

December 2022

Newell Highway Program Alliance



Completed overtaking lanes at Back Creek, 19 kilometres north West Wyalong

The Newell Highway Program Alliance (NHPA) continues to progress the delivery of overtaking lanes and road safety improvement works on the Newell Highway. The works are jointly funded by the Australian Government and NSW Government who have committed \$1.7 billion to upgrade the Newell Highway. The NHPA is on track to deliver 40 overtaking lanes in 2023. The six road safety stimulus projects have now been completed, which marks a milestone in the program.

Program update

Twenty seven overtaking lanes have now been delivered which have added about 40 kilometres of overtaking lanes on the Newell Highway, saving road users about 30 minutes in travel time, making journeys safer and more efficient. The first half of 2022 saw the:

- completion of road safety improvement works between Tocumwal and Finley
- Alleena and Back Creek overtaking lanes progress towards October completion
- commencement of northbound and southbound overtaking lanes at Gullifers Road
- commencement of a southbound overtaking lane at Mirrool
- commencement of a southbound overtaking lane at Darroobalgie
- commencement of the first northbound and southbound overtaking lanes through the Pilliga.

The Newell Highway between Narrabri and Coonabarabran is about 120 kilometres, and currently opportunities for overtaking are limited and can be difficult. Three sites along this section of highway were selected to maximise safety, efficiency and value for money. These three sites will all include northbound and southbound overtaking lanes, providing about nine kilometres of overtaking lanes. The delivery of pairs of overtaking lanes, rather than individual overtaking lanes at different sites, has significant cost savings enabling the NHPA to deliver more with the available funding.

The three locations are Rest Area, about 53 kilometres south of Narrabri, Dandry, about 63 Kilometres north of Coonabarabran and Sir William Bridges Rest Area about 24 kilometres south of Narrabri.

The Gullifers Road northbound and southbound overtaking lanes, 20 kilometres south of Forbes are due to be completed in early 2023.



Commencement of overtaking lanes at Gullifers Road

Benefits of the NHPA



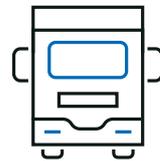
More efficient travel

More overtaking lanes on the Newell Highway will provide more efficient journey times.



Increasing overtaking opportunities

More overtaking lanes will reduce driver frustration and enable safer overtaking opportunities.



Improving freight efficiency

The overtaking lanes will provide a more secure transport route for the freight and agricultural industry.



Connecting communities

The overtaking lanes will provide better and safer connections between communities on the highway.



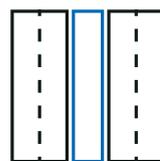
Improving road safety

The overtaking lanes will increase overtaking opportunities for the mix of vehicles on the highway.



Rumble strips

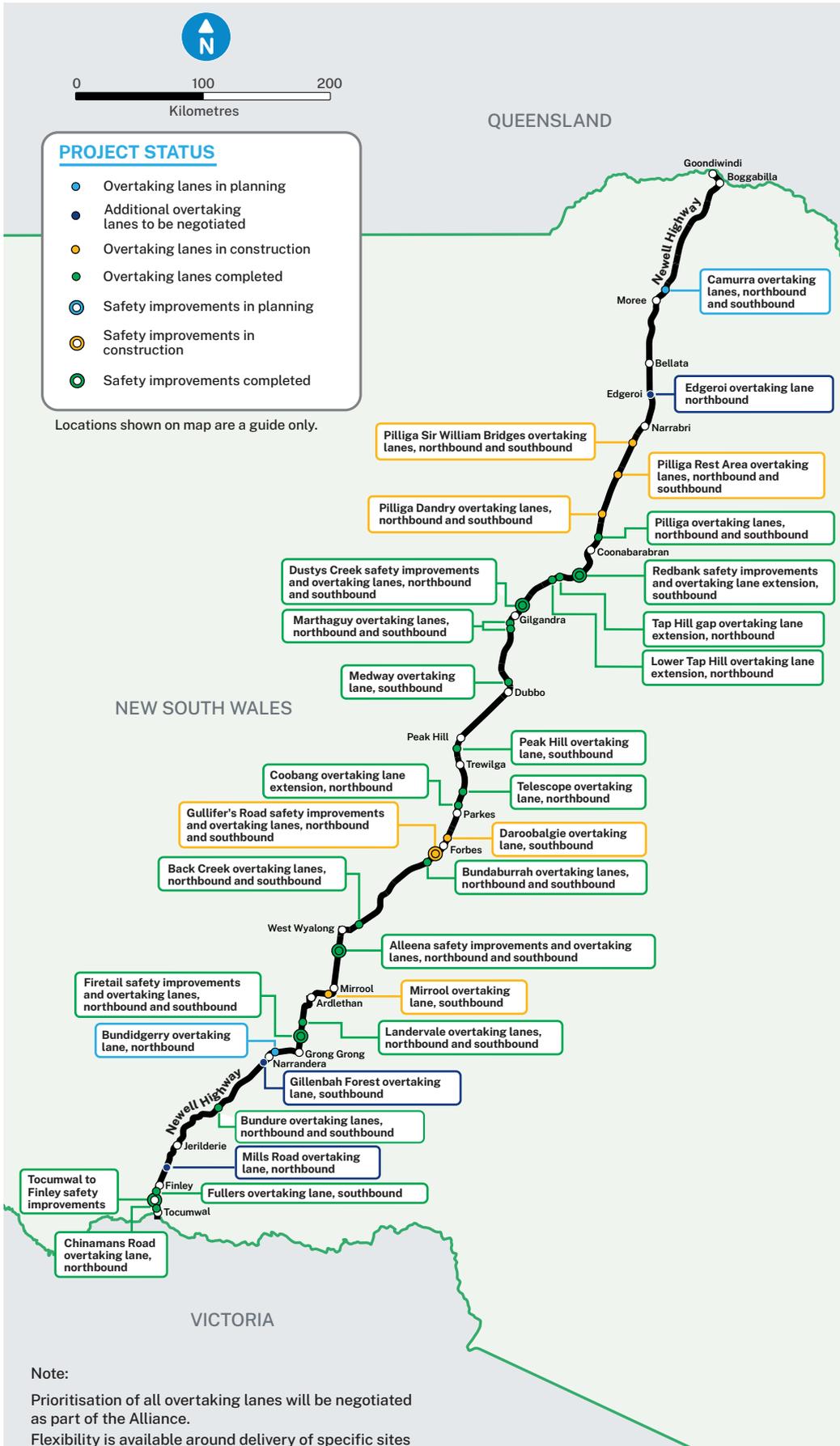
Installation of rumble strips is estimated to reduce the likelihood of vehicles departing their lane by 15% to 25%.



