

Rehabilitation of the Hoekwil Road.

2017-12-05

The contract has been awarded to Henra who did the Heights / Seven Passes project. Work has commenced and will last a projected 16 months. Province are using the term rehabilitation rather than upgrade as it remains within the current road alignment and involves no extra lanes.

Total cost is R102 million and covers the full extent of the existing tar road from the N2 junction, past Hoekwil and Touwsrante and all the way to Lancewood farms. The route was last refurbished in 1995. The project is required as the roads have reached the end of their design lives.

For the full length the road will be upgraded to a class 3. That is, each lane width will be increased to 3,4 metres with a 900 mm hard shoulder plus a 600 mm gravel shoulder, a total road width of almost 10 metres. The road will be lifted by 150 mm to aid drainage.

The viewpoint looking out over the Serpentine will be hard surfaced and roadside furniture may be installed. The storm water drains down the pass will be concreted, which will be a major improvement on the current situation where blocked pipes cause flooding of the road surface when it rains heavily.

The project will include the construction of bus stops, raised side-walks and limited traffic calming measures through Touwsrante. Safety will be enhanced by virtue of the wider paved and graded verges but sadly we know that better roads will also bring more speeding.

Work has already commenced towards the end of the tarred section east of Touwsrante near the Diep River bridge where the river has caused a slip failure.

Representations have been made to provide additional facilities for pedestrian and cyclists especially where there is heavy pedestrian and cycle traffic. We are waiting feedback.

Half-width construction (involving the closure of one lane) will take place with stop/ go controls to manage the flow of traffic. To minimise these delays the work is broken into six sections. Sections 1 (nearest to N2), 3 and 5 will be worked on first and then the remaining sections completed.

The stop/goes will be suspended from 15th December until 10th January. It is planned that work on the busiest section as far as Touwsrante will be complete before the 2018 December holidays.

Approaches have been made to province and/or George engineering teams to make sure the gravel road alternatives, being the Ebb & Flow and Rondevlei roads at the bottom and the old Seven Passes Bospad section have stepped up maintenance schedules during this contract period.

Province is committed to creating short-term Expanded Public Works Programme employment and skills training opportunities. During the course of this project, a total of R14 million will be spent on targeted enterprises, R4 million on targeted local labour and 32 000 person-days of work will be created for people from the George municipal area.