

Cairns Bruce Highway Upgrade and Cairns Transit Network Projects

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IN July 2010, after two years of planning and extensive public consultation, the Department of Transport and Main Roads released an integrated road and public transport vision for Cairns for the next 30 years. This included a Master Plan for the southern access to Cairns including the upcoming \$150 million upgrade of the Bruce Highway between Sheehy Road and Ray Jones Drive and the currently unfunded upgrades between Wrights Creek, Edmonton and Draper St, in the City. The Cairns Transit Network project is protecting now for the future by planning a fast, reliable and sustainable public transport system that will connect the major communities in Cairns. The Concept Design Report and alignment plans for this project are integrated with the Master Plan and were released at the same time.

So why not build a Trinity Inlet option?

A SECOND corridor into the City across Trinity Inlet was an option that was considered in the Southern Cairns Integrated Land Use and Transport Study, carried out between 1999 and 2001.

At this time the study identified that a second corridor would not deliver improved transport efficiency and would not support the desired outcomes of the former regional plan and ruled out the option of a second highway in the short to medium term.

Further research also indicates that such an option is not appropriate at this time.

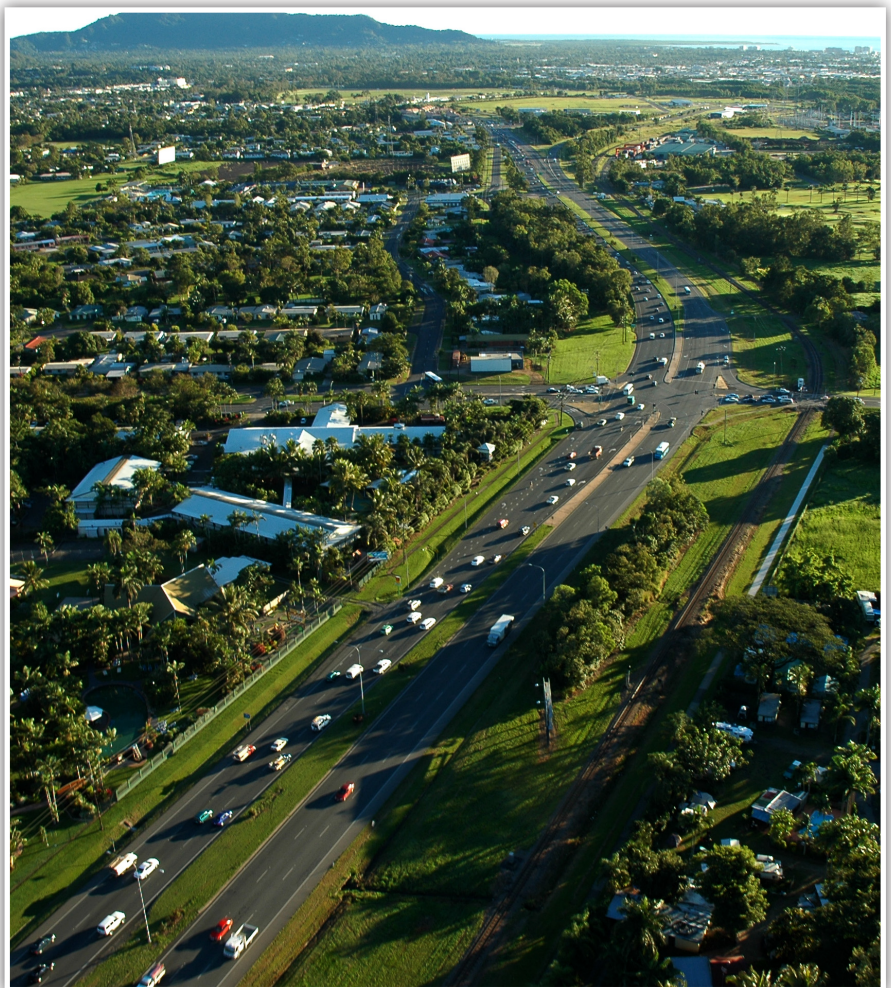
The Southern Cairns Integrated Land Use and Transport Study identified the following issues with a far eastern Trinity Inlet alignment option:

1. Longer travel distance

Travelling into the Cairns CBD, from south of Wrights Creek, would be 5km longer via a proposed Far Eastern Trinity alignment compared to using the existing Bruce Highway.

Residents in Edmonton wanting to drive to the city would first have to head south to Warner Road (approx 4.5km) to gain access to the East Trinity roadway. This would make a trip into the CBD almost 10km longer than at present.

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2. The road would not service urban areas

A proposed Far Eastern Trinity alignment would cross farmland and mangrove swamp and is well away from existing and planned residential areas, schools, shops and employment.

A recently undertaken strategic level traffic assessment of a proposed Far Eastern Trinity route indicated that as little as 10% of projected trips using the Bruce Highway in 2039 would be attracted to this route due to its location, and considerably longer length than the existing Bruce Highway.

3. Public transport targets would not be met

The need for improved public transport was a major consideration of the Southern Cairns Integrated Land Use and Transport Study.

The study recommended that the department plan for a rapid public transport system to attract at least 10% of peak-hour trips from the southern corridor to the city by 2016 and 20% by 2036.

More people on buses means fewer cars on our roads as one busway lane can carry the same number of people as 9 highway lanes.

A high-speed commuter-standard cycleway from Gordonvale to Cairns CBD was also recommended.

4. Environmental impacts

Trinity Inlet is of significant environmental value, considering its proximity to the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area, and is located within the Trinity Inlet Marlin Coast Marine Park. The East Trinity option would have significant environmental impacts.

5. Flooding

Areas to the east of the existing Bruce Highway are more prone to flooding. Significant lengths of culverts and bridges would be needed at substantial cost.



6. Not able to be staged

The proposed 16km road and associated 4.3km bridge across Trinity Inlet would need to be constructed in its entirety before it could be used.

7. The Bruce Highway would still need to be upgraded

Traffic modelling indicates that around 55% of trips on the Cairns Bruce Highway in 2039 would start north of Warner Road and therefore all works proposed for the existing highway would still be necessary.



A balanced road and public transport solution

A MAJOR consideration of the Southern Cairns Integrated Land Use and Transport Study was that all efforts be made by state and local government to provide a balanced road and public transport solution on the southern approach to Cairns. The Cairns Bruce Highway Master Plan and Cairns Transit Network are based on the conclusions and recommendations of the study.

These projects support the Queensland Government's Toward Q2 vision for the future and underpin the settlement pattern of the statutory *Far North Queensland Regional Plan 2009-2031*.

More information

For more information about the Cairns Bruce Highway Upgrade or Cairns Transit Network projects:

Freecall 1800 184 317 (*Freecall within Queensland. Higher rates may apply from mobile phones and pay phones. If calling from outside Queensland, STD rates will apply).

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Visit www.tmr.qld.gov.au (search for Cairns Bruce Highway Upgrade or Cairns Transit Network)