

## Welcome to the first Coffs Harbour bypass project e-newsletter

The Coffs Coast community has been waiting for the Coffs Harbour bypass, which is a priority for the Australian and NSW governments. We've been busy doing the vital work needed before construction starts. This includes finalising the concept design, working with agencies to progress the planning approvals, completing geotechnical investigations, progressing further with property acquisition and locating underground utilities for relocation, as well as meeting with and listening to stakeholders.



Artist impression of Shephards Lane Tunnel

In response to community feedback, we announced key refinements in 2019 to include lowering the height of the bypass and incorporating three tunnels at Roberts Hill, Shephards Lane and Gatelys Road. Further improvements were made to the Englands Road interchange, the school bus stop on Coramba Road, the Korora Hill interchange and the school bus interchange at Korora.

The bypass will remove thousands of vehicles from the Coffs Harbour CBD, making Coffs Harbour an even better place to live, work and visit. The bypass will also boost the local economy, create jobs, increase local skills and improve regional connectivity. It will improve road safety for local, regional and interstate road users, reduce travel times by 11 minutes and bypass 12 sets of traffic lights.

The route has not changed since 2004 and is from Englands Road in the south and connects with the newly-upgraded Sapphire to Woolgoolga section in the north. It passes through the North Boambee Valley, Roberts Hill ridgeline and across the foothills of the Coffs Harbour basin west to Korora Hill. You can view it on [interactive web portal](#).

### Geotech investigations and potholing work underway

Over the past few months we've started drilling at Shephards Lane, Roberts Hill and Gatelys Road tunnel, as well as the two twin bridges over the North Coast Railway and Shephards Lane overbridge, to test the hardness of the rock in preparation for building the tunnels and to assess the distribution and movement of groundwater in the soil and rocks. So far the tests are positive, with the rock quality good for the tunnel design.

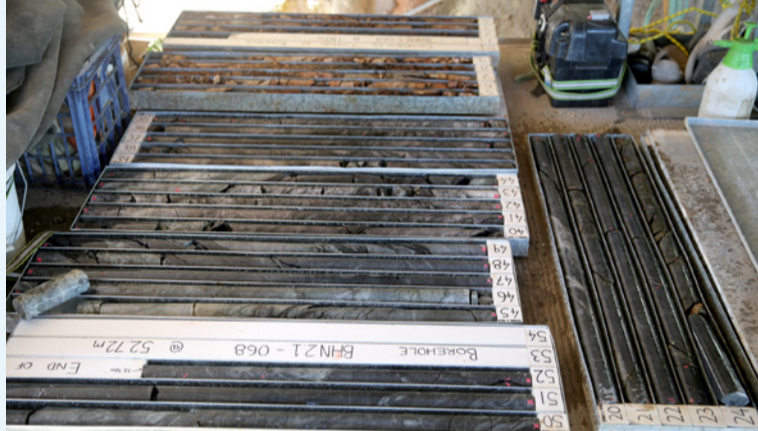


Geotechnical investigation is vital preparation work

The geotechnical investigations are a normal part of any project development in preparation for the construction.

We recently started potholing to find and check the underground utilities' horizontal and vertical locations. To do this we use a water vacuum excavator to dig potholes, using high-pressure water to reduce and loosen the soil. The wet soil and mud slurry is removed to a spoil tank using a powerful vacuum. A hole, typically 300mm square or 150-200mm in diameter, is common and backfilled within 24 hours.

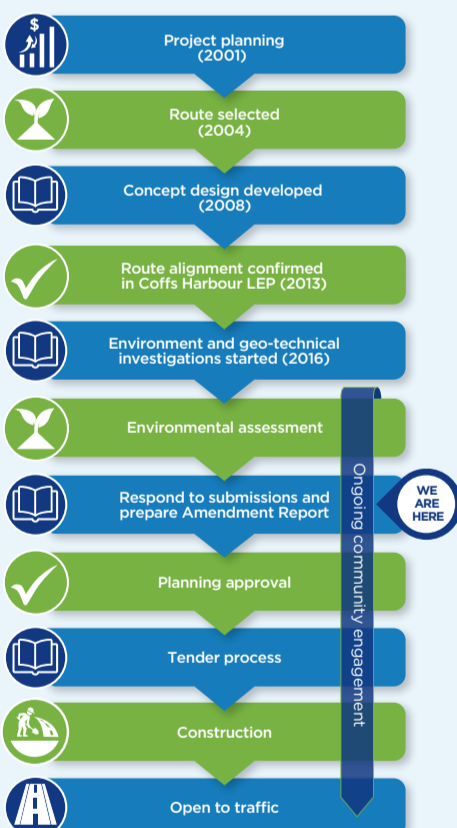
The geotechnical tests and potholing have been taking place in areas that will not impact on Aboriginal cultural heritage or sensitive environmental areas.



Testing rock hardness

### Amendment and Submissions Report coming soon

In September 2019 the Environmental Impact Study (EIS) went on display. The EIS exhibition provided an opportunity for the Coffs Harbour community to comment on the design refinements to include the tunnels, potential environmental impacts and proposed mitigation measures for the proposed bypass. More than 180 submissions were received via the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE) Major Projects' website. The Submissions report collates the community submissions received and provides a response to the issues raised during the EIS.



Amendment and submissions report available in June

In November 2019 design changes, including changes to the Englands Road and Korora Hill interchanges were displayed to the community. Twenty nine submissions were made directly through the Coffs Harbour bypass project email. The Amendment report outlines and assesses the design changes that were an outcome of feedback received from the community display and the feedback received during the EIS, the display of the concept design in 2018, and key stakeholder project meetings.

The Amendment report and the Submissions report will be submitted to DPIE and made available publicly. DPIE will review the reports to reach a decision on the project. The Minister for Planning will then determine if the project is approved. If the Minister approves the project it will be constructed and operated in accordance with the mitigation measures described in the EIS, Submissions report, Amendment report and the Minister's Conditions of Approval.

### How to get in touch?

In response to the evolving Coronavirus situation, the project team is available to organise a video conference or answer questions via email at or telephone 1800 550 621. [Find out how we are consulting in different ways.](#)



We're available to answer your questions and concerns

We are following NSW Health advice and, for the time being, we are changing the way we approach community consultation for the Coffs Harbour bypass project.

This means we have been consulting in different ways via social media, teleconferencing and video conferencing to ensure the community can practice social distancing and limit the spread of Coronavirus.

When face-to-face engagement resumes, the Coffs Harbour bypass display office will reopen. Members of the public are welcome to drop in to the office at 11a Park Avenue, where staff will be available to answer questions about the project. The display office will be open from 10am - 4pm, Wednesdays.