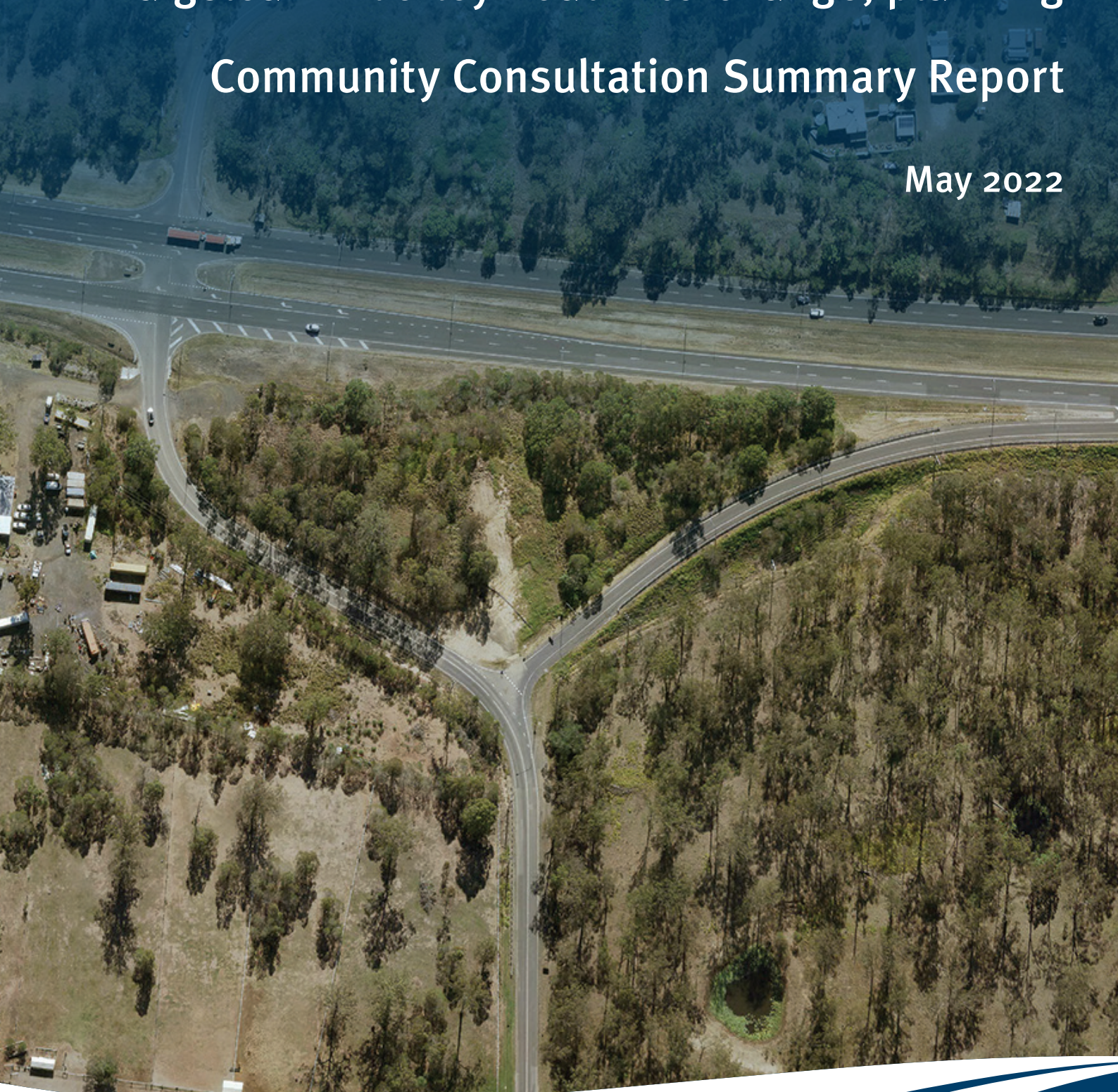


# Warrego Highway (Ipswich–Toowoomba) and Haigslea-Amberley Road interchange, planning Community Consultation Summary Report

May 2022





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# Project overview

## Warrego Highway (Ipswich–Toowoomba) and Haigslea-Amberley Road interchange, planning

The project’s primary focus is to improve safety and reduce congestion at the interchange, however additional benefits also include improving traffic flow along this section of the Warrego Highway and the security and reliability of the transport network.

