



Transport & Infrastructure



Inner West Busway along Victoria Road

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

INFORMATION FOR LOCAL RESIDENTS

UPDATED MARCH 2010



Noise and Vibration Management

Who will ensure that the *Noise and Vibration Management Plan* will be adhered to?

The project's Environment Manager and officers are responsible for ensuring all environmental measures are adhered to through environmental monitoring, auditing and tracking, which will be reported on the project website every six months. The Environment Manager will ensure all staff members are aware of potential noise and vibration impacts through compulsory inductions prior to commencing work.

The project's Environmental Representative (who represents the Department of Planning) is responsible for making sure all conditions of approval are followed, including the noise and vibration management plan. The Environmental Representative is also responsible for monitoring complaints related to noise and vibration.

The project's Operations Manager, who will oversee all construction, is responsible for ensuring the noise and vibration management plan is adhered to through reasonable work methods, choice of equipment and scheduling.

Individually, every member of the alliance is also responsible for adhering to the plan. Environmental issues like noise and vibration will be discussed regularly at weekly meetings on site.

What process for appeal do I have?

There are a number of processes for appeal for both construction and operational (once the project is completed) noise and vibration.

Operational noise and vibration

Noise monitoring has been carried out on and near properties subject to road redevelopment and noise levels predicted for 10 years after opening.

Based on the assessment, mitigation measures may be

considered for these properties. If an affected property owner wants to appeal this assessment or complain about noise impacts during operation they should contact the RTA on 1300 308 349.

Construction vibration

Building condition surveys have been offered to properties that may be impacted by vibration during construction. These surveys protect the property owner from any damage caused by construction vibration, by assessing the condition of properties prior construction activities taking place in their area. Where a property owner feels they have been impacted by vibration they should contact the RTA on 1300 308 349.

Construction noise

If a resident or business is not satisfied with the result of a construction noise complaint they will be referred to the Environmental Representative and/or an independent noise issues facilitator. All appeals will be considered and assessed.

I am a resident/business/school that is now being told that I am going to be affected by noise during the construction program. Why wasn't I told earlier?

The assessments that took place prior to the exhibition phase were based on the knowledge available at the time. Since the exhibition of the environmental assessment late last year, there have been some refinements of construction methods based on community feedback and the Minister's conditions of approval, and there is now greater understanding of the noise impacts to the community.

The residents concerned were advised of the potential impacts as soon as possible, once approval was granted. We will continue to provide notifications before construction activities take place, and give a more accurate description of the type of noise, the time and how long the noise will last.

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Artist's impression of the new bus lane in Drummoyne, looking towards Parramatta.



Q What exactly are the construction noise objectives? Please explain how they relate to other measurements of noise levels or activities that we might understand.

The project has a noise goal of 'background + 5 dB' for all works. In order to meet this goal, the project must apply all feasible and reasonable mitigation measures. However, due to the type and location of works and for a number of sensitive receivers already affected by traffic noise, this goal may be difficult to achieve.

For properties close to construction sites, noise levels experienced could be similar to a heavy truck travelling at 40km about seven metres from the property (source: RTA *How is noise is addressed* fact sheet).

Q How far into the surrounding suburbs will the noise have an impact?

It is likely that the noise from the project will affect many more properties than those directly neighbouring Victoria Road or the construction and compound sites. These might include those on side streets and those streets parallel to Victoria Road. This may be a relatively low impact, but would still require notification of works.

Q On what basis will I be given temporary alternative accommodation?

Temporary alternative accommodation will be offered to residents in buildings that do not already have architectural noise reducing treatments under any of the following circumstances:

- Residents of properties that have a predicted noise exposure of more than LA10, 30dBA above background levels in any 15 minute period after midnight for three or more nights.
- Residents of properties that have a measured noise exposure of more than LA10, 30dBA above background levels in any 15 minute period when the activities that generate at least that noise after midnight are scheduled to continue for three or more nights.
- On a case-by-case basis eg occupant with a serious medical condition that might be affected by noise levels, aged, infirm or special needs members of the community. Typically this would be assessed by the independent noise issues facilitator.

Q What does it mean when I am told that I will be given 'respite' from the noisy activities?

Respite refers to a time period in which noisy works will be stopped. This respite can take the form of a few minutes, hours or days depending on the type, timing and duration of activity and the number of properties impacted.

Q If the noise levels are above the guidelines set in the Environmental Assessment will the work stop?

Even if the noise goals are not met, if all feasible and reasonable measures have been taken to meet the goals, work may continue. However, there are a number of other mitigation measures that can help address noise impacts, such as temporary accommodation.

Q Who measures the noise levels and enforces them?

The project's Environment Team monitors noise levels. Monitoring noise during construction includes:

- Measuring noise levels of equipment to ensure general compliance with predicted levels.
- Measuring noise levels at some receptors to compare to predicted levels.
- Taking an adaptive management approach to noise monitoring results (which might include adjustments to programming, replacement of equipment or temporary lessening) to minimise noise impacts.
- Regular inspections and auditing of the *Construction Noise and Vibration Management Plan*, with compliance with relevant conditions of approval recorded and reported to the Department of Planning every six months.

If you are unhappy with the results of the noise monitoring, please use the appeal process outlined in question 2.

Q According to your own *Construction Noise and Vibration Management Plan*, much of the equipment you are using will create noise above the standards – how will this be managed?

The RTA will implement feasible and reasonable mitigation measures identified in the *Construction Noise and Vibration Management Plan* to help manage noise created by equipment. These include:

- Using low noise and vibration emitting plant and equipment where practical, as well as promoting work practices that minimise noise.
- Planning works to minimise the duration of noise-generating activity, and reducing works occurring consecutively in the same location.
- Use of temporary noise barriers in certain circumstances, such as construction of solid hoardings at locations around the King George Park compound, between work areas and residences along Byrnes Street.

