

# Newcastle Inner City Bypass – Rankin Park to Jesmond

Environmental impact statement overview – November 2016





An artist's 3D impression looking south across the northern interchange

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# Rankin Park to Jesmond overview

## Environmental impact statement

An environmental impact statement (EIS) has been developed for the Newcastle Inner City Bypass between Rankin Park and Jesmond. The EIS outlines the key features of the project and assesses its potential environmental, social and economic impact during construction and operation.

The Department of Planning and Environment has placed the EIS on display for comment.

This overview outlines some of the key issues identified in the EIS.

For detailed information please refer to the EIS in full which is available to view electronically at [majorprojects.planning.nsw.gov.au](http://majorprojects.planning.nsw.gov.au) or in hard copy at locations listed on page 19.

All submissions must be received by the Department of Planning and Environment by Friday 16 December 2016.

More information on how to make a submission is outlined on page 18.



## Overview

**The Newcastle Inner City Bypass is part of Roads and Maritime Services' long-term strategy to provide an orbital road within Newcastle's road network to connect the Pacific Highway at Bennetts Green with the Pacific Highway at Sandgate.**

The bypass provides improved traffic flows across the western suburbs of Newcastle and connects key regional destinations such as Bennetts Green, Charlestown and Jesmond shopping centres, John Hunter Hospital precinct, the University of Newcastle and the Pacific Highway.

Construction of the Newcastle Inner City Bypass began in the early 1980s. Completed bypass sections are:

- Kotara to Rankin Park (completed in 1983)
- Jesmond to Shortland (completed in 1993)
- West Charlestown Bypass (completed in 2003)
- Shortland to Sandgate (completed in 2014).

The proposed Rankin Park to Jesmond section of the bypass would provide traffic relief to the existing route of Lookout Road, Croudace Street and Newcastle Road, which is currently used by about 40,000 to 60,000 vehicles each day.

When completed, motorists travelling north-south on the proposed section of bypass would avoid up to 11 sets of traffic lights along the existing route, which is expected to reduce travel times by up to 80 per cent during the morning and afternoon peaks.

In June 2014, the NSW Government announced it would provide \$280 million to complete the Rankin Park to Jesmond section of the bypass, including \$150 million from Restart NSW. A concept design has been developed for the project which forms the basis of the EIS assessment.

## Scope

**The Rankin Park to Jesmond section of the Newcastle Inner City Bypass is a proposed new 3.4 kilometre bypass between Lookout Road at New Lambton Heights and Newcastle Road at Jesmond, to the west of the John Hunter Hospital.**

The proposed bypass would provide two lanes in each direction separated by a median, as well as three interchanges designed to improve traffic flow and increase connectivity:

- Northern interchange providing access to Newcastle Road and the existing Jesmond to Shortland section of the Newcastle Inner City Bypass. The full interchange provides all movements to/from the bypass and Newcastle Road
- Hospital interchange providing access between the John Hunter Hospital precinct and the bypass. The half interchange provides access to/from the north
- Southern interchange providing access to Lookout Road and the existing Kotara to Rankin Park section of the Newcastle Inner City Bypass. The bypass would travel under McCaffrey Drive. The half interchange provides connection in both directions on Lookout Road.

The project would include upgrades to connecting roads, pedestrian and cycling facilities, noise barriers as required and permanent operational water quality treatment measures.

The project would also include structures along the road for drainage, animal and bushwalker access.

**The surrounding road network experiences high levels of traffic congestion and delays at key intersections. These issues are likely to worsen in the future as traffic volumes increase.**

**The project would deliver significant benefits to the local community and road users by reducing congestion in the area.**