The Warrego Highway between Brisbane and Toowoomba is part of the National Land Transport Network (NLTN) Melbourne – Brisbane corridor (as defined by NLTN Determination 2014). Haigslea-Amberley Road provides a connection between the Warrego Highway and the Cunningham Highway.

The Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR) constructed a dedicated left turn facility for vehicles travelling westbound from Warrego Highway to southbound along Haigslea-Amberley Road, as a safety improvement in 2009.

In early 2020, a planning study was completed that investigated options to address the safety issues at the Haigslea–Amberley Road and Warrego Highway interchange. The original project scope was to undertake an options analysis informing a business case for the Haigslea–Amberley Road interchange. The options analysis identified that an at-grade solution did not improve safety issues at the interchange, primarily due to high traffic volumes on the Warrego Highway, reduced gap spacing for turning safely and the continued growth along the corridor.

The options analysis study recommended that longer term planning, aligning with the Warrego Highway East Masterplan (see overleaf), be progressed.

## Warrego Highway (Ipswich–Toowoomba) and Haigslea-Amberley Road interchange, planning





## Warrego Highway Upgrade Strategy and Warrego Highway East Masterplan

The Queensland Government's Warrego Highway Upgrade Strategy is a planned transformation to motorway standard that includes the closure of all median openings, removal of direct access to property, and connection to all other roads only at intersections. Creation of interim at-grade connections or access to the future motorway needs to be consistent with the planning for its ultimate design, as relocation or removal is usually problematic considering the resultant land-use and traffic patterns previously established. Upgrading to motorway standard will significantly improve road safety by reducing the current number of crashes by up to two-thirds, as well as improving traffic capacity and freight efficiency.

Strategic priorities will be accomplished by staged upgrading of the highway. Master planning aims to determine how improvements to the Warrego Highway will be delivered over the next 20 years (and beyond). A key activity in successful corridor preservation and master planning is community consultation.

### Key Stakeholder and Community Engagement

Community consultation and key stakeholder engagement, as part of the Preliminary Evaluation phase of planning, was undertaken over a four-week period from 24 May 2021 to 20 June 2021. TMR has collated the feedback from the community regarding their concerns and experiences at the interchange.

TMR has been undertaking long-term planning work within the project footprint, as part of the Warrego Highway East Masterplan corridor protection project. This work was ongoing during the Warrego Highway – Haigslea-Amberley Road upgrade community consultation process and the integration of communications and stakeholder engagement between the two project teams was an integral component of the consultation process.

All feedback received will inform the current planning process, anticipated to be completed in early 2022 with key outcomes being communicated to the community.





# Summary of feedback

TMR undertook community consultation for the Warrego Highway and Haigslea-Amberley Road interchange upgrade from 24 May 2021 to 20 June 2021.

The consultation methodology incorporated a number of online and traditional platforms enabling the community to engage with the consultation process via their preferred platform. Of the available methods, the online survey generated the highest number of responses (around 50 per cent) with feedback from community information sessions and the interactive online map both generating around 20 per cent of responses. The remaining 10 per cent were primarily email submissions and phone calls. A full breakdown of the individual feedback channels are outlined below in the chart on page 5.

In total there were around 300 individual submissions as part of the consultation process. This input informs the current planning phase, in order to identify options that address the safety issues at the interchange. This is expected to be completed by early 2022.

Whilst community and key stakeholder feedback was almost unanimous in supporting the need for an interchange upgrade, there were a number of themes which emerged regarding both the current interchange and what an upgrade should involve.

