



Australian Government

BUILDING OUR FUTURE



Richmond River to Ballina Bypass

Community update

September 2017

The Australian and NSW governments are jointly funding the \$4.36 billion Woolgoolga to Ballina Pacific Highway upgrade. Roads and Maritime Services Pacific Highway Project Office and Pacific Complete are working together to deliver the project.

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Fauna nest boxes have been installed in the area

Early work

Since starting in September 2016, early work activities have been carried out to meet the project's Conditions of Approval. This work will continue until major work starts later this year. During this time the Woolgoolga to Ballina Pacific Highway team has:

- Fenced critical parts of the project boundary
- Prepared for new telecommunications and electrical services
- Finalised flood mitigation and management as part of the design development process
- Engaged with local stakeholders including local government, progress associations, residents and the Friends of the Koala.

The project team has also delivered essential environmental early work:

- Carried out koala predator control
- Worked with universities to collect koala scat for research
- Performed regular day and night koala population surveys
- Started phased resource reduction activities and koala monitoring
- Monitored dust, noise and groundwater
- Installed more than 70 fauna nest boxes
- Built temporary and permanent fauna exclusion fencing on local roads
- Installed specially designed fauna grids on local roads
- Planted about 50,000 koala food trees

These activities have been planned and carried out in line with the NSW Planning Minister's Conditions of Approval for the project. External agencies have regularly monitored and reviewed our performance against the Conditions of Approval and other key plans and licences.

Koala and fauna management

To prepare for major work, the project team has delivered a number of management and mitigation measures for fauna, in particular, the local koala population. This work started in September 2016 so that we could prepare for major work and manage impacts on fauna. These activities have built on the previous work Roads and Maritime has delivered in other projects, and are founded on ecological studies as part of the project's planning.

The project team thanks Ballina Shire Council, the project's Koala Interest Group and local residents for their support and input into the delivery of the work.

As the project now moves into the major build phase, we will keep you informed about the next stages of delivery for the Koala Management Plan and how we intend to manage impacts on fauna.



Permanent koala exclusion fencing Wardell Rd

Lumleys Hill borrow site and batch plant

The project team has submitted draft management plans to the Department of Planning and Environment for the proposed borrow site and batch plant at Lumleys Hill near Wardell. The team is continuing to work closely with the Department as it reviews and provides feedback on these plans.

The draft plans include feedback the project team received from the community in late 2016 and our responses to the comments. Thank you for the feedback that was provided as it has assisted with project planning.

Once we have received final advice from the Department about the draft management plans we will notify the community and stakeholders of the outcome, make the plans available publicly and continue to keep you informed about our work. We understand the community's interest in the work proposed for this area and will continue to meet with our neighbours to discuss the project.

Pavement investigation and at house noise treatment assessment

At a resident meeting held earlier this year, following a request from many of the attendees, Roads and Maritime agreed to investigate a potential change to install low noise pavement on the new highway in the Richmond River to Coolgardie area.

The team can confirm that the investigation is progressing and we will respond to residents when we have completed this work.

As part of the Environmental Impact Statement which was approved in 2012, we completed an operational noise assessment. As part of the Conditions of Approval, we need to do a new report based on recent noise monitoring data collected along the alignment.

The Woolgoolga to Ballina project team is drafting the updated Operational Noise Report at the moment. Once this is complete Roads and Maritime will review it and the report will be finalised to be submitted to the Department of Planning and Environment for approval.

This is a key report to help inform the investigation about a potential change to low noise pavement in this area as it provides a clearer understanding of the noise levels expected to be generated during the operation of the new highway. This report will also provide us with the list of residential properties in the area that are eligible for a range of at-house noise treatment.

Once the noise report is approved, we will then need to use this to determine if further noise mitigation measures are required to meet our Conditions of Approval. If further measures are needed they may include consideration of the type of pavement surface for the new highway in this area.



After the new highway is open and traffic is travelling at full speed, the project team will carry out further noise monitoring to confirm the noise mitigation measures which have been implemented are appropriate and in accordance with the project's Conditions of Approval.

There are a number of steps throughout the project that we take to ensure we mitigate and manage operational noise to minimise impact on our communities. We also need to ensure that our measures are consistent along the highway while also meeting the project's Conditions of Approval.

