

Temporary traffic changes on Waterfall Way from July to December 2023

Project update

July 2023

nswroads.work/waterfallway



Armidale

The Australian and NSW governments are funding work to improve safety and resilience on Waterfall Way.

Waterfall Way is located in Northern NSW and extends 170 kilometres from the Pacific Highway at Raleigh to the New England Highway at Armidale. Since August 2022, we have completed maintenance, safety and disaster recovery work including:

- bridge maintenance at Allans Water and Coutts Water
- installation of new slow vehicle turn out lanes and pavement improvement work
- detailed design for permanent disaster recovery work at slopes between Thora and Sherrard Falls.

Join the Facebook Waterfall Way Community Group to get the latest news and information on Waterfall Way road projects at www.facebook.com/groups/waterfallwaycommunity/.





Join the Community Group



What work are we doing?

Work along Waterfall Way generally falls into four categories:

-  safety
-  disaster recovery
-  journey resilience
-  maintenance

We are currently focused on delivering safety and disaster recovery work, which involves:

- widening the road
- installing or upgrading guardrails
- road safety improvements
- bridge maintenance work
- implementing permanent engineering solutions at landslide sites such as Myers Bluff and Thora.

Completed

- Allans Water Bridge maintenance work
- Coutts Water Bridge maintenance work
- Safety improvement work at Bakers Creek
- Safety repair work between Mahers Road and Boggy Creek Road
- Slow vehicle turn out lanes and culvert replacement between Thora and Dorrigo
- Various reseals
- Dorrigo asphalt repair work

Current

- Road improvements and widening between Pump Station and Fernridge Lane
- Slope repair work between Thora and Sherrard Falls
- Road widening work between rabbit eradication fence and Ebor tip
- Culvert repairs between Newell and Sherrard falls
- Pavement work between Appledale to Scotsburn*
- Variable Messaging Sign (VMS) at six locations
- Guardrail upgrades at multiple locations

Future

- Culvert and guardrail repairs west of Dorrigo
- Permanent repair work to Myers Bluff and Thora landslides
- Safety improvements between Wills Creek and Bundarryuron*

*Project name not geographical location



What is a slow vehicle turn out lane and how should you use them?

Slow vehicle turn out lanes are provided on low speed, winding or hilly roads which have limited passing opportunities, to allow for traffic to pass slower moving vehicles.

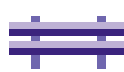
Using a slow vehicle turn out lane is simple:

- if you notice cars behind you travelling faster or starting to back up, keep an eye out for the next turn out area
- as you approach, signal left and pull into the turn out lane
- allow other cars to pass
- signal and pull back onto the road when safe to do so

Parking is not permitted in these lanes.



Slow vehicle turn out lane between Thora and Dorrigo



Why are guardrail upgrades important?

A guardrail is first and foremost a safety barrier intended to shield a motorist who has left the roadway. Guardrail upgrades can make roads safer and lessen the severity of crashes.

What is a landslide?

A landslide, which may also be known as a landslip, refers to the movement of a mass of rock, debris or earth down a slope. Landslides are generally caused by changes or disturbances to the natural stability of a slope formation often resulting from heavy rains, droughts or earthquakes.



Why is Waterfall Way at risk of landslides?

The ground surrounding Waterfall Way has a mix of natural geographical formations that make it unstable. These include layers of sedimentary rock that lie at various angles, intrusions of volcanic rock that penetrate through the sedimentary layers and loose soil from prehistoric landslides. Soil density and permeability also varies across the site, allowing water to penetrate deep into the ground which, in turn, allows the soil to move, increasing the risk of landslides.



Restoring landslide sites

Given the nature of the landslides and the complexity of the sites it is difficult to predict how long each will take to restore. However, we want to provide you with an insight into the work we are doing when we're not onsite.

Geotechnical investigations (completed)

Fixing landslides is a complex engineering task. A slip must be properly stabilised to minimise the risk of similar failures occurring in the future. Specialist geotechnical engineers investigate the best option suited to the site conditions. Generally, this occurs in two stages:

- Stage 1 – a preliminary assessment to inform recommendations about the short term site safety
- Stage 2 – holes are bored and samples are taken to investigate the soil in and around the slip. This helps inform the options to fix the slip

Design (we are here)

We are in the final stages of completing the detailed design for the two main upslope embankment slips. Myers Bluff is 100 per cent complete and Thora is 90 per cent complete. Each slip site location is influenced by a different set of circumstances contributing to the slip.

