



Coffs Harbour bypass

Detailed Design Consultation Summary report



Australian Government



Acknowledgement of Country

Transport for NSW (TfNSW) acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land on which we work and live.

We pay our respects to Elders past and present and celebrate the diversity of Aboriginal people and their ongoing cultures and connections to the lands and waters of NSW.

Many of the transport routes we use today – from rail lines, to roads, to water crossings – follow the traditional Songlines, trade routes and ceremonial paths in Country that our nation's First Peoples followed for tens of thousands of years.

TfNSW is committed to honouring Aboriginal peoples' cultural and spiritual connections to the lands, waters and seas and their rich contribution to society.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose of this report

The purpose of this document is to summarise the feedback received during community consultation for the Coffs Harbour bypass project detailed design. The major changes included updates and improvements to the three interchanges at Englands Road, Coramba Road and Korora Hill.

Feedback for detailed design opened on Monday, 9 January and closed Monday, 20 February 2023. However, the project continued to accept feedback until Sunday, 26 February 2023.

1.2 Background

The Australian and NSW governments are funding the \$2.2 billion, 14-kilometre Coffs Harbour bypass project. The bypass will boost the regional economy and improve connectivity, road transport efficiency and safety for all local and interstate motorists.

Transport for NSW (TfNSW) has engaged Ferrovial Gamuda Joint Venture to build the bypass of Coffs Harbour from south of Englands Road to Sapphire Beach in the north. This includes a two-kilometre upgrade of the existing Pacific Highway between Korora Hill and Sapphire Beach. The project will provide a four-lane divided highway bypassing the Coffs Harbour urban area, passing through the North Boambee Valley and Roberts Hill, then traversing the foothills of the Coffs Harbour basin to Korora Hill.

Key features of the project include:

- four-lane divided highway from south of Englands Road roundabout to the dual carriageway highway at Sapphire Beach
- bypass of the Coffs Harbour urban area from south of Englands Road intersection to Korora Hill
- upgrade of the existing Pacific Highway between Korora Hill and the dual carriageway highway at Sapphire Beach
- grade-separated interchanges at Englands Road, Coramba Road and Korora Hill
- a local access road along the western side of the project between the southern tie-in and Englands Road, connecting properties to the road network via Englands Road
- a new service road, located east of the project, connecting Solitary Islands Way with James Small Drive and the existing Pacific Highway near Bruxner Park Road
- three tunnels through ridges at Roberts Hill (around 160 metres long), Shephards Lane (around 320 metres long) and Gatelys Road (around 410 metres long)
- relocation of the Korora bus interchange and Luke Bowen footbridge.

Early work began in 2020 and major construction started in March 2023. The bypass is expected to be opened to traffic in 2026, weather permitting, with project completion in 2027.

1.3 Benefits of the project

The project is a priority for the Australian and NSW governments as the Pacific Highway is a major contributor to Australia's economy. The bypass will be a key link in this vital piece of the nation's infrastructure, connecting Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane. The project's objectives of improving road freight efficiency for heavy vehicles, road safety and easing congestion all support the NSW Government's Future Transport 2056 Strategy.

The Coffs Harbour bypass project has been developed to complement the Pacific Highway upgrade program and meet the Australian and NSW governments' strategic planning for regional NSW. The project will provide safer road conditions, reduce travel times for all road users, improve transport efficiency, ease congestion, and support economic development.



Easing
congestion



Motorists will save over
12 min in travel time



Improving
safety



Improving
traffic flow



Bypass up to
12 sets of traffic lights

1.4 Detailed design changes

The detailed design delivers better outcomes for the community and road users once the new highway is open. These changes to the project during the detailed design phase reduce construction and operational impacts to nearby residents, mean less impacts on Coffs Creek, and minimise changes to existing roads. This means less disruptions for motorists while improving safety for all road users and the community.

Additionally, improvements at the three interchanges - Korora Hill, Coramba Road and Englands Road - reduce the project's construction carbon footprint as they require fewer bridges which means less truck movements for pre-cast and materials.

The final design changes are consistent with the project's environment approvals.

1.4.1 Changes to Korora Hill Interchange

From the earlier concept design, TfNSW has gone from one large roundabout to two smaller roundabouts including flipping the Korora Hill Interchange. This means the major on and off ramps are lowered to make them a similar height to the existing highway, and the local roads (Bruxner Park Road and James Small Drive) are elevated to an overpass.

Building the interchange over the existing highway maintains free-flow traffic movements into and out of the central business district and lowers the Coffs Harbour on and off ramps, which will reduce traffic noise for nearby residents and businesses.

Moving the roundabout on the western side of the new Pacific Highway means TfNSW will need to do less excavation and controlled blasting in this area. This will potentially reduce impacts from construction noise and dust for nearby residents.

On the existing Pacific Highway near Kororo Public School, TfNSW has optimised the design of the bus interchange to a smaller footprint which results in less vegetation removal and provides safer movements for all users. TfNSW will also install an earth mound with plants, rather than a concrete retaining wall, south of the Kororo Public School between Solitary Island Way and James Small Drive.

The optimised design for the Korora Hill and bus interchanges provide better cyclist and pedestrian connectivity, improved safety and better traffic flow efficiencies. Other benefits of the updated design include reduced construction impacts of traffic disruptions and night work for motorists and nearby residents.

Specific changes to the Korora Hill Interchange include:

- replacing one large roundabout with two smaller ones
- flipping the interchange so the major on and off ramps are lowered to a similar height of the existing highway
- moving the roundabout on the western side of the new Pacific Highway
- reducing the footprint of the Kororo bus interchange.