The team appreciates the interest some community members have in the outcome of this review. We will keep the community informed as new information becomes available.

Celebrating Aboriginal participation in our area

We are committed to increasing the number of Aboriginal people in our workforce and creating opportunities for organisations that employ Aboriginal people to participate in the Woolgoolga to Ballina Pacific Highway upgrade.

As part of our early work, koala revegetation contractor GMC Environmental Consulting has consistently employed Aboriginal people, maintaining between 70 percent and 100 percent participation on work activities that include koala food tree planting, fencing and weed control in various sections throughout the project alignment.

In less than six months, about 50,000 koala food trees have been planted by this dedicated team.

We thank them for their continued effort and valuable contribution to work in our area. If you are interested in applying for a job on the project, please go to www.pacificcomplete.com.au/jobs.



Team members from GMC Environmental Consulting installing fencing as part of the koala revegetation work

Preparing for major work

During the past six months, the project team has been participating in a detailed procurement process to identify contractors to carry out the next stages of work for the build.

Recently, Lendlease Pty Ltd was awarded the contract to build main civil work for 17.5 kilometres of new highway between Richmond River at Broadwater and Pimlico Road at Pimlico. Quickway Constructions Pty Ltd was awarded the contract to deliver 13 bridges between Richmond River and Coolgardie Road at Coolgardie as part of the upgrade.

Some of the key work that these contractors will carry out in the next three months will include:

- Participating in project inductions, which include safety, koala management and professional conduct expectations
- Meeting with the existing team to share project knowledge and processes
- Preparing management plans for areas including construction, safety, environment and community engagement
- Starting to set up to work in the area.

We will continue to keep you informed as work is planned in your area.

Vegetation removal along the alignment

One of the key activities that will occur in the next stage of work in our area will be vegetation removal. The project team has been working hard with agencies to plan this work well and ensure the activities will be carried out in line with the project's Conditions of Approval. All work relating to vegetation removal must adhere to the project's Construction Environmental Management Plan. A copy of this document is available by visiting www.rms.nsw.gov.au/w2b.

Our early work activities (particularly for koala and fauna management) have been designed to minimise impact on native animals that have previously lived in the area. A team of ecologists have been working on site to monitor the location and movement of fauna in this area before vegetation is removed. Early work activities including phased resource reduction and fauna detection using specially trained dogs has been carried out to ensure fauna will be away from areas that may present a risk to their wellbeing once vegetation removal starts. Our ecological monitoring provides the team with reassurance that the native animals are moving to new areas without significant stress and that they have enough food and water sources to support them.

The project team has worked with environmental planning principles to limit vegetation removal where possible – actively avoiding, minimising, mitigating or offsetting potential construction impacts on threatened fauna and flora species, as well as environmentally sensitive areas.

We also take public and team safety very seriously while this work occurs. You will receive notifications in advance of work being carried out in your area. Please note that public entry into the project alignment or our work zones is not permitted.

The team recognises that this type of work can represent a large, visual change to the landscape once vegetation is removed. The Community Relations team is available to take calls on any specific concerns about this work either in advance of work starting, or while the work is being carried out. You can reach the team by calling **1800 778 900**.



Flagging placed for vegetation clearing in preparation for utilities work

Pimlico to Teven stage three

Work is progressing well to complete the final stage of the Ballina Bypass, between Pimlico and Teven. This work is located directly east of the sections previously opened to traffic in May 2016. We will keep you informed about changes to traffic conditions as the work continues.

The project team has recently installed soil wick drains to treat soft soil. A small site compound has also been built on Pimlico Road.

We are currently preparing demolition plans for decommissioning bridges at Emigrant and Duck Creek. The team is working closely with all stakeholders to plan these activities in a manner that minimises impact to waterway users and the environment.

Neighbours will be contacted to provide an update of the proposed work. Road users may experience short delays during construction. We will work to minimise delays, and will provide information through Live Traffic NSW www.livetraffic.com.



Soft soil treatment underway at Pimlico to Teven stage three

Stay connected and informed

You will receive notifications in advance of work being carried out in your area. You are also welcome to update your email address and phone details to allow us to contact you in other ways. Please contact our Community Relations team on **1800 778 900** to provide our project team with your new information.

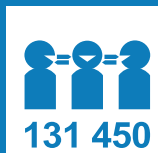


Contact us

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