years ago which they were assured by the Government of the day that it would not go ahead.

- eight stakeholders submitted feedback via phone or email indicating their dissatisfaction with the consultation process
- 16 businesses, industry representatives and land owners expressed their dissatisfaction with the consultation processes however this is likely to relate the limitations of Stage 1 consultation as Stage 2 was the first time many had heard about the project.

“There has been little, if any, consultation with community members, groups, and businesses that will be severely impacted by these two [referring to Stage 2 consultation and the Youth Rehabilitation Precinct] appalling Government decisions!” –
Marjorie Street

“I find it poor consultation; I did not know about this until a few days ago” –
Butler Place

“As a property owner in Pinelands we were never consulted in 2016-17 about any changes to McKinnon Road” –
McKinnon Road

“Our company was never consulted about the proposed road changes to Pinelands in 2016-17 as claimed at the meeting and in the ‘Consultation fact sheet’” –
Stuart Highway

Timing of Deviney Road lights/Deviney Road lights

The timing of the Deviney Road lights was brought up as an issue, mainly verbally during the doorknocks and stakeholder meetings. Some stakeholders commented that they had broached it as an issue during the last consultation, but nothing had been done. A large volume of heavy vehicle traffic use the lights and often cannot make it through the lights before they go red. Those in favour of the signalised intersection at Mander Road/McKinnon Road indicated they would like to see the lights synchronised.

- three stakeholders submitted feedback via phone or email making note of the timing issues at Deviney Road
- 15 businesses , industry representatives or landowners brought up the timing and phasing issues at Deviney Road during meetings.

“As a resident of Pinelands, I see this change to be a massive problem. There is already an issue with cars getting out at the Deviney Road lights, I can only imagine how much worse the congestion will be down the street I live on if you make this change” – Pinelands residents

Continuation of service road towards Darwin, on both Pinelands and Holtze sides

Numerous comments were made suggesting the service road be extended towards Darwin to allow access to other businesses who have highway frontage. Some stakeholders suggested a service road on the Holtze side from Free Spirit Resort towards Darwin.

“The extension of the existing service road further north-west, adjacent the front boundary of Section 5122 (at least in part) would improve access to this land and provide additional development opportunities. Accordingly, it is suggested that the concept plan should consider the extension of the service road to the north-west” –

“I’m looking at the plans for the Pinelands upgrade and am thinking it is rather complicated. Would it not be easier to have a service lane on either side of the highway with lights at Free Spirit and at McKinnon Road intersection?” – community member

“Service roads need to be extended from Marjorie Street, all the way through to the northern part of Pinelands to encourage further development” – to the NT News, 5 October 2018

Safety, access and congestion issues

There was some acknowledgement that there are safety, access and congestion issues on the Pinelands/Holtze strip of the Stuart Highway. This varied between stakeholders on the Holtze side and Pinelands side, with many Holtze stakeholders recounting a near miss traffic collision or actual collision. Most stakeholders, on both sides of the highway, agreed that peak hour (7am to 9am and 4pm to 6pm) can be an issue with a number of stakeholders leaving their premise early or late to avoid this. Some stakeholders on the Pinelands side did not feel as though there were safety issues in the area and felt as though the addition of another set of lights would create further issues.

“Also to install another set of traffic lights in Pinelands, which never required the first set will just bank traffic back even further to the previous set of lights. There have been more accidents along Pinelands than prior to installing lights” – Marjorie Street

“Our company operate trucks and ute’s around this area and there certainly needs to be changes” – 54 Marjorie Street

“Every week the traffic in the morning starts to pile up badly at the Free Spirit lights and adding another set up the road will make this even worse” – Pinelands

Olive Place/Mander Road connection

Most stakeholders were comfortable with connecting Olive Place and Mander Road however some had concerns about its ability to handle heavy vehicle traffic, especially if the median gap at Olive Place/Mander Road is closed.

- one stakeholder called to oppose the connection of Mander Road/Olive Place
- four businesses, industry and landowners expressed their support of the connection of Mander Road/Olive Place
- during stakeholder meetings and doorknocks, five businesses, industry and landowners expressed their concern with the width of the connection road to cater for heavy vehicles.

“You are proposing we take Olive Place onto Mander Road then onto the Stuart Highway. This elevates a safety concern which at present we cross the Stuart Hwy from Olive Place often blocking a north and south bound lane on the Stuart Highway, however the two corners on Mander Road will be a huge issue for these loads with the current businesses in the area and the existing parking arrangements” –
Marjorie Road

“Extend the proposed “Olive Place to Mander Road connection” to the west behind Pinelands North [Foundation Road, Holtze], so that road trains and vehicles can turn right off the highway at the new traffic lights onto Olive Place and access the soil and gravel facilities that way, rather than run the gauntlet by turning right across the highway as they are doing now”-
Stuart Highway

Slip lanes

During stakeholder meetings and doorknocks, some stakeholders felt that slip lanes into the service roads could reduce conflict along the highway and allow for a safer entry into Pinelands. This aspect of the concept design was not a point of contention for stakeholders.

“I note there is slip lanes to exit off the Stuart Hwy North bound and to also enter the Hwy from the Service road. Are you proposing that heavy vehicles use these slip lanes?” –
Marjorie Street

“Would like to see left turns/merging lanes heading inbound to allow vehicles to turn off the highway before slowing down to turn into Pinelands similar to turning into Marjorie Street. This would help with traffic entering Pinelands in the morning in peak traffic times” –
Marjorie Street

McKinnon Road name

During discussions stakeholders generally referred to McKinnon Road as either McKinnon Road South/McKinnon Road North or McKinnon Road 1/McKinnon Road 2. Some suggestions were made during stakeholder meetings to officially change the name of the road to North and South as it is confusing for non-local traffic.

Pedestrian access on Stuart Highway at Holtze

During stakeholder meetings and in one email some stakeholders expressed concern around current pedestrian access on the Holtze side of the Stuart Highway. A number of pedestrians walk from Free Spirit Resort to shops along the highway and from the bus stop to their work place. The need for a designated path was brought up.

“I think the changes are needed but as we have stated before our clients are still required to walk along the edge of the Stuart Highway once they have been dropped off at the bus shelter heading into to town due to no pathway. They cross the road and then walk along the edge of the highway due to the drain that runs along the highway” – Brad Rake, Ironbark Aboriginal Corporation,

Key stakeholder meetings

Next steps

Consideration of an exit onto Tiger Brennan Drive should be given in the next iteration of the concept design. The timing of the Deviney Road lights should also be investigated. Most stakeholders indicated lights at Mander Road/McKinnon Road would be accepted however did not support see cul de sacs of service lanes.

DIPL have committed to reviewing all feedback received during the Stage 2 consultation and releasing the next iteration of the concept design in early 2019. The next iteration will be consulted on with the public and stakeholders from the Stage 2 consultation. To close out this stage of the consultation, an email was sent to all stakeholders advising them of the next steps in the project. The email committed to keeping the stakeholder informed with the progress of the project and advised a revised concept design would be released for consultation in early 2019.

It is recommended stakeholders be contacted early in the new year if there are any expected delays with the release of the revised concept design.

Appendix

- Appendix A: Weekly reports
- Appendix B: Stakeholder list
- Appendix C: Fact sheet
- Appendix D: Land owners list
- Appendix E: Letter to land owners
- Appendix F: Stakeholder meetings register
- Appendix G: Key stakeholder list
- Appendix H: Facebook promotion
- Appendix I: Website statistics
- Appendix J: Feedback received via email and phone

Appendices not included in redacted version of report