## Key benefits

**Increase road capacity** 

**5th section** of the **Newcastle Inner City Bypass**

  
Provide **traffic relief**  
on key parts of the surrounding road network

  
Improved **connectivity**  
for the John Hunter Hospital precinct

Up to **11** sets of traffic lights bypassed 

Up to **80%** **travel time saving** on the bypass by 2030 

  
Reduce **flood impacts**

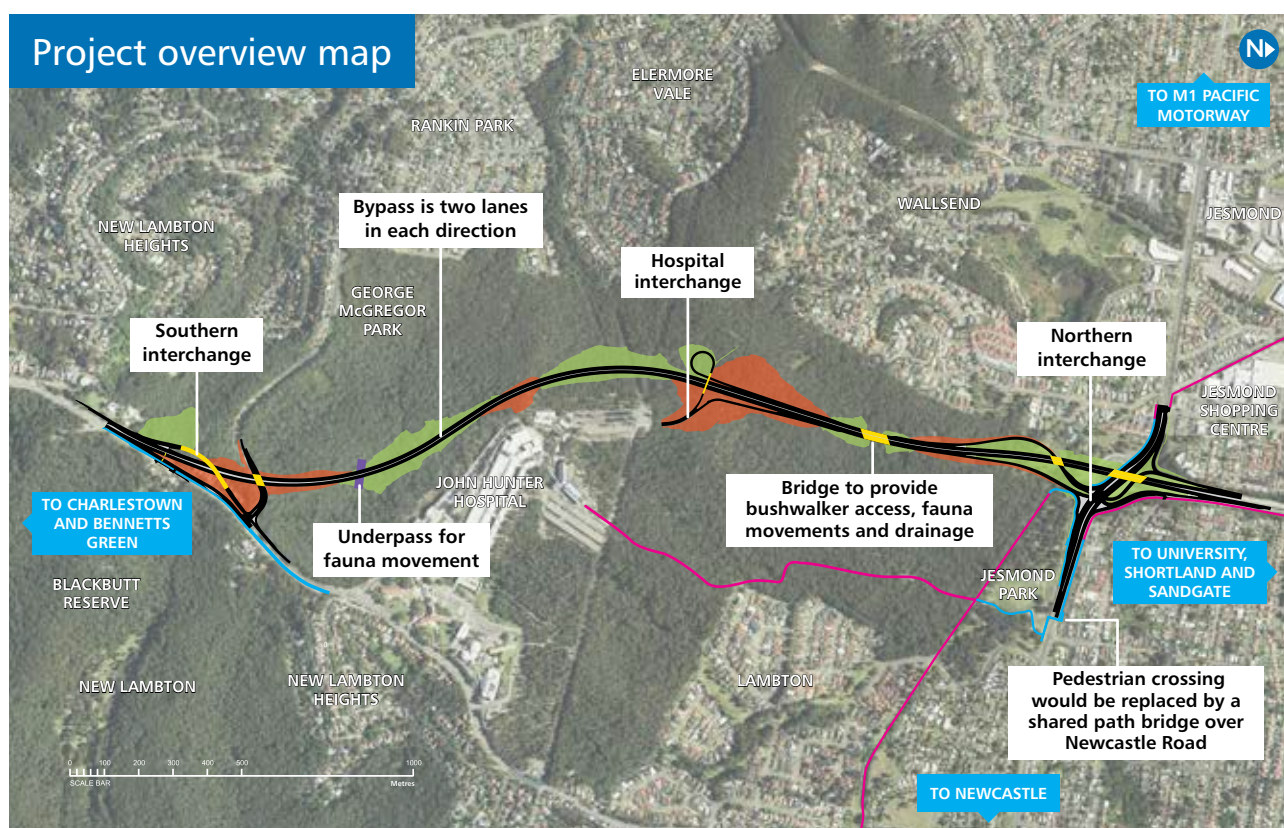
  
Additional **connectivity** for pedestrians and cyclists

**32** per cent reduction in **crashes** 








**Improve** the efficient movement of **freight** 

## Key features

This map provides an overview of the proposed bypass route. You can see more of the design detail in the following three maps, including detail on the proposed interchanges. The maps provide a graphical representation of the Newcastle Inner City Bypass between Rankin Park and Jesmond.

