

**Minister for Infrastructure and Planning
The Honourable Stirling Hinchliffe**

Monday, October 12, 2009

New construction site to keep Airport Link on track

A new Woolloowin construction site for the Airport Link Project has been approved subject to strict conditions by the Coordinator-General.

Minister for Infrastructure and Planning Stirling Hinchliffe said the Coordinator-General's decision today to allow an extra construction site would save months of additional community and congestion impacts across Brisbane's northside.

The site is unused land owned by the Department of Transport and Main Roads, who set it aside for a future road upgrade.

"The Airport Link project requested a new worksite at Rose Street to dig a 42m deep shaft that would link to mainline tunnels being constructed from Clayfield," Mr Hinchliffe said.

"This project change was proposed after confirmation that adverse underground conditions in the Kedron area had the potential to slow the delivery of the project.

"Without this change residents, living along the project's corridor from Toombul to Lutwyche were facing the possibility of many months of additional construction impacts.

"Following extensive consultation with the community the Coordinator-General has now put in place stringent conditions that would allow this proposal.

"The new conditions will be on top of those previously implemented for the Airport Link project."

Mr Hinchliffe asked the community to look ahead and focus on how the project would benefit the community.

"Airport Link, Australia's largest infrastructure project, will ensure the drive between Bowen Hills and Brisbane Airport avoids 18 sets of traffic lights and will take vehicles off northside arterial roads and suburban streets," he said.

"The Northern Busway will also provide an attractive public transport alternative, with each full bus taking up to 40 cars off our streets.

"The busway will be able to cater for 47,000 bus passenger trips per day by 2016 – five times higher than on the existing road network.

"In addition more than three-and-a half hectares of new parkland will be provided for locals upon completion including a hill-top park at Bowen Hills, new cycle and pathways, one million new plants and over 5000 new trees."

Mr Hinchliffe said more than 2000 people had been employed and were now working on the Airport Link, Northern Busway and Airport Roundabout Upgrade projects across seven major worksites with a peak construction figure of approximately 2600 employees.

He said all three projects were progressing very well with 26 per cent of works complete and more than \$1.1 billion worth of work delivered to date.

Conditions imposed on the Rose St site include an acoustic shed to cover the shaft and reduce noise and dust, a five metre acoustic fence and a \$3 million urban mitigation and community development plan.

"These additional conditions recognise the impacts on the Woolloowin community and ensure those impacts are either mitigated or managed appropriately," Mr Hinchliffe said.

"The Coordinator-General's precautionary approach will address concerns about noise, dust, vibration, increased traffic movements and visual amenity."

Mr Hinchliffe thanked the community for their patience.

He said he understood Woolloowin residents would have ongoing concerns but the project was of such importance to Brisbane there was no other option.

"While I understand some sections of the community may not welcome the Coordinator General's decision – I believe it's necessary to ensure the project is delivered on time and will mitigate prolonged impacts for the wider community," Mr Hinchliffe said.

"The Coordinator-General sought advice from an independent expert Graeme Peck, of G.M. Peck and Associates, who advised the Woolloowin project change was the only available option with a reasonable chance of achieving the original completion date of June 2012.

"The approval will result in the project's substantial economic, social and safety benefits being made available on time and will also produce another 220 new jobs.

"And, as announced in June, the State remains committed to ultimately handing the worksite over to the community as a park or other appropriate recreational facility. Local residents will be consulted on what they would like to see happen to the 2800 sq m site.

"I want to take this opportunity to thank the community for their patience during the construction phase of Australia's largest infrastructure project."

The Coordinator-General's Change Report is available on www.dip.qld.gov.au

Media contact: Minister Hinchliffe's office 3227 8425 or 3224 8750.

Conditions include:

- acoustic shed covering the shaft to manage noise and dust which will remain enclosed except for access, egress and ventilation
- five metre acoustic fence around the worksite
- Airport Link to use its best endeavours to minimise the time the worksite is required with a maximum allowable period of 29 months
- a new school crossing provided for Kedron State High School students and staff (subject to Department of Transport and Main Roads' approval)
- footpath treatments and barriers in Kent Road and Park Road plus traffic controllers around the worksite, and in the vicinity of Kedron State High School during school drop off and pick up when spoil is being hauled
- limits on spoil removal during the peak hours of student movement

- noise mitigation measures such as double glazing or air conditioning for identified nearby homes and commercial buildings predicted to be impacted by noisy works
- a \$3 million Urban Mitigation and Community Development Plan that will fund improvements for the local community, new footpaths or bikeways or new urban design improvements near the Eagle Junction shops
- immediate rehabilitation of the site after works have been completed
- independent audits to assess compliance with conditions every six months
- the planting of mature trees and daily inspections and removal of graffiti at the site
- strict limits on the amount of light allowed to spill into neighbouring properties
- introduction of a one-way construction traffic route to minimise the number of spoil truck movements
- no haulage vehicle queuing near residences
- spoil trucks to be monitored to ensure compliance with dedicated construction route
- all workers must be transported by buses to the site (once the site is established) from the existing Kedron worksite, which means no worker car parking allowed in surrounding streets
- dust suppression and anti-pollution requirements with two air quality monitoring