- Informing affected residents of the time, type and duration of noise generation activities, prior to any works that are likely to exceed the construction noise goals.
- Possible relocation in an extreme case – determined on an individual basis.
- Training and awareness of noise and vibration issues for staff.

A full list of mitigation measures and their application against different types of noise is available in the *Construction Noise and Vibration Management Plan N*.

Q With the increase in traffic, won't I be more affected by the noise on Victoria Road after construction?

Properties that may be acutely affected by increased traffic volumes after construction have already been identified based on the results of noise modelling. If you received a letter from the RTA in April 2009 regarding noise monitoring for the project then you are considered a sensitive receiver.

If you would like to discuss this further, please contact the RTA on 1300 308 349

Q What is being done to assist those affected by traffic noise once construction is complete?

Assistance for properties affected by traffic noise after construction will be assessed on an individual basis. Where possible the RTA aims to implement any mitigation measures as early as possible in the project, so these properties can benefit during construction.

These properties subject to road redevelopment will be monitored and assessed for feasible and reasonable mitigation.

Q What sort of vibration levels can I expect from all this equipment being used? Will it damage my house? Can it affect my hearing?

Ground vibration may be caused by piling, rock hammering and ground compacting associated with establishing the King George Park compound and construction site as well as construction of the car park in Brett Park and the roadworks along Victoria Road.

Vibration levels generated during piling, rock hammering and ground compacting will depend on the exact equipment to be used and the type of ground.

The experience at any property will depend on its relation to the work site. Given the type, anticipated level, and duration of vibration expected on the project it is unlikely construction would have an impact on individuals hearing (unless there is some sort of medical pre-disposition).

Any properties that the RTA assessed as potentially impacted by vibration have been offered a property condition survey. If you believe vibrations from the project have damaged your property please contact the RTA on 1300 308 349.

Q What is the experience of other residents close by to major RTA projects in the past? Have any lessons been learned?

The RTA has developed a greater understanding of the impacts of noise on local communities over time and has devoted resources to the management of these impacts.

This includes an increasing effort to understand individual's circumstances, earlier notification of when noisy works are occurring and what the likely impacts are to be. This has led to a greater commitment to minimising impacts through measures such as those to be adopted on the Inner West Busway project. This includes detailed consideration of construction scheduling options, innovative techniques to minimise noise generation and greater commitments to respite from noise generating activities

Q If you change the schedule of roadworks, how will we know when you are going to be close enough to affect us?

Every attempt will be made to notify residents that may be impacted by roadworks at least three working days before for day works, and at least five working days before for night works.

Notifications will include details about the type, timing, anticipated noise levels, location and duration of works.

Q The RTA says it will be undertaking noisy works at night. This will be unbearable for residents. What can be done?

The construction team is committed to minimising noise impacts where feasible and reasonable. This may include completing noisy work during the day, and/or before midnight. It may also include providing respite or other measures determined by an independent noise issues facilitator and the RTA (for example temporary accommodation).

Q We are close to the construction sites you identify. When will the shift changes occur and how will you minimise noise from the workers and their cars?

All workers must undergo a staff induction before working onsite, which details expectations for behaviour at and around work sites, particularly at night and early morning. Workers are advised to minimise noise from car engines and radios, watch the volume of their voice and be conscious of residents near the construction site.

This message will be reinforced regularly and any complaints about noise created by workers will be recorded and responded to, as well as reported to the Environmental Representative (the independent representative of the Department of Planning).



Artist's impression looking east along Victoria Road towards Rozelle.

Q Are there rules around respite during piling?

The construction team is committed to working with the community to mitigate noise and vibration impacts where possible and practical. This may include respite, scheduling or other measures. Where piling activities result in noise generation for a continuous three hour period, and are audible to sensitive receivers, a minimum respite period of at least one hour will be scheduled before activities will commence again. Piling activities will not start before 8am.

Q Where and when will the noise barriers be installed?

There will be temporary noise barriers built on the boundary of King George Park, adjacent to Byrnes Street. Temporary barriers will also be used where it is practical to do so to mitigate construction noise from activities such as roadworks. There are no permanent noise barriers being installed.

Q Why are there no plans to erect noise barriers on the new bridge?

For a noise barrier to be effective it needs to extend for some distance beyond the receiver it is designed to shield. On Victoria Road it is not feasible to extend a noise barrier beyond the end of the bridge because it would cut off property access and local road access.

Q Where and when will noise monitoring take place? Who will conduct this monitoring?

The project's Environment Team will conduct noise and vibration monitoring during construction, and this monitoring will continue, depending of the type of activity taking place. Some examples include:

- Investigating the conditions of buildings prior to construction.
- Measuring noise levels of equipment, to ensure general compliance with predicted levels, and establish minimum working separation between the equipment and nearby sensitive receivers.
- Carrying out vibration testing and monitoring to develop safe working distances to buildings, including heritage items, for various construction activities.
- Monitoring at the commencement of compaction vibration to determine acceptable work hours for this activity in accordance with DECC guidelines.
- In response to a complaint about construction vibration at a residence.
- During periodic inspections and auditing of the *Construction Noise and Vibration Management Plan*, to comply with relevant conditions of approval.

Monitoring will occur at various locations during construction.

Q Will the results of noise and vibration monitoring be independently audited?

Yes. Noise and vibration monitoring will be audited on a six monthly basis by a representative of the Department of Planning.



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