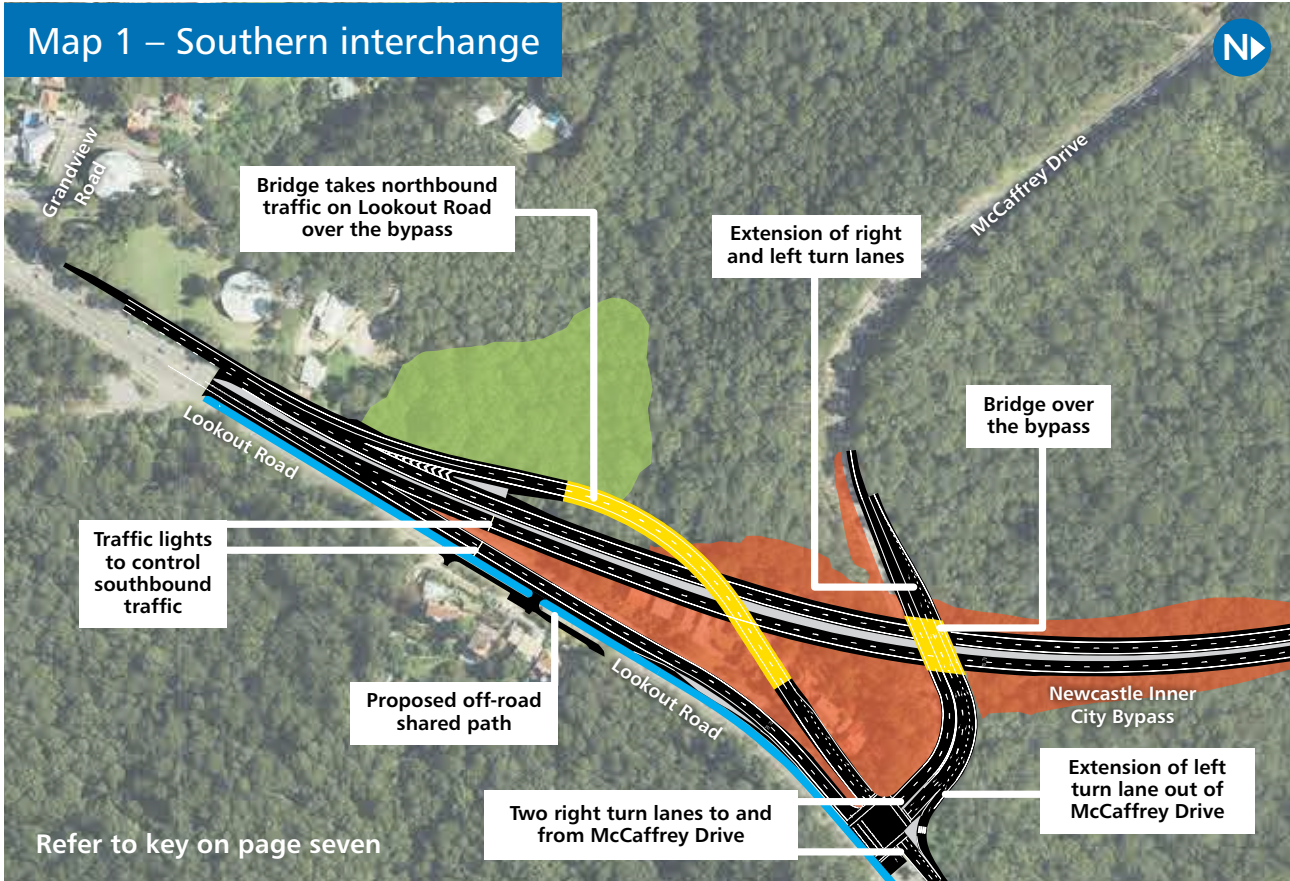


### Key

	Road
	Bridge structures
	Existing shared path
	Proposed shared path
	Earthworks fill (adding soil)
	Earthworks cut (removing soil)
	Fauna underpass

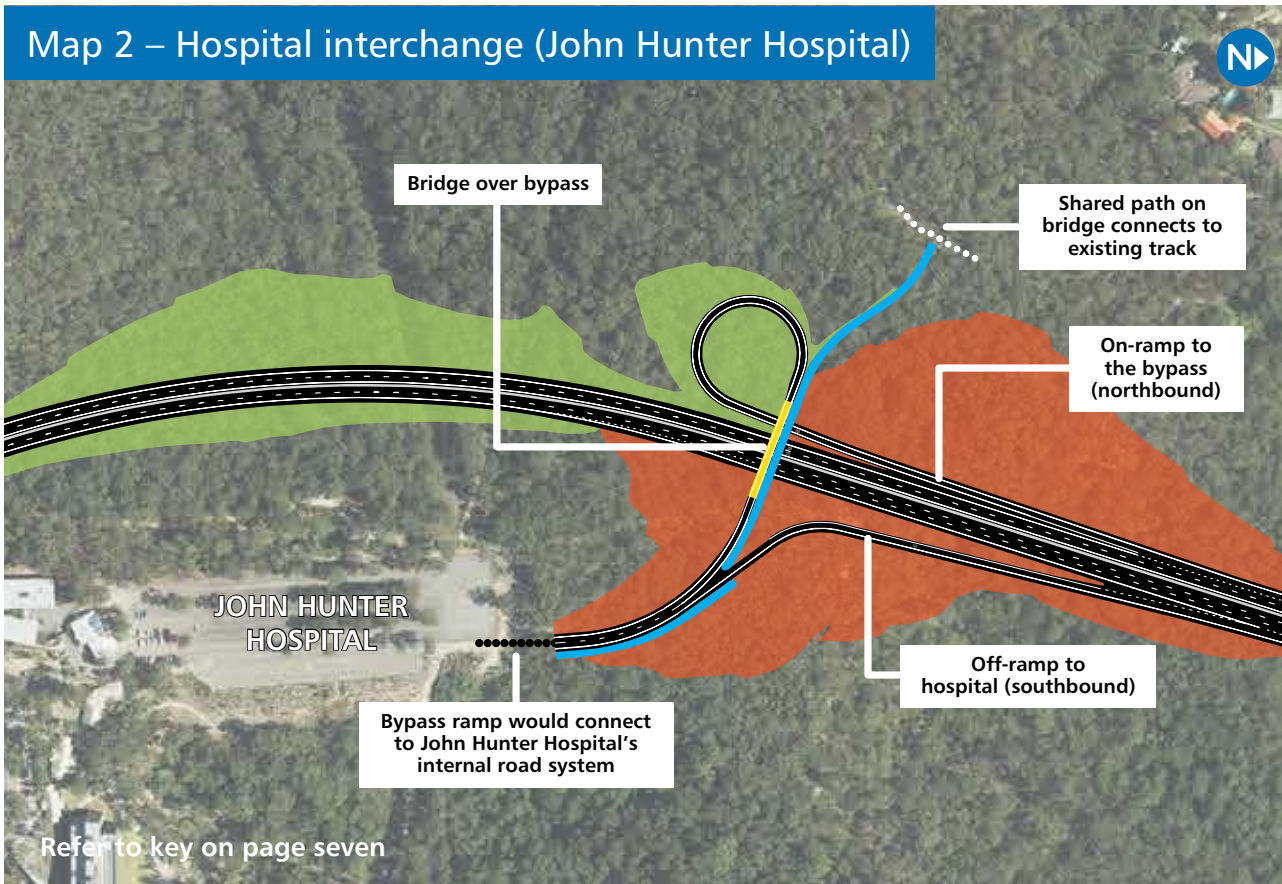
### FEATURES

- 3.4 kilometres of four lane divided road
- A northern interchange at Newcastle Road
- A southern interchange at Lookout Road
- An interchange providing access to John Hunter Hospital precinct to/from the north
- Three structures provided along the bypass to improve connectivity in the bushland for people and animals
- Off-road provisions for pedestrians and cyclists including a shared path bridge over Newcastle Road at Jesmond Park.