As a result, there is a range of construction techniques that need to be assessed when designing the permanent repair for the damaged sites. We will engage specialist contractors to carry out the work.

Environmental assessment

We have completed the required environmental assessment for this work. This assessment includes a biodiversity impact study in line with the requirements under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act.

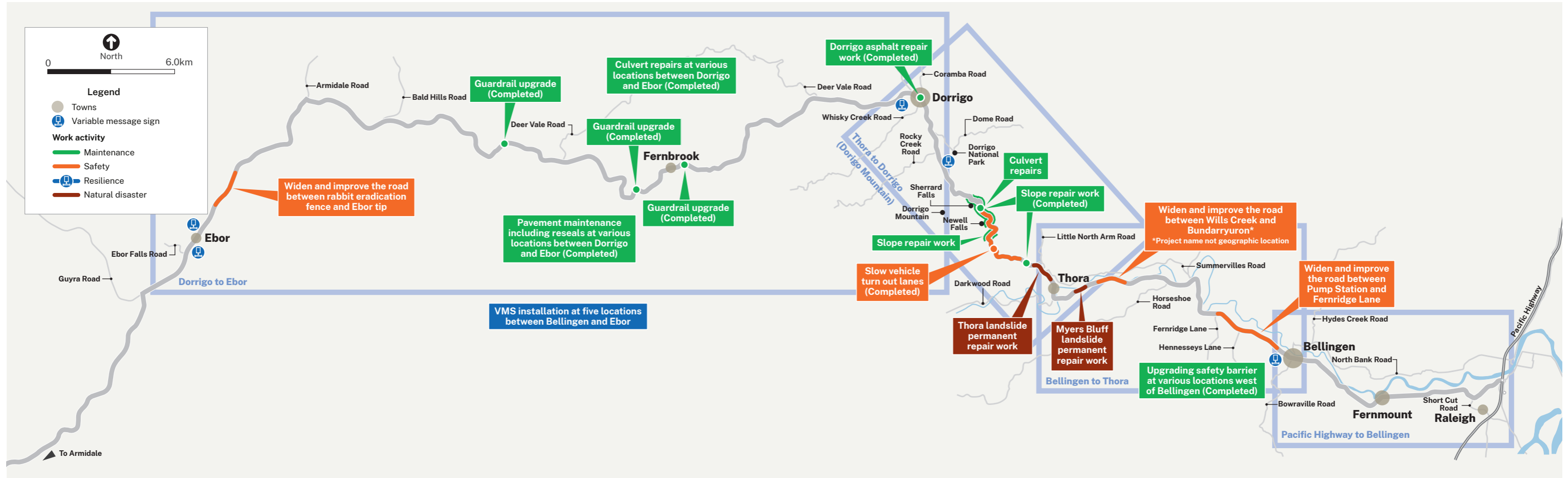
We are committed to ensuring there is minimal environmental and community impact during construction and that the permanent repairs operate within our environmental approvals.

Construction

Generally this process includes site establishment, clearing and excavation of minor vegetation, excavation of slip areas, foundation work including soil/rock nail drilling and construction followed by embankment structural treatment such as turf reinforced matting or shotcrete.