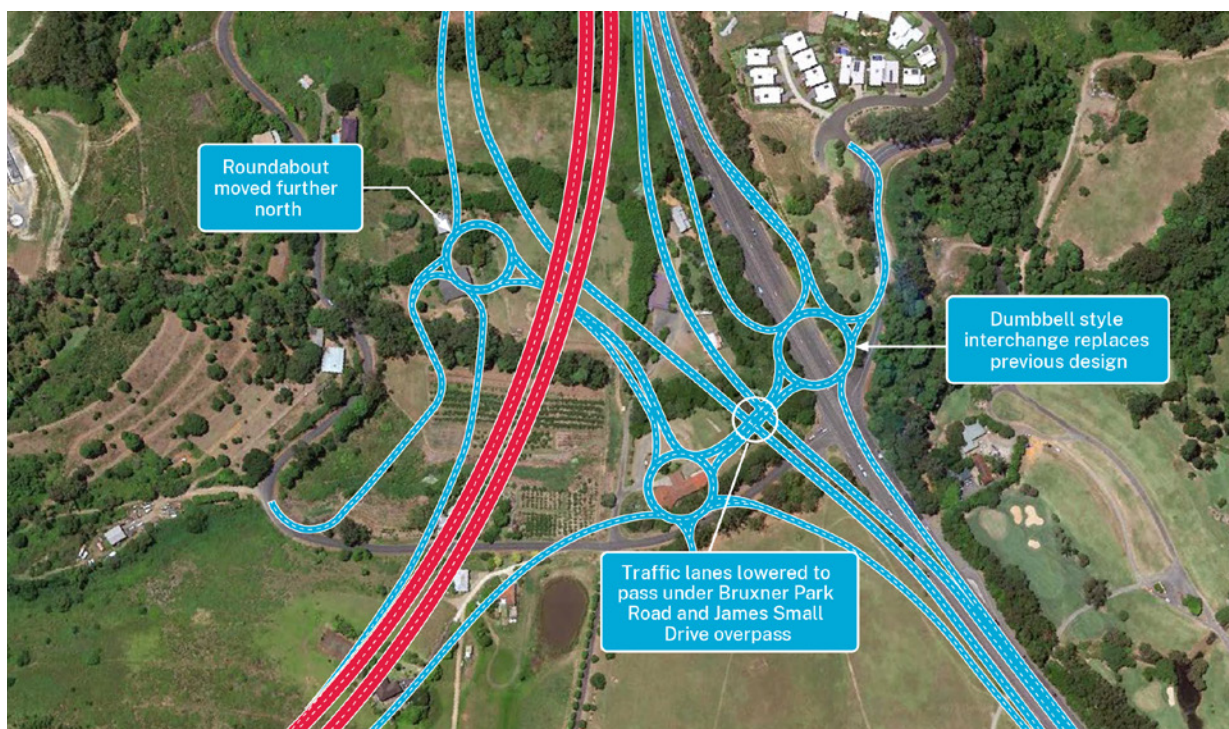


Figure 1-1 Map of Korora Hill Interchange detailed design refinements

1.4.2 Changes to Coramba Road Interchange

From the earlier concept design, the Coramba Road Interchange has moved about 260 to 350 metres north making it safer and more efficient for motorists and further away from Roselands Estate residential properties.

The optimised design also means the southern ramps no longer require bridges across Coffs Creek. This means the new bypass carriageway will be the project's only bridges over Coffs Creek which will reduce construction impacts on this key waterway. TfNSW has carried out flood modelling and the updated design will not change the existing drainage to the Spagnolos Road flood retention basin.

For residents east of the new interchange, the updated design means less construction and operational impacts as the interchange is further away from homes. During construction there will be less traffic changes and disruptions for motorists using Coramba and Bennetts roads because the roundabouts will be built away from live traffic.

Specific changes to the Coramba Road Interchange include:

- moving the interchange at least 260 to 350 metres north of its previous location
- reducing the number of bridges over the Coffs Creek from three to one
- safer access from the interchange onto the northbound on ramp
- fewer construction traffic changes and operational impacts.

