

Introduction

We are on the cusp of going out to tender for the Murphy Street Landslip Repair project and this first update provides a summary of the feedback from consultation done over the past 5-6 weeks. Being the first update, it is quite long as it needs to cover a number of topics. Future updates are unlikely to be quite as long, and you can unsubscribe at any time.

Construction Impacts

Construction Schedule

Some residents had no problem with the proposed FNQROC¹ construction times which are Monday to Friday 7am to 6pm and Saturday 7am to 1pm. Essentially they were keen for work to be completed as quickly as possible.

Five people requested deferring start time to 8am. Two requested earlier finish times, one 2pm and another 5pm. Some were residents, but it was mainly those with guests in tourist accommodation. They thought some quiet time for guests would be worth extending construction time.

At this stage, our approach is that contractors can be on site from 7am, but drilling may not start until 8am. This takes into consideration concerns people on holidays would have been woken early, but should not significantly extend the contractors time on site.

No Construction Days

Under FNQROC guidelines, no construction is scheduled for:

- Sundays
- Long Weekends including the Saturday
- Public holidays
- Christmas New Year Period - 23 December 2019 through to 6 January 2020

We asked if there were other additional days to consider and received a request that if construction extended past April 10 next year, could we avoid noisy construction during the first term school holidays. Council has noted this and will make every effort to avoid noisy construction during school holidays, which in the first quarter of 2020, which when looking at all the different States extend from 30 March to 26 April 2020.

Construction Dates

We had a few enquiries about the starting date. Until a contractor is appointed, we cannot provide start/finish dates with any certainty. At this stage, broadly speaking, if the tender is released early mid to late September, contractors are unlikely to be on site until mid-November. We will get a firm schedule once a contractor is appointed and this information will be shared in future updates.

Noise

Understandably, several residents and businesses are concerned with the drilling noise. Council will be asking for innovative solutions to noise reduction and will be encouraging contractors to source equipment which has been adapted to minimise noise.

¹ FNQROC Far North Queensland Region of Councils

Dust

During the pre-Christmas work a few people had trouble with dust which permeated all nooks and crannies. Council will look to improve dust control this time around and has made a note to request contractors to use dust mitigation measures where possible. Some activities however, such as tipping soil from trucks, will generate dust regardless of the controls used.

Traffic – Cars and Pedestrians

We received a few enquiries regarding access - essentially people do not want the road completely closed off and neither does Council. Contractors will be required to have at least one lane of Murphy Street open at all times to vehicles and pedestrians. In saying that, there may be times when the road may need to be closed for short periods, (15 minutes or less). We expect this will be infrequent. If required, traffic controllers will be on site with Stop/Slow signs.

Contractors will need to provide notice of any full road closure for planned activities so residents/guests are pre warned.

A few people asked about the safety of pedestrians as Murphy Street is used by many walkers coming off the top of the beach steps or from apartments/houses.

Prior to starting, the contractors will need to prepare a Traffic Management Plan and Workplace Health and Safety Plan. Contractors will be made aware pedestrians use the road and will be required to consider this and include measures in their safety and traffic plans.

Design

Gabions or No Gabions

We asked people to provide their thoughts on whether or not gabions should be used. It turned out to be 50/50 – half in favour of gabions and half in favour of tech mat all the way to the bitumen.

For those in favour, some wanted gabions for aesthetic reasons as it was a cleaner look, but others felt it was a better technical solution and a few wanted a suitable creeper plant to eventually trail over the wall to soften its hard look. There was no consensus as to colour which ranged from red, grey, white and black.

For those against, some thought tech mat would be a more natural look and others mentioned a hard face would impede parking area.

At this stage, gabions will not be used on the narrow section of Murphy Street [turning right at Grant Street]. They may be retained in other sections although the detailed plans have yet to be finalised.

Plantings – Slope and Gabion Shelves

It was suggested that tall trees be avoided and certainly this aligns with Council's thinking.

Council's approach is to follow nature's lead and use native plants, bushes and grasses and Council's nursery is already collecting seeds. The slope at all three locations is steep so cannot be maintained such as you may do in a manicured garden setting.

People wanted plants to have some colour, along with bird and butterfly attracting characteristics. Species suggested for gabion shelves included native plants like, Wonga vine, Monstera, native Jasmin and Hoya species along with ferns like Birds' Nests, Stag Ferns and Basket Ferns to be allowed to colonise the wall. These and other species suggested, are in line with Council's plans.

Rock Anchors/Bolts

One person requested that any visible ends of the rock anchors be painted the same colour as the rock face (not white as at Pebbly Beach). Council will request this, but the paint systems are quite specialised and limited in colour range

Other

Drainage

Several residents asked about drainage and there will be minor improvements to Murphy Street drainage as a result of the project. Drainage will be upgraded to normal urban standards within the works footprint only on both sides of the road. Drainage issues which have been reported outside the scope of the project have been referred to the civil works team.

Street Lighting

Residents requested an increase in street lighting to improve safety of pedestrians walking at night, but not an excessive amount “we don’t want it lit up like a football ground” and “no direct light into surrounding houses”. The safety imperatives of street lighting Murphy Street are understood but lighting is outside the scope of repairs. Council is however, in the process of preparing a Street Lighting Strategy which among other things, will include how streets in the shire will be prioritised for street lighting upgrades. Comments from Murphy Street residents will be fed into this strategic planning process.

Signs

Several people mentioned installation of signs to make it clear there was no access to lookout and/or beach. Residents reported damage to garage doors caused by people turning into their driveways when doing a U turn. This is outside the scope of the project however the request has been directed to the civil works team for consideration. The outcome will be included in future updates.

Ditch

There was one report of a huge and growing ditch along Murphy Street which was considered dangerous. This is outside the project footprint however it has been passed on to the civil works team who will do an assessment. If it is deemed a hazard Council will take action in the short term, and if required, will look to develop a capital works project for future investment.

Future Updates and Enquiries

It is our intention to continue providing updates through the whole project. The next Update is likely to be when the tender released, so those who are interested will be able to access the final tender specifications.

In the interim, if there are any questions or further comments, please email Gaye Scott on gaye.scott@douglas.qld.gov.au or call 0418 793 009 or 4099 9414.

If you want to unsubscribe from the Murphy Street Landslide Repairs email updates simply email Gaye with “Unsubscribe from Murphy Street” in the subject line and you will be taken off the distribution list.

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