Wide centreline

Centreline widening is estimated to reduce head-on crashes by 50% and run-off-road crashes by up to 25%.

Status of NHPA



Working with the freight industry

The NHPA has been working with the freight industry to raise awareness around the implementation of wide load bays at project work zones for the safety of workers and road users. The NHPA released its wide load bay animation in June 2022 and it can be viewed here roads-waterways.transport.nsw.gov.au/projects/newell-highway/program-alliance/index.html. The video explains how oversize over mass (OSOM) vehicles and their pilot vehicles should travel through the NHPA construction zones.

In addition to wide load bays, the NHPA is continuing to offer a “wide load call ahead service”. This initiative encourages logistic companies to call ahead to inform the NHPA what projects they are passing through, and approximate timing. Project sites have seen about a dozen logistic companies call ahead providing notice about their routes. This information has enabled site crews to be ready ahead of time to assist wide loads safely and efficiently pass through the NHPA sites.



The Newell Highway is a key transport route for the freight industry



Wide Load Bay at Alleena

Environment

The NHPA continues to find opportunities to minimise its environmental footprint. The latest sustainability initiative is integrating native bee friendly houses into culverts. This involves attaching clay bricks or blocks of excess non-treated wood to the wing walls of culverts that are a part of the road works. Several different sized holes are drilled into the block of wood or set into the clay bricks. The holes of varying sizes make the habitat suitable for different species of bees that live in the western regions of NSW. Regeneration of native grass species, a typical practice on all NHPA sites, is supplemented by planting additional native grass and or herb seeds to make the habitat more desirable to native bees.

The NHPA stopped by Finley Public School and spoke to Year 5 students about native bees and the students got to make bee friendly houses from clay.



Bee houses being made



The bee habitats made were placed at the school

In the community

Day at the footy

The NHPA has a passion for supporting local youth and has developed a close relationship with the staff and youth of the Police and Community Youth Club (PCYC) Dubbo. In May 2022, the NHPA provided tickets for the PCYC to attend the Canberra Raiders against South Sydney Rabbitohs NRL game in Dubbo. This enabled 12 young people, two Skillset College students, and 10 Fit for Life participants to attend the game. The PCYC bus picked up the students who travelled to the game in their jerseys! The students and staff from PCYC, and the seven families whose children participated were extremely thankful and appreciative to have this opportunity.

On the day, NHPA staff helped in the PCYC food van cooking steak and sausage sandwiches raising almost \$6,000 for PCYC Dubbo.

Re-opening Gullifers rest area

In early May 2022, the NHPA re-opened the Gullifers Road rest area which was closed to deliver the Gullifers Road safety works. The re-opening event was co-hosted with the Centre for Road Safety. Rest areas are vital to enable drivers to Stop, Revive, Survive and the event raised awareness that the rest area was now open. With the recent increase in holiday road trips the event focused on caravan safety, providing information on safe loading and towing, trip planning, driving to the conditions, safe speeds and distances, and avoiding caravan sway.

Did you know? If you are planning a road trip you can use Google Maps and launch the rest areas map to find rest areas (and facilities available). The map has information for heavy vehicles and regular motorists.



PCYC Dubbo Youth enjoying the NRL game



Opening of Gullifers Road rest area where caravan safety was a key message

Power line safety in construction zones

Most worksite incidents are the result of operators failing to see the power lines, or not maintaining a safe distance to them. To mitigate this risk, it is standard practice to visually mark underground and overhead services on construction sites with totem poles, flagging or mendez markers.

Some of the standard practices to identify services and improve safety around utilities include:

- Dial Before You Dig Drawings
- utilising technology such as the Essential Energy Look Up and Live App
- consulting with the asset owner/owners regarding voltages and heights
- conducting pre work walks.

To further improve safety around power lines, the NHPA has taken extra steps and implemented additional measures on sites to include:

- silhouettes of people
- danger signs indicating the height of the overhead service
- the separation distance required for machinery.

These additional measures, combined with other on-site safety practices have helped the NHPA keep residents and the travelling public informed and safe. They have also enabled construction works to be undertaken confidently with the knowledge that the risks associated with overhead services have been considered and controlled.



Look up silhouettes at Tocumwal to Finley

Contact us

We will continue to work with the community and key stakeholders. We will keep you updated about our work.

If you have any questions or would like further information about the upgrade, please contact the project team:



1800 577 295



info@newellHPA.com.au



nswroads.work/nhpa



This document contains important information about road projects in your area. If you require the services of an interpreter, please contact the Translating and Interpreting Service on **131 450** and ask them to call the project team on **1800 577 295**. The interpreter will then assist you with translation.

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