



FACT SHEET

Consideration of a possible secondary access road to Gracetown

For consideration by the community

Background

Why is a new road being considered?

After considering the Keelty Report into the cause of the 2011 Margaret River Bushfires, the State Parliament requested investigation into new alternative access roads for various coastal towns.

Who was involved in this investigation?

Main Roads WA was asked by the Minister for Transport to investigate the possibility for second access roads to these coastal communities. Initially, a Working Group of key stakeholders was established to achieve this and included: Main Roads WA (Chair), the Department of Planning, Members of the Department of Environment and Conservation (now Department of Parks and Wildlife), Department of Fire and Emergency Services, Shire of Augusta Margaret River, City of Busselton and the Minister for Transport's office.

Following the initial Working Group investigation, the State Government requested that Main Roads undertake the further investigation of the feasible alignment options, including a community consultation process. A Steering Group consisting of the Shire of Augusta Margaret River, Main Roads WA, Department of Parks and Wildlife, and Department of Fire and Emergency Services was formed to consider the issues associated with providing a secondary access road to Gracetown and to recommend the most viable option.

The Steering Group investigated a range of options, including those recommended by the Working Group, designed to meet the following criteria:

- Maximise the separation from the current access (ie. provide a legitimate alternative escape route).
- The road should be constructed to meet the standards detailed in the Department of Planning, Planning for Bushfire Protection Guidelines, as well as current road design and safety standards as appropriate.
- Impacts of the road on environmental and heritage values of the National Park should be minimised as far as practicable.

Current situation

What options have been developed for the Gracetown second access and how were they assessed?

Providing a second access for the coastal community of Gracetown has been previously raised. As part of the preliminary planning studies for the proposed Gracetown development, a report prepared by Koltasz-Smith on behalf of LandCorp in 2000 identified nine (9) possible alternative routes, with an alignment running directly from Salter Street to Caves Road considered the most appropriate. This alignment was revisited by both the Working Group and Steering Group and is shown as Option 2 on the map. The Koltasz-Smith report also identified a number of other alignments that have been reconsidered including one that follows the existing Van Tripp Road Reserve.

The Working Group also developed and investigated two further options:

- the Cowaramup Brook alignment (Option 1); and
- an alignment connecting Salter Street to Ellen Brook Road following the coast (Option 3).

A report to the Minister for Transport in May 2013 included these options and recommended further investigation of Options 2 and 3 to determine the feasibility of these alignments. Options 1 and 2 were dismissed due to lack of separation from the existing access (Cowaramup Bay Road) and difficult terrain respectively.

With the benefit of a detailed ground model, the Steering Group reviewed the designs for all previous options and developed a fourth option which connected Salter Street to Ellen Brook Road, largely following the alignment of an existing north-south management track further inland.

In December 2015, the Steering Group met to consider the four (4) options and agreed with the original Working Group that Options 1 and 2 should be dismissed. A multi-criteria analysis of options 3 and 4 followed, with Option 4 being identified as the preferred option from a technical perspective.

Current situation

Options 3 and 4 were presented to a Community Reference Group in April 2016 (which included Gracetown representatives) and no CRG members supported Option 3. While Option 4 was preferred, the CRG requested an additional inland alignment (Option 5) be considered. During the development of Option 5, Option 6 was devised, but quickly dismissed by the Steering Group due to limited evacuation benefit and potential environmental impacts in the easternmost section.

This also resulted in the consideration of a modified Option 4 alignment that ran closer to the coast and subsequently Option 4 was renamed as Option 4A with the alternative alignment being Option 4B.

The additional options were presented at the second CRG meeting in December 2016, and it was agreed that Option 4A remained the preferred option, with further investigation of Option 4B requested.

The Steering Group has undertaken preliminary flora and visual impact investigations into Option 4B, and these show that the impacts may be greater than Option 4A which predominantly follows the existing management track. Consequently, while Option 4B is viable, it is not the preferred option of the Steering Group.

Prior to and during investigations being undertaken firstly by the Working Group and then the Steering Group, the proposed residential development expansion of Gracetown was progressed by LandCorp. The LandCorp development proposal included alternative fire protection measures to cater for additional growth, but not a pre-requisite for the establishment of a secondary access road. The LandCorp proposal has now been finalised and may be acted on at some point in the future. The investigations into secondary access for Gracetown initially through the Working Group and now through the Steering Group are being undertaken regardless of the outcome of the previous assessment and endorsement of the LandCorp proposal.

