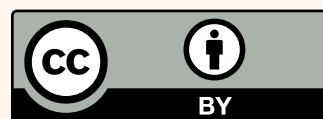


BUSINESS FRIENDLY GUIDE FOR INFRASTRUCTURE WORKS

*A resource for government and councils to minimise the
impact of construction on businesses*





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INTRODUCTION

Queensland is in the biggest decade of infrastructure delivery in our history – Queensland’s Big Build. Whether it is hospitals, schools, roads, rail, parks and precincts, sports facilities, or renewable energy transformation: building Queensland means a better Queensland – now and for future generations.

While completion of major infrastructure generates many benefits to the economy, businesses, and communities alike, some businesses may be affected during construction.

The *Business friendly guide for infrastructure works* (the guide) has been developed to provide practical advice to Queensland Government agencies, local councils and their contractors on working with the business community to minimise disruption and to support jobs when undertaking major infrastructure work. Also, a checklist covering key actions from this guide is available.

By working with businesses located in the area where construction will occur, Queensland Government and local councils can help businesses to continue to operate and thrive, especially small businesses as many rely on local customers to support their livelihoods and economic prosperity.

Although the use of this guide is not mandatory, it offers a best-practice approach to minimising business disruption. As every project is unique, this guide is intentionally flexible, and designed to encourage innovative solutions and practical approaches to its application.

Applying this guide does not reduce any legal liabilities that may occur due to infrastructure work, nor does it confer any entitlement to financial compensation for individual businesses.

GUIDE OVERVIEW

A diverse range of stakeholder groups are interested in infrastructure projects, including infrastructure users, the local community, and those who may be potentially impacted during construction.

This guide focuses on approaches to reduce the impact on businesses during construction which are outlined within three project stages.

1. Before construction

Before construction starts, the project management team should develop solutions that will minimise potential business disruption. The process includes:

- **Consultation** – proactive communication with businesses to obtain the required information on potential business impacts.
- **Assessing potential impacts** – analysing the information received from businesses.
- **Mitigating potential impacts** – informed by consultation and an assessment of potential impacts, planning to reduce these so businesses can continue to operate and thrive.

2. During construction

During this stage, the plan to **mitigate potential impacts** will be implemented. Also, it is a time for the project management team to monitor how well the plan is being delivered by engaging with businesses and responding to issues.

3. At completion of construction

It is good practice to **document learnings** on how business disruption was minimised as a reference for future projects and to consider how this information can be shared.

BEFORE CONSTRUCTION

During the planning stage, project managers have a range of responsibilities including project design, preparing information on how to implement the required works (including specifications), and defining responsibilities for project development, procurement, and delivery.

Consultation and an evaluation of the potential impacts on businesses should be done as early as possible, so the infrastructure's delivery pathway can be established in a way that minimises impacts on nearby businesses.

Where possible, agencies are encouraged to coordinate the delivery of infrastructure works, as part of a 'one dig' approach to avoid multiple disruptions.

Consultation

Communicating with businesses at the planning stage

Connect with businesses

- A broad variety of channels should be used, both online and face-to-face, to get the message out and invite genuine engagement.
- This could be through website updates, advertising, social media, e-newsletters, flyers, face-to-face communication, and by raising awareness through local business chambers and other business networks.
- Consider how to communicate with home-based or mobile businesses.

Establish a central point of contact

- Provide a feedback mechanism and include an email address and telephone number. It is advisable to appoint a project manager or liaison officer as the first point-of-contact. Consider a Queensland Government agency or local council representative for a second point-of-contact.

Public consultation and information sessions

- Provide opportunities for businesses to participate in the consultation process, and explain how they can raise issues and the process for resolving complaints.

Determine key messages

- Key messages should be developed to ensure consistency of information including why the infrastructure works are being undertaken and proposed timeframes.
- Outline the long-term benefits of the project, in a quantifiable manner where possible, including any expected positive impacts on local businesses following its completion.

