



Transport
Roads & Maritime
Services

TENTERFIELD HEAVY VEHICLE BYPASS ASSESSMENT OF ROUTE OPTIONS

Community Feedback Report 1

AUGUST 2013

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Transport
Roads & Maritime
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Tenterfield Heavy Vehicle Bypass Assessment of Route Options Community Feedback Report 1

Rev 1

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1. Introduction

1.1 Project overview

Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) has engaged GHD to undertake a detailed investigation into a proposed heavy vehicle bypass of the town of Tenterfield in northern New South Wales. The RMS engagement of GHD is to complete a range of planning and engineering services for the development and assessment of various route options for a heavy vehicle bypass of Tenterfield. The investigation will focus on identifying potential route options and understanding how they relate to a range of planning and environmental, physical, socio-economic and existing infrastructure constraints in and around the town.

The proposed outcomes of the study will include engineering and environmental investigation reports, community consultation, strategic concept designs, cost estimates and feasibility assessments to enable a preferred heavy vehicle bypass route option to be recommended to RMS.

1.2 Project objectives

The aim of the project is to determine a preferred New England Highway corridor route to bypass the urban area of Tenterfield. The preferred route will consider how to achieve the following objectives:

- Improve road safety
- Improve road transport productivity, efficiency and reliability of travel
- Minimise the impact on the natural, cultural and built environment
- Provide sustainable economic outcomes for the local community
- Minimise the social impact on the local community
- Provides value for money.

1.3 Purpose and scope of this report

The purpose of this report is to provide a record of the community consultation activities and feedback received following the first two phases of community and stakeholder engagement. The first phase of community consultation was held in October 2012 and the second phase of community consultation was held in March 2013. These activities include:

- Preparation of a consultation methodology
- Development of project information materials
- An overview of feedback received, including:
 - Issues related to heavy vehicles travelling through the centre of Tenterfield
 - Issues the community would like the project team to consider in planning
 - Identification of potential route options by community members
 - Feedback on the draft preliminary route options
 - Ranking the selection criteria to be used for the route options assessment process.

2. Consultation methodology

2.1 Project process

Figure 2-1 below outlines the project timeline and the heavy vehicle bypass route option assessment process. The timeline also indicates the schedule of opportunities for the community to provide input and feedback. The first two phases of community consultation were held in October 2012 and March 2013.

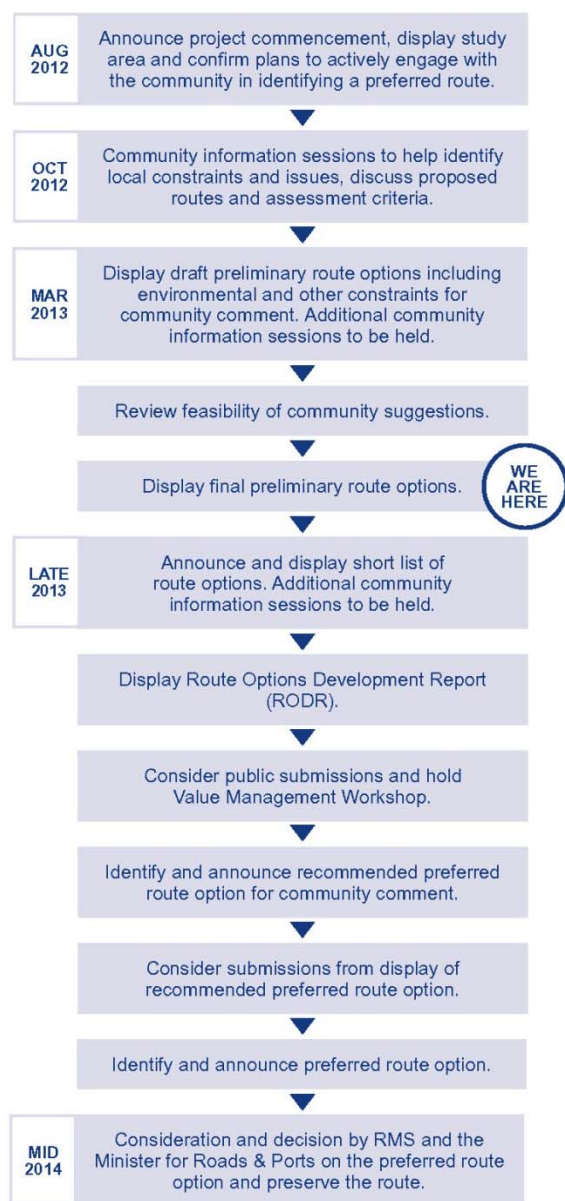


Figure 2-1 Project timeline

2.2 Community engagement

A range of community consultation activities have been carried out during the first two phases of engagement, including:

- Two community information sessions held in Tenterfield in October 2012
- Two community information sessions held in Tenterfield in March 2013

- Community updates and feedback forms distributed during October 2012 and March 2013 to correspond with the announcement of each stage of the project
- Ongoing management of the community 1800 information line and project email
- Project mailing address for feedback
- Project website for information.

3. Community consultation phase one

3.1 Investigation status

The Australian Government and RMS announced the project in September 2012, outlining that GHD had been engaged to assist in the investigation and recommendation of route options and the project study area was identified (see map below). The initial activities conducted by the project team included constraint and opportunities mapping and reviewing previous studies.



Figure 3-1 Study area

3.2 Community information materials

Publicity for the community information sessions was achieved through:

- Community Update One, which was mailed to approximately 2,000 households and businesses throughout the Tenterfield local government area.
- Advertising in print media including:
 - Tenterfield Star on 3, 10 and 17 October 2012
 - Casino Times on 2, 9 and 16 October 2012
 - Glen Innes Examiner on 2, 9 and 16 October 2012
 - Radio advertising on Ten Community FM. Radio announcements were made four times a day between 8-14 October, six times a day between 15-18 October and one announcement was made on 19 October 2012.
- Display posters at Tenterfield Shire Council, Tenterfield Post Office, Tenterfield Library, Tenterfield Motor Registry and Tenterfield Hub Community Centre.

- The RMS project and Tenterfield Shire Council websites.

Materials at each community information session included:

- A poster size map of the study area
- A poster showing the project timeline
- Feedback forms, which included a map of the study area on the back.

3.3 Community information sessions

As part of the first phase of consultation for the Tenterfield heavy vehicle bypass project, GHD facilitated two drop-in community information sessions at the Sir Henry Parkes Memorial School of Arts on Thursday 18 October 2012 from 4pm until 7pm and Friday 19 October 2012 from 9am until 12pm.

The sessions were well attended with approximately 60 local residents and stakeholders participating, with a majority (37) attending on Thursday evening. The majority of those in attendance were residents of Tenterfield. Representatives from Tenterfield Shire Council also attended.

The objective of the sessions was to provide the community and stakeholders with:

- Information on the study process
- The opportunity to identify constraint areas
- The opportunity to discuss issues and concerns with a proposed heavy vehicle bypass
- The opportunity to suggest their preferred route options.

The Thursday evening and Friday morning sessions were selected on the basis of past consultation practice and to ensure that both night time and day time options were available for meeting with the project team. The project team in attendance consisted of RMS and GHD staff, and covered a number of disciplines including engineering, community and environment.

The sessions were consistent with the consultation objectives for the project as outlined in the Tenterfield Heavy Vehicle Bypass Assessment of Route Options Community Participation Plan developed by GHD in August 2012.

3.4 Community update one

Community Update One introduced the project to the community, announced the study area and objectives of the project and outlined the process and timeframe that would be followed by the project team in the identification of a preferred route. This update also sought community feedback on potential constraints and possible route options throughout the study area.

A copy of Community Update One is provided in Appendix A.

3.5 Phase one feedback analysis

A total of 50 feedback forms or comments via email were received during the October 2012 consultation period.

Respondents were encouraged to complete the feedback form during the drop-in session or return their form via email or post. Respondents were also encouraged to mark up the study area map to identify suggestions for a heavy vehicle bypass route option as well as any known constraints. Feedback forms were accepted up until Friday 2 November, a week later than the advertised closing date.

3.6 Key issues

The key issues raised by the community during consultation phase one includes:

- The need for a heavy vehicle bypass to be implemented to reduce heavy vehicle traffic volumes along the main street of Tenterfield.
- Concerns that heavy vehicle bypass options will impact negatively on residential areas and the local economy.
- Increasing traffic along the Bruxner Highway should be considered as part of the New England Highway bypass route.
- The need for the community and Tenterfield Shire Council to work together to improve the tourist potential of the town to offset any economic impacts.

Respondents identified a number of concerns related to heavy vehicles travelling through Tenterfield and a future heavy vehicle bypass, and also identified a range of potential heavy vehicle bypass route options.

Respondents to the feedback form were asked to identify which issues most concerned them about heavy vehicles travelling through the centre of town. The feedback received in response to this question is summarised in Table 3-1 and represented in Figure 3-2.

Table 3-1 Issues regarding heavy vehicle travel in Tenterfield

Issue	Count
Road safety	42
Pedestrian safety	42
Noise	38
Traffic congestion	31
Air pollution	28
Vibration	17
Visual amenity	16
Impact on business	11
Other (livestock waste/odour, road safety education)	10
Amenity	7
Loss of parking	3

Note: Respondents were asked to select from a list of key issues and could select more than one issue in response to this question. Respondents also had the opportunity to identify 'other' issues.

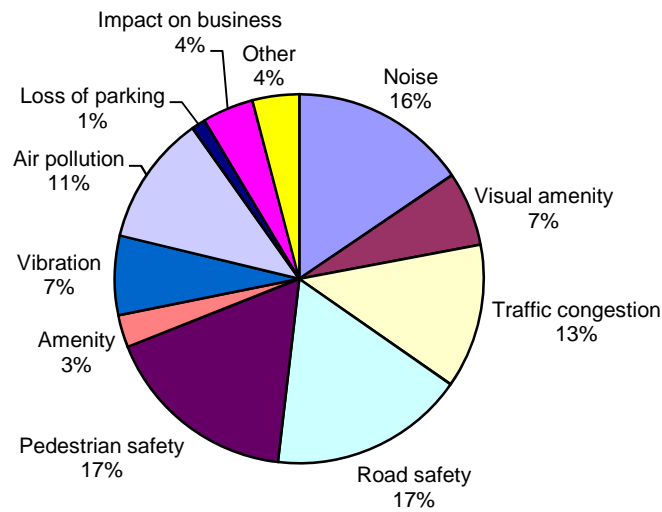


Figure 3-2 Issues of most concern to the community

The second section of the feedback form asked the community to indicate some of the most important issues that the project team should consider when planning the heavy vehicle bypass. Respondents were able to select more than one issue. The feedback received in response to this question has been summarised in Table 3-2 and represented in Figure 3-3 below.