## **The main themes regarding the current interchange:**

- A general comment that the interchange is unsafe, requires upgrading and that it is avoided if possible, to the point that it was now impacting on the respondent's lifestyle and causing anxiety, particularly in older members of the community and/or during traffic journeys where children were in the vehicle.
- The alignment of the interchange with the Warrego Highway when crossing to Schultzs Road from Haigslea-Amberley Road and vice versa as well as just entering the median – was not straight causing problems with access, visibility and the ability to easily enter/exit.
- The current speed limit at the interchange (100km/h) was too high and should be reduced to match the 80km/h speed limit east of the intersection at Blacksoil – either as an interim measure or permanently.
- Vegetation at the interchange was not effectively maintained and obstructed the line of sight making entering/exiting the interchange dangerous.
- Comments were gained regarding the inadequate design/length of the on-ramp towards Toowoomba. However, the off-ramp towards Haigslea-Amberley Road was also raised due to the design of the ramp, where it meets Haigslea-Amberley Road causing issues with visibility and the ability to properly anticipate oncoming traffic.
- Heavy vehicles are using the interchange to get to the Cunningham Highway from the Warrego Highway which is causing safety issues as this route is not designed for heavy vehicles and includes schools and community facilities.
- Size of the median is inadequate, and priority is unclear.

## **Feedback regarding the community's preference on what an upgrade should include or consider:**

- 70 per cent of those who responded stated that an overpass or flyover was required.
- 23 per cent stated that the Western Ipswich Bypass should be constructed in order to rectify the issues with the interchange.

Consultation participants and the wider community will be notified about the consultation outcomes in early 2022. This will include all key stakeholders who took part in the consultation and/or those who requested project updates.

# Community consultation methodology

TMR undertook community consultation on a potential Warrego Highway and Haigslea-Amberley Road interchange upgrade from 24 May 2021 to 20 June 2021.

## Community engagement methods included:

- a project web page directing people to the online engagement platform that included the interactive map and online survey
- a hard copy feedback form, mirroring the online survey, and either post, email or hand-over the form at any community information session.
- stakeholders could email feedback or provide input over the phone
- opportunity to attend community information sessions:
  - Sunday 6 June, 7am – 11am at the Walloon Markets
  - Thursday 10 June, 3.30pm – 7.30pm at the Walloon Uniting Church

## The consultation process was promoted via the following platforms:

- Briefings were held with elected representatives: Jim Madden MP, Member for Ipswich West; Shayne Neumann MP, Member for Blair; and Ipswich City Council Division 4 councillors, Kate Kunzelmann and Russell Milligan. This resulted in some of the elected representatives promoting the consultation to their constituents via their own communication platforms.
- TMR website with the 'Have Your Say' link to The HiVE community consultation platform which went live on Monday 24 May 2021.
- A targeted mail-out by the Warrego Highway East Masterplan Project Team to 58 landowners along the corridor within the project footprint included information regarding the consultation and a hard copy factsheet/feedback form.
- Hard copy factsheet/feedback forms were distributed to the offices of the elected representatives briefed prior to consultation launch, for distribution to members of the public, see **Appendix A**.
- Hard copy factsheet/feedback forms were distributed to community hubs within the project footprint including the medical centre and dental surgeries in Walloon, the local IGA grocery store and the Walloon service station.
- Distribution of a postcard via letterbox drop to approximately 13,500 properties within the surrounding area, see **Appendix B**.
- A sponsored social media post was published on 31 May 2021 with information about the project and a link to the projects 'Have you say' online survey and interactive map, see **Appendix C**. This post ran for the last 3 weeks of the consultation and had a reach of 23,341 individuals and generated 1031 unique clicks (1115 link clicks which indicate that some people clicked it a number of times). It also generated 112 comments, 55 reactions and 45 shares.

