

NOV  
2001

# BRUNSWICK HEADS TO YELGUN UPGRADE

Community Newsletter No 8

## About the open design forums

Two open design forums will be held on Saturday, 8 December and Saturday, 15 December 2001 between 10am and 4pm (venues to be advertised). Members of the project team will be available to explain the design review in more detail, discuss your comments and receive community feedback.

The open design forum will include artists' impressions of the design options. (Note: A model will be produced towards the end of the detailed design phase).

## About the project website

A website has been set up to keep the community up to date. The address is:

[www.rta.nsw.gov.au/pacific.htm](http://www.rta.nsw.gov.au/pacific.htm)

then click on the Brunswick Heads to Yelgun project label on the map.

The website will include the latest information on the project, a section on frequently asked questions, a feedback facility and project contact details.

## Want to get regular updates?

You can request update alerts through the project website. This will let you know when new information has been added to the site.

You can also register on the project mailing list to have the latest available information sent to you automatically.

**FREECALL 1800 071 144**

## Pacific Highway Upgrading Program

The Pacific Highway Upgrading Program is the single largest construction program in NSW for the last 40 years. Nineteen major and eighteen smaller projects have been opened to traffic. Two major construction projects are presently under way and a further twenty projects are at various stages of planning and development.

The program so far has brought enormous improvements to road conditions and travel times. Notorious black spots have been removed with the completion of the 22km Bulahdelah to Coolongolook Freeway and the Ewingsdale Interchange. Traffic congestion on the highway has been alleviated with the completion of the 14.5km Taree Bypass and the Bray to Arthur Streets upgrade in Coffs Harbour.

As well as boosting tourism and transport efficiency, providing safer and more consistent overtaking opportunities has saved lives and reduced the incidence of road accident trauma.

### For more information contact: Community Liaison Manager

Rob Van Iersel  
PO Box 9, Lennox Head NSW 2478  
Freecall: 1800 071 144  
Facsimile: (02) 66877782  
E-mail: [rvi@geolink.net.au](mailto:rvi@geolink.net.au)

### RTA Project Manager

Peter Borrelli  
Roads and Traffic Authority  
PO Box 576, Grafton NSW 2460  
Telephone: (02) 6640 1022  
Freecall: 1800 653 092  
Facsimile: (02) 6640 1003  
E-mail: [peter\\_borrelli@rta.nsw.gov.au](mailto:peter_borrelli@rta.nsw.gov.au)

### Or go to the RTA website at:

[www.rta.nsw.gov.au/pacific.htm](http://www.rta.nsw.gov.au/pacific.htm)  
RTA/Pub. 01.133

UPGRADING THE PACIFIC HIGHWAY

## INTRODUCTION

### Why upgrade the Pacific Highway?

The Pacific Highway between Brunswick Heads and Yelgun is funded by the NSW State and Federal Governments under the 10-year \$2.2 billion Pacific Highway Upgrading Program. The NSW Government is contributing \$1.6 billion, and the Federal Government is contributing \$600 million to the program.

When completed, the program will significantly reduce the incidence of fatalities and serious injuries on the highway by providing dual carriageways, as well as improving the overall standard and efficiency of the highway in order to meet current and future demands in terms of population growth and economic development.

The Roads and Traffic Authority (RTA) is managing the upgrading program.

### Upgrading Brunswick Heads to Yelgun

An 8.7km dual carriageway is proposed from south of Brunswick Heads to south of Yelgun. The project will include the duplication of the existing Brunswick Heads Bypass, which opened to traffic in mid 1998. North of the Brunswick River, the upgrade will essentially follow the existing highway alignment to the west of Ocean Shores and east of Billinudgel (see map opposite).

Most of the existing Pacific Highway through the project area will be retained as a local service road, so that long-distance and local traffic can be separated and access improved between Brunswick Heads, Ocean Shores and Billinudgel. Local road users will enjoy much safer travel between these locations, away from highway traffic.

The Brunswick Heads to Yelgun Upgrade will link the dual carriageway Tandys Lane project to the south and the Yelgun to Chinderah Freeway to the north. Both of these projects will be completed in 2002.