Table 3-2 Most important issues for the project team to consider

Issue	Count
Road safety	33
Economic benefit to the community	27
Impact on the community	25
Impact on property	24
Efficiency	20
Road transport productivity and efficiency	19
Travel times	14
Environmental impact	13
Cost of project	10
Other (Rouse Street viability and amenity post bypass, any option should take in Bruxner Highway traffic)	7
Impact on agricultural land	4

Note: Respondents were asked to select from a list of key issues and could select more than one issue in response to this question. Respondents also had the opportunity to identify 'other' issues.

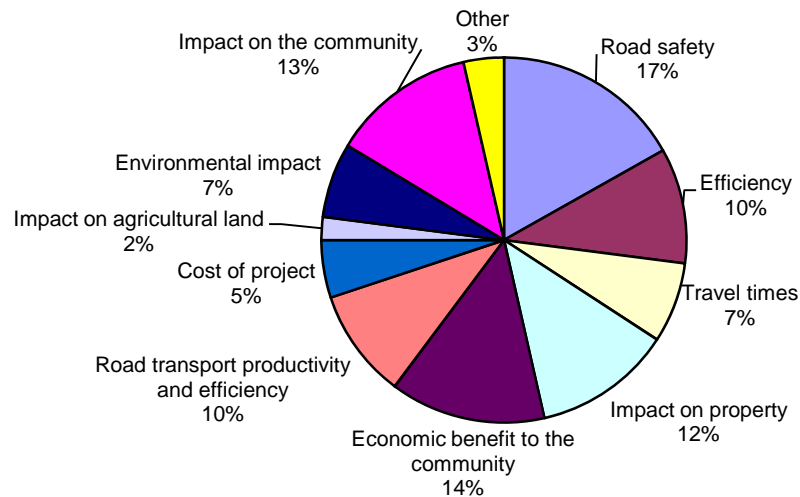


Figure 3-3 Most important for the project team to consider

All but six respondents used the feedback form to map a possible route for consideration on the feedback form. A map showing the various options proposed by respondents on feedback forms can be found in Appendix C. The heavy vehicle bypass route options identified by the community have also been summarised in Table 3-3 below. For identification and differentiation between the wider range of options presented in the second phase of consultation, these suggestions are numbered with a C prefix.

The majority of respondents (24) suggested route options (C1 – C3) well to the east of town. However, a comparable number of respondents (15 respondents) suggested options (C4– C5) to the west of town and eight respondents suggested a combination (C6) of western and eastern routes. Other options included tunnelling under Railway Avenue and an eastern route option closer to town. Also presented are comments made by respondents about the route option(s) that were identified at this stage.

Table 3-3 Route suggestions from the community

Option	Description	Count	Community comments
C1	East, below Tenterfield Dam, pick up Bruxner Highway traffic and then head along Bellevue Street and onto Old Ballandean Road	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give trucks direct access to the sale yards. Avoid built up areas of town.
C2	East, between Tenterfield Dam and Tenterfield Creek, pick up Bruxner Highway traffic and then head along Bellevue Street and onto Old Ballandean Road	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avoid railway precinct, schools, cemetery and Aboriginal heritage sites. Consider relocating the rifle range.
C3	East, above Tenterfield Creek, pick up Bruxner Highway traffic and then head along Bellevue Street and onto Old Ballandean Road	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider the environmental aspects along Mount Lindesay Road.
C4	West, follow existing railway alignment, east of cemetery	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> East route takes in good agricultural land. Uses existing rail line, however is not wide enough. Noise impacts on some parts of town.
C5	West, follow existing railway alignment, staying west of cemetery	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Noise levels over the dam would be an issue if there was an eastern route. Apply the recommendation from the PEECE/TSC report.
C6	West, follow existing railway alignment, staying west of cemetery and upgrade Bellevue Street and Old Ballandean Road	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No need for a super highway, just upgrade the existing section.
	Other	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Road safety education would also go a long way – both drivers and pedestrians.
	No route mapped	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use a Consultative Committee as the project progresses. Reduce speed limit on Rouse Street / New England Highway between Douglas and Molesworth Streets.

3.7 General comments

A small number of respondents commented on the route assessment process, particularly in relation to the potential impact of the proposed heavy vehicle bypass on the economic livelihood and quality of life of the community.

The key issues raised in the responses include:

- The need for RMS to implement the bypass to reduce traffic volumes and improve pedestrian safety and quality of life (9).
- Residential/built-up areas should not be affected by the bypass (8).

- The impact the bypass would have on accessing the cemetery and the presence of Indigenous and non-Indigenous heritage artefacts if a western option was to proceed (3).
- Need to consider impacts on key sites in the investigations – schools, aged care facilities, hospital sale yards, rifle range (5).
- The current impact of heavy vehicles and their loads, e.g. dangerous goods and livestock, affecting the main street (5).

4. Community consultation phase two

4.1 Status of investigations

During the second phase of community consultation the project team has:

- Considered community feedback from the first phase of community consultation.
- Used the feedback from the community to add and further analyse potential constraints within the study area.
- Collected and analysed traffic data including assessment of road safety data.
- Conducted ecology surveys including fauna and flora at a number of locations across the study area.
- Identified draft preliminary route options including those identified in previous studies and those identified by the community.

4.2 Community information materials

Publicity for the community information sessions held in March 2013 was achieved through:

- Community Update Two, which was mailed to 2,000 households and businesses within the Tenterfield postcode.
- A mail out to all 116 stakeholders and community members registered on the project stakeholder database.
- Advertising displayed in print media:
 - Tenterfield Star on 6 March and 13 March 2013
 - Glen Innes Examiner on 5 March and 12 March 2013
 - Northern Star on 5 March and 12 March 2013
- Radio advertising on Ten Community FM, Rebel FM and Breeze FM in Tenterfield and Stanthorpe. The radio advertising occurred multiple times each day between 6-15 March.
- A3 and A2 display posters at Tenterfield Shire Council, Tenterfield Post Office, Tenterfield Library, Tenterfield Motor Registry and Tenterfield Hub Community Centre.
- The RMS project website.

Materials at each community information session included:

- A1 poster size map of the 13 preliminary route options
- A1 poster size map of the ecology study areas
- A poster showing the project timeline and the current status
- Copies of Community Update Two
- Feedback forms
- Registration sheet
- A summary sheet on the various options for how the community can provide their feedback and comments on the draft preliminary route options.

4.3 Briefing for Tenterfield Shire Council

A session to brief Tenterfield Shire Council (TSC) about the project was held on Thursday 14 March 2013. At this briefing, Councillors and Council officers were updated about the status of the project and the draft preliminary route options prior to the community information sessions being held. Ten of the twelve Councillors attended and the following key issues and comments were raised:

- The TSC commissioned PEECE Report is not valid because it did not adequately investigate eastern route options.
- Addressing all heavy traffic including from the Bruxner Highway is important to the community.
- The heavy vehicle bypass must provide value for money.
- Further detail and clarification needs to be provided about property acquisition including on relevant and applicable legislation.
- Flooding on the Pacific Highway has meant that the New England Highway has been used more extensively by heavy vehicles in recent times. Future use of the New England Highway during flooding events needs to be considered.
- Council has offered assistance in undertaking additional traffic counts.
- Council is seeking funding for the upgrade of Mt Lindesay Rd which may result in increased traffic if this road is improved.
- Similarly the bypass needs to consider impact of a wide range of regional road upgrades such as at Cunningham's Gap in Queensland.
- Consider increased traffic along the Bruxner Highway that may be a result of upgrading Tabulam Bridge – potential for Bruxner to become a B-Double route.
- Query on process for truck load limits that may be applied to Rouse Street once a bypass is in place.
- Clarification on how permits may be provided for the delivery of goods into town if Rouse Street is load limited.
- Do nothing is an option that should be considered.
- Interrupting access from the cemetery is a key issue.
- The bypass has to be for heavy vehicles only and steps should be taken to continue to encourage light vehicles through Tenterfield.
- There is no point providing a heavy vehicle bypass if it doesn't get all trucks off the main street.

4.4 Community information sessions

Two community information sessions were held to provide information to the community about the 13 draft preliminary route options. Both sessions were held at the Sir Henry Parkes Memorial School of Arts.

The first session was held on Thursday 14 March 2013 between 6pm and 7.30pm where a presentation was given to the community on the current status of the project. Feedback on the previous round of community consultation and a summary of the results of recent traffic surveys and ecology surveys was also provided.

Over 80 people attended this session and there was time for questions at the conclusion of the presentation. The presentation provided by the project team can be found in Appendix D and a summary of the questions asked by the community during the question and answer session is located in Appendix E.

The second community information session, an informal 'drop-in' style session, was held on Friday 15 March between 9am and 12pm. Members of the project team were available for the community to ask questions about the ecology and traffic studies or about the draft preliminary route options. More than 25 people attended this session and were encouraged to provide their comments and concerns on the community feedback form.

4.5 Community update two

Community Update Two was distributed to the community in early March 2013 and provided an update on the study process, outlined the 13 draft preliminary route options that had been identified through consultation with the community in October 2012 and provided an overview of the initial environmental and technical investigations to have been carried out for the project. This update also included a feedback form which sought specific feedback on the assessment methodology and selection criteria that will be used by the project team in shortlisting the route options. The feedback form also asked the community for feedback on the draft preliminary route options.