# Consultation feedback

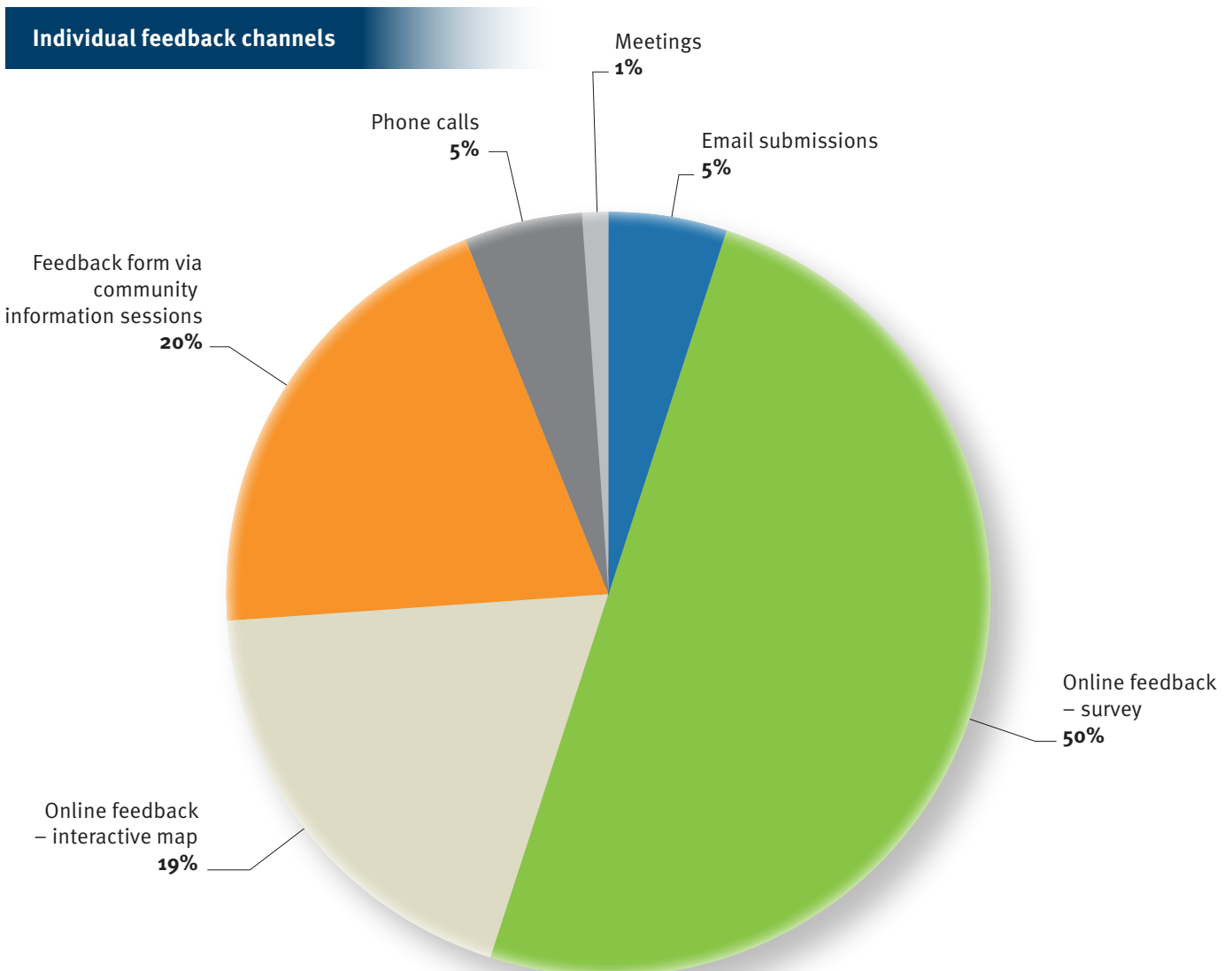
There were 300 responses gained directly through the consultation process. These were received via a number of sources, as outlined above. The breakdown of feedback channels is listed below, with the overwhelming majority coming from the online consultation platform (69 per cent).

Meetings were held with key stakeholders including the Australian Defence Force, specifically with regard to the Amberley RAAF base, and the Marburg Police Station’s Officer-in-Charge.

While not specific to the consultation process timeframe, ongoing communications were also undertaken with Ipswich City Council officers and information was also collected via the Warrego Highway East Masterplan project team from their interactions with stakeholders as part of their ongoing corridor protection master planning. This included feedback from other emergency service providers – Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) and Queensland Ambulance Services (QAS) regarding their experiences and issues with the interchange.

All information has been collated and analysed to inform the planning process.

Individual feedback channels are outlined below in the chart below and table on page 7.



## Community information sessions

The project received 59 items of written feedback from the two community information sessions where the engagement team spoke with around 93 stakeholders.

