

Gerringong upgrade

Princes Highway



COMMUNITY UPDATE

JUNE 2010



Mount Pleasant to Toolijooa Road

Review of environmental factors

This community update outlines the concept design and the review of environmental factors for the proposed Gerringong upgrade on the Princes Highway between Mount Pleasant and Toolijooa Road. The review of environmental factors assesses the potential environmental and social impacts associated with the proposed Gerringong upgrade and makes recommendations for the management and mitigation of these impacts.

Background

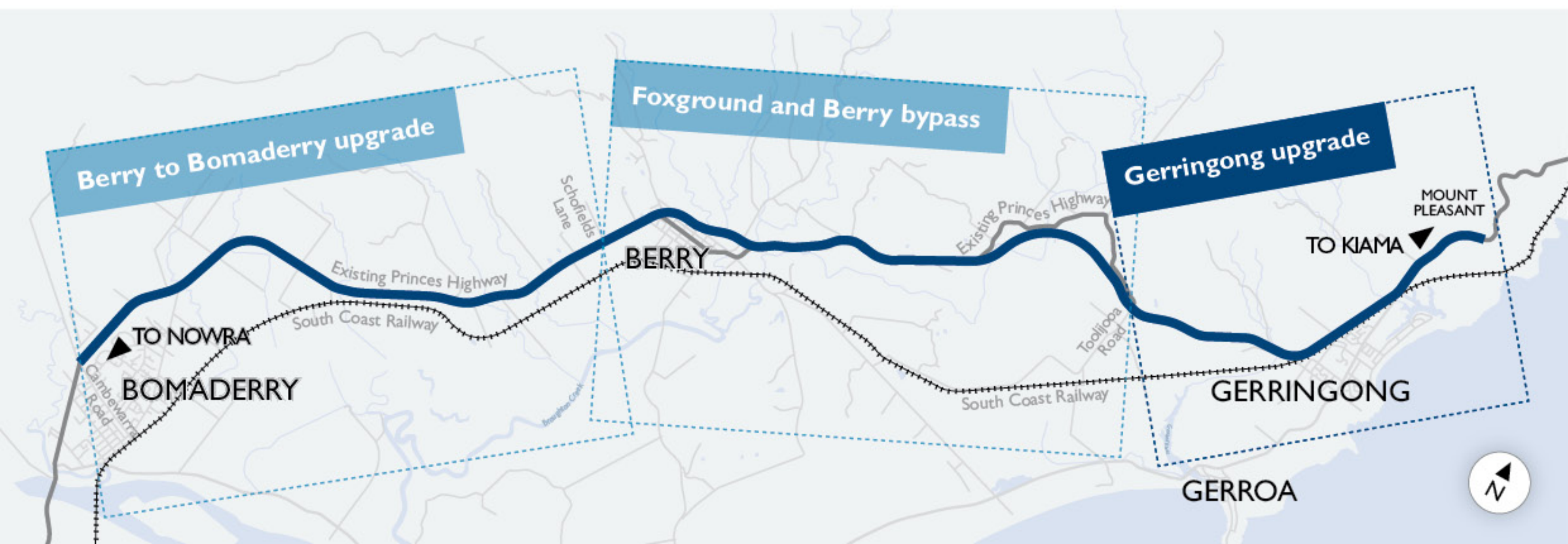
In June 2009 the RTA announced a preferred option for the upgrade of the Princes Highway between Gerringong and Bomaderry.

The RTA is now planning the work as three separate projects:

- Gerringong upgrade (Mount Pleasant to Toolijooa Road).
- Foxground and Berry bypass (Toolijooa Road to Schofields Lane).
- Berry to Bomaderry upgrade (Schofields Lane to Cambewarra Road).

The review of environmental factors for the Gerringong upgrade between Mount Pleasant and Toolijooa Road is on display for community comment until **Friday 2 July 2010**.

The review of environmental factors describes the specialist studies that assisted the RTA in determining whether the proposal is likely to have a significant effect on the environment.



**Detailed report available**

The review of environmental factors is available on the RTA website at www.rta.nsw.gov.au.