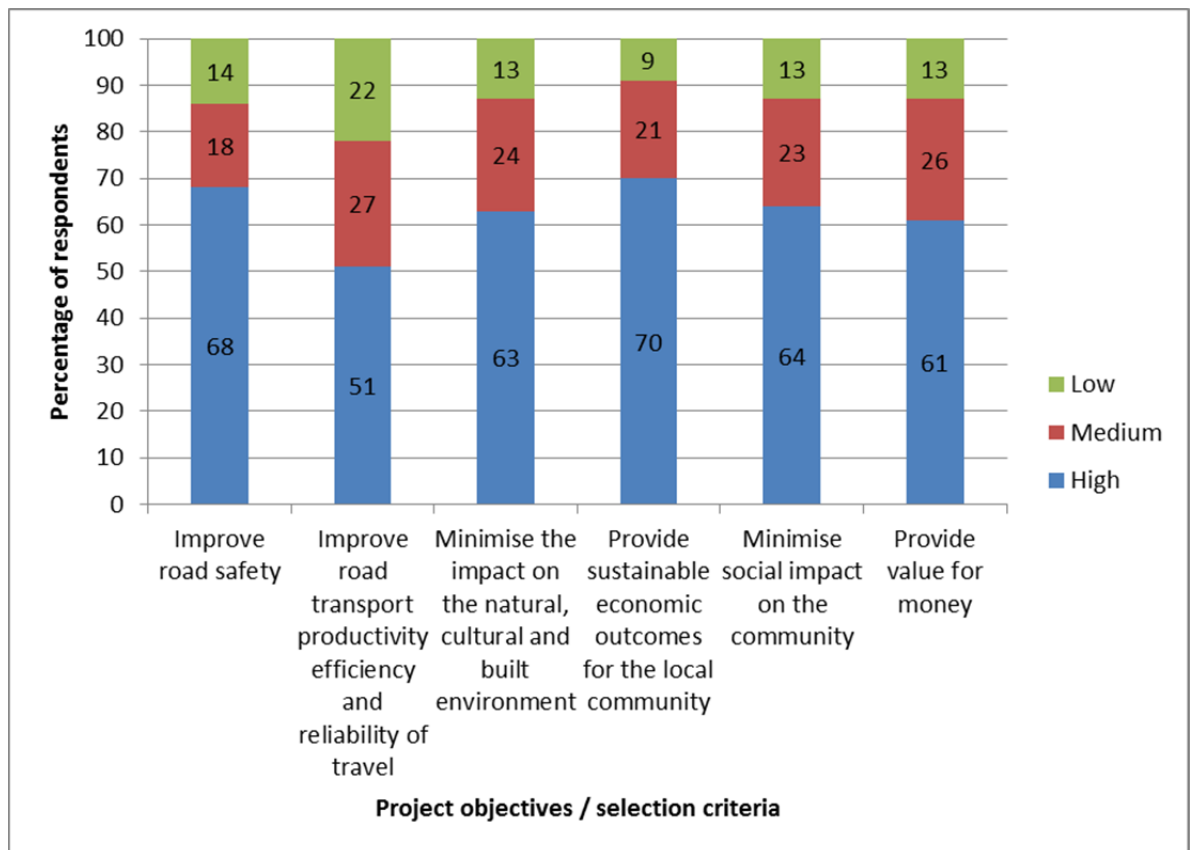
A copy of Community Update Two is provided in Appendix B.

4.6 Phase two feedback analysis

A total of 107 people returned feedback forms or provided feedback via the project email account. Feedback from the community was invited until 2 April 2013 however, this was extended due to Easter falling within this period. Feedback was considered up until 16 April 2013. A copy of this feedback form is located in Appendix B.

The following section of this report provides a summary of the feedback received by the community and stakeholders.

The first section of the feedback form distributed in phase two asked respondents to rank the level of importance of the project objectives from which the draft route selection criteria are to be determined. Figure 4-1 below indicates that the criteria of greatest importance identified by the respondents were to 'Provide sustainable economic outcomes for the local community' and 'Improve Road Safety'.



Notes: Figure 4-1 represents the percentage of all respondents that selected High, Medium or Low against each of the project objectives and selection criteria. While responses were received from in excess of 100 community members, not all respondents answered this question and not all ranked each individual objective.

Figure 4-1 Feedback on importance of project objectives/selection criteria

Respondents were asked to rank the importance of each project objective, which were each divided into individual assessable criteria. Respondents were not asked to rank each criterion individually.

A couple of comments were received from respondents indicating that they would have assigned different rankings for each individual criteria. A couple of people commented that this may skew the results and the level of importance assigned to the project objectives.

A number of respondents provided additional feedback on the proposed heavy vehicle bypass and the draft preliminary route options in the comments section of the feedback form or via email.

The top five key themes or issues raised by the greatest number of respondents included:

- Concern about the impact of the bypass on residents and the need to minimise the number of residents impacted.
- The need to ensure the bypass addresses traffic from the New England Highway as well as the Bruxner Highway and Mt Lindesay Road.
- Concern about the economic impact of the proposed heavy vehicle bypass on the community and local businesses.
- Current safety concerns for the community particularly along Rouse Street but also safety concerns surrounding the future bypass.
- The cost effectiveness of the proposed heavy vehicle bypass.

Table 4-1 below provides a summary of other themes, issues and considerations raised by respondents in the feedback form and comments received via email.

Table 4-1 Key themes and issues identified by the community

Key themes and issues	Count
Impact on residents	41
Address traffic from Bruxner Highway and/or Mt Lindesay Rd	39
Safety	26
Economic impact on the community and businesses	22
Cost of the bypass	18
Environment	16
Heritage	13
Threat to water supply	13
Noise	12
Traffic volumes	12
Efficiency of travel time on the bypass	11
Property value	11
Uncertainty of development	10
Signage	7
Route assessment process	3
Parking	2

A number of comments were provided in relation to support for and concerns with the route option types, west or east of the town. Table 4-2 provides a synopsis of these comments.

Table 4-2 Community comment on Western and Eastern route options

Route option commentary comparisons	
Support for Western Route Options	Concerns with Western Route Options
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outer west routes were far away from residential areas. Inner west routes could utilise the rail corridor and minimise impacts on residents. Inner west routes would be shorter and more cost effective. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do not address traffic from the Bruxner Highway or Mt Lindesay Road. Impact on Curry's Gap Conservation Area. Impact on Indigenous heritage through Curry's Gap. Impact on important heritage areas particularly around the station. Inner west routes would have a noise impact on residents. Length and cost of outer west route options.

Route option commentary comparisons	
Support for Eastern Route Options	Concerns with Eastern Route Options
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Address traffic from the Bruxner Highway and Mt Lindesay Road. Outer eastern routes were far away from residential areas. Outer eastern routes would not impact on the potential future growth of Tenterfield. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Route 9 and Route 10 are too close to residential areas and will prevent the future growth of Tenterfield. Outer eastern routes may pose a threat to the town's water supply. Eastern routes may impact on wildlife corridors. Eastern option not necessary as the limited vehicle numbers along the Bruxner Highway do not support an eastern option. Route 10 will go through some swamp ground. Bridges will be required along eastern route options. Impact on heritage areas particularly to the north and east of town.

Table 4-3 below outlines the support identified by respondents for the draft preliminary route corridors e.g. inner west, central west etc. Support for the outer east route corridor was identified by the greatest number of respondents followed by the inner west route corridor.

Table 4-3 Route corridor preferences

Identified Community Route Corridor Preference	Count
Support outer west	9
Support central west	10
Support inner west	25
Support inner east	14
Support outer east	40

A number of respondents identified routes across more than one corridor as their preference (in this case all route corridors identified were counted) and some identified a combination of routes across different corridors (in this case both corridors were selected as a preference). Where respondents identified either eastern or western routes as their preference all eastern corridors or all western corridors were added into the count.

Table 4-4 outlines individual route preferences nominated by respondents in the open ended section of the community feedback form or through comments received via the project email. Route 13 was identified by the greatest number of respondents as their preferred route option.

Table 4-4 Route option preferences

Identified Community Route Preference	Count
Route 1	6
Route 2	2
Route 3	1
Route 4	1
Route 5	4
Route 6	11
Route 7	4
Route 8	3
Route 9	1
Route 10	1
Route 11	10
Route 12	12
Route 13	21

The data provided in Table 4-4 indicates the preferred route options identified by respondents. Some respondents identified more than one route option as their preference. If a respondent identified a combination of routes they were not included in this count but a summary of the combined route options identified have been outlined in Table 4-5 below.

Table 4-5 is not an exhaustive list of combinations identified but outlines the most common combination of routes identified by respondents.

Table 4-5 Route combinations identified

Route Combinations	Count
Combination of Route 10 and 11	4
Combination of Route 10, 11, 12	3
Combination of Route 11, 12, 13	3
Combination of Route 5 and 7	3

5. Summary

There was a high level of community engagement with and response to community consultation phases one and two. A total of 50 feedback forms were received in October 2012 and over 100 feedback forms or responses received in April 2013.

Analysis of community feedback indicates a relatively high level of support for a heavy vehicle bypass due to the positive pedestrian, traffic and community outcomes the project is aiming to achieve. The key concerns raised about the heavy vehicle bypass included potential impacts on private property, potential impact of a bypass on residential areas such as noise, vibration and air pollution, and the potential impact on the local economy. A number of community members have also expressed concern about the uncertainty of the proposed heavy vehicle bypass actually being constructed and the impact this uncertainty is having on the local community and economy.

During both consultation phases, a heavy vehicle bypass route option to the east of town was identified as the preferred option by the greatest number of respondents with many respondents commenting that it was important for heavy vehicle traffic from the Bruxner Highway and Mt Lindesay Road to also be captured by the bypass.

An Inner West route option was the third most popular route choice, following the outer east route options, with a number of respondents identifying the railway corridor as the preferred alignment to minimise impact on residents. Other supporting comments in relation to this option included that it would be the most cost effective and time efficient given the shorter length of this option.

The community information sessions widened public awareness of the project and enabled people to raise key concerns and to suggest preferred route options for consideration by the project team. It has also provided an opportunity for the community to ask the project team questions.

Appendices

Appendix A Community update one

New England Highway, Tenterfield – Heavy Vehicle Bypass

Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) is working with the community to identify a preferred route for a heavy vehicle bypass of Tenterfield.

Background

The Australian Government has committed \$6 million for planning of a Tenterfield heavy vehicle bypass and safety works at Bolivia Hill as part of the Nation Building Program.

The New England Highway is a major link from the Hunter Region to the New England area and beyond. The highway passes through Tenterfield's central business district, causing traffic and safety issues. The purpose of this planning is to identify a future heavy vehicle bypass of Tenterfield to improve traffic flow, pedestrian and road safety. The planning will assess the feasibility of a heavy vehicle bypass and investigate and select a preferred route.

Although construction funding has not been allocated, it is important to plan now for a heavy vehicle bypass. This provides certainty for the future development of Tenterfield.

