

Pioneer Bay Proposed Road and Drainage Improvement Project

Updated July 2020

What is the Pioneer Bay Road and Drainage Improvement Project?

A road and drainage improvement project typically involves the construction of road and drainage upgrades, pathways and other associated works like traffic calming in urban areas of the Shire. Council have identified projects like Pioneer Bay where the existing infrastructure does not currently meet the community's needs and expectations.

These projects are typically funded through a Special Charge Scheme.

What is a Special Charge Scheme?

A Special Charge Scheme is a funding method that allows Council to recover the cost of upgrade works from the property owners who will gain a special benefit as a result of the works. Provision for Schemes of this nature are facilitated within the Local Government Act 1989 and those prior. This has enabled many residential areas to have improved infrastructure in their community. A Special Charge Scheme may also be considered for township development and traffic management projects.

The aim of this Road and Drainage Upgrade project is to ensure that people in Pioneer Bay get the infrastructure that is expected in an urban residential area, and the people who live there get the benefits that come with good quality infrastructure. Council voted to proceed with a Special Charge Scheme to upgrade \$4.6 million worth of roads and drainage in February 2018.

What works are proposed?

The road and drainage improvement project will involve the construction of about 2.7 kilometres upgrade of roads and nearly 2.9 kilometres of underground drainage.

These works shall consist mainly of pavement and sealing works, underground and surface storm water drainage, kerb and channel, nature strip top dressing, speed humps and pedestrian pathways on selected streets.

The roads included within the project are Beach Boulevard, Whiting Street, Loter Avenue, Daisy Avenue, Wendy Street, Sonia Crescent, Alec Street (south), Kallay Drive, Short Street, Bream Avenue, Helen Street and the service roads within Pioneer Bay Estate.

Is Council still working with Melbourne Water?

Officers are working with Melbourne Water on the integration of their project and Council's, which will run at the same time. Melbourne Water's project will include the installation of a 900mm trunk drain storm water pipe to divert high water flows from the northern waterway to a new wetland on the south side of the estate.

How did Council decide on the appropriate standard of works?

Council has a standard of construction for various types of developments in both urban and

rural areas. The construction of pavement and sealing works, underground and surface storm water drainage, kerb and channel, nature strip top dressing, speed humps and pedestrian pathways on selected streets is consistent with standards for urban areas.

What is Councils contribution to the Project?

Council's estimated total contribution towards the road and drainage works, including purchase of the wetland and its contribution to Melbourne Water, is \$1,098,000.

Who else is contributing to the Project?

Melbourne Water is also a partner in these works as they will be contributing to the creek diversion, a 900mm diameter trunk drain through the Pioneer Bay Estate and will be constructing a wetlands to the south of the development.

The notice states that the charge is an estimate, what does this mean?

Initial costs provided to the landowners are a conservative estimate. The actual construction costs will be used to work out how much each landowner contributes to the special charge.

It is impossible to determine the final cost of the project until construction is complete.

Section 165 of the Local Government Act outlines that if Council receives additional money than what is required from a Special Charge, it must make a refund proportionate to the contributions received to the current land owners of the land.

Should the actual costs exceed estimated costs, Council may decide to recover these additional costs. However, in accordance with the Act under Section 163(2BA) the increase in liability of any person to pay the special rate or charge must not exceed 10%.

I pay rates, why do I have to pay for this upgrade?

Council provides a wide range of services from its rates revenue including road maintenance. The cost of maintenance does not include improvements such as the construction of an unsealed road or kerb and channel, footpaths or drainage when they are not currently provided.

Accordingly, Council has adopted the Urban Roads and Drainage Improvement Policy, which states that the cost of significant residential road, drainage and/or footpath upgrades must be contributed by those properties which primarily benefit from the infrastructure improvements.

When do I have to pay?

General practice is for invoices for payment will be sent one month after construction has begun. Council estimates construction will begin in September, subject to contractor availability and favorable weather conditions. However, due to COVID-19 Council will delay issuing the charge invoice for payment until November 2020.

What are Council's payment options for the Special Charge?

There are three payment options which are as follows:

- a) 'Payment Option 1 Lump Sum Discounted Payment' – payment of the Special Charge in full within 30 days of the issue of the invoice, with a 5% discount;
- b) 'Payment Option 2 Lump Sum Payment' – payment of the Special Charge in full within 90 days of the issue of the invoice; and
- c) 'Payment Option 3 Instalment Payment Plan' – payment of the Special Charge in 40 quarterly instalments over 10 years, with interest. Please fill and return the completed Quarterly Payment Installment form.

What is Council's interest rate?

Interest rates are charged in accordance with current Legislation. The interest rate will be charged on the principal amount, at Council's borrowing rate plus 1%. The interest rate charged will be 3% which is 1% above the estimated fixed rate borrowing costs of the Council which is currently 2%.

I cannot afford to pay my invoice. What can I do?

If you believe that you may have difficulty paying your account using the options listed previously, please contact Council's Revenue Services team on 5671 2211. Our officers are more than willing to confidentially discuss payment options with you, taking into account your current situation.