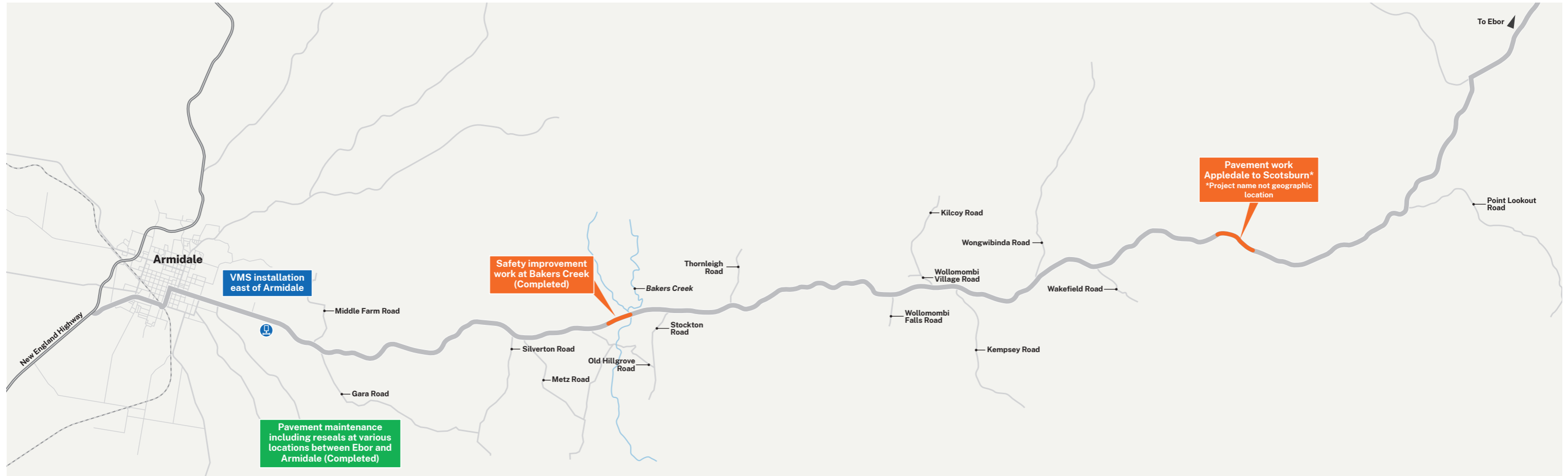
Drainage improvements may also be made at the top and bottom of the slip faces which may include some minor road work.

Location of work sites



See below for continuation of map

Map continues from above





Pacific Highway to Bellingen

From Raleigh, about 25 kilometres south of Coffs Harbour, motorists begin their 13 kilometre journey west along Waterfall Way towards Bellingen.

This picturesque drive follows the Bellingier River. It has rich alluvial farmlands and is the perfect introduction to what lies ahead.

Fun fact

Bellingen is about halfway between the cities of Sydney and Brisbane on Waterfall Way and is home to numerous creative festivals including the Camp Creative, Bellingen Music Festival and the Readers and Writers Festival.