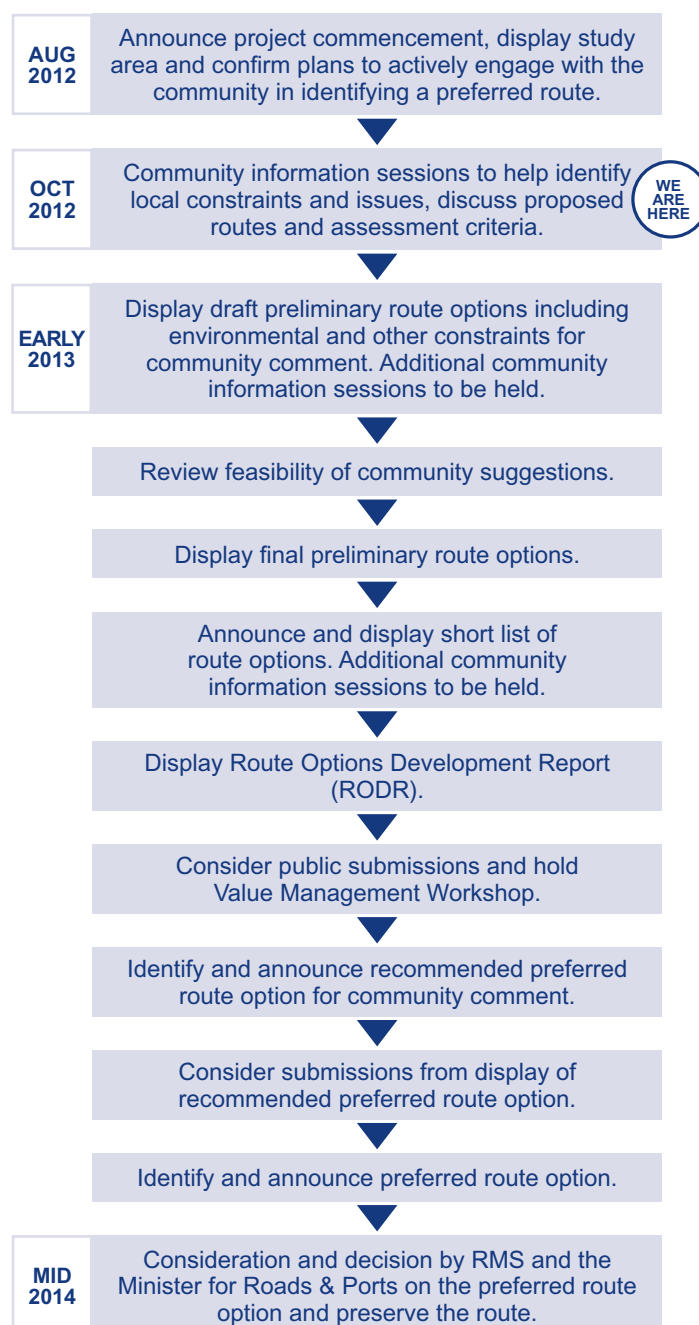
Current status

RMS has engaged GHD to assist in the investigation and recommendation of route options for a heavy vehicle bypass of Tenterfield. GHD will conduct community information sessions, displays and workshops to work with the community to help identify the best route for a heavy vehicle bypass and achieve the best outcome for the Tenterfield community.

Residents and businesses in the Tenterfield area are encouraged to become involved in these investigations. RMS is planning to display preliminary route options by early 2013. This will provide planning clarity for Tenterfield Shire Council and the community.

Extensive community involvement will continue throughout the route identification process. The process to identify a preferred option for a heavy vehicle bypass is shown in the project timeline opposite.

Project timeline



Study area

Investigations will focus within a proposed study area, indicated on the map opposite.

The aim of the investigations is to determine a preferred New England Highway heavy vehicle route to bypass Tenterfield. The preferred bypass route shall consider the following objectives.

- Improve road safety.
- Improve road transport productivity, efficiency and reliability of travel.
- Minimise the impact on the natural, cultural and built environment.
- Provide sustainable economic outcomes for the local community.
- Minimise social impact on the local community.
- Provide value for money.

Field investigations, to be undertaken in 2013, on shortlisted route options would include:

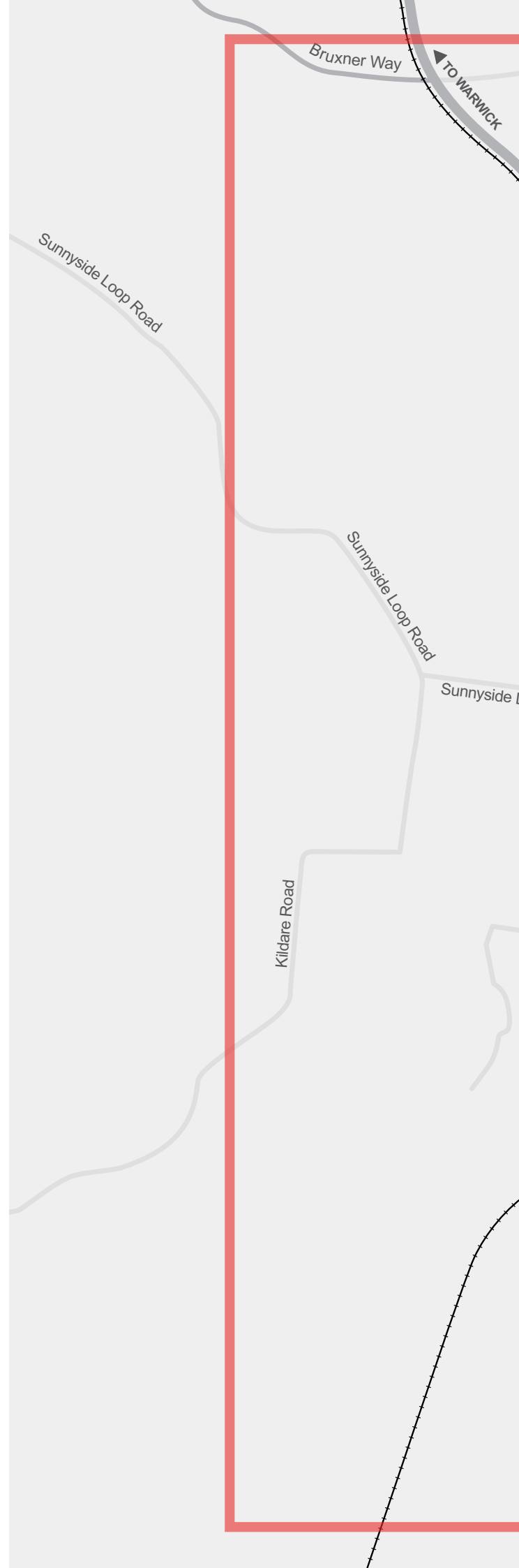
- Geotechnical investigations.
- Flora and fauna studies.
- Noise monitoring and assessments
- Examination of Aboriginal and/or non-Aboriginal heritage.

The project team will need to access private properties to undertake these investigations.

A letter of request for access will be sent to the owners of properties proposed for investigation activities closer to that time.



RMS is planning a heavy vehicle bypass



INITIAL STUDY AREA



TENTERFIELD

Tenterfield
Golf Club

Tenterfield
Park

TO GLEN INNES

Involving the community

RMS values your input to help identify local constraints and issues, discuss potential routes and assessment criteria. The project team will be available at community information sessions to discuss the investigations, answer your questions and receive your feedback.

You are invited to:

A drop-in community information session at

Sir Henry Parkes Memorial School of Arts
Rouse Street, Tenterfield

- **Thursday 18 October 2012**

From 4pm to 7pm

- **Friday 19 October 2012**

From 9am to 12noon

If you are planning to drop in at one of these information sessions, please contact the project team by calling 1800 810 680 prior to the day.

Project information will also be on display at the following locations:

- Tenterfield Shire Council
247 Rouse Street Tenterfield
- Tenterfield Hub Community Resource Centre
204 Rouse Street Tenterfield
- Tenterfield Post Office
225 Rouse Street Tenterfield
- Tenterfield RMS Motor Registry
Court House Building
94 Molesworth Street Tenterfield

Contact the project team

For more information or to comment, please contact the project team at;

Phone: 1800 810 680 (toll free)

Email: community.input@ghd.com

Web: www.rta.nsw.gov.au/roadprojects/projects/north_eastern_region/new_england_tenterfield

Write to: Tenterfield Bypass project team
Roads and Maritime Services,
PO Box 576, Grafton NSW 2460



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For further enquiries

Tenterfield Bypass project team, Roads and Maritime Services

PO Box 576, Grafton, NSW 2460

T 1800 810 680 | E community.input@ghd.com

www.rms.nsw.gov.au

September 2012
RMS 12.322

Appendix B Community update two

Continuing involvement of the community

RMS values your input to help identify local constraints and issues, discuss the draft preliminary route options as well as the assessment methodology and criteria. The project team will be available at two sessions to discuss the investigations, answer your questions and receive your feedback.

You are invited to:

- A community meeting held on **Thursday 14 March 2013** at 6pm
- The community meeting will feature a presentation from the project team outlining the preliminary route options development process and a question-and-answer session.
- A 'drop in' information session held on **Friday 15 March 2013** From 9am to 12noon

The 'drop in' session will not feature a presentation, however the project team will be available for you to meet, discuss the project's progress, ask questions and provide your feedback.

Both sessions will be held at **Sir Henry Parkes Memorial School of Arts**, Rouse Street, Tenterfield.

If you are planning to attend either of these sessions, please contact the project team by calling 1800 810 680 prior to the day for room set-up purposes.

Project information will also be on display at the following locations:

Tenterfield Shire Council
247 Rouse Street Tenterfield

Tenterfield Hub Community Resource Centre
204 Rouse Street Tenterfield

Tenterfield Post Office
225 Rouse Street Tenterfield

Tenterfield RMS Motor Registry
Court House Building,
94 Molesworth Street Tenterfield

Tenterfield Library
135 Manners Street Tenterfield

If you are unable to attend these sessions or view these displays, project information and survey forms are available from the website below.

For more information or to comment, please contact the Tenterfield heavy vehicle bypass project team at:

Phone: 1800 810 680 (toll free)
Email: community.input@ghd.com
Web: www.rta.nsw.gov.au/roadprojects/projects/north_eastern_region/new_england_tenterfield

Write to: Tenterfield heavy vehicle bypass project team
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For further enquiries
Tenterfield heavy vehicle bypass project team, Roads and Maritime Services
PO Box 576, Grafton, NSW 2460
T 1800 810 680 | E community.input@ghd.com
www.rms.nsw.gov.au

February 2013
RMS 13.176



New England Highway, Tenterfield – Heavy Vehicle Bypass

Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) is working with the community to identify a preferred route for a heavy vehicle bypass of Tenterfield.