Gerringong upgrade

Mount Pleasant to Toolijooa Road

The Gerringong upgrade would provide approximately 7.5 kilometres of upgraded highway from Mount Pleasant to Toolijooa Road. It would include two new interchanges providing access to Gerringong and Gerroa.

Key features of the Gerringong upgrade

- Approximately 7.5 kilometres of new four-lane carriageway generally following the existing highway alignment, posted at 100 km/h with median separation.
- A new grade separated interchange at Belinda Street with a service road connecting to Willowvale Road.
- A new grade separated interchange at Rose Valley Road with a service road connecting to Fern Street.
- An additional (third) northbound lane for the climb up from Rose Valley Road to Mount Pleasant.
- The highway crossing of Omega Flat would be raised to achieve immunity to a one in 100 year flood event.
- Preservation of the largest Moreton Bay fig tree at the Rose Valley Road interchange.

Key benefits of the upgrade

- Would improve safety and traffic efficiency at Fern Street and Belinda Street.
- Would improve safety by removing the rail level crossing at Fern Street.
- Would provide access to Gerringong via the new Belinda Street interchange that is protected from local floods.
- Would improve safety at local road accesses such as Willowvale Road, Sims Road and Rose Valley Road.
- Would improve safety and traffic efficiency through the additional (third) lane climbing to Mount Pleasant.
- Would improve safety at property accesses.
- Would provide safe crossing of the highway by cattle and farm machinery through underpasses.

Key considerations for assessment

The following key areas of potential impact have been identified in the environmental investigations. The review of environmental factors describes these impacts and ways to reduce them.

Visual impact

For a project of this scale there would be visual impacts during both construction and when opened including:

- Removing or modifying the road and its existing vegetation and landscape features.
- Temporarily constructing infrastructure such as site compounds, plant and equipment facilities and material stockpiles.
- Introducing new infrastructure including grade separated interchanges at Rose Valley Road and Belinda Street and a new railway overbridge in the low lying landscape at Fern Street.
- Increasing the road footprint compared to the existing highway.
- Introducing new earth embankments in low lying areas.

These visual impacts would be mitigated by:

Integrating major structural elements with the surrounding infrastructure and landscape where feasible, and through careful landscaping and urban design.

Temporary closure of Fern Street

Fern Street north of Illoura Place would need to be closed for a period of up to 12 months in order to construct the new railway overbridge. The RTA will continue to investigate options to minimise the closure through detailed design of the bridge and the use of appropriate construction techniques, however an extended closure can not be avoided due to poor ground conditions adjacent to the bridge site.

Access to and travel through Gerringong would change during this time and there would be a temporary loss of through traffic. Traffic would need to be redirected to the town centre via Belinda Street.

The RTA is proposing to work with affected individuals and groups including the Kiama and District Chamber of Commerce, Kiama Municipal Council and local business operators to develop and implement measures to reduce the impacts of this measure including:

- Clear signage.
- Timely information.
- Useful maps for tourists.

Flooding and drainage

Introducing a new earth embankment and highway infrastructure in a low lying area would have the potential to impact the existing flood behaviour if not considered in enough detail in the concept design development.

Drainage for the highway upgrade has been designed and modelled in each catchment and includes allowances for a one in 100 year flood and the potential impacts of climate change.

Potential impact on Sandtrack traffic

There is expected to be a temporary shift of traffic to the Sandtrack via Belinda Street during construction to avoid the works zone. On completion this traffic is expected to shift back from the Sandtrack to the newly constructed highway.

Traffic management plans, including specific sign posting, would be prepared and implemented for the construction stages and when the upgrade is opened to traffic. The RTA would also closely monitor traffic volumes and patterns on both roads for any unexpected changes.