Accessibility

Have you considered how a person with disability or an accessibility issue can participate in the planning process?

Diverse audiences

Be aware of the location's demographics. Do you need to provide information that is appropriate for culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) audiences. Engagement may encompass respectful communication with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. [The Cultural Capability Resource](#) provides information on a First Nations engagement strategy.

The [Queensland Government Language Services Policy](#) recognises that clients of the Queensland Government who face language barriers should have fair access to services including use of interpreters and translators.

Two-way communication

Consultation relies on effective two-way communication between the project management team and businesses.

Best practice communication would be proactive and underpinned by the following principles:

- **Integrity** – encourage and undertake actions that build trust and credibility throughout the consultation process. Speak honestly to ensure communication lines remain open.
- **Openness** – disclose all relevant information to affected businesses in a timely manner. Businesses should hear news about the project directly from those responsible for construction, not via media coverage.
- **Inclusion** – ensure potentially impacted businesses have fair and equal access to information, can participate in public consultation, and are provided with the opportunity to influence decisions where possible. Face-to-face consultation needs to be at a time and in a place suitable for businesses. Ensure people with a disability and those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds are included.
- **Respect** – engage respectfully and consider different points of view and mitigation options put forward. If a proposed mitigation option is not feasible, explain why and discuss alternatives.
- **Collaboration** – enable a collaborative approach between government agencies, local councils, community, and businesses to achieve desired and shared outcomes.



Collecting information from businesses that may be impacted

The level of impact from the infrastructure works will vary between businesses, so it is important to capture potential impacts for businesses in general, and at an individual level.

Consider organising businesses into groups based on expected levels of impact. Prioritise more in-depth engagement such as initial face-to-face contact for businesses likely to be most affected. In comparison, businesses deemed low-impact could receive written communication and an email contact to raise any concerns.

As part of an information gathering exercise, information that should be captured for each potentially impacted business includes:

- business contact details
- proximity to where the infrastructure work is being carried out
- the business trading times including peak times/periods
- required safe access to business for customers and suppliers
- utility service requirements
- health and safety considerations for the business and the community/public
- businesses specific needs, for more detail refer to 'Assessing potential impacts - Factors to consider' on page 6.

Advise businesses how you will manage the information collected on them. Outline to businesses how they will learn of the project management team's next steps, including being informed at commencement of construction.



Assessing potential impacts

A business impact assessment uses information obtained from businesses in conjunction with the proposed construction process to determine the potential impacts on businesses. This assessment is a precursor to considering mitigation options which may include modification of the initial proposed project delivery process to minimise business disruption and/or providing business support during construction.

Factors to consider

Project timing and duration

The business impact assessment should consider the proposed length of time for the project including any scheduled periods of intense disruption. This needs to be overlaid with information specific to the location. Consider:

- seasonal impacts (e.g. heavy rainfall/flooding during summer)
- disruption during peak trading times during the day
- impact on peak holiday visitation periods, events or festivals usually held in the area.

Business visibility

Business visibility should be evaluated, including whether:

- customers will still see store fronts and existing signage during the infrastructure works
- road users (customers and suppliers) will be able to see how to access businesses
- customers will be confused about businesses being open.

Physical access

Assess whether the infrastructure work will block or limit safe physical access to businesses, specifically:

- will the project intrude on business trading areas (e.g. outside dining)
- access to footpaths for pedestrians
- access for people with disability and/or accessibility issues
- access to amenities such as bathrooms
- road access, including the ability for businesses to accept and dispatch deliveries
- availability of parking (including disability parking bays)
- public transport, taxi, and drop-off point access
- traffic redistribution and traffic-related impacts
- special event access.

Utilities and services

Consider if the infrastructure works will impact access to utilities and services required by businesses, including:

- electricity and gas services
- internet
- telecommunications
- waste management
- water.

Considerations should factor in whether other organisations will have utility maintenance works scheduled during the same period and how these activities, in aggregate, may contribute to business disruption.