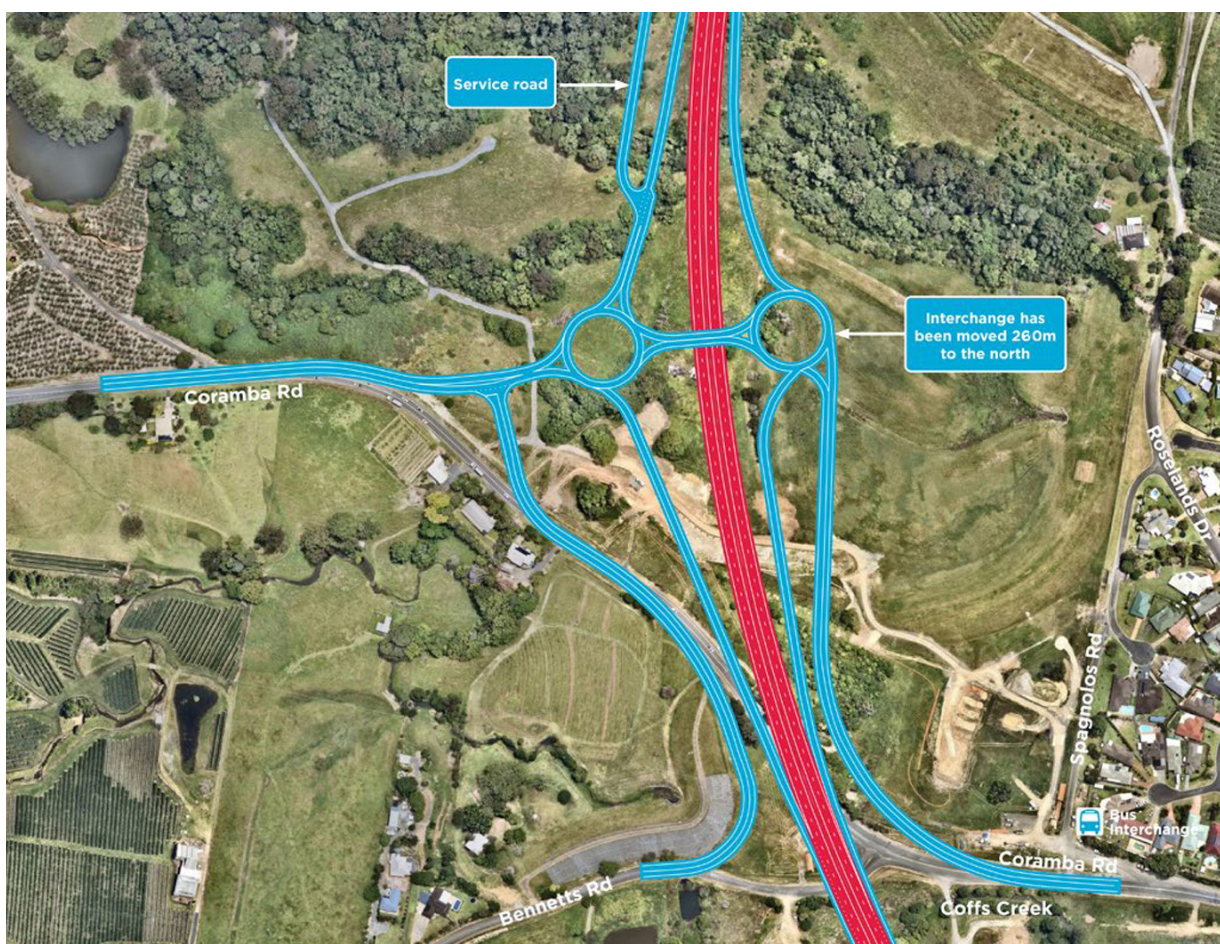


Figure 1-2 Map of Coramba Road Interchange detailed design refinements

1.4.3 Changes to Englands Road Interchange

From the earlier concept design, TfNSW has optimised the design using two small roundabouts to improve safety and traffic flow. Access has been improved with a two way local service road.

The service road west of the Pacific Highway, which was previously one way, will now be built for two-way traffic. This improves safety and connectivity for businesses and residents in the area, particularly those in the south-west as the road connects directly into the new roundabouts rather than the previous T-intersection. Optimising the design of Isles Drive streamlines access to the interchange for the industrial area to the north. These improvements provide safer and more direct access for workers, heavy vehicles accessing the industrial area, waste facility and the transportation depot.

The intersection of Englands Road, Stadium Drive and the existing Pacific Highway will still have traffic lights. This optimised design will require fewer traffic changes and disruptions for motorists during construction and also mean there will be one less bridge needed which reduces heavy vehicle movements and the projects carbon footprint during construction.

Specific changes to the Englands Road Interchange include:

- replacing one large roundabout with two smaller ones
- two-way traffic for the service road west of the Pacific Highway
- optimising the design of the Isles Drive connection to the new roundabout.

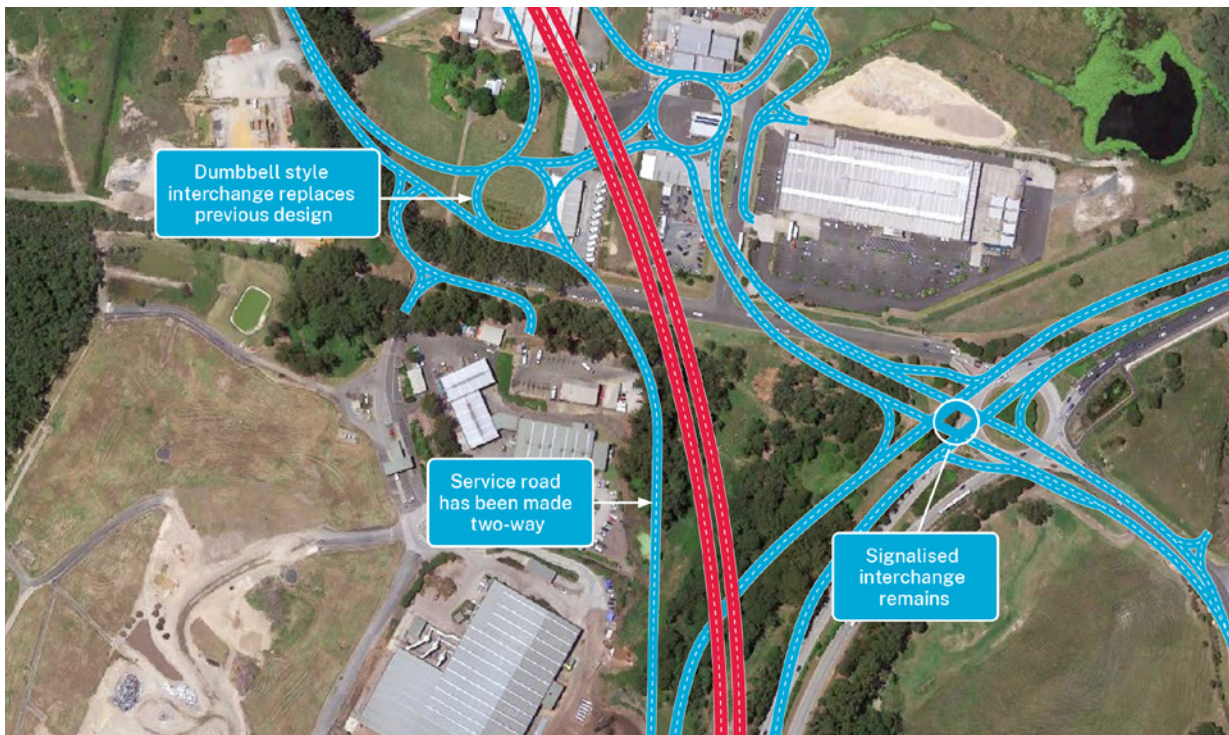


Figure 1-3 Map of Englands Road Interchange detailed design refinements

2. Community consultation

TfNSW considers meaningful community consultation to be essential in the development and construction of projects. Consultation for this project has provided important feedback and been considered in decisions about, preferred route selection, environmental assessment and throughout the detailed design and early work phases.