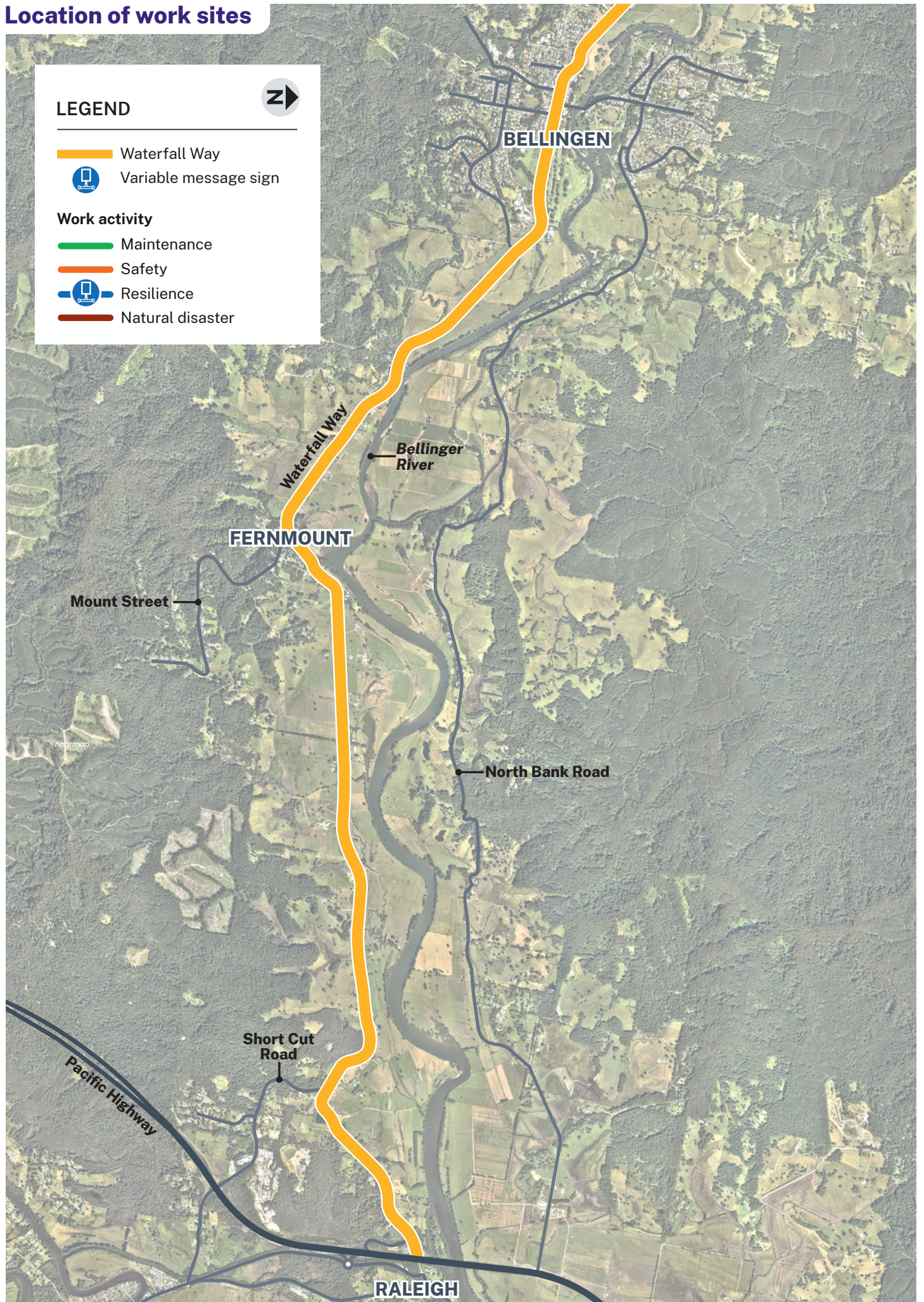


Newly installed guardrail, east of Bellingen



Aerial view of Waterfall Way and Bellingen

Location of work sites



Bellingen to Thora

The journey from the tranquil surrounds and heritage feel of Bellingen to the small locality of Thora is about 14 kilometres.

The landscape that creates the unique beauty in this area also makes it susceptible to the impact of heavy rainfall which can result in landslides.

Fun fact

The Bellinger River meanders for about 20 kilometres alongside Waterfall Way between Thora and Bellingen.

Program activities

Pump Station and Fernridge Lane: road widening and pavement work, including installing safety barriers.

Wills Creek to Bundarryuron*: safety improvement work.

Myers Bluff: start of work on permanent design.

