

GERALDTON–NORTHAMPTON FREIGHT ROUTE

**1275. Hon RICK MAZZA to the minister representing the Minister for Transport:**

I refer to the 5 November 2020 article from the *Countryman*, “Dismay over proposed route”, which describes a midwest farming community with concerns about the proposed Geraldton–Northampton freight route. People say it threatens to wipe out homes, cut through farms and destroy native bushland.

- (1) What is the estimated volume of traffic that justifies the construction of a new freight route?
- (2) Will the proposed haulage route affect access to Walkaway Primary School for students who live on Arthur Road?
- (3) If yes to (2), what measures will be taken to improve access for students?
- (4) Will the proposed haulage route cut through cropping paddocks?
- (5) If yes to (4), what measures will be taken to allow farming vehicles to cross the haulage route road?

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:**

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question.

- (1) Traffic modelling undertaken in 2016 indicated traffic volume growth of approximately 60 per cent by 2031 along Brand Highway between Dongara and Geraldton and more than double on North West Coastal Highway north of Geraldton. In addition to these significant increases, where vehicle numbers are higher, the mixing of heavy and regular vehicles, and local and regional traffic presents significant concerns for safety and efficiency.
- (2)–(5) As part of the next stage of strategic planning—alignment definition—Main Roads will determine further alignment detail. This will consider local access and other issues with the aim of minimising impacts on landowners. Continuing community and stakeholder engagement seeks to understand the needs of road users while identifying solutions to minimise impacts on landowners.