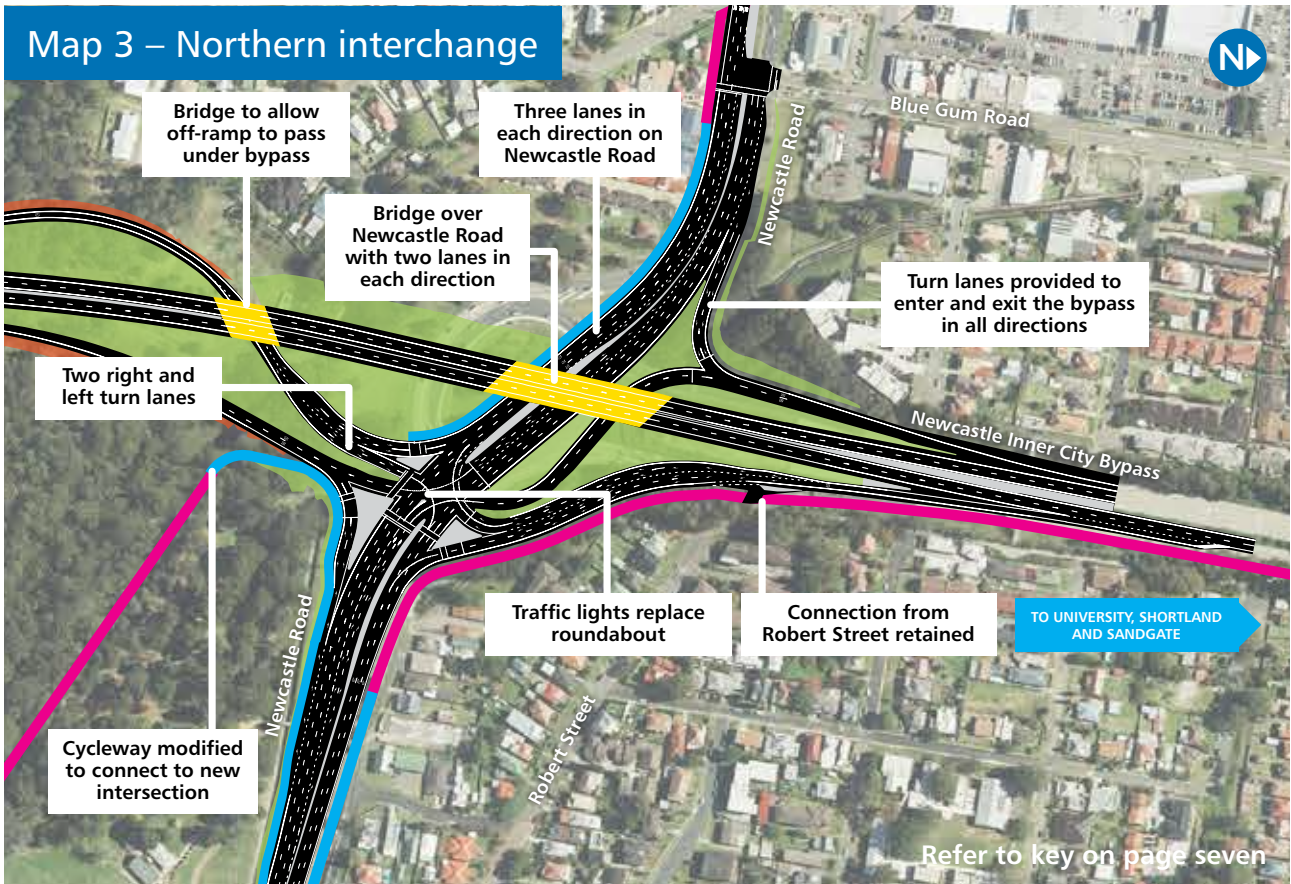


An artist's 3D impression looking south across the southern interchange





An artist's 3D impression looking south across the hospital interchange



An artist's 3D impression looking west across the northern interchange

# Construction

## The Rankin Park to Jesmond project would take around two and a half years to build.

During construction there would be some disruption to traffic on the road network surrounding the Newcastle Inner City Bypass between Rankin Park and Jesmond. In particular, sections of Lookout Road, McCaffrey Drive and Newcastle Road.

Construction activities are expected to be completed while maintaining through traffic on existing roads.