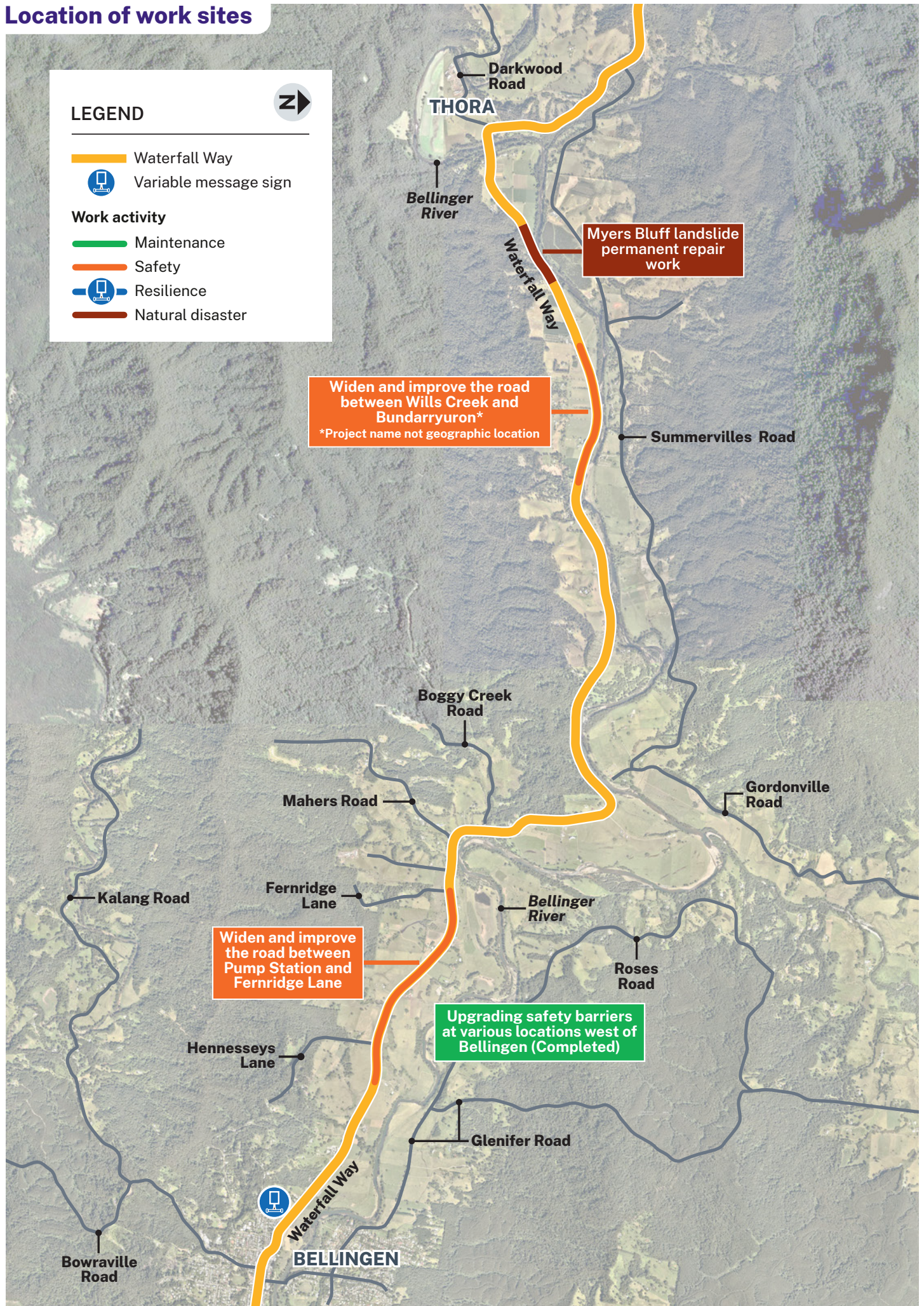
Variable message sign: installed west of Bellingen, to better inform our customers of changing road conditions.

*Project name not geographical location



Site compound east of Thora

Location of work sites





Thora to Dorrigo (Dorrigo Mountain)

This section of Waterfall Way is about 15 kilometres. It includes steep grades, sections with single travel lanes and additional challenges such as slope stability and lack of overtaking facilities. Four new slow vehicle turn out lanes have been installed to improve safety and journey management.

Fun fact

The average gradient between Thora to Dorrigo is just over five per cent with the maximum gradient being around 11.3 per cent.

Program activities

Thora land slip (west): start of work on permanent design.