Environmental impacts

Evaluate environmental factors that may impact business owners, employees and customers, such as:

- dirt, dust, and other pollutants generated by the infrastructure works
- vibration impacts and increases in noise pollution
- health and safety risks
- a less visually appealing trading environment.

Economic impacts

Consider broader economic impacts (including any supply chain issues) on affected businesses by investigating the specific nature of each business, such as:

- What will be the constraints due to business trading hours clashing with infrastructure works?
- Could the infrastructure works keep customers away from the location?
- Will businesses reliant on customers obtaining quick access to the location, e.g. bakeries, be affected?
- Would perishable items be lost if there are interruptions to utility services?
- What will be the 'pain points' for each affected business?
- Will there be impacts to businesses beyond the immediate area of infrastructure work, including other businesses in the supply chain?

Business impact assessment report

Potential impacts on business should be summarised in a business impact assessment report that:

- determines an impact zone (area that may be impacted by the infrastructure work) and identifies potentially affected businesses
- summarises business characteristics, including shared and individual business 'pain points'.

Summary information on businesses that may be impacted should cover factors relevant to the delivery of the infrastructure works, and include at a minimum:

- operating hours, including peak trading hours
- delivery times and required access
- when utility services must be provided
- business visibility
- extent of business' reliance on pedestrian foot traffic
- transport access (e.g. road and bus access, inclusive access, car parking)
- health and safety impacts
- amenity impacts (e.g. noise and dust).

Closely evaluate impacts on businesses that will be particularly affected and the potential scale of the impact on these businesses.

Ensure that any additional information specific to individual businesses is captured for specific consideration.

The business impact assessment report should also identify risks such as the impact of delays or changes to the infrastructure work schedule on potentially impacted businesses.

Mitigating potential impacts

Informed by the business impact assessment report, planning how to mitigate business disruption requires designed solutions that are tailored to the project and the businesses that are likely to be affected.

Key elements of a disruption mitigation plan

A disruption mitigation plan should be developed, including:

- A practical guide on how construction will be undertaken to minimise business disruption, such as changes to boundaries and safe access routes during different stages of the project, and construction times in the day for specific processes.

By collaborating with businesses, viable solutions can be identified. For example, would they benefit from (or prefer) continuous work until the completion of infrastructure work, or would construction in stages better suit seasonal needs and peak trading times of the year?

- Initiatives that support the physical environment to help businesses operate, e.g. signage, cleaning, visual amenity.
- How affected business can be supported, such as:
 - promotion of the location
 - providing updates and information on support programs they can access.
- How risk will be managed (unexpected or significant disruptions above what is anticipated), including the process for dealing with these risks and how businesses will be kept informed.

Suggestions on mitigation strategies follow.

Mitigation options

Reduce potential physical and economic impacts

Consider undertaking the following strategies to reduce impacts on businesses when construction starts:

- Disruptive work to take place outside of trading hours or peak trading times.
- Utility works to be scheduled outside of business trading times, or if not possible, alternative temporary supplies to be provided to enable continued trading, e.g. a portable generator for electricity, or a water tanker and booster pump for water supply. Coordinate this work so businesses don't have to deal with multiple disruptions.
- Provide alternative safe access routes.
- Ensure existing signage is visible and provide additional directional signage if required.
- Produce large 'where to park' maps so customers can see how to access the area during construction.
- Limit the reduction of car park spaces and/or provide alternative parking options.
- Explore opportunities to relax or waive parking fees to reduce the inconvenience on customers.
- Incorporate visual improvements e.g. local artwork or images of the area at project completion.
- Enact controls that can be used to eliminate or manage health and safety risks and document these requirements.
- Provide advance notice (with an acceptable time period for notification) on construction changes for which impacted businesses need to be aware, e.g. changed traffic conditions.