Background

The Australian Government has committed \$6 million for planning of a Tenterfield heavy vehicle bypass and safety works at Bolivia Hill as part of the Nation Building Program.

The New England Highway is a major link from the Hunter Region to the New England area and beyond. The highway passes through Tenterfield's central business district, causing traffic and safety issues.

The purpose of the planning is to determine a preferred heavy vehicle route to bypass Tenterfield. The preferred bypass route will need to consider how to achieve the following objectives:

- Improve road safety.
- Improve road transport productivity, efficiency and reliability of travel.
- Minimise the impact on the natural, cultural and built environment.
- Provide sustainable economic outcomes for the local community.
- Minimise social impact on the local community.
- Provide value for money.

Although construction funding has not been allocated, it is important to plan now for a heavy vehicle bypass. This provides certainty for the future development of Tenterfield.

Current status

Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) engaged GHD to assist in the investigation and recommendation of route options for a future heavy vehicle bypass of Tenterfield.

RMS held two drop-in community information sessions in Tenterfield during October 2012. The sessions were attended by nearly 100 members of the community who provided feedback to the project team on a number of issues, including the need to improve pedestrian and traffic safety, travel efficiency and management of economic, community and environmental impacts.

RMS is now seeking community input on the draft preliminary route options as well as known constraints within the study area. This feedback will assist in selecting the preliminary route options to be considered for short listing and further investigation.

Desktop studies have also been completed, which assist in identifying the various constraints to potential route options for the heavy vehicle bypass. A range of constraints and route options identified through these processes are shown on the map on page 3.

Extensive community involvement will continue throughout the route identification and preliminary assessment stages. The process to identify a preferred route option for a heavy vehicle bypass is shown in the project timeline on page 2.

For more information, please call the project team on **1800 810 680** (toll free), email **community.input@ghd.com** or visit **http://www.rta.nsw.gov.au/roadprojects/projects/north_eastern_region/new_england_tenterfield.html**

Please return completed forms to the project team in person at the community meeting, or by mail by **2 April 2013** to:
GHD, Reply Paid 85012,
Sydney NSW 2000



RMS is also seeking your feedback on the draft assessment methodology and criteria. The assessment methodology and criteria will identify the proposed process and issues for RMS to consider in the evaluation of the route options to be short listed for further detailed investigations. They will also be used later in the project to assess each short listed route option in the process of identifying a preferred route.

Each of the draft preliminary route options will be assessed against these criteria. An assessment framework will be developed to determine an overall ranking against the criteria and the value for money of each preliminary route option.

Twelve draft preliminary route options have been identified for a future heavy vehicle bypass of Tenterfield and are shown on the map opposite. These route options have been developed by the project team and through suggestions from the community. The project team is now seeking your feedback.

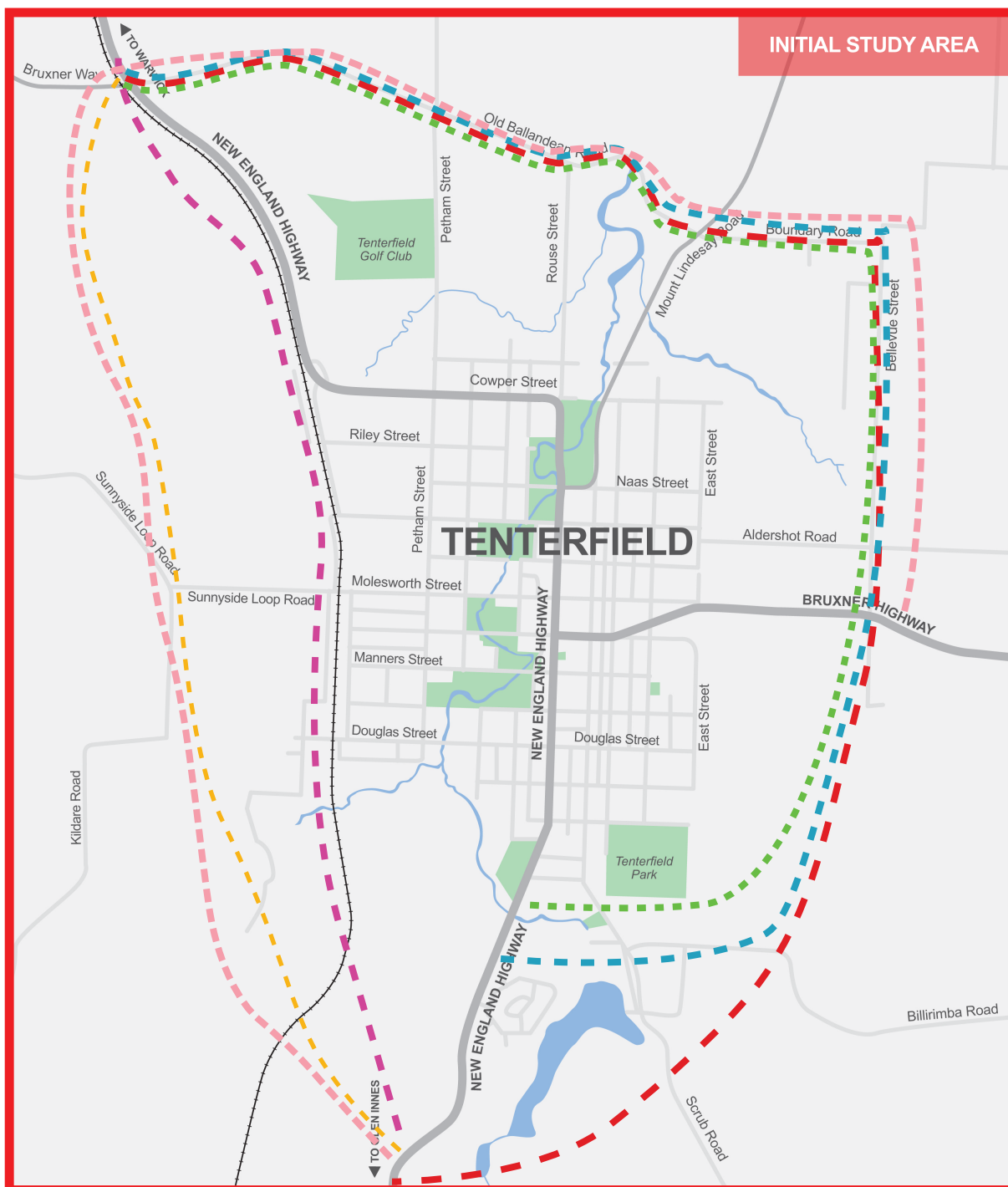


Roads and Maritime Services is developing a heavy vehicle bypass for Tenterfield. To ensure that we reflect the interests and needs of the Tenterfield community and other stakeholders, we are seeking your feedback on the draft assessment methodology and criteria.

Please indicate in the tick boxes below the level of importance of each of the selection criteria identified for the following project objectives.

Any further comments (if you require more space, please feel free to attach additional pages):

Appendix C Community suggested route options



LEGEND

OPTION 1 OPTION 2 OPTION 3 OPTION 4 OPTION 5 OPTION 6

— — — — — — — — — — — — — — — — — — — — — — — — — — — — — —

Appendix D Information session presentation



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Tenterfield Heavy Vehicle Bypass

Draft Preliminary Route Options

Community and Stakeholder Presentation

Gavin Rayward / Barry Hancock / Belinda Thompson / Trish Chadwick

14 March 2013



Tenterfield Heavy Vehicle Bypass



Transport
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RMS Introduction

Gavin Rayward



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Project Aim

The aim of the Project is to determine a preferred New England Highway corridor route for a Heavy Vehicle Bypass of the urban area of Tenterfield. The highway is a major interstate road freight route and is part of the National Land Transport Network.

Project objectives

The preferred heavy vehicle bypass route shall meet the following objectives.

- Improve road safety.
- Improve road transport productivity efficiency and reliability of travel.
- Minimise the impact on the natural, cultural and built environment.
- Provide sustainable economic outcomes for the local community.
- Minimise social impact on the local community.
- Provide value for money.

RMS has engaged GHD to complete a range of planning, engineering and community consultation services for the development and assessment of route options for a heavy vehicle bypass of Tenterfield.

Strategic Context

- Located at the intersection of Bruxner Highway and New England Highway
- Sits on a major freight route between Sydney and Brisbane
- New England Highway passes through main street (Rouse Street)
- Freight traffic through Tenterfield mixes with local traffic, affecting local amenity and freight traffic



Tenterfield Heavy Vehicle Bypass



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Assessment of existing traffic conditions

Barry Hancock



Previous Studies and Strategies

- Traffic and transport through Tenterfield has been examined in previous studies and strategies, including:
 - ❖ Heavy Vehicle Alternative Route to the New England Highway
 - ❖ Feasibility Assessment (PEECE, 2009)
 - ❖ Bruxner Highway, Ballina to Tenterfield Corridor Strategy (RTA, 2009)
 - ❖ Sydney Brisbane Corridor Strategy (Commonwealth of Australia, 2007)
- The movement of freight through regional and interstate destinations is a key theme arising in previous studies
- Work done in the past has identified a need to separate freight and local traffic to improve local amenity and improve freight efficiency