The successful contractor would develop construction and traffic management plans to deliver the project with impacts minimised on local residents, motorists using the existing road network and the environment.

### Construction hours

Standard construction hours in NSW are:

- 7am to 6pm Monday to Friday
- 8am to 1pm Saturday.

We are seeking approval for extended construction hours to allow the project to be completed as quickly as possible to reduce impacts on local residents, motorists and the community.

The proposed extended hours would be:

- 6am to 7pm Monday to Friday
- 7am to 5pm Saturday.

### Out of hours work

Out of hours work, such as night work, would be required where construction activities would otherwise severely impact traffic flow, stakeholders or worker safety.

### Information for local residents

The majority of construction would occur along the bushland area. This would minimise impacts on the existing route and surrounding road network.

Temporary detours and construction traffic management measures would be used to ensure the safety of motorists, pedestrians, cyclists and workers. Road closures are not expected, however temporary short-term diversions may be required.

We would work closely with directly impacted residents and nearby neighbours. A 24 hour information line would be staffed throughout construction. Residents would be regularly consulted and informed through emails, letters and the project website.

### Information for motorists

The contractor would work with the Transport Management Centre to manage all planned and unplanned incidents during construction. Traffic changes would be communicated to motorists through electronic message signs and [livetraffic.com](http://livetraffic.com).

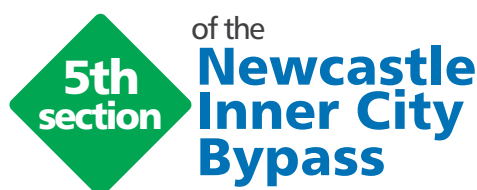
Motorists would be advised of temporary changed traffic conditions via construction signage.

### Construction compounds

Secured construction compounds would be located close to the project corridor. Compounds would potentially be used for:

- Offices and parking
- Materials handling and storage
- Crushing and batching equipment
- Deliveries.

**For more information go to Chapter 5 in the EIS.**



# Assessment of key issues

## Traffic and transport

**The project is predicted to provide major benefits for motorists using the Newcastle Inner City Bypass with substantial improvements in traffic flow and travel time for northbound and southbound journeys.**

The road network surrounding the Rankin Park to Jesmond project area has high levels of traffic congestion and delays for motorists at key intersections. Around 40,000 to 60,000 vehicles use the existing route of Lookout Road, Croudace Street and Newcastle Road every day.

Extensive traffic modelling has been carried out to primarily assess the predicted traffic performance of the project and the forecast redistribution of traffic on the road network in the study area.

The project is expected to carry up to 34,500 vehicles per day in 2030, reducing traffic volumes on the existing route of Lookout Road, Croudace Street and Newcastle Road by about 25 to 45 per cent depending on location.

The project is predicted to provide major benefits for motorists using the bypass with substantial improvements in travel time for both northbound and southbound journeys. The project is also predicted to improve travel times for north-south trips on the existing route and for east-west trips on Newcastle Road.

The project is expected to improve road safety on the existing route due to the reduction in traffic volumes and improved traffic flows, with a predicted 32 per cent reduction in crashes each year.

Traffic relief on key parts of the surrounding road network is expected when the project opens to traffic, including nearby key intersections. The project would include upgrades on McCaffrey Drive where it joins Lookout Road to improve traffic flow.

The project would provide additional connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists via on-road cycleways and off-road shared paths, including a shared path bridge over Newcastle Road.

**For more information go to Chapter 8 in the EIS.**

The Newcastle Inner City Bypass between Rankin Park and Jesmond is forecast to reduce north-south travel times by up to 80 per cent during the morning and afternoon peaks, from about 14 minutes down to three in 2030.

The project is expected to reduce east-west travel times on Newcastle Road between Douglas Street and Morehead Street by up to 38 per cent in 2030.

Up to  
**travel time**  
**80%**  
**saving**  
on the bypass  
by 2030

  
Provide  
**traffic relief**  
on key parts of the surrounding road network

## Biodiversity

**The environment around the proposed bypass has been assessed to minimise environmental impacts where possible.**

Extensive surveys were carried out as part of the EIS to understand the existing environment and evaluate the potential impact of the Rankin Park to Jesmond bypass.

The assessment included:

- Field surveys
- Research and analysis of relevant databases, literature and reports
- Identification and likelihood of impacts to threatened species, communities and high value ecosystems
- Assessment of impacts under the Office of Environment and Heritage's Framework for Biodiversity Assessment
- Identification of mitigation and management measures.

### The bypass would impact:

- About 39 hectares of native vegetation, including about four hectares of Lower Hunter Spotted Gum Ironbark Forest endangered ecological community
- Black-eyed Susan (*Tetradthea juncea*)
- Habitat for the Grey-headed Flying-fox (*Pteropus poliocephalus*).

To compensate for impacts to threatened ecological communities and species, biodiversity offsets would be provided in accordance with the NSW Biodiversity Offsets Policy for Major Projects.

A Construction Environmental Management Plan, including a Flora and Fauna Management Plan, would be developed to manage potential environmental impacts during construction. After construction, the site would be rehabilitated and landscaped.