Reduce potential environmental impacts

Mitigation strategies may include:

- conducting noisy or dusty activities during off-peak hours
- building barriers to reduce noise and dust
- implementing dust suppression measures
- providing additional cleaning for pedestrian areas.

In Queensland, government entities, businesses and citizens have a legal duty to meet environmental protection obligations, including a General Environmental Duty. This duty requires taking all practicable measures to prevent or minimise activities that may cause environmental harm.

For more details on legal obligations, visit the Business Queensland website:

- **General Environmental Duty.**
- **Industry Codes of Practice.**

Affected businesses should be provided with advice about how they can report complaints. If a business has concerns about dust, noise or other environmental nuisance, they can advise the Department of Environment, Science and Innovation by completing an online **Environment reporting form** or by calling the Pollution Hotline at 1300 130 372 and select Option 2.

Support marketing

The disruption mitigation plan should, where possible, consider options for the project management team to facilitate marketing and promotional opportunities that support affected local businesses. This may include working with businesses on:

- online promotional opportunities e.g. a ‘we are open for business’ style campaign
- special events
- pop-up business locations.

Consider creating an advertising/marketing fund to help social media and online promotion of the local area to potential customers.



Business Queensland resources and other support for small business

As part of the disruption mitigation plan, support programs that businesses can access should be identified, including how they will be made aware of these programs.

Our Business Queensland website provides information and resources on a range of business topics, including:

- Information for small businesses on **reducing disruption from major infrastructure works**.
- Free financial counselling and wellness coaches accessible through the **Small Business Support Network**.
- Helpful information on **running a business**, from finance to business planning to managing risk.
- Support through the **Mentoring for Growth program**, which provides eligible businesses free access to volunteer business experts who can provide insights and suggestions relating to challenges and opportunities being experienced by a business.
- The **Injury Prevention and Management program**, which helps Queensland businesses to develop and implement sustainable health, safety and injury management systems.
- The **Office of the Queensland Small Business Commissioner**, which can help small businesses resolve leasing disputes with their landlord and offers mediation services for business-to-business disputes. You can also speak to them on 1300 312 344.

Procurement

The disruption mitigation plan could outline how local businesses will be supported by encouraging purchases from local suppliers throughout the project, whether it is by using local businesses to cater events or distributing promotional material from local business amongst project construction staff.

Some local businesses may have the capability to supply materials or services to the infrastructure project. Consider how the project could be divided into smaller packages to support a competitive tendering process that includes local businesses and creates opportunities for training and skills development in the local area. **Industry Capability Network Queensland** has experienced industry procurement and supply chain specialists who can facilitate connections between major projects and regional suppliers.

It is important that Queensland Government procurement activities align with:

- **The Queensland Procurement Strategy 2023 – Jobs, Economy, Legacy, Confidence** (QPS 2023) which sets the strategic direction of Queensland Government procurement and outlines the State's four outcome areas (more quality, local jobs; a thriving, resilient and decarbonised economy; responsible intergenerational value for Queenslanders; and increased trust in procurement).
- **Queensland Procurement Policy 2023** (QPP 2023) which establishes the procurement framework for Queensland Government agencies when procuring goods and services including construction. The QPP 2023 specifies procurement-specific targets, including:
 - The **small and medium enterprise (SME) procurement target** which requires all agencies subject to the QPP 2023 to collectively source at least 30 per cent of the state's procurement spend by value from SMEs.
 - Increased procurement with Indigenous owned businesses to 3 per cent of addressable spend under the **Queensland Indigenous Procurement Policy** to boost economic participation through business growth and employment.
- The **Queensland Small Business Procurement Commitment** which is the Queensland Government's commitment to making it easier for small businesses to supply to government and to act as a model customer e.g. meeting agreed timelines, keeping businesses informed, and paying small businesses quickly, on time and in full.