**The two community information sessions held are outlined below:**

- Saturday 6 June, 7am – 11am at the Walloon Markets – around 70 individuals attended
- Thursday 10 June, 3:30pm – 7:30pm at the Walloon Uniting Church – around 25 individuals attended.

**Whilst almost unanimously, those providing feedback agreed that there was a significant need to upgrade the interchange due to safety concerns, with many avoiding the interchange due to these concerns, there were a number of specific issues raised – both in terms of the current interchange as well as suggestions for an upgrade:**

- The interchange needs an overpass or flyover.
- Vegetation is an issue as it currently obstructs vision.
- Speed at this location is an issue, it should be reduced to 80km/h as an interim measure.
- The on-ramp to the Warrego Highway from Haigslea-Amberley Road is poorly designed.
- Turning right into Haigslea-Amberley Road through the interchange, when travelling from Toowoomba is dangerous as you need to come to a complete stop when a vehicle is already stationary in the median.
- Turning right from Haigslea-Amberley Road onto the Warrego Highway towards Brisbane is very dangerous due to visibility issues, lack of space to stop in the middle, the speed along that stretch of the highway and lack of clarity around priority movements.
- Questions around the Western Ipswich Bypass and if or when it will be built.
- Heavy vehicles are using the interchange to get to the Cunningham Highway from the Warrego Highway which causes safety issues as this route is not designed for heavy vehicles and includes schools and community facilities.

## Analysis of the ‘Have Your Say’ online data

The largest portion of feedback was from the online platform which comprised a survey (48.7 per cent) and interactive map (19 per cent), accessible through the project web page ‘Have Your Say’ button. This source represented nearly 70 per cent of the feedback received.

Additionally, the hard copy feedback form replicated the online survey and the results gained through those submissions were added to the overall survey responses outlined in the next section.

The online page was live between 24 May 2021 – 20 June 2021. There were 2874 visits, 2629 unique visitors, 3236 page views and 203 contributions. Visitors to the page came through a variety of methods which can be broken down as follows:

## Online survey results – Snapshot

**A snapshot of the online survey results includes:**

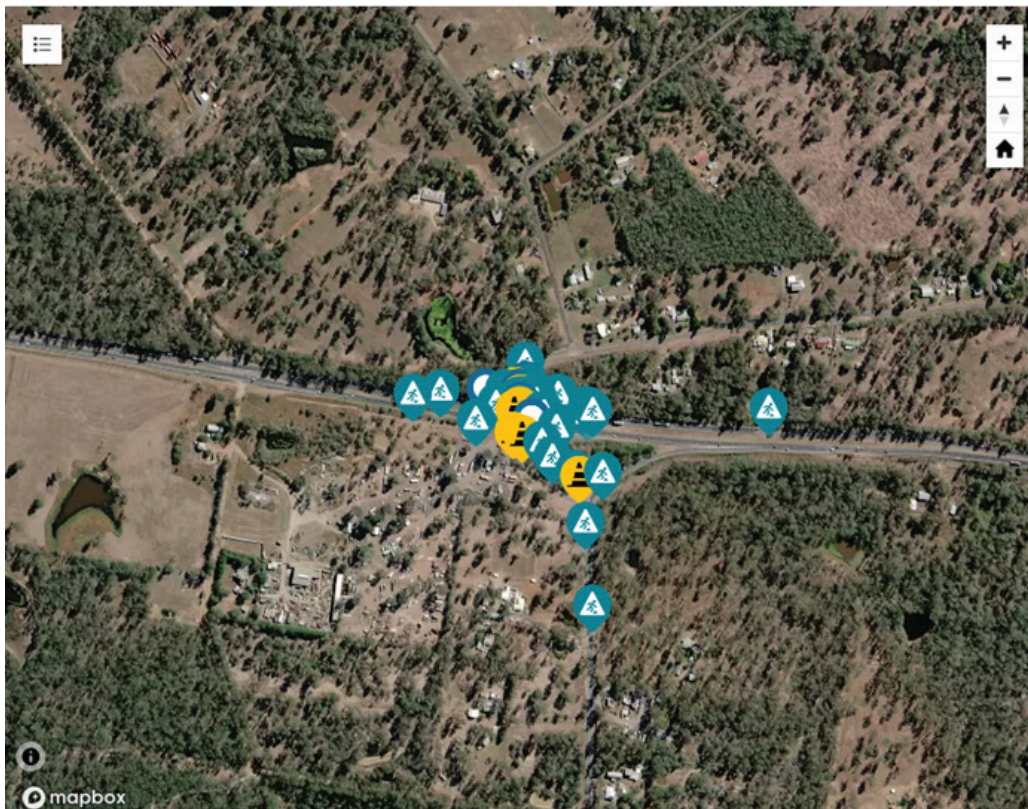
- Almost half of respondents were local to the intersection, with the suburbs of Walloon, Ironbark, Haigslea and Rosewood accounting for nearly 50 per cent of respondents. However, feedback was gained from respondents as far a field as the North of Brisbane and Toowoomba, illustrating the widespread interest in the intersection upgrade.