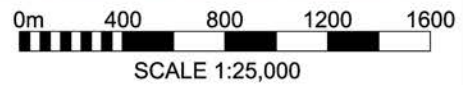
Weighing up the options

What are the viable options?

A number of options have been considered as shown on the map (overleaf). Options 4A, 4B and 5 are considered to be the viable options. Option 4A is currently preferred and hence has been shown in black.

As noted in the previous section and the table below, Options 1, 2, 3 and 6 are not considered viable and will not be considered further at this stage:

OPTION	REASON FOR NOT CONSIDERING FURTHER
OPTION 1 Cowaramup Brook	Does not provide any appreciable time benefit to escape from a fire.
OPTION 2 Koltasz-Smith	Does not provide any appreciable time benefit to escape from a fire.
OPTION 3 Coastal Route	While this provides the most evacuation benefit, it has significant environmental impact, and impacts the Cape to Cape walking track. The CRG did not support this option.
OPTION 6 Inland Direct Route	While this option had direct access to Caves Road, the east-west orientation was less desirable in the event of a fire moving from north to south. Additionally, most of the alignment did not follow existing tracks and passed through an environmentally sensitive area.



GRACETOWN SECOND ACCESS ROAD ALIGNMENT OPTIONS

C. COATES 12-1-17

What are the associated advantages and disadvantages of the viable options that have been considered?

	OPTION 4A Inland North-South Route	OPTION 5 Eastern North-South Route
Bushfire Management and Evacuation	Preferred by the Steering Group due to its north-south alignment being more favourable in the event of a fire from a northerly direction.	Not preferred by the Steering Group due to an east-west section that would be compromised earlier in the event of a fire from a northerly direction.
Engineering and Constructability	Maximum Grade 11.3% Limited excess fill material generated by earthworks.	Maximum Grade 11.8% ~40,000m3 of excess fill material generated by earthworks due to less favourable terrain.
Connectivity to Existing Network	More suitable connection at Ellenbrook Road 2.7km upgrade of Ellenbrook Road	Less desirable connection at Ellenbrook Road 1.7km upgrade of Ellenbrook Road
Environment	4.4km footprint, 10.2 hectare area ~8.8 hectare clearing Predominantly follows existing track Limited variation in vegetation/habitat types impacted No Rare Flora, Threatened/Priority Ecological Communities expected North-south severance of National Park Visual impact similar	5.2km footprint, 13.5 hectare area ~8.1 hectare clearing Partially follows existing track and then cleared private land Greater variation of vegetation/ habitat types impacted No Rare Flora, Threatened/Priority Ecological Communities expected North-South and East-West severance of National Park Visual impact similar
Heritage	No Aboriginal or European heritage issues expected*	No Aboriginal or European heritage issues expected*
Land	Excision from Leeuwin-Naturaliste National Park	Excision from Leeuwin-Naturaliste National Park Potential acquisition/severance of private land

*Note – an ethnographic and archaeological survey of the preferred option 4A will be undertaken during the consultation period to determine whether there is any heritage impact.

At the second meeting of the CRG in December, the majority of group members chose Option 4A as the preferred alignment.

We now invite community comment on the preferred Option 4A.

Have your say

When will the community get to have a say?

Community consultation so far has included:

April 2016 and December 2016 Community Reference Group Meetings

The Shire of Augusta Margaret River established a Community Reference Group (CRG) in early 2016. The group met to provide initial community feedback input into the Gracetown alignment options in April 2016, and met again in December 2016 to consider the outcomes of further investigations into Options 4, 5 and 6. The CRG will meet again following wider community consultation

Planned consultation includes:

3 - 24 February 2017

- Wider community consultation on Gracetown options (this process).

March/April 2017

- Community Reference Group meeting 3.

How will consultation feedback be considered?

Feedback from community and stakeholder consultation, as well as the findings of the Steering Group, will be included in a report to the State Government. The government will then decide whether to pursue any of the options presented. It is important to note the delivery of any of these options is not a certainty and would require future decision in favour of providing a road and an allocation of sufficient funds

How can you provide feedback on the options?

You can provide feedback via either of the following methods;

Online feedback form

Go to **yoursay.amrshire.wa.gov.au/gracetown-access** to complete our short four question feedback form.

OR

Hard copy feedback form

Complete the feedback form and return to the Shire.

Hand delivery to

Shire of Augusta Margaret River Office
41 Wallcliffe Rd, Margaret River

Or

Augusta Customer Service Office
66 Allnutt Tce, Augusta

Mail to

Shire of Augusta Margaret River
PO Box 61
Margaret River WA 6285

Email to

spdplanning@amrshire.wa.gov.au