Bruce Highway – Cairns Southern Access Corridor (Stage 3), Edmonton to Gordonvale (E2G) project

The \$575 million Bruce Highway – Cairns Southern Access Corridor (Stage 3) E2G project was the Department of Transport and Main Roads’ (TMR) biggest and most complex road and rail infrastructure undertaking for Far North Queensland. Completed in December 2023, the project delivered long-term benefits for road access, traffic flow and road safety, and significantly improved travel to and from Cairns.

Minimising disruption to businesses

Project teams worked together with the local community, including farmers, local businesses, and residents, to ensure they were supported during project construction.

Stakeholder engagement with businesses and assessing their requirements was also integral to the project and its success.

Although physical disruption to businesses was avoided, as the project was on a new alignment, the works traversed many cane farms and occurred over three cane harvest seasons. Subsequently, the project team worked closely with local sugar cane farmers and miller, MSF Sugar, to minimise impacts to farm and mill operations.

Procurement from local businesses

The project had regional communities and businesses at the core of its delivery, with more than 300 local suppliers and contractors engaged – it also represented a significant opportunity to upskill local businesses.

Around 80 per cent of the total contract value was spent within the local region, supporting local businesses, social enterprises and Indigenous businesses.

The project team:

- Collaborated with North Queensland Solar to develop a series of solar-hybrid generators for E2G, a first for TMR. The solar-hybrid systems replaced traditional generators to power remote compounds and utilities with a reliable 24-hour power source saving an estimated 200 tonnes of CO₂.
- Negotiated with the local supplier, Pioneer North Queensland, to increase capability and develop a supply of stone mastic asphalt for future use by TMR and Cairns Regional Council.
- Negotiated with Holcim to re-open its Gordonvale batch plant to secure concrete supply.
- Upskilled smaller operators not previously exposed to a construction project of this scale or complexity, creating more capability within the region for the future.

This award-winning project was funded by the Australian and Queensland Governments under the Bruce Highway Upgrade Program.

DURING CONSTRUCTION

During this stage, the disruption mitigation plan will be implemented. However, certain responsibilities may change.

The project planning team may continue to directly oversee contractors or a head contractor may be appointed to construct the infrastructure works. In some projects the head contractor is involved in stakeholder engagement and project planning before the construction starts.

If management of project delivery is transferred to a different project team to those involved in planning, it is important the following contractual arrangements are defined and documented:

- The respective consultation and engagement roles of the government agency/council and head contractor.
- How the head contractor and contractors will engage with impacted businesses.
- How they will execute requirements under the disruption mitigation plan.
- How issues with businesses will be managed during construction e.g. the responsibilities of the head contractor in resolving issues or referring issues identified by impacted businesses to the government agency/council.

How to engage with businesses during construction

- Communication lines with affected businesses must remain open so they are made aware of construction changes and any emerging issues identified by these businesses can be managed effectively.
- Determine the most appropriate communication method based on the needs of each business.
- Ensure businesses can register to receive infrastructure work updates.
- Consider providing information packs on the benefits of the project when completed and the construction process, so that businesses can inform their customers.
- Consider organising business stakeholders into different groups, with those most affected contacted more frequently to seek their feedback on issues. Know the contact person for each business.
- Define key messages for each business stakeholder group and the communication channels to be used, so communication to businesses is consistent.
- Consider appointing a liaison officer as the point-of-contact between the businesses and the project team and ensure the liaison officer attends project delivery meetings so that issues impacting businesses continue to be considered.
- Ensure that businesses are aware of relevant Government entities and their contact details for alternative dispute resolution.
- Ensure the contact details for impacted businesses are kept up to date and are easily accessible.
- Sub-contractors who work on site daily and are more visible must be briefed on who to contact in the project management team if businesses approach them with any issues.
- Determine timing of communication updates, noting that businesses need adequate time to prepare for any changes.
- Track your communication efforts.