2.1 Detailed design consultation

Community consultation was held during January and February 2023 to gain feedback on detailed design refinements to the three interchanges and other aspects of the project.

Community members were invited to meet with project staff to discuss and provide comments on the design via several channels, including:

- four community information sessions held at various locations in Coffs Harbour between 2 and 6 February
- the project display office was open for detailed design feedback throughout February, as per its normal operating hours
- replies to letters, emails and phone calls
- individual meetings with project staff, if requested.

Table 2-1 Attendees at the various information sessions

Locations	Date and time	Number of attendees
Project display centre	Wednesday 1 February 2023 –10am to 4pm to Wednesday 8 February 2023 –10am to 4pm	40
Coffs Harbour Stadium	Thursday 2 February 2023 –10am to 2pm	10
Pacific Bay Resort	Friday 3 February 2023 –9am to 12pm	45
Coffs Harbour Racecourse	Saturday 4 February 2023 –10am to 2pm	67
Coffs Harbour Golf Club	Monday 6 February 2023 –3pm to 6pm	9
Total		171

The number of attendees at the various information sessions are listed below.

Collateral developed for the consultation included:

- a media release
- a project update –22,500 copies distributed in the Coffs Harbour area
- factsheets –provided to people who attended the display centre and community information sessions
- posters of the interchanges and roll plots of the full alignment
- four social media posts
- website update.

3. Community feedback

During the consultation period, 27 paper forms and 261 emails were received by the project team. Of those emails, 233 were a copy of three form letters requesting a noise barrier on the Pacific Highway near Charlesworth Bay Drive and redesign of the alignment to not impact the White Booyong Fig Subtropical Rainforest ('Grandpa's Scrub').

TfNSW has provided a summary of the key themes and guidance on where in this report full responses are provided.

Table 3-1 Korora Hill Interchange

Key themes	Response summary
Korora Hill Interchange	
<p>It is complicated and would be difficult for drivers to navigate</p> <p>The connection of the service roads to the interchange via the roundabouts</p> <p>The noise and visual impacts to nearby residents</p> <p>Inclusion of traffic lights and a noise wall at the intersection of the Pacific Highway and Charlesworth Bay Drive</p>	<p>The Korora Hill Interchange will have wayfinding signage to assist motorists in navigating to their destinations.</p> <p>Local road accesses to the interchange will significantly improve safety as motorists will no longer turn directly onto or across the new highway.</p> <p>There will be a noise wall built in the Korora area to mitigate operational noise for the new highway. This wall will be located between the extended Solitary Islands Way and the Pacific Highway from south of the Sapphire Beach Interchange 1km north of the Korora Hill Interchange, as described in the Amendment Report 2020.</p> <p>The project is developing a Place Design and Landscape Plan (PDLP) which will address visual amenity and the proposed landscaping.</p> <p>Traffic lights will be provided at the intersection of the existing Pacific Highway and Charlesworth Bay Road to provide safe access for pedestrians, cyclists and traffic from Charlesworth Bay Road travelling north, as outlined in the project's 2020 Amendment Report.</p> <p>As required by Minister's Conditions of Approval (MCoA) of the State Significant Infrastructure Approval, the project will prepare an Operational Noise Review (ONR) on the final design which will be submitted to the NSW Department of Planning Secretary for approval later in 2023.</p> <p>At this stage, TfNSW doesn't expect significant changes in noise levels from the refined design but appropriate noise mitigation will be considered if required. Following the completion of the bypass, TfNSW will carry out noise monitoring and prepare an Operational Noise Compliance Report to compare actual operational road traffic noise performance of the project against noise performance predictions made in the ONR. The Operational Noise Compliance Report will also determine if further noise mitigations are required for the operational phase of the bypass.</p>

Table 3-2 Coramba Road Interchange

Key themes	Response summary
Coramba Road Interchange	
<p>Additional travel time to use the interchange given it has been moved further north</p> <p>The need for the interchange and concern it would increase traffic on Coramba Road</p> <p>Change in gradient of the southern ramps to avoid impact on Coffs Creek and the interchange sitting 2m higher</p> <p>Noise impacts to nearby residents</p> <p>Visual amenity of the interchange for nearby residents and property owners</p> <p>Pavement and shoulder condition of Coramba Road between the interchange and Coffs Harbour central business district</p>	<p>There will be minor increased travel times for local motorists using the Coramba Road Interchange which is expected to be up to a maximum of about five seconds for each one-way trip on the longest route to join the bypass.</p> <p>The Coramba Road Interchange has been part of all previous designs for the Coffs Harbour bypass. It provides Coramba residents with better access to the new highway.</p> <p>Entry signage for Coffs Harbour will be installed at Englands Road Interchange and Korora Hill Interchange.</p> <p>In reducing impacts on Coffs Creek by moving the interchange further away from this waterway, TfNSW acknowledges the gradient has increased on the southern ramps from 1 percent to 4.7 percent. The two-roundabout interchange is an overpass of the new carriageway which means there is a need to build up the two roundabouts to provide clearance for the new carriageway to go under the overpass.</p> <p>Consistent with the Amendment Report, noise barriers will be built along the eastern side of the new highway and Coramba Road Interchange through to east of the Spagnolos Road intersection with Coramba Road to minimise operational noise for residents.</p> <p>The project is developing a PDLP which will address visual amenity and the proposed landscaping.</p> <p>Coramba Road is under the control of the City of Coffs Harbour and improvements and maintenance of this road is the responsibility of the council.</p>

