

PROJECT NOTE

The proposed project is essentially a highway upgrading project and involves construction of elevated road and expansion over part of existing Thane –Ghodbunder Road. Since this road passes through Sanjay Gandhi National Park, a Protected Area, the project will involve diversion of 8.8451ha forest land.

During our attempt to formulate the Forest Diversion Proposal and Area verification by Forest department, it was noticed that a patch of forest land described in details in below given table was used for construction or augmentation although it was not diverted for such purpose under Forest Conservation Act, 1980. We have tried to find out the circumstances under which this has occurred from MSRDC as also from Forest Department but without success.

Sr. No	Agency	Forest area affected in Ha
1	Construction of Road by MSRDC in ROW handover by PWD	7.0799
2	Proposed Elevated road construction by MSRDC	1.7652
	Total Area of Diversion required	8.8451

As far as the current position is concerned it is essential to have this area diverted for execution of the project under consideration. Therefore we are willing to follow all provisions of law or conditions that will be imposed to regularize the matter, however we will apparently not be answerable to whatever has happened in past.

General

State Highway 42, commonly referred to as Ghodbunder Road or G.B. Road, runs entirely through the district of Thane in Maharashtra State. It is one of the major roads leading out of Thane city and connects to the Eastern Express Highway (NH- 3) on one end and to the Western Express Highway (NH-8) on the other end. Ghodbunder Road carries a significant amount of JNPT bound traffic from Gujarat as also in reverse direction. As stated above Ghodbunder Road traverses through forests area under Sanjay Gandhi National Park. It also skirts the Vasai Creek for most of its route.

The proposed project diversion of 8.8451 ha forest land for grade improvement, horizontal expansion and construction of elevated portion over a distance of 4.89 Km on State Highway 42, namely Thane Ghodbunder Highway. This Highway (with total Ch.- 0/000 to 14/900), passes through the Mira-Bhayender Municipal Corporation area (ch. 0/000 to 3/800) and the Thane Municipal Corporation area (ch. 3/800 to 14/900). Entire road from chainage 0/000 to 0/405 and 4/500 to 14/900 has a width of minimum 3+3 lanes, except a part of it from Ghodbunder to Gaimukh (ch 0/405 to 4/400) which has limited width of only 2+2 lanes consisting of hilly portion, with higher gradient. Due to limited width in this portion of road, coupled with hilly terrain and gradient it is a bottleneck, hindering smooth movement of all time heavy traffic. Being a major link between Eastern Express Highway (NH- 3) passing through Thane city and the Western Express Highway (NH-8) it is essential to upgrade this road to 3+3 lane with improvement of its grade in the hilly portion and through construction of elevated road over some distance

It needs to be taken in to account that due to inadequate ROW in this particular stretch of road the heavy traffic causes frequent traffic jams, ranging many a times for 2-3 hours. It is important to mention here that this portion of road caters to major part of JNPT bound traffic from Gujarat and also in the reverse direction. Thus, it is commercially very important road link for trade and commerce. In addition, the disruption in traffic causes tremendous loss in terms of fuel, a scarce non-renewable natural resource, valuable time, delay in handling of goods and services, loss of value to the goods, particularly perishable essential commodities as also heavy emission in the environment, which is hazardous also to invaluable local flora and fauna of adjoining portion of the Sanjay Gandhi National Park. The current traffic bound to increase because of (i) Increased traffic load over the period of time (ii) Expansion of JNPT will further increase the traffic. Traffic at Thane-Ghodbunder Road is expected to rise and traffic load will almost double by 2026. Congestion of traffic result into air pollution and emission of gases viz. CO₂, CO, NO_x etc. In addition, it also results in to health hazard to human life and other living being. Many a times inordinate delay in transfer of critical emergency patients to hospitals located in Thane and Mumbai causes loss of human life. Besides, the office commuters and workers are held up in traffic causing heavy loss

of man hours and resultant loss of productivity. Hence it is essential to convert this stretch of road in to dual 3+3 lane configuration, with improvement in grade and through construction of elevated road over part of it.

Implementation of this project will reduce travel time, fuel consumption, operational and maintenance cost of vehicles in addition to many advantages like pollution control, increase in productivity and prevention of losses due to delayed transit and safety to human life by avoiding likely accidents and quick transfer of serious patients. While meeting these essential services the project activity will generate large scale temporary as well as permanent employment to the skilled and un-skilled workers. The Proposed Elevated road starts from chainage 0+740 near existing Toll plaza and ends at chainage 4+890 near Gaimukh village. Total length of elevated road is 4.15km.

Bridge /Road Carriageway Configuration

- Total width of superstructure -18 m
- 4-lane carriageways -14 m
- Crash Barriers on both sides- 0.45 m
- Median- 0.6 m
- Kerb Shyness -0.25 m
- Paved Shoulder -1.0 m

Approaches Carriageway Configuration

- Ghodbunder end 3+3 lane carriageway
- Thane end 3+3 lane carriageway

Salient details of Project

Name of Project – Elevated Road and expansion of existing Thane- Ghodbunder-Road (Ghodbunder to Gaimukh) in the state of Maharashtra under DBFOT

1. User Agency - Maharashtra State Road Development Corporation Limited a Maharashtra Government Undertaking.
2. Total Forest area for which diversion is sought – 8.8451Ha.
3. Total Length of Project – 4.89 Km (expansion of existing Thane-Ghodbunder Road)

4. Total Length of Elevated Road – 4.15 Km (To be constructed after expansion of Thane-Ghodbunder Road)
5. Cost of project – Rs. 510 crores.
6. About application – It is submitted in the Part I of Form A prescribe under Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980.
7. Main benefits from project – Implementation of entire project will ensure fast and safe road traffic movement, reducing travel time to half by achieving speed of 40km/hour.