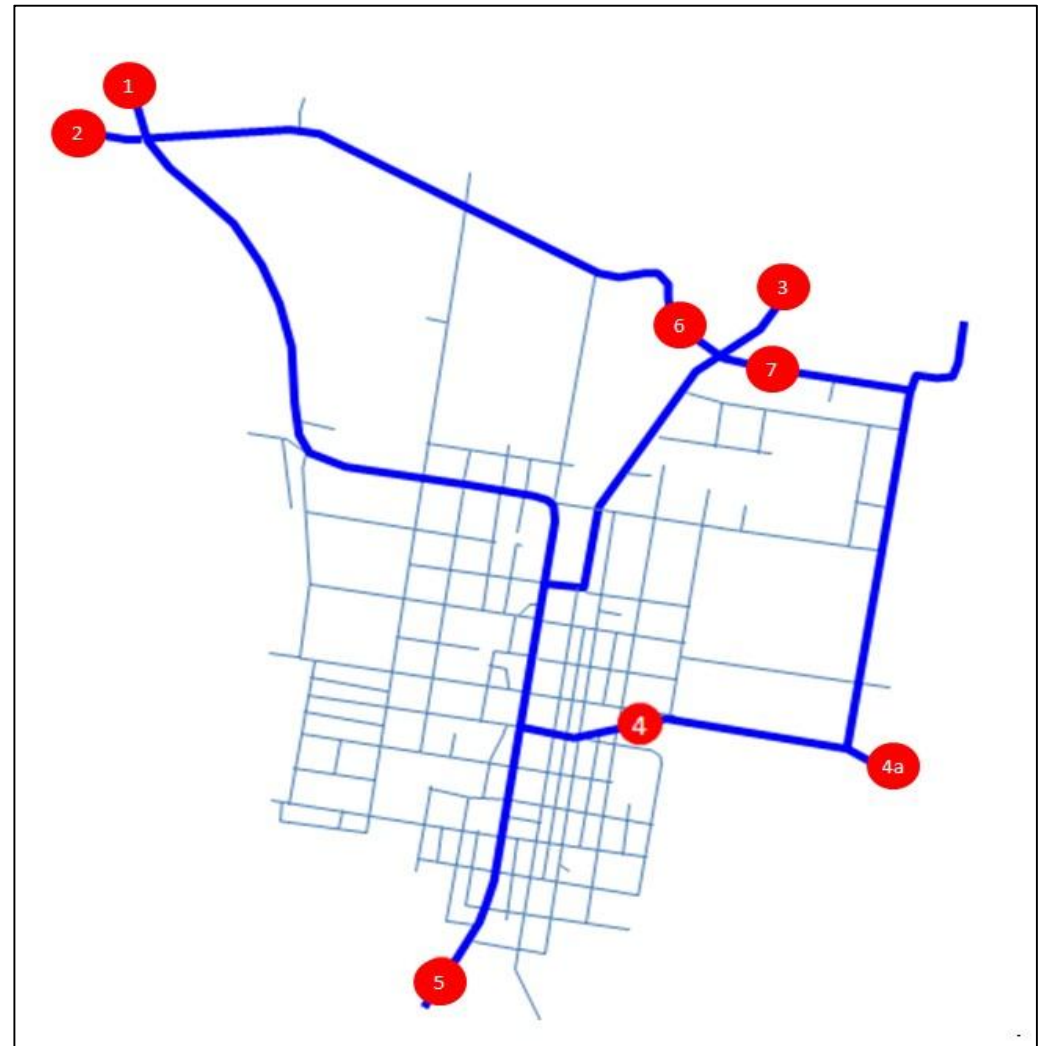


Data collection for bypass investigation



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- 7 day Automatic traffic counts – including vehicle classifications at 7 locations
- Intersection counts at 4 locations and 3 pedestrian crossing counts
- Origin – destination survey at 6 locations
- Travel time surveys

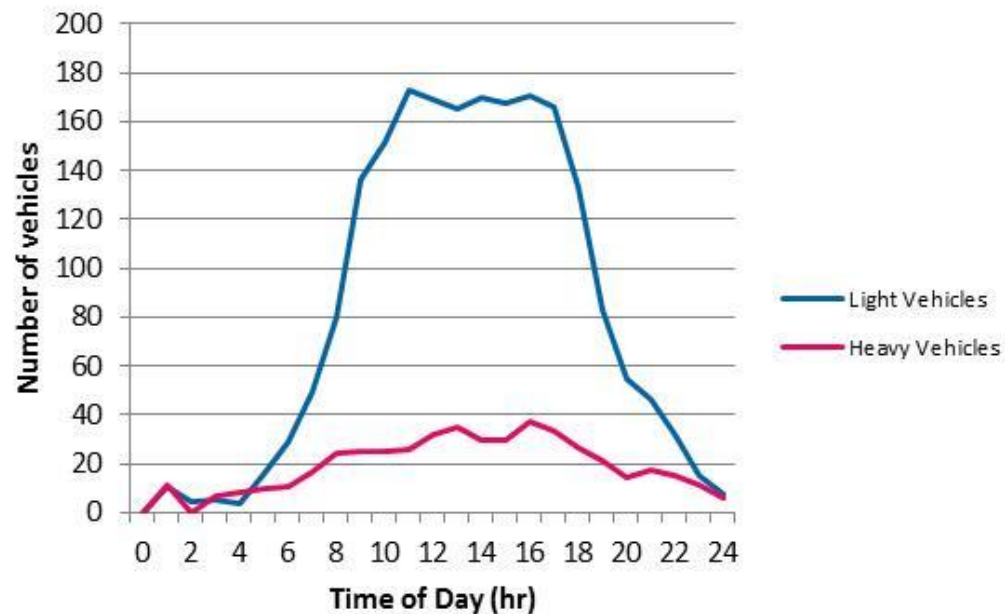


Existing Traffic Conditions – Daily Volumes



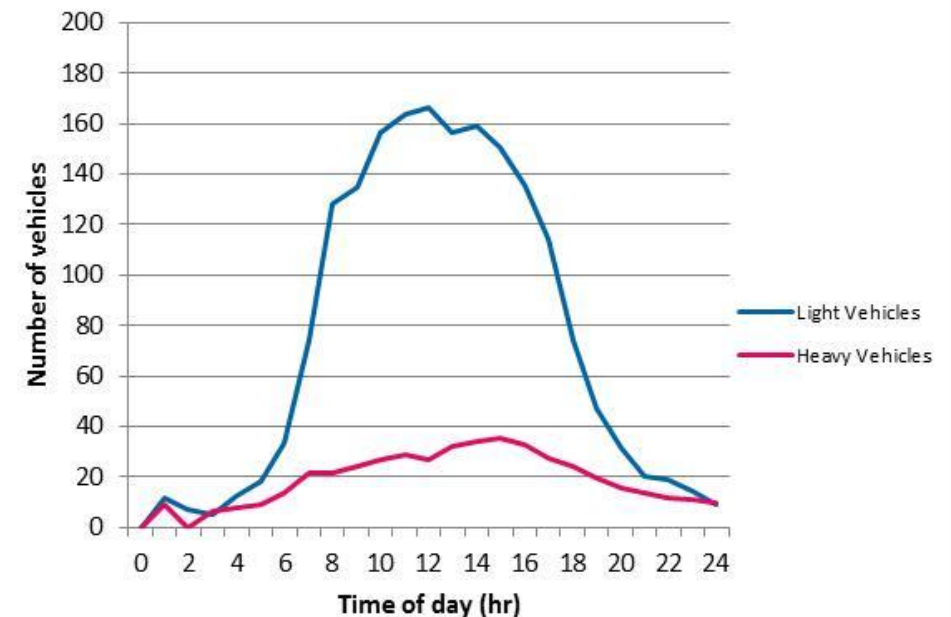
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NEH north of Bruxner Highway (Site 1)



Site 1 Survey Results	Average Daily Volumes	
	Light	Heavy
5 day week (M to F)	2083	556
7 day week (M to S)	2044	483

NEH south of Saddlers Road (Site 5)



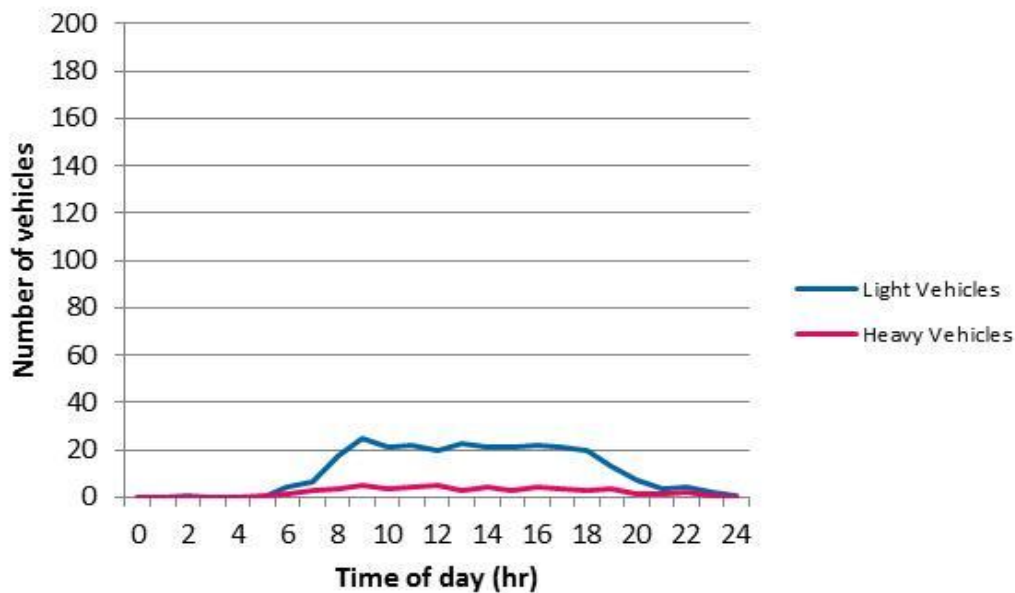
Site 5 Survey Results	Average Daily Volumes	
	Light	Heavy
5 day week (M to F)	1894	458
7 day week (M to S)	1845	472

Existing Traffic Conditions – Daily Volumes



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Bruxner Highway west of NEH (Site 2)



Site 2
Survey Results

Average Daily Volumes

Light

Heavy

5 day week (M to F)

284

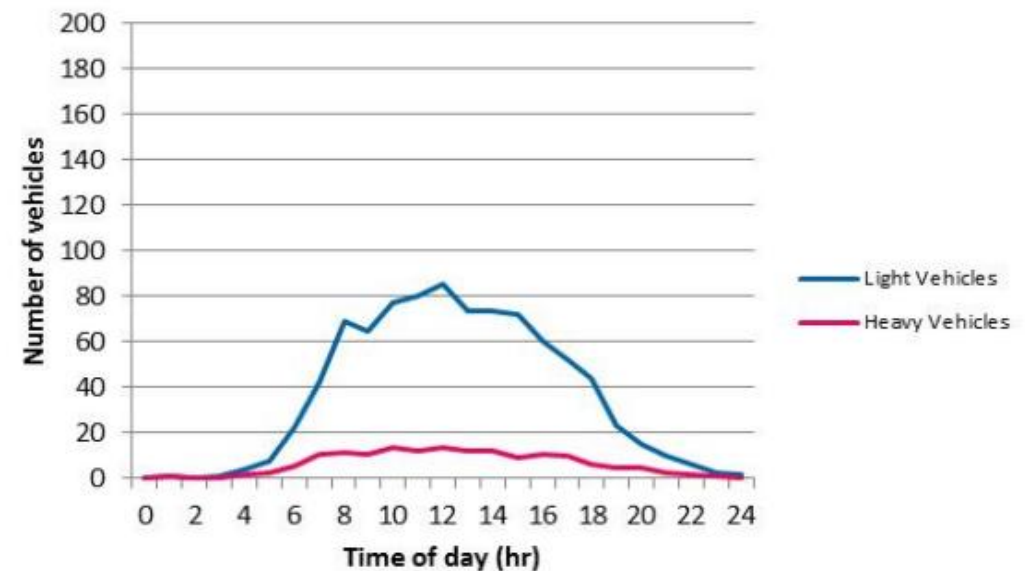
64

7 day week (M to S)