Table 3-3 Englands Road Interchange

Key themes	Response summary
Englands Road Interchange	
<p>Access from private property owners south of the interchange about safe entry and exit from their driveways which connect directly to the Pacific Highway</p> <p>Closing access from the existing Pacific Highway into the Lindsay Transport property</p> <p>Changing the current roundabout at the existing Pacific Highway, Stadium Drive and Englands Road to traffic lights</p> <p>Pavement condition of eastern end of Englands Road</p>	<p>During the detailed design there was further investigation of the private access directly off the Pacific Highway south of Englands Road. These private driveway accesses were assessed as being a low safety risk and will therefore not be changed as part of this project.</p> <p>The service road on the western side of the Pacific Highway has been made two-way access which provides a safer access for trucks entering and exiting the Lindsay Transport property.</p> <p>The traffic lights at the intersection of the existing Pacific Highway, Stadium Drive and Englands Road, has been in previous designs for the bypass project, including the 2020 Amendment Report.</p> <p>Englands Road is under the control of the City of Coffs Harbour and improvements and maintenance of this road is the responsibility of the council.</p>

Key themes	Response summary
Alignment wide	
<p>Noise</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes in noise impacts due to detailed design refinements Noise impacts because Coramba Road Interchange had been moved Eligibility of individual properties for at-house noise treatment Impacts of construction noise for individual properties Inclusion of a noise wall at the intersection of the Pacific Highway and Charlesworth Bay Drive 	<p>As required by Minister’s Conditions of Approval (MCoA) of the State Significant Infrastructure Approval, the project will prepare an Operational Noise Review (ONR) on the final design which will be submitted to the NSW Department of Planning Secretary for approval later in 2023.</p> <p>At this stage, TfNSW doesn’t expect significant changes in noise levels from the refined design and will provide more information to the community after the ONR is approved.</p> <p>The project has strict requirements for managing noise impacts from construction work associated with the Planning Approval and the Environmental Protection Licence (EPL#21766) issued to the project. TfNSW is required to predict and monitor its noise levels to ensure it complies with these conditions.</p> <p>TfNSW maintains its initial position that no noise wall is necessary for Charlesworth Bay Road as noise levels are expected to fall as a result of the Coffs Harbour bypass.</p>
<p>Environmental impacts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impacts the White Booyong Fig Subtropical Rainforest (Grandpa’s scrub) Removal of asbestos Impacts to animals in the Korora area 	<p>TfNSW has refined the design for the bypass in this area to mitigate impacts to the White Booyong Fig Subtropical Rainforest (Grandpa’s scrub). The changes will move the alignment north and save 100 percent of the remnant rainforest.</p> <p>During major construction for the Coffs Harbour Bypass, asbestos containing materials (ACM) were found at several locations within the project boundary. The ACM must be removed and relocated safely.</p> <p>TfNSW has engaged a licensed local contractor to safely remove, relocate and dispose of the ACM and an experienced independent hygienist will be onsite during this work.</p> <p>TfNSW is still committed to protect more than 300 hectares of natural habitat through biodiversity offsets on the Coffs Harbour bypass project.</p> <p>Through the project’s dedicated koala revegetation work, we will be restoring eight hectares of previously cleared agricultural land as koala habitat. This work will reconnect bushland from the escarpment to the low-lying areas of Coffs Harbour creating a significant fauna corridor.</p>

Key themes	Response summary
<p>Visual amenity</p> <p>Information about the landscaping for the bypass</p> <p>What will be the visual amenity at the Interchanges</p> <p>Information about the height and types of noise walls</p>	<p>While the project is still finalising the Place Design and Landscape Plan for public exhibition later in 2023, TfNSW wanted to provide some high-level information about TfNSW's proposed approach to visual amenity.</p> <p>The landscape design and revegetation strategy has been developed to provide a strong emphasis on creating a well-vegetated corridor with distinctive intersections, and interchanges.</p> <p>The project is working with Gumbaynggirr artists on design to be incorporated into the alignment and particularly the noise walls which will be made from recycled plastic. Noise wall heights will not be reduced from what was previously advised in the 2020 Amendment Report with final heights to be informed by the Operational Noise Report.</p> <p>The project's draft Place Design and Landscape Plan will be placed on public display later in 2023 for community and stakeholder feedback.</p>
<p>Cyclists</p> <p>A cycling link to the service road at Englands Road</p> <p>A shared path from Charlesworth Bay Drive to Diggers Beach</p> <p>Building of a cycleway at McCauleys headland.</p>	<p>The project is providing extensive cycling access across the alignment.</p> <p>There is a new shared path being built on the eastern side of the Pacific Highway to connect to existing cycleways in the North Boambee area.</p> <p>Provision of cycling paths along local roads is the role and responsibility of City of Coffs Harbour.</p>
<p>Consultation</p> <p>Community information sessions not held outside of working hours.</p>	<p>The project team held two of its six community information session outside of standard working hours.</p>



Utilities relocation work on the Coffs Harbour bypass

3.1 Design changes

Most of the individual responses received by the project team related to the design changes. Many of these were requests for clarification or more information about the changes and the reasons why they were made.

Most of the comments focused on Korora Hill and Coramba Road Interchanges, with only a few specifically relating to Englands Road.

There was also feedback received about the impact of the alignment on the White Booyong Fig Subtropical Rainforest ('Grandpa's Scrub') near Mackays Road.