**For more information go to Chapter 7 in the EIS.**



Grey-headed Flying-fox (*Pteropus poliocephalus*)



Black-eyed Susan (*Tetradthea juncea*)

# Noise and vibration

**Vehicle engines, exhausts, tyres and brakes can create traffic noise for people working and living near roads. The impact of long term traffic noise and short term construction noise has been assessed to inform how we can:**

- 1** Reduce factors that can contribute to traffic noise levels
- 2** Mitigate the extent of unavoidable noise
- 3** Schedule unavoidable construction noise at the best possible time
- 4** Resolve any unreasonable long term change in noise levels

## How we assessed noise

A detailed noise assessment was carried out to evaluate and predict the potential impact of construction and operation. Noise monitoring and traffic counts were carried out to measure traffic noise from the existing road network.

**A computer-based noise model was used to simulate the existing noise environment, predict future road traffic noise levels and assess the need for noise mitigation measures.**

## Managing construction noise

Practical steps would be used to minimise noise on construction sites including diesel exhaust dampeners, switching engines off when not in use, keeping machinery well maintained and smart scheduling of work. Additionally:

- Construction scheduling would consider school holidays, public holidays and weekday options
- Work that must be done at night to avoid heavier traffic conditions would be carefully managed and residents would be advised
- Simultaneous use of loud machines or construction methods would be avoided where possible.

A Noise and Vibration Management Plan would be prepared for the construction period. This would include:

- Noise and vibration monitoring and reporting requirements
- Specific mitigation and management measures to be implemented during construction
- Construction timetabling to minimise noise impacts
- Procedures for notifying residents and business owners likely to be affected by noise and vibration
- Contingency measures to be implemented in the event of non-compliance and / or noise complaints.

## Managing operational noise

Ongoing noise reduction measures for traffic noise when the project has opened would include:

- Providing low noise pavement for sections of the project, where feasible
- Noise barriers at two potential locations
- Consideration of property noise treatments for some sensitive receivers.

The need for noise barriers, and their design, would be confirmed in detailed design. Affected property owners would be consulted.

## Mitigation measures

The noise assessment and preliminary noise reduction measures will be re-evaluated at the detailed design stage and are subject to change. This may result in more or less properties qualifying for consideration of noise mitigation. It will take into account any changes to the design and, where required, feedback from consultation with affected residents.

The effectiveness of noise mitigation measures would be assessed to check actual noise after the bypass is opened to traffic. Additional mitigation measures may be required.

**For more information go to Chapter 9 in the EIS.**

## Landscape character and visual impact

**A landscape character and visual impact assessment was prepared to inform the concept design for the project and to assess the potential landscape character and visual impacts of the project.**

The project is situated in a bushland setting in an otherwise urban environment. The rugged topography and dense bushland limits the visual and landscape character impacts to the surrounding areas.

During the development of the concept design, urban design objectives and principles have been considered with the aim of integrating the project into the existing landscape. As a result, a number of potential adverse visual and landscape impacts have been avoided or minimised.

Elevated residential areas in the southern parts of the project area have panoramic views to the north, east or west.

In the northern parts of the project area distant views are typically limited to views across Newcastle Road to the south or north.

Views from most residential and recreational areas in the project area are into nearby areas of bushland.

**The concept design aims to protect and enhance the existing visual character of the study area.**

Public vantage points that have potential views of the project are generally limited to the John Hunter Hospital precinct and existing roads.

Based on the visual catchment of the project area, direct views of the project would be limited to areas generally around Lookout Road and Newcastle Road. Parts of the John Hunter Hospital precinct would also have views to the project.

Urban design and landscape plans would be finalised during detailed design, including consideration of vegetation screening for affected residents.