Adapt the disruption mitigation plan as needed

- Monitor requirements of the disruption mitigation plan e.g. health and safety controls and the effectiveness of dust reduction measures as construction progresses.
- Respond to issues raised by businesses in a timely manner. If a business is dissatisfied with the response, either advance the complaint, internally, or advise the business of the relevant government agency for dealing with the complaint and provide contact details.
- Maintain a reliable log documenting all the issues raised by businesses. These issues may also be received via head contractors and sub-contractors.
- Update the business impact assessment report regularly.
- Adapt the disruption mitigation plan, as necessary.



Stakeholder engagement for the New Performing Arts Venue (NPAV) Build

The Queensland Government is investing in the delivery of a new theatre at the Queensland Cultural Centre, creating a fifth theatre for the Queensland Performing Arts Centre (QPAC).

The location is in the densely populated South Bank precinct, with a wide array of businesses including cafes, restaurants, hotels, the ABC Headquarters and the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre.

Before construction, the Queensland Government team undertook stakeholder identification and analysis. It was immediately clear that neighbouring businesses and their customers could be impacted by noise levels and altered vehicle and pedestrian access. As a result, regular communication and collaboration was prioritised for project planning and delivery.

Stakeholder impacts were a standing item on planning meeting agendas. Documents and tools that guided and supported stakeholder engagement included a:

- Stakeholder Management Plan to establish communication goals and agreed roles and responsibilities
- key messages document, for consistent communication, regularly updated throughout the project
- project website as a single source of truth for project facts, construction updates and contact details

- dedicated 1800 phone number and project email address allowing businesses to choose their preferred method of contact and build trust through two-way communication.

During construction, a Managing Contractor (MC) is undertaking works on behalf of the Queensland Government.

The NPAV's Stakeholder Management Plan clearly defines the communication roles and responsibilities between the MC and the Queensland Government. The MC's stakeholder engagement manager is responsible for engaging with local businesses and ensuring they are considered in the planning of works, issuing construction updates to keep them informed, and developing on-site relationships. Any emerging issues are shared via regular meetings.

MC-issued construction updates provide advance notice of any works that might cause increased noise, light, dust or vibration, or occur outside normal work hours. This advice clearly communicates the timeframes, dates and likely impacts of works, and provides contact details to ensure stakeholders can raise any queries or concerns before or during works.

A South Bank Construction Projects Coordination Group was formed to bring together project teams from adjacent, concurrent construction projects including Brisbane Metro and the Neville Bonner Bridge.

The Group meets fortnightly during key stages to share information on upcoming works. This ensures enquiries are quickly directed to the responsible authority for response, and traffic and pedestrian impacts are considered collectively to reduce the overall disruption.

QPAC continues to operate its existing venues during construction. Given its close connection with the project site – sharing walls, driveways, and footpaths – construction impacts are mitigated by:

- scheduling noisy works away from performances, achieved through clearly documenting this requirement within the MC's tender documentation
- discussing upcoming activities led by QPAC or the construction project and any potential for conflicts, and adjusting planned works where possible

- communicating safe alternative drop-off arrangements with consideration for visitors with restricted mobility and those needing close vehicular access to the precinct.

Continual re-evaluation and open communication ensures the needs of all stakeholders are addressed. Both the Queensland Government and the MC regularly liaise with stakeholders to ensure that any concerns, such as signage, lighting levels, security and access for patron safety, are worked through to ensure constructive resolution for all parties.

AT COMPLETION OF CONSTRUCTION

Once the project is completed, an evaluation should be done to determine what worked well and to identify opportunities for future improvements. The evaluation should consider if:

- consultation with impacted stakeholders during the planning stage was comprehensive
- the business impact assessment was sufficient
- issues raised by businesses were resolved effectively (you can draw on records of complaints and responses)
- new factors, identified during construction, could have been identified and considered earlier in the planning process.

Consider how these learnings could be shared. Evidence could be collated to assist other project management teams planning to undertake similar types of infrastructure works.

CHECKLIST

A check list summarising key steps in this guide is available at

www.forgov.qld.gov.au/property-land-and-infrastructure/minimise-business-disruption-from-infrastructure-works



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