276

59

Bruxner Highway east of Bellevue Street (Site 4A)



Site 4A
Survey Results

Average Daily Volumes

Light

Heavy

5 day week (M to F)

931

157

7 day week (M to S)

893

159

Existing Traffic Conditions – Road Safety

- PEECE report identified a number of safety issues through Tenterfield:
 - ❖ Unshielded objects within the clear zone
 - ❖ Width restrictions for over dimension vehicles
 - ❖ Sight distance limitations at pedestrian crossings
 - ❖ Pedestrian refuges of insufficient width
- 18 crashes on the New England Highway between 2004 and 2009, including 1 fatality
- 80% of crashes in Tenterfield between 1990 and 2000 were on the New England Highway
- Speed limits (50 km/hr) and speed camera enforcement were implemented in 2005 along with traffic calming to improve road safety



Tenterfield Heavy Vehicle Bypass



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Community Consultation

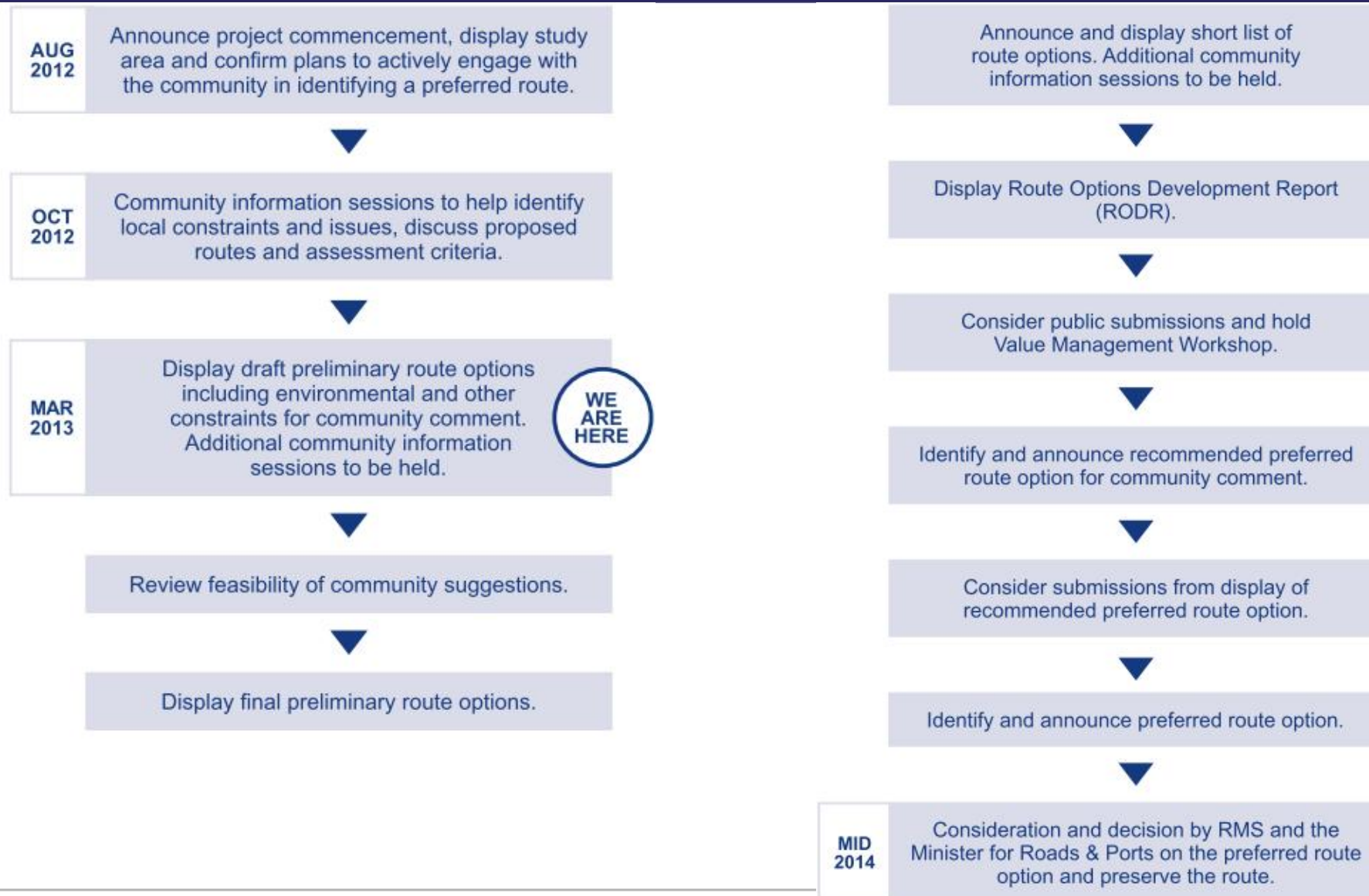
Belinda Thompson



Community consultation framework



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Community consultation objectives



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- Ensure clear and transparent communication and timely provision of accurate information
- Undertake proactive and on-going engagement with the community
- Ensure that community concerns are reflected in the assessment of route options
- Provide opportunities for the community to meet the project team, ask questions and identify issues
- Establish and monitor feedback mechanisms

Community consultation approach



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- Project announcement - October 2012
 - ❖ Community update
 - ❖ Public poster displays
 - ❖ Community information sessions
 - ❖ RMS website
 - ❖ Media release and advertisements
 - ❖ Invitation for comment and feedback
 - ❖ Contact details, including 1800 number, email address and reply paid postage address
- Draft preliminary route options – March 2013
 - ❖ Consultation approach as above
 - ❖ Community meeting and presentation
 - ❖ Feedback form inviting comment on project objectives and preliminary route options
- Future consultation
 - ❖ Same consultation approach at each stage of preferred route option development

Feed back received to date

Issues of most concern to the community

Issue	Count
Road safety	42
Pedestrian safety	42
Noise	38
Traffic congestion	31
Air pollution	28
Vibration	17
Visual amenity	16
Impact on business	11
Other (livestock waste/odour, road safety education)	10
Amenity	7
Loss of parking	3

Feed back received to date



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Most important issues for project team to consider

Issue	Count
Road safety	33
Economic benefit to the community	27
Impact on the community	25
Impact on property	24
Efficiency	20
Road transport productivity and efficiency	19
Travel times	14
Environmental impact	13
Cost of project	10
Other (Rouse Street viability and amenity post bypass, any option should take in Bruxner Highway traffic)	7
Impact on agricultural land	4

Route Options identification and assessment

Barry Hancock

Route Options identification and assessment



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- **Draft Preliminary Route Options**
 - ❖ Community suggestions
 - ❖ Constraints analysis
 - ❖ Design speed and road design standards
 - ❖ Indicative bypass diversion, calculate distance and travel time savings
- **Route options development**
 - ❖ Short listing of four Route Options
 - ❖ Refine alignments
 - ❖ Consideration of intersections / bridges / drainage / property access / potential environmental impact
 - ❖ Concept design cost estimates, traffic projections and preliminary economic analysis
- **Selection of preferred route option**
 - ❖ Comparison of all route options across multi criteria assessment
 - ❖ Value Management Workshop with key stakeholders
 - ❖ Recommendation of preferred option
- **Strategic concept design and engineering scope definition**
 - ❖ Confirm proposed corridor for preferred option, including land acquisition requirements

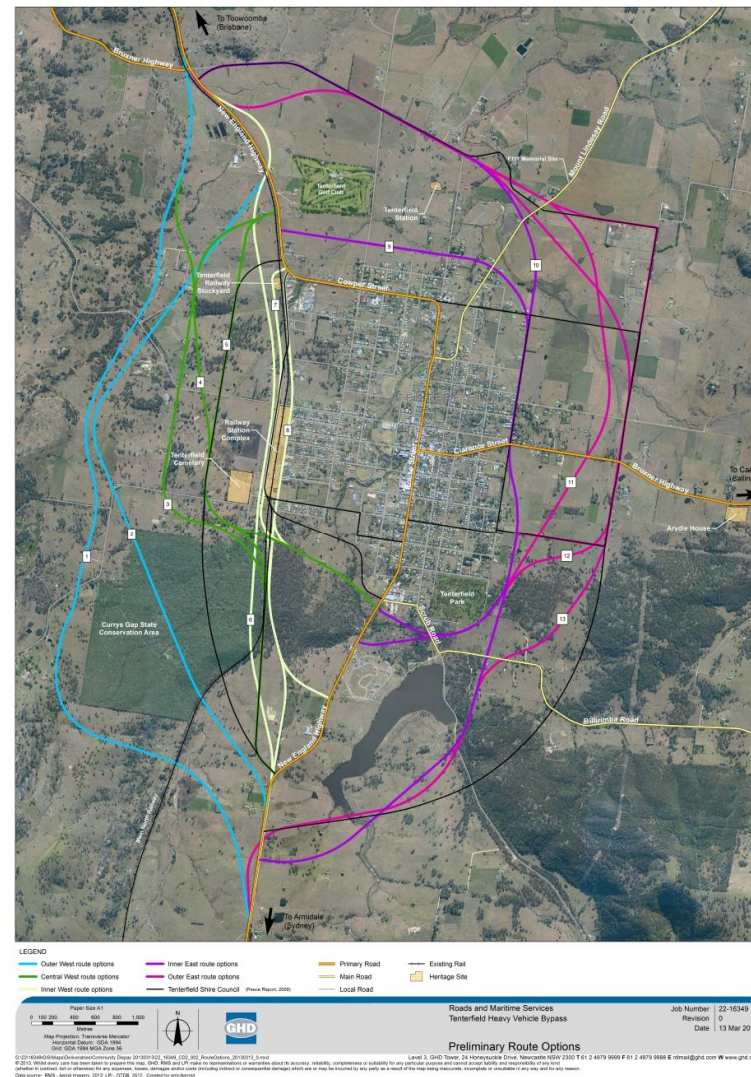
Draft Preliminary route options

- Community suggestions for route options
 - ❖ Western route suggestions
 - ❖ Eastern route suggestions
 - ❖ Combinations of options
- Constraints analysis and options identification
 - ❖ Environmental
 - ❖ Social
 - ❖ Engineering
- Draft preliminary route options
 - ❖ Nominated in categories (outer, central, inner) west or east of town area
 - ❖ Route options numbered west to east for identification purposes only
 - ❖ Additional suggestions or refinements welcome
- Distance and travel time savings
 - ❖ Route options range from 3.6 km to 13.3 km in length
 - ❖ Length of existing highway bypassed is comparable, ranging from 4.3 km to 10.1 km
 - ❖ Western route options generally shorter, eastern route options longer