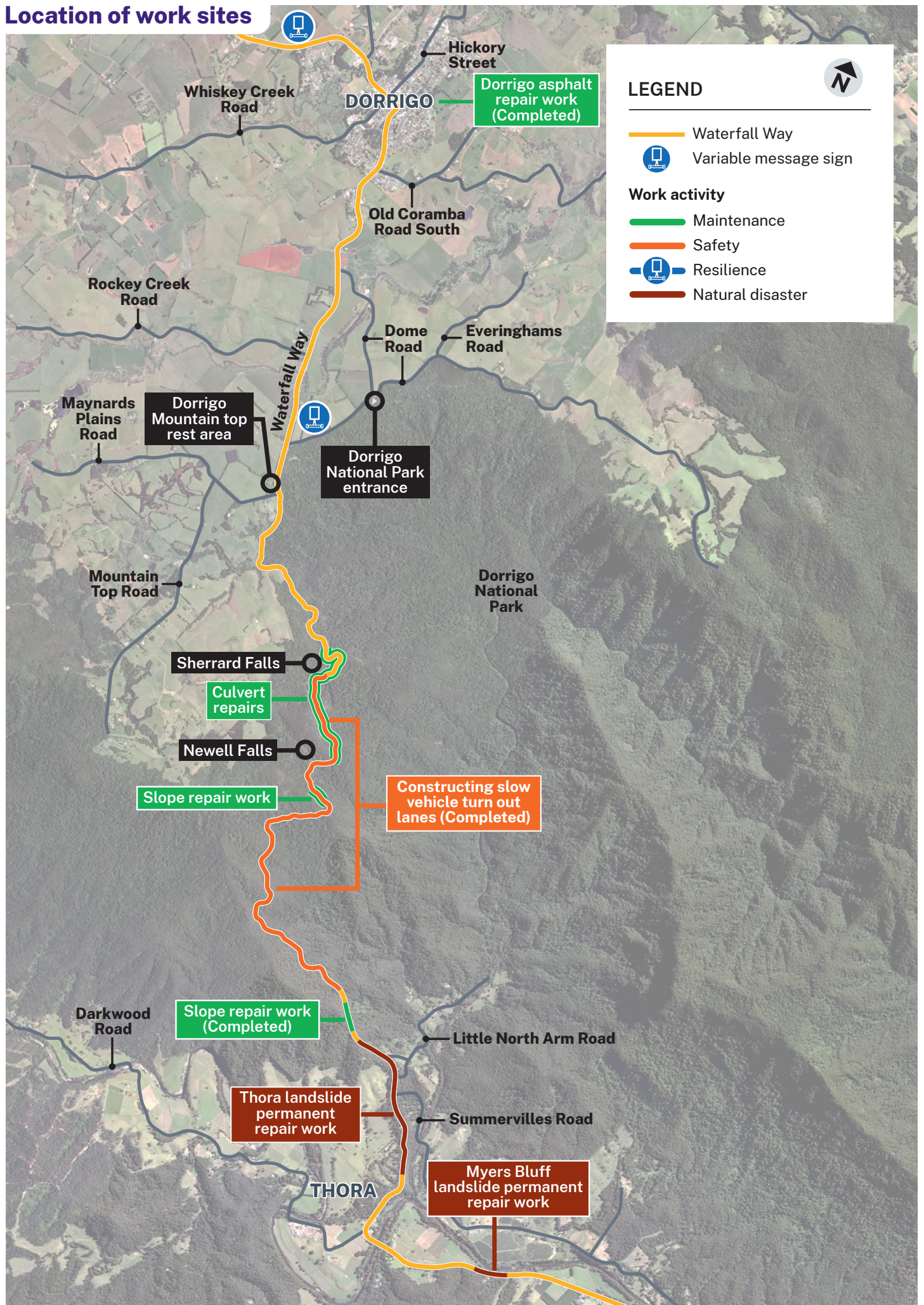
Culvert and slope repair work: being completed at several locations

Variable message sign: installed east of Dorrigo, to better inform our customers of changing road conditions.



Waterfall Way, Dorrigo

Location of work sites



Dorrigo to Ebor

Located on the Dorrigo Plateau above the Bellinger Valley, the quiet rural town of Dorrigo is surrounded by rich farmland, breathtaking waterfalls and bushwalks.

The winding road to Ebor, about 50 kilometres west of Dorrigo, takes you through the centre of Waterfall Way, providing access to amazing waterfalls and wildlife.

Fun fact

Due to its central position on Waterfall Way, Ebor offers easy access to several national parks including Guy Fawkes River, Cathedral Rock, Cunnawarra and New England to name a few.

