

What's next with geotech?

Did you know that the deepest point of each tunnel below the existing ground surface level is approximately 39.5 metres at Roberts Hill, 62.2 metres at Shephards Lane and 78.6 metres at Gatelys Road? The St Helena tunnel near Byron Bay has a deepest point of 45 metres.



Geotechnical work continues.



Artist impression of Gatelys Road tunnel.

The geographical setting for the Coffs Harbour bypass is described as a challenging environment for construction due to the steep terrain associated with being at the foothills of the Great Dividing Range. The tunnels will pass through three major ridge lines that extend from the mountains, to the city of Coffs Harbour and to the sea. The tunnels for Coffs Harbour bypass will be mined tunnels, meaning excavation without removing the overlying rock or soil. The benefits associated with the construction of mined tunnels include avoiding impacts to biodiversity, Aboriginal cultural heritage and improved urban amenity. More details on these benefits are in the Environmental Impact Study and Amendment Report available on the [Coffs Harbour bypass project website](#).

The method for excavation of the Coffs Harbour bypass tunnels will primarily be drill and blast. This will require temporary support during construction and permanent support for the long term operation over their design life.