3.1.1 Korora Hill Interchange and nearby area

Some of the specific concerns raised included:

- it is complicated and would be difficult for drivers to navigate
- the connection of the service roads to the interchange via the roundabouts
- the noise and visual impacts to nearby residents
- the inclusion of a noise wall at the intersection of the Pacific Highway and Charlesworth Bay Drive.

Other topics raised included the traffic lights at the intersection of the Pacific Highway and Charlesworth Bay Drive, visual amenity for the underpass near Coachmans Close and speed limits on the extension of Solitary Islands Way. Most of the specific feedback received was negative or neutral in sentiment.



Artist's impression of Korora Hill Interchange looking north

Response to Korora Hill Interchange feedback

The Korora Hill Interchange will have wayfinding signage to assist motorists in navigating to their destinations.

Local road accesses to the interchange will significantly improve safety as motorists will no longer turn directly onto or across the new highway. The extension of Solitary Islands Way will be 80km/h and then 60km/h closer to the interchange which will provide safer access for local residents to travel into and out of Coffs Harbour, join the new highway and travel north of Coffs Harbour via the Sapphire Beach Interchange.

The project is developing a Place Design and Landscape Plan (PDLP) which will address visual amenity and the proposed landscaping to be carried out across the new alignment. Coffs Harbour bypass will be seeking community feedback on this plan when it is displayed for public consultation later in 2023. The proposed landscaping near Coachmans Close will be addressed in this plan and feedback will be considered in finalising the project's Place Design and Landscape Plan.

There will be a noise wall built in the Korora area to mitigate operational noise for the new highway. This wall will be located between the extended Solitary Islands Way and the Pacific Highway from south of the Sapphire Beach Interchange to about 1km north of the Korora Hill Interchange, as described in the Amendment Report 2020. Localised increases in noise wall heights will be detailed in the ONR and the PDLP.

At this stage, TfNSW doesn't expect significant changes in noise levels from the refined design and will provide more information to the community after the ONR is approved.



“At this stage, TfNSW don't expect significant changes in noise levels from the refined design and will provide more information to the community after the ONR is approved.”

Response to general Korora feedback

Traffic lights will be provided at the intersection of the existing Pacific Highway and Charlesworth Bay Road to provide safe access for pedestrians, cyclists and traffic from Charlesworth Bay Road travelling north, as outlined in the project's 2020 Amendment Report. There have been no changes made to this intersection through the detailed design process.

As required by Minister's Conditions of Approval (MCoA) of the State Significant Infrastructure Approval, the project will prepare an Operational Noise Review (ONR) on the final design which will be submitted to the NSW Department of Planning Secretary for approval later in 2023.

At this stage, TfNSW doesn't expect significant changes in noise levels from the refined design but appropriate noise mitigation will be considered if required. Following the completion of the bypass, TfNSW will carry out noise monitoring and prepare a Noise Verification Report which will confirm levels and show if further noise mitigations are required for the operational phase of the bypass.

Any noise reports completed by external parties, which show that a noise wall is required for a future state of the site, would need to be exhibited publicly as part of relevant planning approvals for the site. If a development application was submitted for this site, TfNSW would work with the appropriate external parties through a Transport Infrastructure Contribution Deed and to facilitate a noise wall being installed as part of that development proposal.

3.1.2 Coramba Road Interchange and nearby area

Feedback about Coramba Road Interchange focused on the decision to move it further north and potential construction and operation impacts associated with that change. Other issues raised about the Coramba Road Interchange included:

- the additional travel time to use the interchange given it has been moved further north
- the need for the interchange and concern it would increase traffic on Coramba Road as motorists would use it to access the Coffs Harbour central business district
- noise impacts to nearby residents
- pavement and shoulder condition of Coramba Road between the interchange and Coffs Harbour central business district
- change in gradient of the southern ramps to avoid impact on Coffs Creek and the interchange sitting 2m higher
- visual amenity of the interchange for nearby residents and property owners
- Coramba Road bus interchange facilities.

While the sentiment about the changes was negative or neutral, there was some positive feedback received about the refinements to the interchange.



Artist's impression of Coramba Road Interchange looking north

Response to Coramba Road Interchange feedback

In TfNSW's Project Update on detailed design for the Coramba Road Interchange, it stated the interchange had been moved about 200m north of its previous location. This was an error, as the interchange will be between 260m and 350m north of its previous location, depending on the point of measurement from the Amendment Report location. There will be minor increased travel times for local motorists using the Coramba Road Interchange but it will also make the interchange safer due to the improved alignment to the current Coramba Road and the removal of the turn onto the northbound onramp to the new highway. This additional travel time is expected to be about five seconds for each one-way trip on the longest route to join the bypass and about one minute and 15 seconds for motorists travelling between Bennetts Road and Coramba Road.

The Coramba Road Interchange has been part of all previous designs for the Coffs Harbour bypass. It provides Coramba residents with better access to the new highway. Entry signage for Coffs Harbour will be installed at Englands Road Interchange and Korora Hill Interchange which will direct visitors to access Coffs Harbour from the north and south rather than the west.

In reducing impacts on Coffs Creek by moving the interchange further away from this waterway, TfNSW acknowledges the gradient has increased on the southern ramps from 1 percent to 4.7 percent. For the Coramba Road Interchange and as per previous designs, the two-roundabout interchange is an overpass of the new carriageway. This means there is a need to build up the two roundabouts to provide clearance for the new carriageway to go under the overpass.

Consistent with the Amendment Report, noise barriers will be built along the eastern side of the new highway and Coramba Road Interchange through to east of the Spagnolos Road intersection with Coramba Road to minimise operational noise for residents. Noise barrier heights and exact extents will be detailed within the ONR.

At this stage, TfNSW doesn't expect significant changes in noise levels from the refined design and will provide more information to the community after the ONR is approved.

The project is developing a Place Design and Landscape Plan which will address visual amenity and the proposed landscaping to be carried out across the new alignment. Coffs Harbour bypass will be seeking community feedback on this plan when it is displayed for public consultation later in 2023.

