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MEDIA RELEASE

PRIORITY LISTING FOR TRURO BYPASS WELCOMED

The recent priority listing of a major project to build a Sturt Highway bypass around the town of Truro has been welcomed by the Mid Murray Council.

For decades, the Council and the Truro and District Community Association have raised concerns about the threat to pedestrian safety by heavy vehicles often speeding through the town's main street, and without a bypass, trucks have no choice but to travel through the centre of the town.

Now the issue has been put under the national spotlight, with the State Government working with the Federal Government's infrastructure advisory body (Infrastructure Australia) to identify options for the project.

The bypass would form part of a wider project to upgrade the Sturt Highway - possibly within the next five to 10 years - allowing it to carry high productivity vehicles towing three or more trailers, which currently traverse through the town's main street.

Mid Murray Mayor Dave Burgess welcomed the latest development.

"We've been advocating for Sturt Highway improvements for a long time and it's encouraging to see the State Government stepping in to push this priority with the Federal Government," Mayor Burgess says.

"The danger was brought home last October, when an out-of-control B-double wiped out a fence and nearly crashed into a house in Truro, reiterating the urgent need for something to be done.

"Heavy truck configurations, combined with a small town's main street precinct and significant pedestrian activity, should not mix. These vehicles are passing through – often at speed – and in areas frequented by school children and the public.

"There is a very real fear that someone will suffer serious injury, or worse, unless this bypass is developed. We continue to engage with the Truro community and business sector to seek the best outcome for a Truro Bypass proposal."

Both the Council and the Truro and District Community Association met with the State's Department for Planning, Transport and Infrastructure (DPTI) and SAPOL last month to discuss interim strategies and concerns.

Council's Infrastructure Director David Hassett said actions DPTI may consider in the meantime, to improve safety for Truro, included limiting the speed of heavy vehicles through the main street to 40 kilometres per hour, increased monitoring by SAPOL and installing traffic counters to collect data on traffic movements, speeds and volumes.

"While we welcome the work being done by the State and Federal Governments on the bypass concept, both the Council and the Truro community believe there are measures that can be taken now to improve safety and we are eager to see those put in place as soon as practical," Mr Hassett says.

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