

**Up-gradation of Nagpur-Umred-Nagbhir-Brahmapuri-Armori Section of NH-353
D in the State of Maharashtra to two/four lane with paved shoulder (Package-
II Start km 54.385 to End km 96.445)**

Justification for Locating the Project in Forest Land

The Ministry of Road Transport & Highways (MoRT&H), Government of India, has decided to take up the development of Nagbhir-Brahmapuri-Armori Section of NH-353D in the state of Maharashtra for capacity augmentation, safe and efficient movement of traffic by upgrading to 2-lane/2lane with paved shoulder configuration based on the traffic demand.

The project road starts at Nagpur and passes through Umred, Nagbhir, Brahmapuri, and terminates at Armori.

The existing project road predominantly has a carriageway width ranging from intermediate to two lane configurations with earthen shoulder 0.5 to 1.5 m on both sides except at a few locations. Paved shoulders are observed at all minor and major built up areas along the project stretch. The existing width is incapable to cope up with the increasing traffic. Being a national Highway, the project road requires minimum up gradation to two-lane with paved shoulder configuration.

Entire length of the stretch passes through plain terrain, this section has gentle horizontal geometry mostly straight. Vertical geometry needs substantial improvement to met HFL criteria as per IRC SP 73 2015. Inadequate carriageway width and lack of adequate safety appurtenances including highway lighting at built up areas are major causes for accident along the stretch.

The junctions present at the built-up areas are lacking channelization, signs, place identification boards, markings and maintenance. The pedestrian crossing facilities such as zebra crossings and signs are nowhere observed.

The total length of the project stretch is 42.060 km of which 2.224 km is passing through forest area. The proposed widening requires diversion of 1.3715 ha of forest land in Kargaon, Tas, Bhiwapur, Nilaj, Bikli, Kunghada Mokasa (Rith) village of Nagpur, Bhandara and Chandrapur district.

The diversion of forest area has limited to the minimum that satisfies the National Highway standards. As the project road is passing through the middle of the forest area, bypassing the forest and the proposed Eco-Sensitive Zone is not possible. Alternatives have been examined and found that no better option is available. The widening has been limited to non-forest land where the road is abutting the forest land only on one side of the existing road, to reduce the requirement of forest land diversion.