Response to general Coramba Road feedback

Coramba Road is under the control of the City of Coffs Harbour and improvements and maintenance of this road is the responsibility of the council.

For all local roads the project is using for access, TfNSW has carried out condition surveys before starting major construction. Throughout major construction TfNSW monitors the condition of sections of the road within the project boundary and undertakes any required maintenance. Before the end of the project, the major construction contractor is required to undertake a condition survey of the roads used to access the project and return these to current state. Where possible, haulage of material for this project will be along the alignment to reduce heavy vehicle movements on local roads, however throughout construction there will be increased heavy vehicles on local roads where materials need to be brought to site.

At this stage, there will be no changes to the bus stop at the intersection of Coramba Road and Spagnolos Road. Current bus shelters are expected to be retained and any additional shelters are the responsibility of the City of Coffs Harbour.

3.1.3 Englands Road Interchange and nearby area

There were only a few comments received about Englands Road Interchange. The comments included:

- access from private property owners south of the interchange about safe entry and exit from their driveways which connect directly to the Pacific Highway
- changing the current roundabout at the existing Pacific Highway, Stadium Drive and Englands Road to traffic lights
- closing access from the existing Pacific Highway into the Lindsay Transport property
- pavement condition of eastern end of Englands Road.

Response to Englands Road Interchange feedback



Artist's impression of Englands Road Interchange looking north

The service road on the western side of the Pacific Highway has been made two-way access for the safety of motorists and community. This improvement removes the need for large trucks to turn directly off the Pacific Highway to access businesses and to also use the Sawtell Interchange.

The traffic lights at the intersection of the existing Pacific Highway, Stadium Drive and Englands Road, has been in previous designs for the bypass project, including the Amendment Report. Installing traffic lights at this intersection improves safety for pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists. It also enables TfNSW to reduce the likelihood of queuing traffic on off ramps from the bypass when there are significant events being held at the C.ex Coffs Stadium.

Response to general Pacific Highway southern feedback

During the detailed design phase there was further investigation of the entry and exit driveway access of private property owners south of the interchange which connect directly to the Pacific Highway. This investigation included a review of the Coffs Harbour Bypass (Zones 1 and 3) Pre-Construction Concept Design Road Safety Audit and the Detailed Design RSA which identified a low risk. Accesses to private properties will not be upgraded as part of the Coffs Harbour bypass project. The Lindsay Transport property will no longer be accessible directly from the existing Pacific Highway. This includes closing access from the existing Pacific Highway into the Lindsay Transport property.

Englands Road is under the control of the City of Coffs Harbour and improvements and maintenance of this road is the responsibility of the council.

For all local roads the project is using for access, TfNSW has carried out condition surveys before starting major construction. Throughout major construction TfNSW monitors the condition of sections of the road within the project boundaries and undertakes any required maintenance. Before the end of the project, the major construction contractor is required to undertake a condition survey of the roads used to access the project and return these to current state. Where possible, haulage of material for this project will be along the alignment to reduce heavy vehicle movements on local roads, however throughout construction there will be increased heavy vehicles on local roads where materials need to be brought to site.

3.2 Noise

Concerns raised included change in noise for some properties because Coramba Road Interchange had been moved, eligibility of individual properties for at-house noise treatment, and impacts of construction noise for individual properties.

Response to general Pacific Highway noise feedback

As required by Minister's Conditions of Approval (MCoA) of the State Significant Infrastructure Approval, the project will prepare an Operational Noise Review (ONR) on the final design which will be submitted to the NSW Department of Planning Secretary for approval later in 2023. The ONR will be based on 2027 and 2037 traffic volume data given the new carriageway is due to open at the end of 2026. The ONR will confirm the noise mitigation measures required for operation of the Coffs Harbour Bypass, including a review of the suitability of operational noise mitigation measures identified in the Amendment Report (2024 year of opening). Based on the outcomes of the approved ONR, operational mitigation measures will be implemented to ensure the project complies with the MCoA and TfNSW's Road Noise Policy.

At this stage, TfNSW doesn't expect significant changes in noise levels from the refined design and will provide more information to the community after the ONR is approved.

On balance, there is expected to be an overall reduction in operational noise impacts and any additional required at-house noise treatments as a result of the design refinements. While there may be changes to treatment categories, or new properties requiring treatment, TfNSW is committed to treating properties as required in the Amendment Report, along with any new or changed property treatments identified as a result of these design refinements.

The project has strict requirements for managing noise impacts from construction work associated with the Planning Approval and the Environmental Protection Licence (EPL#21766) issued to the project. TfNSW is required to predict and monitor its noise levels to ensure it complies with these conditions. TfNSW's mitigation measures are implemented in accordance with the project's Construction Environment Management Plan, sub plans and relevant criteria from the Construction Noise and Vibration Guideline (Roads and Maritime, 2016a) and Noise Criteria Guideline (Roads and Maritime, 2015c).

Construction activities that have the potential to generate unwanted noise include:

- reversing alarms and beepers
- controlled blasting
- bulk earthworks
- rock hammering, drilling and crushing
- bridge building including installing piles
- concrete and asphalt manufacturing
- saw cutting of concrete and pavement.

Mitigation measures adopted to reduce and manage noise and vibration during construction may include:

- maximising the distance between noisy equipment and residential areas
- scheduling noisy work at less sensitive time periods (such as during normal daytime work hours where possible)
- regular maintenance of equipment
- installing noise control equipment on machinery and tools
- noise compliance/verification monitoring
- locating compounds, stockpiles and crushing plants as far as possible away from residential areas
- use of temporary noise barriers
- scheduling respite periods for annoying noise activities, such as rock hammering (such as two hours on, two hours off)
- installing noise mitigation treatments designed for road traffic noise as early as possible to provide additional relief during construction
- scheduling noise generating activities outside of school examination periods
- providing advanced notice of planned noisy work to neighbouring communities to help them plan.