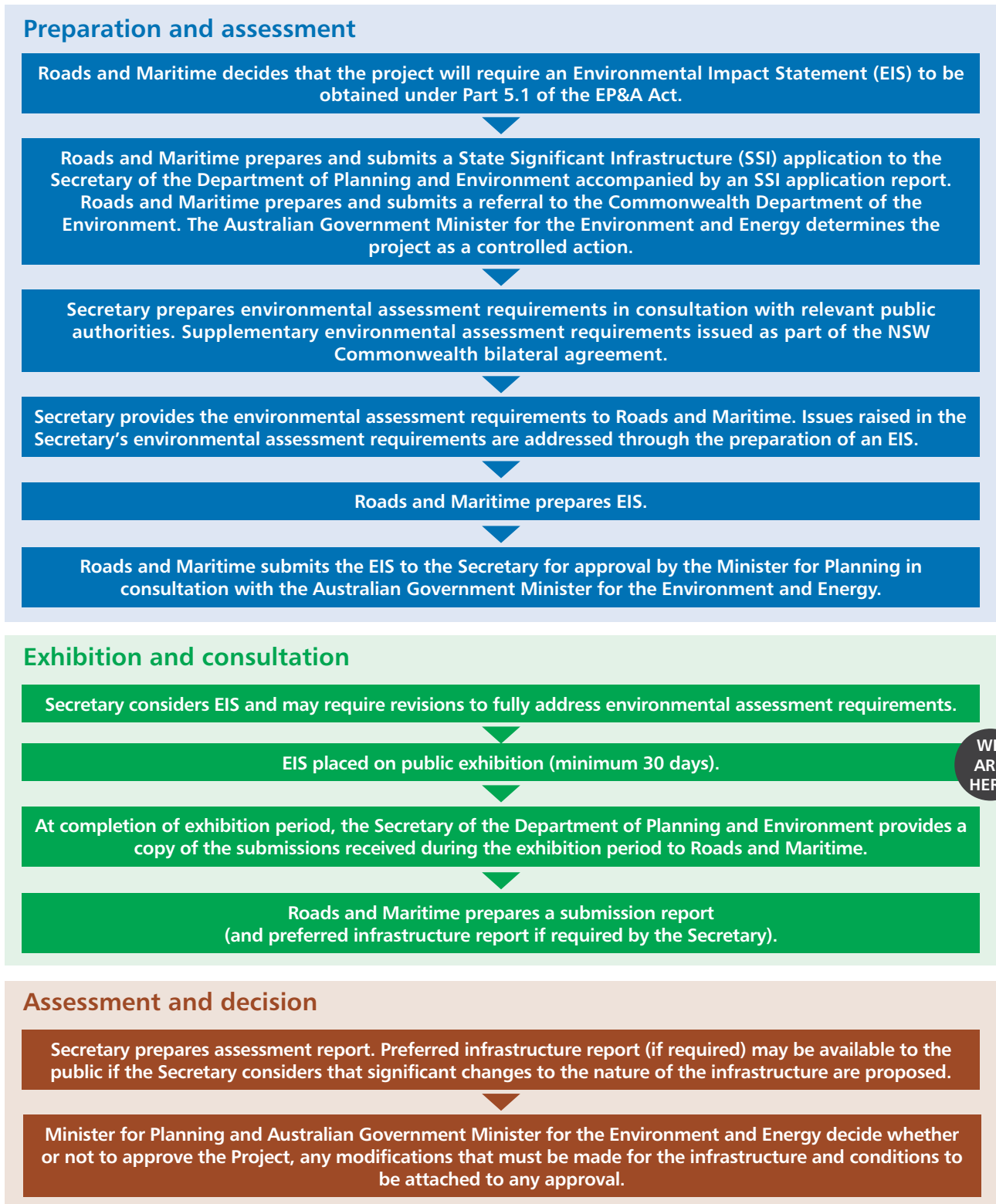
**For more information go to Chapter 10 in the EIS.**



