Gold Coast Light Rail Stage 4 (Burleigh Heads to Coolangatta)

November 2022

Light rail route selection

Tugun to Coolangatta section

Factsheet



Artist's impression: Chalk Street, Coolangatta.



Artist's impression: Musgrave Street, Kirra.

Gold Coast Light Rail Stage 4 will deliver a 13 kilometre extension south of Light Rail Stage 3, linking Burleigh Heads to Coolangatta, via the Gold Coast Airport. It will provide 14 stations as identified through the Burleigh Heads to Tugun and Tugun to Coolangatta Multi-modal Corridor Studies.

The Queensland Government has committed $3.7 million to undertake a preliminary business case for Gold Coast Light Rail Stage 4, along with City of Gold Coast's financial contribution of $670,000. An additional $1.83 million has been committed by City of Gold Coast, bringing the City's total commitment to the preliminary business case to $2.5 million and the total project investment to $6.2 million.

Multi-modal Corridor Studies

The Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR) completed the *Gold Coast Highway (Burleigh Heads to Tugun) Multi-modal Corridor Study* in 2020 and the Gold Coast Highway (Tugun to Coolangatta) Multi-modal Corridor Study in 2022 to review all previous planning and develop an updated transport strategy for these corridors that considers all modes of transport including walking, cycling, public transport and private vehicles.

The Burleigh Heads to Tugun Corridor Study investigated several alternative routes parallel to the Gold Coast Highway and concluded a future southern extension of the light rail should follow the existing Gold Coast Highway alignment. This alignment:

- responds to population **growth**
- minimises **property impacts**
- minimises **travel time**
- provides best opportunity to improve **walking and bike riding** connectivity and safety
- delivers greatest benefits for **cost**
- minimises impacts to the **environment and cultural heritage**
- maximises opportunities to enhance **sustainability** objectives
- protects the M1 corridor for **future heavy rail extension.**

The Tugun to Coolangatta Corridor Study was split into four sections–Bilinga, Airport precinct, Kirra and Coolangatta - and in each section a variety of alignment and route options were investigated via a two stage Multi-Criteria Assessment (MCA) process to review strategic objectives and detailed design considerations of the corridor.

An MCA is best practice and involves considering a variety of different criteria to arrive at a preferred option. This technique is widely adopted throughout Australia and across the globe.

The criteria included traffic performance, parking numbers, property impacts, catchment analysis (where people live and work), travel times, environmental considerations including flooding and urban design. Specific criteria has been used for each section to reflect their unique features and nature. This rigorous MCA identified the preferred alignment and route for this section of the project.

The potential routes were also assessed against the SEQ Regional Plan (Shaping SEQ) themes of growth, prosperity, connectivity, sustainability (environment/social) and liveability.

More information about how the preferred Tugun to Coolangatta route was identified can be found in this factsheet. For information about the preferred route for the Burleigh Heads to Tugun section of the project, please refer to the Light Rail route selection factsheet dated July 2021.

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Tugun to Coolangatta route selection

Multiple potential alignments and routes were investigated for each section from Tugun to Coolangatta through the two stage MCA and the shortlisting identified the following options:

- Bilinga: east of Gold Coast Highway, centre of Gold Coast Highway
- Airport precinct: Terminal Drive (south), Gold Coast Highway
- Kirra: Marine Parade, Coolangatta Road
- Coolangatta: Griffith Street, Chalk Street.

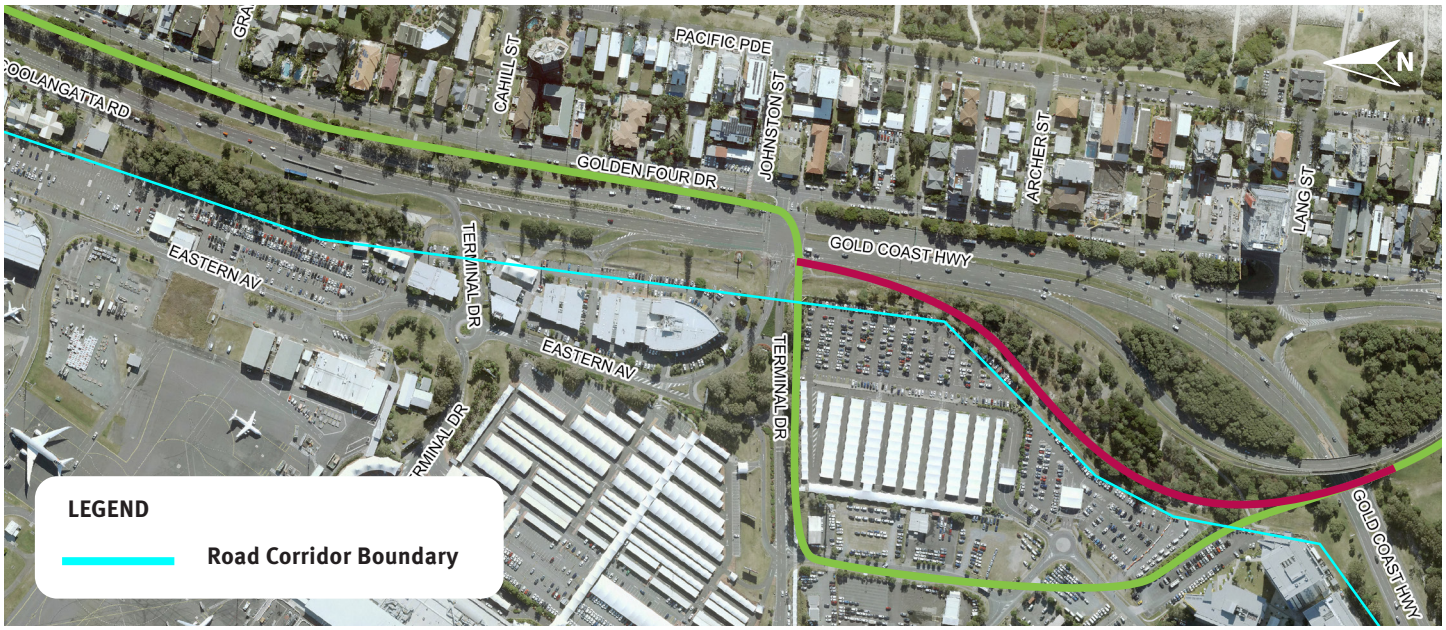
Full details of all potential alignments and routes considered through the MCA can be found in the Gold Coast Highway (Tugun to Coolangatta) Multi-modal Corridor Study on TMR's website at **www.tmr.qld.gov.au/gclr4**