The objectives of the project are to upgrade the highway in a way that:

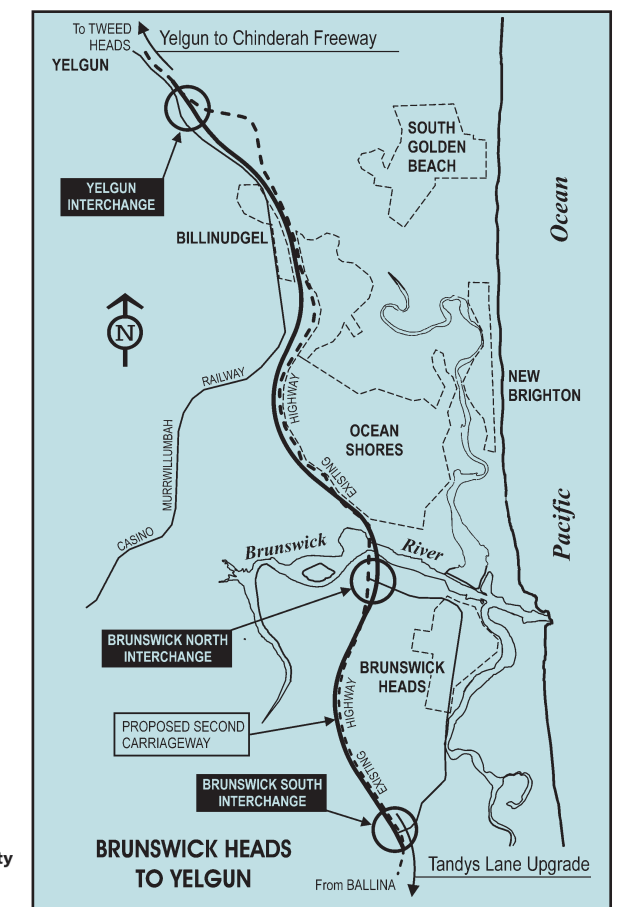
- Minimises the impact of the road on the environment and community.
- Improves safety.
- Separates through and local traffic.
- Improves transport efficiency (reduces time and cost of travel).
- Provides a cost-effective solution.

### How will the community benefit?

When complete, the upgrade will make a major contribution to overall safety and travelling conditions on the Pacific Highway as part of a 59km continuous dual carriageway section from Ewingsdale to the Queensland Border.

Local traffic will be separated from highway traffic and intersections will be upgraded, improving safety and access between local communities, as well as providing for future development and traffic growth. This will include upgraded facilities for pedestrians and cyclists.

Measures to protect local waterways from road run-off and accidental spills will be incorporated into the design for the upgrade.



----- BUILDING A SAFER HIGHWAY -----

The RTA will also be seeking local community input into the following:

- Restoration or redevelopment of the Brunswick River southern foreshore.
- Rehabilitation of land purchased by the RTA for compensatory habitat.
- Aesthetics of various design elements.

## BRINGING YOU UP TO DATE

### What's been happening?

Between November 1996 and July 1998, Sinclair Knight Merz were engaged by the RTA to undertake project development and environmental impact assessment for the project. This work culminated in the completion of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) recommending the adoption of Route A2. In August 1999, the Acting Minister for Urban Affairs and Planning gave approval for the RTA to carry out the upgrade as proposed, subject to a number of conditions. To address community concerns, further field studies have been undertaken since this approval.

In March 2001, the RTA appointed Connell Wagner Pty Ltd to undertake detailed investigations and design for the project. In response to community concern, this phase began with a thorough review of the approved concept design to explore opportunities to further reduce the impact on local residents and the environment.

In May 2001, nominations were sought for a project Community Liaison Group.

In June 2001, following a request from the NSW Minister for Roads, the RTA commissioned an independent environmental and cost assessment of an alternative route (VA2) proposed by the community, so that it could be compared with the approved route. This assessment was undertaken between June and October 2001.

The assessment found that the alternative VA2 route would be more costly and environmentally damaging than the approved route. The approved project (Route A2) will therefore proceed to the detailed investigation and design phase, with continued input from the community, Council and other stakeholders.

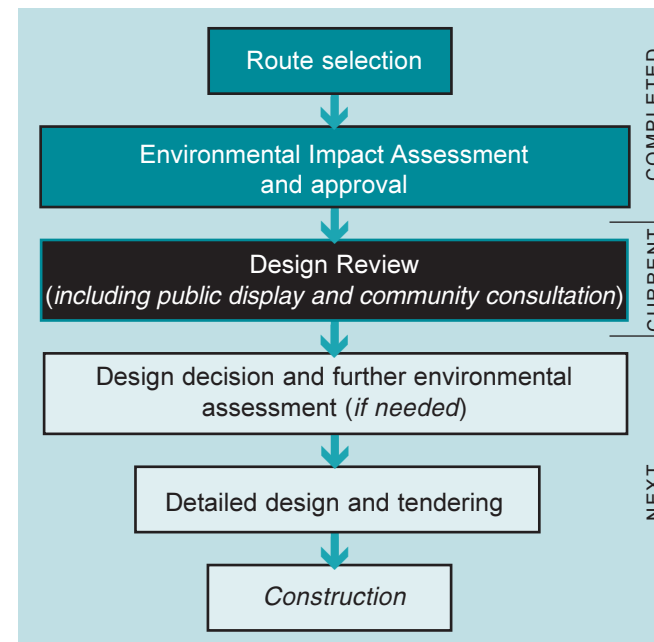
A fact sheet has been prepared to outline the key findings of the VA2/A2 comparative assessment and independent ecological review. Copies of the fact sheet are available at project display locations, through the project website or by phoning the project freecall number.