- The majority (40 per cent of respondents) utilise the interchange when travelling to work with 42 per cent utilising the interchange when travelling to attend community facilities (34 per cent) and/or educational institutions (8 per cent). This aligned with the most common usage of the interchange being twice per day (40 per cent) at peak hours (72 per cent).
- Around 87 per cent of respondents drive through the interchange in private vehicles, with motorcycles (7 per cent) and trucks (4 per cent) representing the next largest category.
- The majority of respondents used the interchange to travel to and from Brisbane from Haigslea-Amberley Road (52 per cent and 34 per cent respectively).
- When asked to rank seven issues relating to the interchange in order of importance the following issue was viewed as being of the most concern (54 per cent) – entering the Warrego Highway from Haigslea-Amberley Road when travelling east towards Brisbane due to having to cross the median lane. Conversely, exiting the Warrego Highway to Haigslea-Amberley Road was seen as the issue of least concern with only 0.8 per cent marking it as their primary concern.

## Online interactive map results

The interactive map enabled respondents to pinpoint particular locations of concern and categorise their comments. There were 57 contributions by 39 contributors which were categorised as follows:



## Categorisations

Category	Contributions	
Safety 	43	75%
Congestion 	6	10.5%
General comment 	8	14.5%

The general comments received related to the need to reduce speed at the interchange, suggested design improvements and the need for the Western Ipswich Bypass to be built.

# Summary of feedback

## Concerns with current interchange

In addition to the use of the online survey which was replicated in hard-copy feedback, TMR asked people to provide their feedback on the interchange in comment form...

