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Safe pedestrian access approved at Angels Beach residential subdivision

The NSW Government has resolved the issue of safe pedestrian access to the North Angels Beach subdivision in East Ballina by requiring a signalised pedestrian crossing on Angels Beach Drive.

Deputy Director-General, Richard Pearson, said that the proponent, SJ Connelly CPP Pty Ltd, applied to modify its approval to construct an at-grade non-signalised pedestrian crossing, rather than an underpass which was required under its 2007 approval.

“The Department undertook careful assessment of the proposed changes, canvassing a diverse range of views on the issue,” Mr Pearson said.

“Consultation was undertaken with Ballina Shire Council, relevant Government agencies and community groups in order to achieve a sound planning outcome for the site.

“To assist in its assessment, the Department also engaged an independent traffic engineer and transport planner to undertake a peer review of the proposed approaches.

“Following lengthy consideration of the possible options for this site, the Department’s conclusion was that the developer’s proposed at-grade crossing was appropriate but that the crossing should be supported by traffic signals to maximise safety.

“A signalised crossing will ensure the safe and efficient movement of pedestrians and cyclists across Angels Beach Drive from the subdivision and also importantly allow for disabled access.

“At the same time, this approach will avoid any potential impacts on local Aboriginal heritage.”

The decision to implement a signalised crossing rather than an underpass or non-signalised crossing was based on a number of reasons, including that:

- An underpass could create opportunities for vandalism and anti-social behaviour, especially due to the fact that it would have blind corners;
- An overpass or underpass would require long access ramps due to the topography, which would lengthen trips and potentially encourage pedestrians to cross the road at-grade;
- The speed of traffic flow along Angels Beach Drive would pose a safety risk to pedestrians using a non-signalised crossing; and
- Due to the predicted low level of pedestrian and cycle traffic, an overpass or underpass is not considered warranted.

Mr Pearson said the proponent would also have to redesign and relocate the existing bus bays so that the pedestrian crossing is at the rear of the bus bays, which will further improve pedestrian safety and provide better traffic flow from the site onto Angels Beach Drive.

“This approval will provide an improved planning outcome enabling safe access for residents and other pedestrians between the subdivision and Angels Beach.”

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