Artist's impression of shared path bridge over Newcastle Road looking west

# Community involvement

## Environmental assessment and approval process

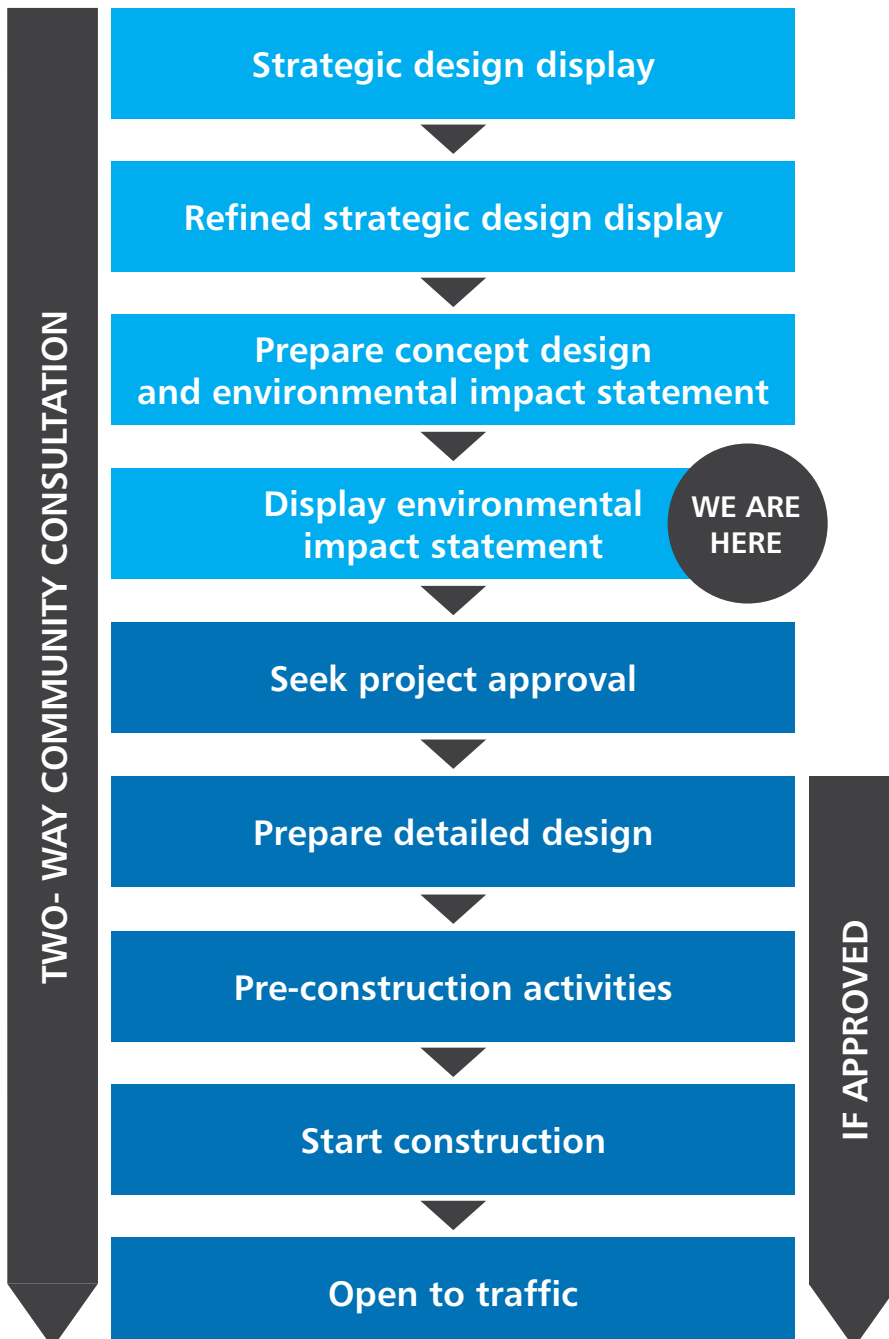


WE ARE HERE



# Project progress chart

The Rankin Park to Jesmond project is a state significant infrastructure project and an environmental impact statement has been prepared under part 5.1 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.



## Have your say

**The submissions process plays a vital role in the development of the project and provides an opportunity for you to have your say. At the close of the exhibition period a submissions report will document all issues raised during the formal consultation process and provide responses.**

The NSW Minister for Planning and Australian Government Minister for the Environment and Energy will determine whether to approve the project and any conditions of approval to be applied.

### How to make a formal submission

Before making your submission, please read the Department of Planning and Environment's Privacy Statement at [www.planning.nsw.gov.au/privacy](http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/privacy) or call 1300 305 695 for a copy.

**Your submission must reach the Department of Planning and Environment by Friday 16 December 2016.**

The Department of Planning and Environment will publish your submission on its website in accordance with the privacy statement.

### Online

Any person wishing to make a submission should use the online form if possible. To find the online form go to [www.majorprojects.planning.nsw.gov.au/page/on-exhibition](http://www.majorprojects.planning.nsw.gov.au/page/on-exhibition).



Community engagement for the project May 2016

### In writing

If you want the Department of Planning and Environment to delete your personal information before publication, please make this clear at the top of your letter. You need to include:

- Your name and address, at the top of the letter only
- The name of the application and the application number (SSI-6888)
- A statement on whether you support or object the proposal
- The reasons why you support or object to the proposal
- A declaration of any reportable political donations made in the previous two years. To find out what is reportable, and for a disclosure form, go to [www.planning.nsw.gov.au/donations](http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/donations) or call 1300 305 695 for a copy.

### Send your written submission to:

Attention: Director, Transport Assessments  
Planning Services  
Department of Planning and Environment  
GPO Box 39  
Sydney NSW 2001

**All submissions must be received by the NSW Department of Planning and Environment by Friday 16 December 2016.**

### Drop-in sessions

Drop in anytime to view the project information and speak with the project team at one of the following community drop-in sessions:

#### **Saturday 26 November**

Silver Ridge Community Cottage  
13 Iranda Grove, Wallsend  
9am to 2pm

#### **Thursday 1 December**

Silver Ridge Community Cottage  
13 Iranda Grove, Wallsend  
3pm to 6pm

### Environmental impact statement

Will be on public display until Friday 16 December 2016 at these locations:

Roads and Maritime Services  
59 Darby Street, Newcastle

Department of Planning and Environment  
Level 22, 320 Pitt Street, Sydney

Department of Planning and Environment  
Level 2, 26 Honeysuckle Drive, Newcastle

Nature Conservation Council of NSW  
Level 14, 338 Pitt Street, Sydney

Newcastle City Council  
282 King Street, Newcastle

Newcastle City Library  
15 Laman Street, Newcastle

New Lambton Library  
93 Regent Street (corner Alma Lane), New Lambton

Wallsend District Library  
30 Bunn Street, Wallsend

Lambton Library  
Morehead Street (corner Elder Street), Lambton

### Further information:



[rms.nsw.gov.au/rp2j](http://rms.nsw.gov.au/rp2j)



[rp2j.community@aurecongroup.com](mailto:rp2j.community@aurecongroup.com)



1800 818 433 (during business hours)



A 3D visualisation of the project has been developed to help understand the key features and benefits of the project. This, together with information on how to make a submission, and locations where the information can be viewed, can be found at the project website [rms.nsw.gov.au/rp2j](http://rms.nsw.gov.au/rp2j)



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