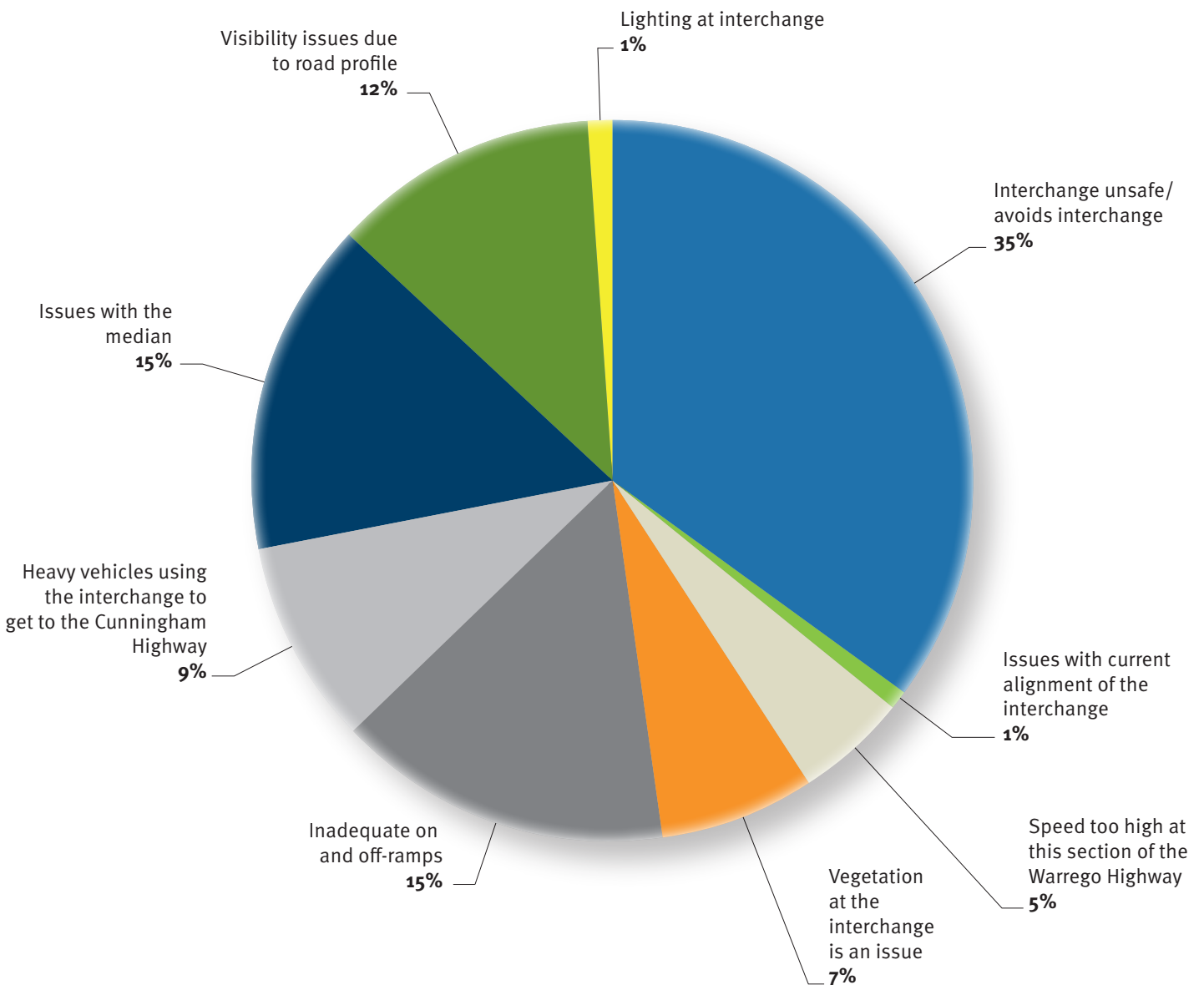
**“Do you have any comments, suggestions or feedback for the project team?”**

All respondents provided feedback though this format (300 respondents generating 250 comments) and the comments were analysed to identify the top concerns with regard to:

- 1) the existing interchange
- 2) suggestions for an upgrade to the existing interchange.

These comments have been summarised below.