Program activities

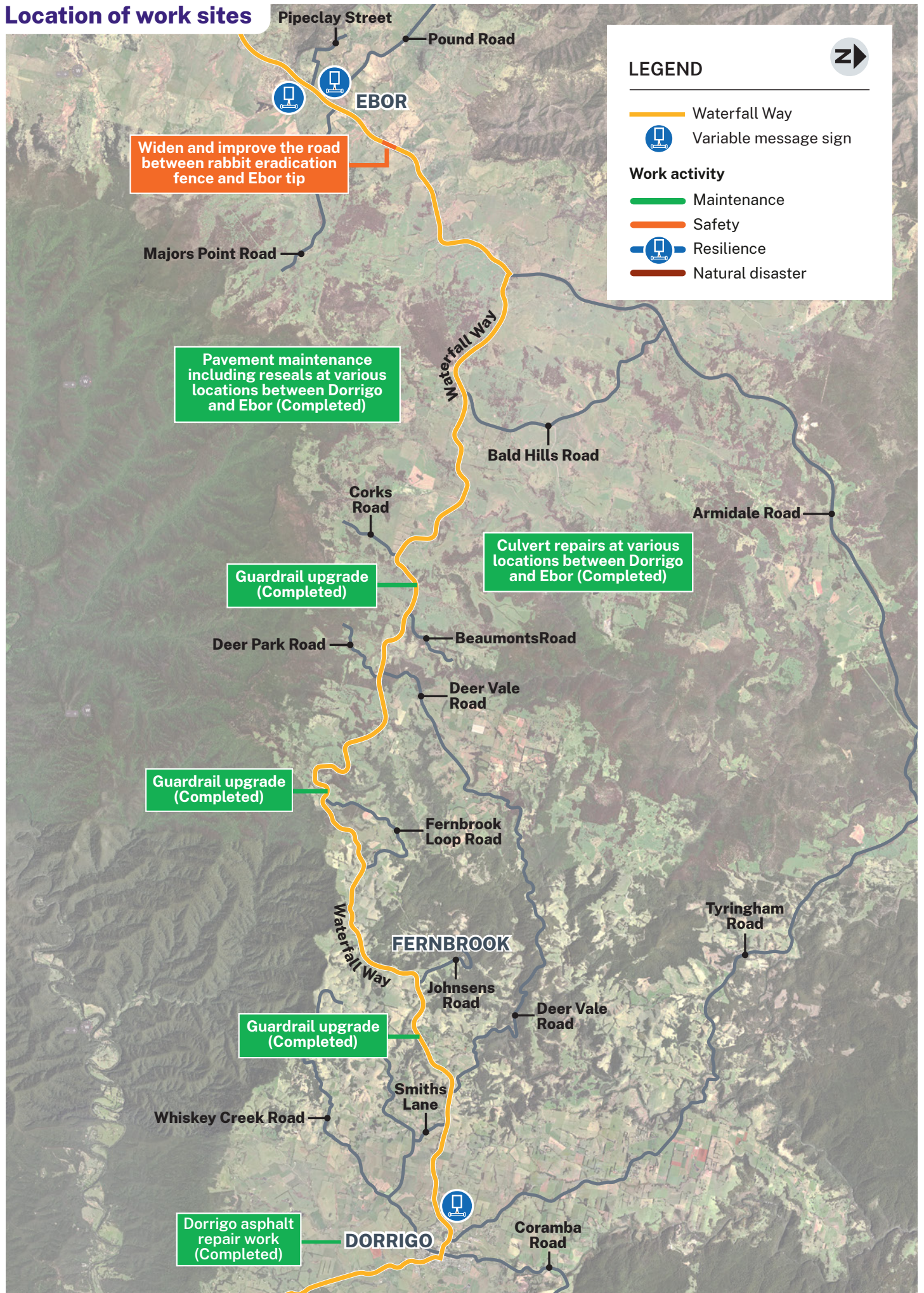
Rabbit eradication fence to Ebor tip: ongoing road widening and pavement work.

Variable message signs: installed west of Dorrigo and east of Ebor, to better inform our customers of changing road conditions.



Construction work between rabbit eradication fence to Ebor tip, east of Ebor

Location of work sites



Ebor to Armidale

This part of the Waterfall Way journey is about 80 kilometres. Travelling through this section of the Northern Tablelands you can experience the World Heritage listed New England National Park with its panoramic views back to the Bellinger Valley.

Fun fact

The city is home to a large number of education facilities, including the University of New England (UNE). The university is built around the historic mansion Booloominbah, which is now used for administration and houses a restaurant.

Program activities

Appledale to Scotsburn*: ongoing construction work.

