

MEDIA STATEMENT

01 September 2020

Shirbourne Road intersection reopening to single direction traffic

The Bruce Highway intersection with Shirbourne Road (west) has reopened to single direction traffic after being closed in February as part of the Haughton River Floodplain Upgrade project.

Transport and Main Roads North Queensland Regional Director Sanjay Ram said the closure was required during works on a highway overpass.

"Only one travel direction will be accommodated at this time, but locals will be glad to hear they can now travel from the Bruce Highway directly onto Shirbourne Road, towards Shirbourne, again," Mr Ram said.

"Travel from Shirbourne on to the Bruce Highway will continue to be via the Woodstock Giru Road detour only for the time being, while works continue.

"The overpass is really taking shape, but the size and current progress of this structure severely restricts the visibility of oncoming Bruce Highway traffic which makes conditions too unsafe for outbound traffic.

"There is also insufficient space on Shirbourne Road, considering the overpass abutments and nearby cane rail, to accommodate two lanes of traffic.

"As a result, Shirbourne residents will need to continue using the detour to access the Bruce Highway, until the overpass and on/off ramps are complete in mid 2021."

Mr Ram said the intersection reopening to single direction travel was one of many milestones recently reached on the Haughton River Floodplain Upgrade project, which would improve safety and flood resilience on the Bruce Highway.

"In a little over a year so much has been done, with intersection upgrades underway, road surfacing in multiple areas and several structures now identifiable across the 13.5-kilometre project area," he said.

"The last of 362 piles required for structures was recently driven, and in a few short months the first of five bridges to be built as part of this project will be under traffic, at Horseshoe Lagoon.

"When completed, these bridges will make for reliable travel between Ayr and Townsville, with the Bruce Highway much more resilient to the flooding regularly experienced in North Queensland.

"In addition to the bridges, two highway overpasses of cane tramways will also be built, eliminating future interactions between Bruce Highway vehicles and cane trains.

"Given the cane season has just restarted, it's an important reminder that motorists need to adhere to open-level train crossing signals and drive cautiously in agricultural areas."

The Haughton River Floodplain Upgrade project is under construction on the Bruce Highway at Giru and due to be completed in mid 2021, weather and construction conditions permitting.

The \$514.3 million project is jointly funded by the Australian and Queensland Governments (on an 80:20 basis) under the Bruce Highway Upgrade program and is expected to support an average of 544 direct jobs.

For the latest on the project, visit www.tmr.qld.gov.au and search 'Haughton'.

ENDS

Media contact: TMR Media Unit, 3066 7060