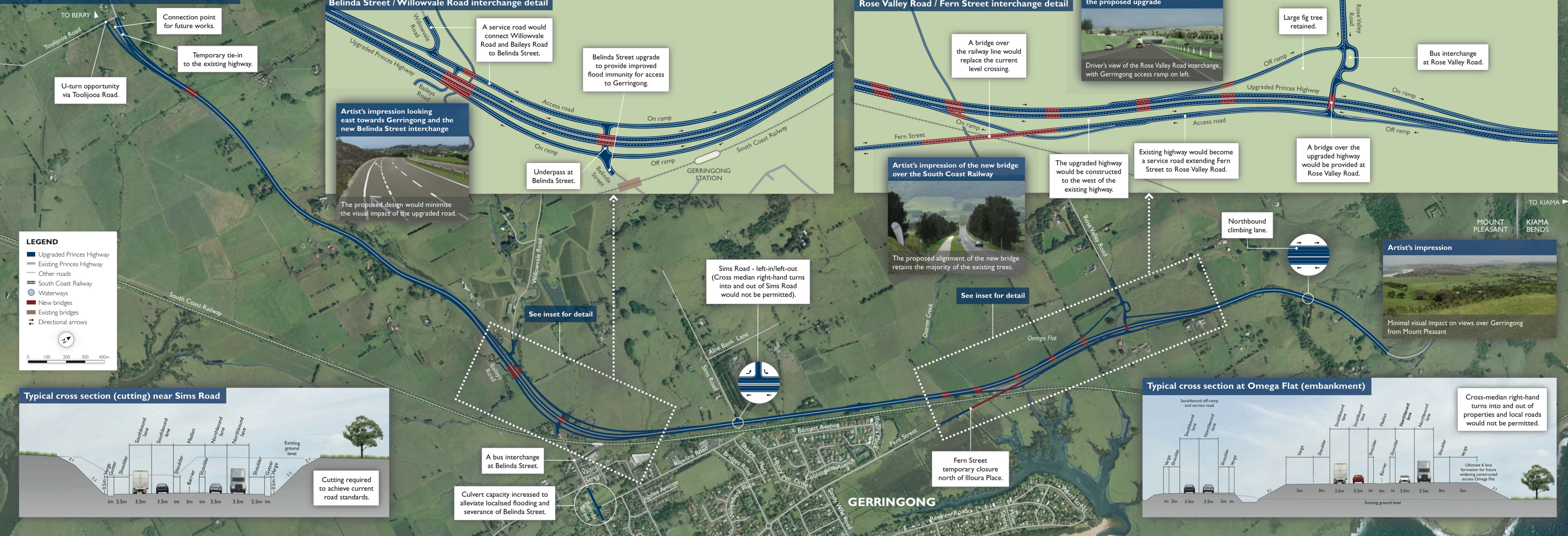
Heritage

There are expected to be impacts associated with both the removal of the smaller fig tree at the existing Rose Valley Road junction and the encroachment into Renfrew Park Estate, to accommodate the new grade separated Rose Valley Road interchange. Consideration would be given to using cuttings and/or seeds from the smaller tree for new plantings along the project, in consultation with the Aboriginal community. The RTA also proposes new landscaping in the grounds of Renfrew Park, which would be developed in consultation with the property owner and a heritage specialist.

Ecology

The environmental assessment has identified there are not likely to be any significant impacts on terrestrial and aquatic ecology associated with the proposal. Environmental safeguards would be incorporated into the construction contract to minimise impacts to areas of conservation significance and native flora.

Gerrong upgrade concept design





Display locations

The review of environmental factors will be on display from **Monday 7 June 2010** at

Kiama Council

11 Manning Street, Kiama.
Monday to Friday from 9am to 4pm.

Staffed displays

At the following display location members of the project team will be available to discuss the review of environmental factors in more detail. Concept designs showing all access arrangements as well as 3D animations of the upgrade will also be available.

Gerringong RSL Hall

Corner of Belinda Street and Fern Street, Gerringong.
Monday 7 June to Friday 2 July, 11am to 7pm.
Saturday 19 June and Saturday 26 June, 10am to 2pm.

Have your say

Feedback on the Gerringong upgrade review of environmental factors is encouraged and welcome. Please send your written submission by **5pm**

Friday 2 July 2010 to:

Gerringong upgrade,
AECOM,
PO Box Q410,
QVB Post Office,
Sydney, NSW 2000.



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For more information:

Email Gerringongupgrade@rta.nsw.gov.au / **web** www.rta.nsw.gov.au

Phone 1800 506 976 (free call) project information line

Gerringong upgrade AECOM, P.O. Box Q410, QVB Post Office, Sydney NSW 2000

Berry project office (Broughton Court) shop 3/113 Queen Street, Berry NSW 2535