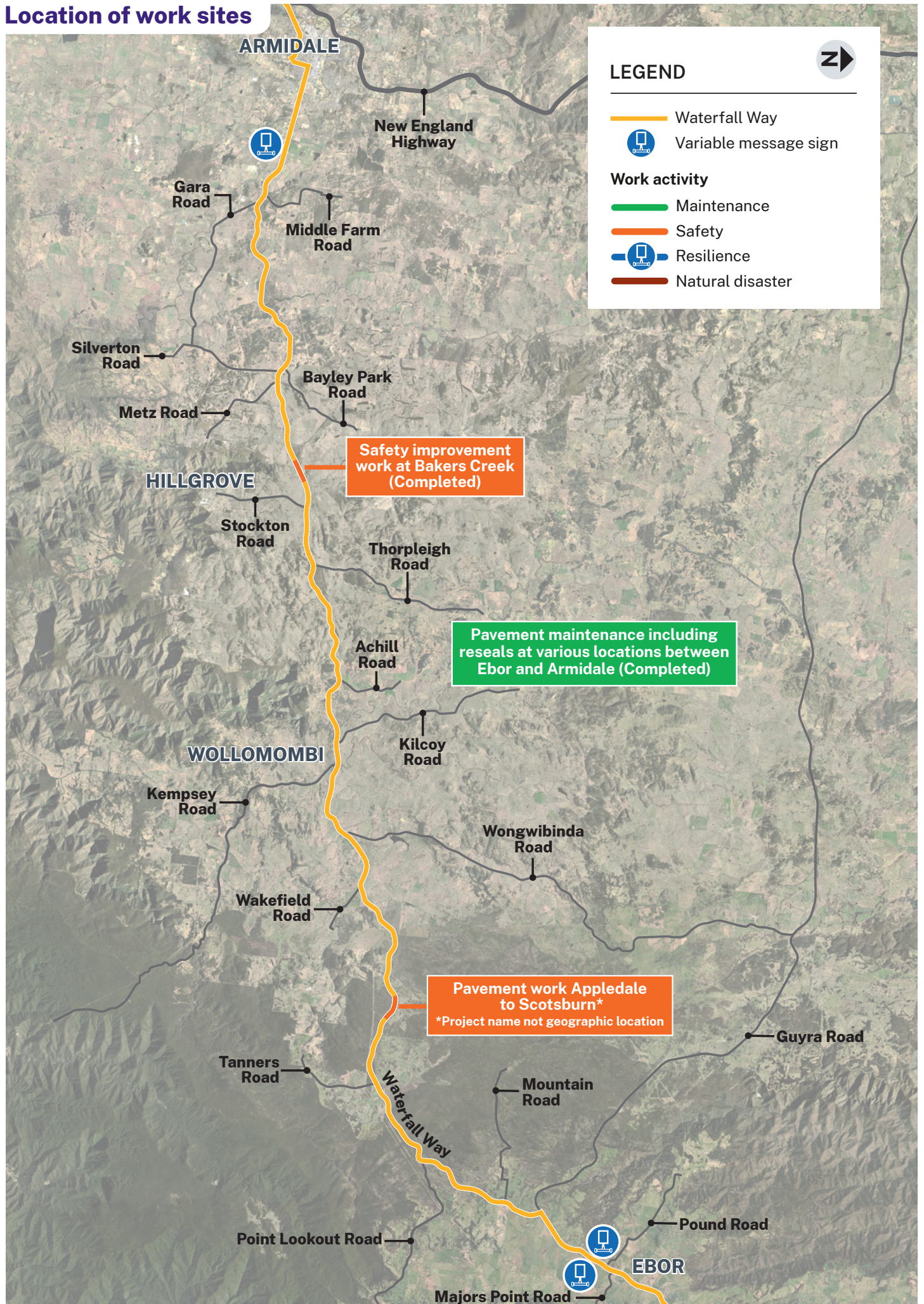
Variable message signs: installed west of Ebor and east of Armidale to better inform our customers of changing road conditions.

* Project name not geographic location



Ongoing construction work, Appledale to Scotsburn*, east of Armidale

Location of work sites



Work hours

Work hours will be between 7am and 5pm, Monday to Friday and Saturdays between 7am and 1pm. We will notify residents adjacent to work if there is a need to work outside these hours.

The project team will plan activities to minimise the impact of this work where possible and monitor any potential impacts so we can adjust our work as required.

Plan your journey

To manage safety there will be temporary traffic changes including reduced speed limits and lane closures, which may affect travel times.

You will need to plan for up to ten minute delays at each location as they will be controlled with traffic signals. Whenever possible, priority will be given to emergency vehicles and school buses.

Please keep to speed limits and follow the direction of traffic controllers and signs. For the latest traffic updates, you can call 132 701, visit livetraffic.com or download the Live Traffic NSW App.

SMS alert subscription


Transport encourages you to register for SMS alerts to receive notification on emergency or planned road closures on Waterfall Way. To register, please go to the website: nswroads.work/waterfallway.



Aerial view of Dorrigo

Contact

If you would like to provide feedback, or have any questions and require more information about work activities, please contact our project team on:

 1800 653 092 (toll free)

 region.north@transport.nsw.gov.au

 nswroads.work/waterfallway

We apologise for any inconvenience and thank you for your patience during this important work.



Scan the QR code to visit the project webpage.



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