A copy of the full Route Option VA2 Assessment and the independent ecological review is available on the project website and for viewing at the following locations:

- Brunswick Heads Library
- Byron Bay Library
- Byron Shire Council, Mullumbimby.

### Where are we up to?

The six main phases in the development and delivery of the project are:



### Detailed investigations commence

Connell Wagner will shortly commence detailed investigations. This will involve on-ground survey and geotechnical work along the full length of the project. These investigations will assist in the detailed design for the upgrade.

Permission will be sought in advance from each affected property owner or occupier before any investigations are undertaken. Please contact the project freecall if you have any concerns or want more information about these investigations.

## DESIGN REVIEW

### Why review the design?

As a result of community concern, the NSW Minister for Roads asked the RTA to undertake a comprehensive review of the approved concept design before proceeding to detailed investigations and design. The design review has identified a number of opportunities to further reduce the social and environmental impacts of the upgrade, while still providing a safer and more efficient road network for highway users and the local community.

### What are the options?

The design review has identified two options for the A2 route, the approved design and an alternative design.

The alternative design includes possible changes at three locations:

- Near the Brunswick River
- Billinudgel
- Yelgun interchange.

### Brunswick River

The RTA project team has identified an alternative road design for the Brunswick River crossing that involves a new 4-lane highway bridge and retains the existing highway as a local service road. The revised design offers greater choice of bridges for the highway crossing (e.g. some with fewer piers). To improve river flows and navigational clearance, the existing bridge could also be replaced with a higher bridge structure that has fewer piers in the river.

The alternative road design would simplify the Brunswick North interchange and reduce the impact on adjacent wetlands and the Brunswick Heads Nature Reserve. The alternative road design would have a reduced footprint on the environment. This has been made possible by the provision of a full interchange just south of Brunswick Heads as part of the Tandys Lane Upgrade.

### Billinudgel

At Billinudgel, an alternative road design has been identified that would replace the proposed Wilfred Street overpass with a highway underpass 300m south of Wilfred Street (access through the industrial area).

Removal of the Wilfred Street overpass would allow northbound highway access to and from Billinudgel (left-in, left-out) at Wilfred Street.

An overbridge for pedestrians and cyclists would be built on the northern side of Wilfred Street to provide safer cross-highway access between Billinudgel and Ocean Shores.

### Yelgun

The project team has identified an alternative road design that would reduce the road footprint and simplify the directional flow for traffic using the Yelgun interchange and would have a reduced footprint on the environment.

## HOW YOU CAN COMMENT

The RTA has produced a comprehensive summary brochure about the design review and has set up several displays throughout the local area, which include feedback facilities.

Copies of the Design Review brochure are available at project display locations, on the project website, or by phoning the project freecall. The brochure includes a comment form. Your comments are invited up until 21 December 2001.

The RTA is seeking broad community input. Your feedback is important and all interested persons and groups should make their views known.

## HOW YOU CAN BE INVOLVED

To ensure that the community has a number of opportunities to have input and stay involved during the detailed design phase, a range of community involvement activities are planned. These include:

- Community Liaison Group meetings
- 24 hour freecall number
- Community newsletters
- Project displays
- Open design forum
- Advertisements
- Project website
- Meetings with individuals/groups
- Media releases and articles
- Project mailing list.

### About the Community Liaison Group

The Community Liaison Group (CLG) will provide an essential link between the project team and the community. Meetings will be held at key stages of the detailed design and minutes of meetings will be available at project displays and on the project website.

The CLG includes representatives from a wide range of local communities and groups. It also includes representatives of Byron Shire Council and members of the project team.

The CLG is a forum for broad community input into the project. You can contact a CLG representative to discuss your ideas and concerns or find out what is happening with the project. To find out who your local community representative is, contact the project freecall.

### About the project displays

Displays have been set up throughout the local area to help keep you informed. These are located at:

- Brunswick Heads Library
- Ocean Village Shopping Centre
- Billinudgel General Store
- Byron Bay Library
- Byron Shire Council, Mullumbimby.

Staff will be available at the Ocean Village Shopping Centre on Thursday 6 December and Thursday 13 December 2001 between 10am and 6pm.