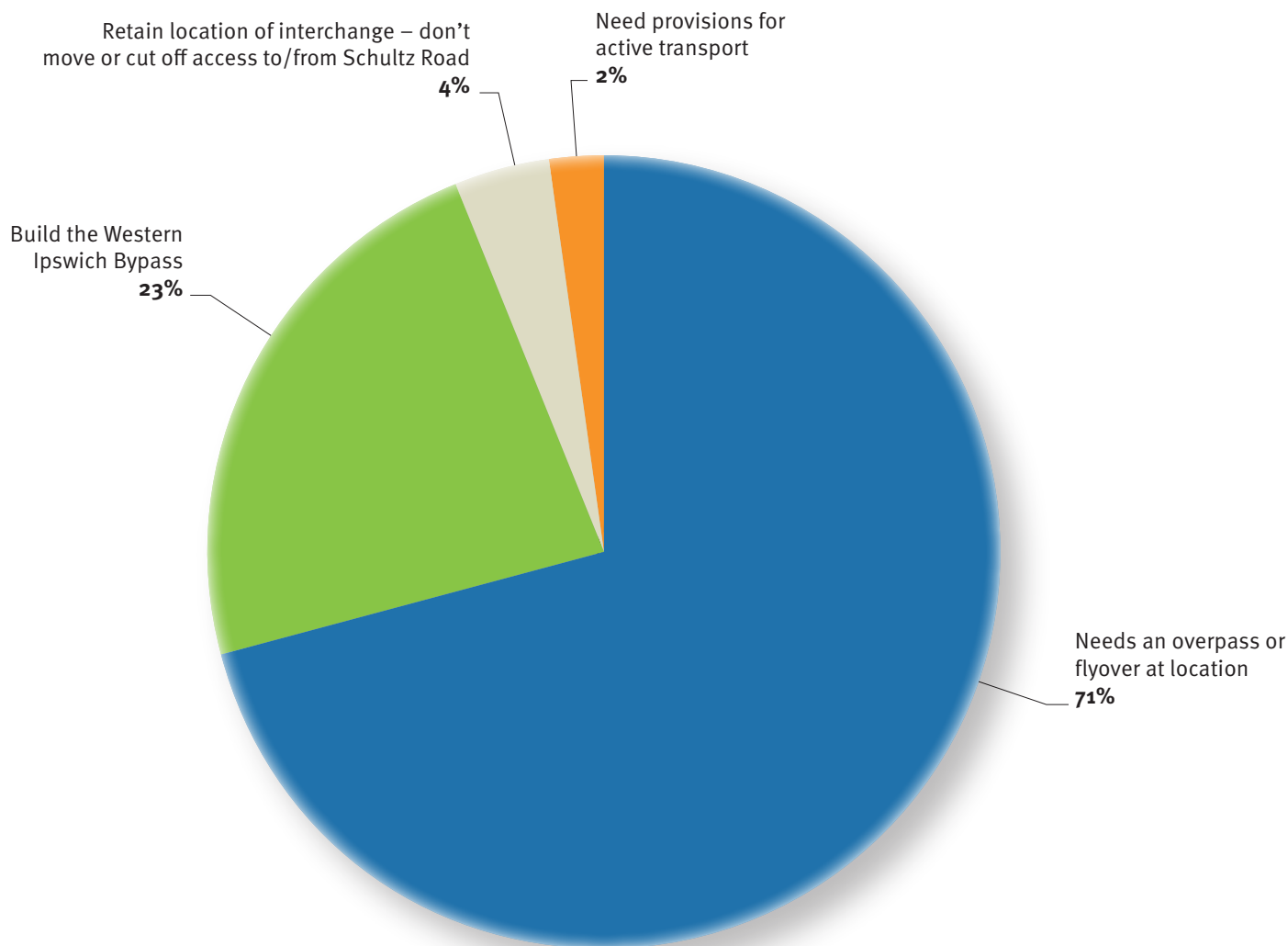
### Summary of most common concerns with the current interchange





## Suggestions for upgrading the interchange – summary of feedback

### Feedback on upgrade preferences



### Other issues which were not specific to the interchange itself but impacted on the interchange in terms of current and future usage were:

- The incorporation of significant increases in the rate of traffic growth were viewed as a crucial element of any future upgrade. This was due to the rate of population increase in the local area due to housing developments at Waterlea and nearby locations, coupled with the expansion of the RAAF Base at Amberley. Additionally, the recently approved Development Application for a significant Truck Stop to the west of the existing interchange was viewed as a significant concern in terms of additional heavy vehicle traffic through that section of the highway as well as potentially increasing the number of heavy vehicles utilising the interchange to get to the Cunningham Highway.
- Haigslea-Amberley Road was sighted as being inadequate in terms of capacity, quality of road surface and due to the variance in speed along that corridor. Capacity was specifically mentioned as a contributor of congestion for drivers accessing the interchange, especially at peak hour.
- Retain direct access to the Warrego Highway for current and future residents of the Leschke Road/ Pioneer Road turn-off but upgrade turn in/turn out provisions to ensure safety.



## Next steps

All participants have received an acknowledgement and have been thanked for their input.

Consultation participants and the wider community will be notified about the consultation outcomes in early 2022. This will include all key stakeholders who formed part of the consultation process.

TMR will keep the community up to date with the upgrade of the Warrego Highway and Haigslea-Amberley Road interchange, as the project progresses.

## Stay informed

TMR will keep the community up to date with the upgrade of the Warrego Highway and Haigslea-Amberley Road interchange, as the project progresses. To stay informed about the project outlined in this report, you can email the project team at [metropolitanregion@tmr.qld.gov.au](mailto:metropolitanregion@tmr.qld.gov.au) or call **3066 4338** during business hours.