Draft Preliminary route options



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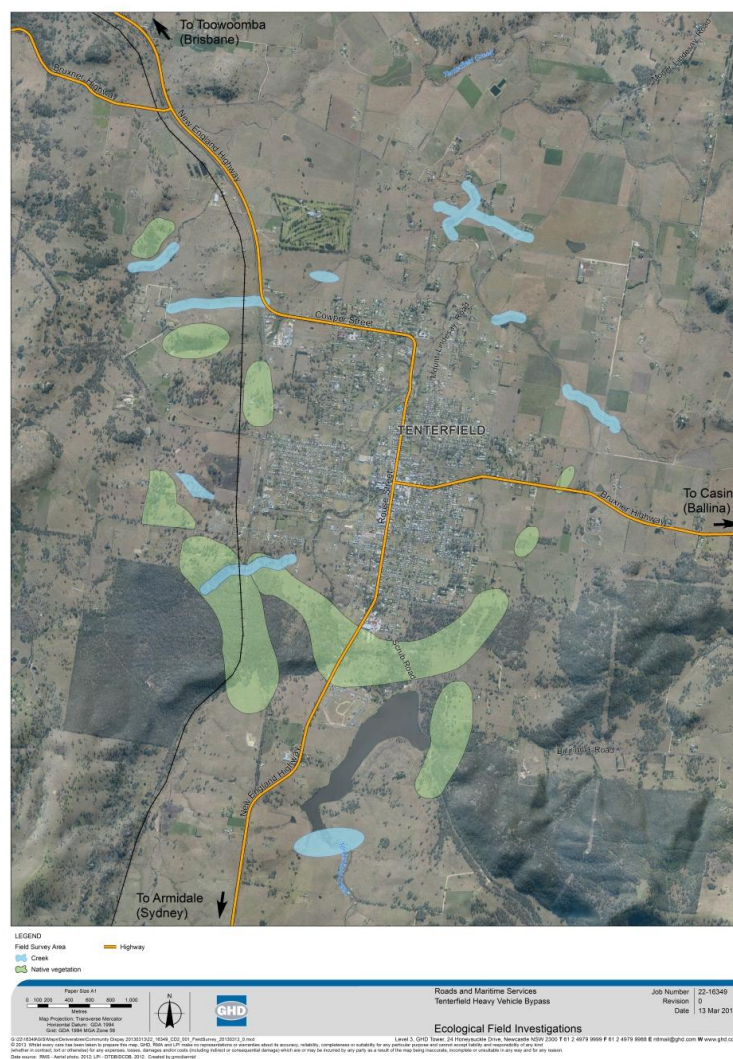


Ecology and Biodiversity investigations

Trish Chadwick



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Ecology and Biodiversity Investigations



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- Desk top study completed October 2012
 - ❖ Provided a predictive list of species likely to occur
 - ❖ Provided previously recorded species
- Focus of field investigations February 2013
 - ❖ Large areas of native vegetation
 - ❖ Potential creek crossings and watercourse areas
 - ❖ Check for potential threatened species in pastures and road corridors
- Fauna investigations
 - ❖ Dawn, daytime and night surveys
 - ❖ Anabat recorders
 - ❖ Stream surveys for frogs
- Potential Flora species
 - ❖ No threatened flora species
 - ❖ Two endangered ecological communities



Ecology and Biodiversity Investigations



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- Endangered Ecological Communities (EEC)
 - ❖ White Box Yellow Box Blakely's Red Gum Woodland (Box Woodland)
 - ❖ New England Peppermint Woodland
- Threatened Fauna
 - ❖ Little Eagle (*Hieraaetus morphnoides*)
 - ❖ Hooded Robin (*Melanodryas cucullata*)
- Key Fauna Locations
 - ❖ Curry's Gap State Conservation Area
 - ❖ Tenterfield Park
 - ❖ Tenterfield Reservoir and adjacent bushland to the east of Scrub Road



Appendix E Community questions and comments

Questions raised during the community information session

Thursday 14 March, 2013

Q. How will the heavy vehicle bypass be signed? This will be critical so that light vehicles are still encouraged to drive through the town.

A. Design of signposting and strategies for light vehicle traffic will be key considerations in any future detailed planning for a heavy vehicle bypass.

Q. If a western route is selected how will it address the heavy vehicle traffic from the Bruxner Highway and access to the saleyards on the eastern side of town?

A. The heavy vehicle bypass investigations will take into account all traffic flows in and around Tenterfield.

Q. Are the project team considering two bypasses? One for the western route and one for the eastern route?

A. While there is a single project under consideration all options will be considered, including route options on both the eastern and western sides of Tenterfield.

Q. Can a combination of the routes be identified?

A. A number of different route combinations have already been identified and these will be assessed in the next stage of investigations.

Q. When you were last in Tenterfield you commented that the eastern route may not be viable? Were you surprised by the vehicle count undertaken on the Bruxner Highway?

A. The viability of all route options on both sides of Tenterfield are being assessed. The preliminary traffic analysis indicated that traffic volumes on the Bruxner Highway are lower than those on the New England Highway.

Q. Have you considered the upgrade of the bridge at Tabulam along the Bruxner Highway? Will the Bruxner Highway become a B-Double route?

A. The upgrade of Tabulam Bridge is in the early stages of planning only at this stage. The potential future use of the Bruxner Highway as a B-double route would be considered very carefully by RMS taking into account the overall standard and condition of that route.

Q. The traffic data collected to date examines the current traffic conditions but has analysis of future traffic conditions been assessed?

A. Future traffic growth, including sensitivity testing around growth rate assumptions, will be factored in to the assessment of the shortlisted route options.

Q. Have the project team taken into consideration the future expansion north of the town? There are a number of amenities to the north of the town and the sewerage system for the town is still gravity fed which needs to be considered.

A. These issues will be closely investigated in partnership with Tenterfield Shire Council (TSC).

Q. Have you considered that some of the eastern routes are close to the catchment dam and this could pose a risk to town drinking water?

A. The project team is very aware of the proximity of some route options to the town water supply. The management of this will be factored into the assessment of the route options.

Q. Will intersections on the proposed bypass be designed as proper highway interchanges?

A. The configuration of interchanges for the project will be considered following the development of the shortlist of route options.

Q. Does Council have the power to stop the bypass or its route selection?

A. TSC is supportive of a heavy vehicle bypass and is being consulted as the project progresses.

Q. When the routes are shortlisted down to four, how will you reimburse landowners?

A. RMS does not seek to purchase land until a project is approved and construction funding is available. A property acquisition information guide is available on the RMS website at www.rta.nsw.gov.au/roadprojects/resources/documents

Q. When will a decision be made about the project going ahead? The uncertainty of the project is affecting property prices and the ability of landowners to sell or buy land.
A. There will be no decision on whether the project proceeds until the route options have been assessed and a preferred option is announced.
Q. How wide will the corridor for the bypass need to be?
A. Strategic concept designs will be prepared for each of the shortlisted route options, which would include an indicative corridor width. This width will vary depending on the terrain and other factors.
Q. Will RMS refund Council for the \$50,000 spent on the PEECE report?
A. While these investigations have used the PEECE Report as background, and are expanding on this work, RMS does not plan to reimburse TSC for the investigating bypass options.
Q. If the bypass becomes the New England Highway, will RMS upgrade Rouse Street?
A. RMS would discuss the current and future requirements of this existing highway with TSC as part of a negotiated handover process following the identification of a preferred route.
Other comments
A rifle range is located at the intersection of routes 12 and 13. It has been there for over 100 years and is used by two rifle clubs.
The Rifle Range will be included in constraints mapping.
Consider potential growth areas to the east and north of the town that could potentially be impacted by the eastern routes.
These growth areas will be included in constraints mapping.
Increase in heavy vehicles due to closure of the Pacific Highway during floods, seasonal traffic with cattle sales and grain harvest. There are lots of trucks travelling from the south onto the Bruxner Highway to the meatworks in Casino. A lot of trucks also currently use Bellevue and Old Ballandean Roads.
Periods of increased heavy vehicle traffic from cattle sales and seasonal grain movements are to be investigated.
Money has recently been allocated by Council to beautify Rouse Street. Would like to see better coordination between RMS and Council as a bypass may change what can be done on Rouse Street.
RMS will discuss this issue with TSC.
There is a dangerous intersection from Bruxner Highway (west) onto the New England Highway.
This will be taken into account and improved by any route options in this area.
Using the rail corridor is the obvious western route to follow and will be the quickest. An additional option to turn into town along this bypass route alignment should be included.
Suggestion noted.
The dam wall of the town's water supply is a failed structure. It is possible that the route alignment could be fixed at the same time as the bypass by using the road as a structure support for the dam wall. Council also owns land along the eastern route which could be used.
Suggestion noted.
Shops in the main street are closed and there is difficulty for residents to buy and sell land due to the uncertainty of the bypass and its potential location. Tenterfield's economy will be significantly impacted by a bypass.
Noted. This investigation is progressing, and aims to remove uncertainty as soon as possible.
An Aboriginal family was living in Curry's Gap until the 1970s and Aboriginal remains are located across the road from the cemetery on Western Street.
To be investigated.
Need to assess traffic to and from Mt Lindesay Road.
Noted.

Consideration needs to be given to the bypass being closely located to the cemetery (amenity concerns) and assess how people would access the cemetery across the bypass if required.

Noted.

GHD

Level 3 GHD Tower 24 Honeysuckle Drive Newcastle NSW 2300
PO Box 5403 Hunter Region Mail Centre NSW 2310
T: (02) 4979 9999 F: (02) 4979 9988 E: ntlmail@ghd.com.au

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Document Status

Rev No.	Author	Reviewer		Approved for Issue		
		Name	Signature	Name	Signature	Date
0	S Olivier	L. Clayton	<i>L. Clayton</i>	G. Wood	<i>G. Wood</i>	09/07/2013
1	S Olivier	P Burke and G Rayward		G. Wood	<i>G. Wood</i>	6/08/2013

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