Bilinga section



The findings from the MCA indicated that the route on the eastern side of the Gold Coast Highway would perform better in terms of cost, catchment, and serving growth as well as slightly better light rail travel times and general traffic performance. It is also consistent with the proposed east-side light rail running for the section north to Tugun Village. By providing a vegetation buffer between Golden Four Drive and the Gold Coast Highway (where possible) this option offers enhanced opportunities for placemaking and legibility with retention of more of the current avenue of trees as part of an arrival gateway.

Airport precinct section



Proposed route for airport precinct. Gold Coast Airport will confirm the light rail route and station location within the airport precinct as part of their master planning development.

From the MCA, TMR determined that the option closer to the Airport Terminal would perform significantly better in terms of supporting growth and enhancing access to frequent and reliable public transport for key regional destinations, being the Airport precinct and Southern Cross University. TMR also believes it could deliver better urban amenity and placemaking outcomes. Although the option that is closer to the Gold Coast Highway is slightly shorter and therefore cheaper with marginally faster travel times for through passengers, the option closest to the terminal was found to best serve passengers travelling to and from the Airport precinct. TMR will continue to work with the Gold Coast Airport who will confirm the final light rail route and station location within the Airport precinct as part of their master planning development.

Kirra section



The findings from the MCA indicated that whilst the Musgrave Street route would provide a unique beachside transport experience for passengers, serving the current highest trip generating uses within this part of the study area, it would be at an increased cost, longer journey time, and with major impacts to parkland and visual amenity. The Coolangatta Road route offers a shorter, faster, cheaper route. It is more centrally located to provide greater access to a wider catchment and may help support population growth more equitably. While it has construction challenges, the corridor is wide and there are opportunities for improved public transport. Overall, the Coolangatta Road route significantly outperformed the Musgrave Street option.

Coolangatta section



The findings from the MCA indicated that whilst the Griffith Street route reflects the existing road and transport hierarchy with public transport serving the original 'high street', it comes with higher costs, loss of shop front parking, and significant impacts to business during construction. It would be more disruptive to local vehicle access and circulation and would significantly reduce the pedestrian oriented public spaces. The Chalk Street route option offers a more transformative opportunity for Coolangatta and could help shape a more balanced town centre anchored by light rail. It also offers a more direct, shorter, cheaper and easier to construct route from Coolangatta Road and opportunities for an extension options towards Tweed Heads, subject to planning by Transport for NSW.

Track options

Various track options were assessed for light rail including segregated at grade (on ground in its own lanes like Stage 1 through Broadbeach), shared running (on ground in lanes shared with other traffic), grade separated (elevated or underground) as well as single and dual tracks.

Overall, the segregated double track at-grade option was deemed most appropriate as it was consistent with the functionality of Stages 1 and 2, and the current extension to Burleigh Heads (Stage 3).

It also delivers appropriate speed, reliability and capacity, at a reasonable cost and level of property impact.

Tugun to Coolangatta preferred route

The identification of the preferred corridor option from the MCA process included the following steps:

- review stakeholder feedback and confirm the key design philosophy and parameters guiding the option refinement
- undertake additional investigations as required including traffic, land use, geometric design
- update design including station location and configuration and intersection layouts and prepare concept designs to confirm interfaces with existing features.

A number of changes and refinements, as detailed in the Tugun to Coolangatta Multi-modal Corridor Study, were incorporated into the preferred route option and concept designs.

Project timeline



Get involved and have your say

We would like to hear your views and find out what is important to you. You are invited to participate in our community consultation program to find out more about planning for the Gold Coast Light Rail Stage 4 and provide your input.

Provide your feedback online

Visit the interactive community consultation website to find out more about the project and provide your feedback.

Visit: **www.tmr.qld.gov.au/gclr4**

Talk to us in person

The project team will be holding community drop-in sessions to enable you to ask questions and provide face-to-face feedback on Gold Coast Light Rail Stage 4 planning.

Visit the website to find out drop-in session locations and times for community consultation for the Tugun to Coolangatta section.

Visit: **www.tmr.qld.gov.au/gclr4**

Contact us

If you would like further information about Gold Coast Light Rail Stage 4 or to register for updates, please contact the project team:

Phone: 1800 316 365*
Email: gclr4@tmr.qld.gov.au

**Check with your service provider for call costs.*

13 QGOV (13 74 68)
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