Ratepayers who reside in the affected property and their only form of income is a Government pension may qualify for hardship assistance. If this is the case and you haven't already contacted the Specialist Revenue Officer please do so now on 5671 2211. All applications for hardship are treated confidentially and all assessments are made non-judgmentally on a case by case basis. If you have previously contacted Council's Specialist Revenue Officer please call again to complete a hardship application over the phone.

Ratepayers who have been impacted by Covid-19 may be eligible for deferral of their first 2 instalments, please contact Council's Revenue Services team to discuss further.

A copy of Council's Hardship and Covid-19 Policies can be found on our website at <https://www.basscoast.vic.gov.au/about-council/strategies-and-policies/policies>

What is the benefit of this upgrade to me?

The direct benefit to the property owner enhanced amenity to the estate which includes improved access, reduced dust, better safety for vehicles and pedestrians, reduction in road noise and improved storm water control.

Do I have access to the cost estimates?

The cost estimates are available to be viewed on our website

<https://www.basscoast.vic.gov.au/services/roads-footpaths/road-and-drainage-upgrades/pioneer-bay-road-and-drainage-upgrade> .

How were the estimated levy costs calculated?

Council utilised a standard and acceptable formula and criteria such as the property dimensions, property frontages (length), area and property access to provide the most fair and equitable approach when calculating the contribution amount for each property.

Frontage length is used for road infrastructure contribution calculation and area is used for drainage infrastructure contribution calculation. Further information on your property can be viewed on our website in relation to your levy amount -

<https://www.basscoast.vic.gov.au/services/roads-footpaths/road-and-drainage-upgrades/pioneer-bay-road-and-drainage-upgrade>

In calculating the charge, for each property, Council considered if the property gained a benefit from improved access due to road infrastructure and/or improved amenity from other works included in the scheme.

The level of benefit for improved access and amenity was based on the frontage length of a property, including where the parcel of land is located at an intersection (side boundary).

The road associated works generally include pavement construction and sealing, kerb and channel, speed humps including other ancillary works.

If a property gained a point of discharge to an underground drain included as part of the works or if a property had improved protection from storm water runoff, then that property is considered to have received a benefit from the improved drainage infrastructure included as part of the scheme.

The level of drainage benefit was based on the area of the individual property. Drainage works generally include underground pipes, storm water pits, both new and modifications to existing, outfall structures and erosion control measures.

These two measures together form the basis for the calculation of the charge. If a property owner has any questions regarding the charge to their particular property, they should contact Council to discuss. Officers will be able to take them through the calculations as they apply to their property.

Why do different properties have different estimated costs?

Estimated costs are based on the area and frontage length of each property. Generally, a larger property with a greater frontage and/or area would have a higher estimated cost.

When will construction of the project commence?

Construction is expected to commence in September 2020, subject to contractor availability and favourable weather conditions.

Will access to the properties be affected?

The successful contractor will keep access to your property open. We understand that this project could cause some inconvenience to property owners and residents. During construction all efforts will be made by our contractor to keep access disruptions to your property as minimal as possible and to inform you early of any works that may temporarily restrict access to your property.

If you have a letter box or any other private property currently in the road reserve (outside of your property boundary) you will need to move it to inside your boundary by the 14 August. This will provide the contractor with clear access to the site and ensure that your letter box or private property is not damaged. If you need assistance to move your letter box or private property please contact Council to discuss. Australia Post has been informed that from the 14 August all letter boxes will be within the confines of the landowner's or resident's property.

What will happen to our driveways?

Driveway crossovers will be replaced on a like for like basis. If you currently have a concrete driveway that needs to be removed as a part of the proposed works it will be replaced with a like for like material, in this case, concrete.

As a minimum a crushed rock driveway will be provided for all properties with a driveway within the project boundary. No driveways will be installed if one does not exist.

In addition to this, landowners with private crushed rock driveways can opt to have them fully constructed (in concrete) to an approved Council standard which would be at the cost to that landowner. It is beneficial to have driveways constructed at the same time during the construction works as contractors can offer good rates whilst their equipment is on site. Any upgrade of your driveway will require a Road Occupation Permit (ROP). This fee of \$89.60 will be waived to those residents within the Pioneer Bay Estate during the construction works only.

You can speak to our contractor if you wish to consider this option. The contractor will provide their contact details to all landowners and residents in the lead up to works commencing in September. Alternatively, you can contact Council and officers can provide you with the contractor's details.

Who can I contact if I have any questions?

If you have questions relating to the construction or staging of the project, please contact Council's Infrastructure Delivery team.

If you have questions relating to the fundamentals or details of the Special Charge Scheme, please contact Council's Asset Management team.

If your question is in relation to financial hardship, please contact Council's Specialist Revenue

Frequently Asked Questions



Officer or the Revenue Service team.

The teams above can be contact by:

- phone on 1300 BCOAST (226 278) or (03) 5671 2211.
- email PioneerBayUpgrade@basscoast.vic.gov.au

Visit our website www.basscoast.vic.gov.au/PioneerBay for regular updates.