

Scholars Drive Link

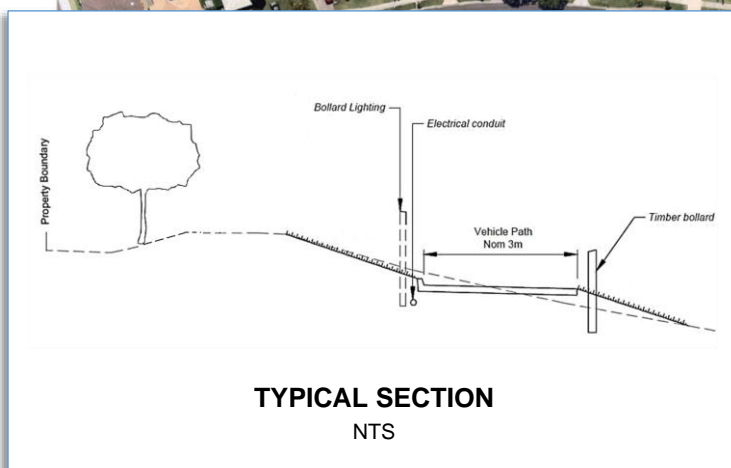
New Access | Sippy Downs

October 2021

 Project number: **P-H4223**

Scholars Drive Link is being constructed to alleviate traffic congestion on Scholars Drive at school peak hours and improve traffic efficiency in and around the school precinct. Council would like to keep the community informed about the progression of the Link by providing additional information about the project and its background, which can be found overleaf.

This project has a long-standing history of more than 15 years. This project also has the support of the Chancellor Safe ST group which includes members of the school community, P&C, school executive, local State MP, Divisional Councillor, Department of Education staff and council officers.



Further information

You can find further information about this project on Council's website at www.sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au

To contact Council's project team please email projectdelivery@sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au

or call: (07) 5475 7272 and reference P-H4223.

Q. How will the Link Operate?

The Scholars Drive Link will consist of a three-metre-wide, 20km/h, one-way concrete path that will provide access for light vehicles during school pick-up and drop-off times only – between 7am and 9am and 2pm and 4pm on school days.

Installed boom gates will restrict vehicle access outside of peak times. Opening times will depend on traffic use and could operate for as little as 30 minutes morning and afternoon if congestion eases quickly.

Q. What traffic studies in the area has Council undertaken?

A traffic movement study was carried out in 2016 to inform the Scholars Drive project development. These early traffic counts have been compared to a drone survey carried out on Tuesday 20 July 2021 and the number of turning vehicles are similar. A verification count was carried out on Thursday 22 July 2021 to calibrate the 2016 count data. It showed that the data was appropriate for current traffic analysis and reporting needs.

Q. How many cars will use the Scholars Drive Link?

It's anticipated a split of one third of vehicles will use the new Link and two thirds will continue to use the University Way roundabout. The traffic studies predict the volume of traffic likely to use the Scholars Drive Link will be high soon after the Link opens but will drop off once travel patterns develop. Based on the studies, if only left turning vehicles out of Scholars Drive were considered to use the Link, the volume of traffic would be between 70 and 80 vehicles using the Link in AM and PM peaks.

The queue length on Scholars Drive is predicted to drop to below half the current 600 metre queue length.

Q. Will Council monitor the volume of traffic using Scholars Drive Link?

Council officers will monitor the traffic volumes in the first three months and modify the Link opening times to reflect peak vehicle movements. Once the short-term peak has passed the Link will be closed to through traffic.

Q. What other options has Council considered?

Council investigated four other options in addition to the Scholars Drive Link:

Option 1 - Signalise the University Way, Scholars Drive and Springhill Drive Intersection
AVID property group is conditioned to construct these signals in 2028.

An investigation into the bring forward of the signal upgrade has occurred between relevant stakeholders, and unfortunately a mutual agreement was unable to be reached. Upon further

review, the bring forward of the upgrade is considered undesirable as construction vehicles would be diverted through the residential area on Springfield Drive.

Option 2 - Beaverbrook Circuit Drainage Reserve
This option was not supported by the school or Council due to inherent safety concerns with cars traveling through a car park with 90-degree angle parking; the impact on the school's bicycle parking, school buildings, and an internal footpath, as well as Council's footpath through the drainage reserve.

Option 3 - Opening the Public Transport Only Green Link to Small Vehicle Access
This option was not supported by USC as it would increase vehicle movements and maintenance requirements on the internal road network. It was also considered that additional vehicle movements would increase risk for pedestrians within the university's grounds.

Option 4 – School Stop, Drop and Go Zone
This option was considered in 2020 and not supported by Council and DTMR as the limited network permeability associated with the sole entry into Scholars Drive would see a stop, drop and go zone result in further congestion and traffic issues at the University Way and Scholars Drive intersection.

Q. Will Council address the existing parking concerns in Columbia & Parkville Streets?

Council will be meeting with USC to discuss potential options for off street parking, to help reduce the number of parked vehicles within Columbia and Parkville Streets.

Councillor Dickson has also funded a Road Safety Audit for Columbia and Parkville Streets.

Q. How will Council manage the traffic impact on Columbia and Parkville Streets?

It is Council's intention to reduce the impact of traffic on residents in Columbia and Parkville Streets by managing the opening and closing times of the Scholars Drive Link to ensure it is only open for the shortest time possible.

Q. Will the Link impact local wildlife such as kangaroos?

Council is committed to protecting wildlife and the interests of the community. This project will comply with fauna management requirements under the Nature Conservation Act.

The risk to wildlife is considered very low due to the low traffic speed (20km/hr, like the speed within a carpark environment), and times of operation which are outside peak times for wildlife movements. Kangaroo signs will be installed to warn drivers of the risk to wildlife.