Unfortunately, in some instances, TfNSW has limited options available to reduce noise impacts given the type and range of machinery and equipment required to carry out the tasks.

3.3 Environmental impacts

Issues raised included the impacts on Grandpas Scrub, the removal of asbestos from individual properties and the mitigations proposed for reduced impacts to native animals in the Korora area.

Response to environmental impacts feedback

In response to community feedback, TfNSW has investigated design refinements to mitigate impacts to the White Booyong Fig Subtropical Rainforest (Grandpa's scrub). The changes will move the alignment north and save 100 percent of the remnant rainforest. The optimised design also means squeezing the carriageways closer together and moving the Mackays Road underpass north, away from the forest, thereby adjusting the footprint of the motorway to avoid the remnant rainforest.

TfNSW is still committed to protect more than 300 hectares of natural habitat through biodiversity offsets on the Coffs Harbour bypass project. TfNSW will protect more than five times the required offsets for White Booyong Fig (Grandpa's Scrub) rainforest. These offsets include the Coffs Basin adjacent to the alignment and Upper Kalang. Together these offsets and the measures to save Grandpa's Scrub are very positive measures for the environment around the bypass and Coffs Harbour more generally. TfNSW is investigating the possibility of expanding the rainforest downstream along areas of Treefern Creek, which have been deforested. This could result in tripling the size of the remnant forest. During major construction for the Coffs Harbour bypass, asbestos containing materials (ACM) were found at several locations within the project boundary. The ACM must be removed and relocated safely.

TfNSW has engaged a licensed local contractor to safely remove, relocate and dispose of the ACM and an experienced independent hygienist will be onsite during this work.



“Extensive landscaping and revegetation work covering about 150 hectares, at this stage, will be carried out as part of the project.”

The safety of workers and the community is our highest priority and there are strict measures in place to minimise risks and reduce any potential harm. All work will be carried out in line with the relevant legislation, SafeWork NSW codes of practice and the TfNSW Asbestos Management Plan. For more information about asbestos management on the project, please view our factsheet at www.pacifichighway/coffsharbourbypass.nsw.gov.au.

TfNSW acknowledges acknowledge major linear projects, like the Coffs Harbour bypass, can impact threatened species and native wildlife and TfNSW is aiming to mitigate these impacts as much as possible. Through detailed design refinements, TfNSW has reduced native vegetation clearing by 20 percent from the approved 48.17 hectares to about 38 hectares.

The project team continues to be committed to reducing the amount of vegetation to be removed as much as possible across the bypass.

Extensive landscaping and revegetation work covering about 150 hectares, at this stage, will be carried out as part of the project. Details will be included in the Place Design and Landscape Plan which the project team will be placing on public display later this year for feedback.

TfNSW will be restoring koala habitat and connectivity at several locations including over the Roberts Hill and Gatelys Road tunnels and under the bypass at Jordans Creek. Through the project's dedicated koala revegetation work, TfNSW will be restoring eight hectares of previously cleared agricultural land as koala habitat. This work will reconnect bushland from the escarpment to the low-lying areas of Coffs Harbour creating a significant fauna corridor. This corridor will benefit other fauna species and will be started two years prior to the bypass completion with each area being protected in perpetuity. The project's koala habitat restoration work will complement the City of Coffs Harbour Koala Plan. The project will also protect roughly 300 hectares of natural habitat through biodiversity offsets including the Coffs Basin adjacent to the alignment and Upper Kalang near Urunga. TfNSW has also contributed more than \$270,000 to NSW Biodiversity Conservation division for research into the management of Myrtle Rust and its impacts on the Scrub Turpentine species. For more information, read the project's vegetation removal and landscape and habitat restoration factsheet at www.pacifichighway/coffsharbourbypass.gov.au.



“Through the project’s dedicated koala revegetation work, TfNSW will be restoring eight hectares of previously cleared agricultural land as koala habitat.”

Other benefits of the updated design include minimising biodiversity impacts. The design improvements will reduce the project's construction carbon footprint by reducing the number of traffic changes required during construction. TfNSW's detailed design has reduced almost 70,000 tonnes of CO₂ equivalent of carbon emissions through optimisations including reduced vegetation removal, higher than usual percentage of fly ash (a waste product of coal-fire power generation) in the project's concrete, using recycled plastic for noise walls, and laying a low noise asphalt pavement, which requires less materials.

Design changes reduce native vegetation clearing by 20 percent from the approved 48.17 hectares to about 38 hectares. During selection of the route for the bypass, the preferred alignment was chosen, in part, because it had less environmental and biodiversity impacts compared to other options. The project team continues to be committed to reducing the amount of vegetation to be removed as much as possible across the bypass. Through detailed design, the alignment has been moved to retain the White Booyong Fig Subtropical Rainforest (Grandpa's Scrub) and the Kororo Nature Reserve will not be impacted.

Through detailed design refinements, TfNSW has reduced earthwork excavation for the project by 350,000m³ and reduced excess earthwork materials from about 250,000m³ to almost no spoil required to leave the project site.

Finally, the refined design of the interchanges seeks to provide a robust landscape that will be in proportion with the scale of the intersection and road infrastructure.

3.4 Visual amenity

Community members asked for more information about the visual amenity of the bypass, particularly about the landscaping that would be implemented at the interchanges as well as along the alignment. They also requested information about the height and types of noise walls.

Response to visual amenity feedback

While the project is still finalising the Place Design and Landscape Plan for public exhibition later in 2023, TfNSW wanted to prove some high-level information about TfNSW’s proposed approach to visual amenity.

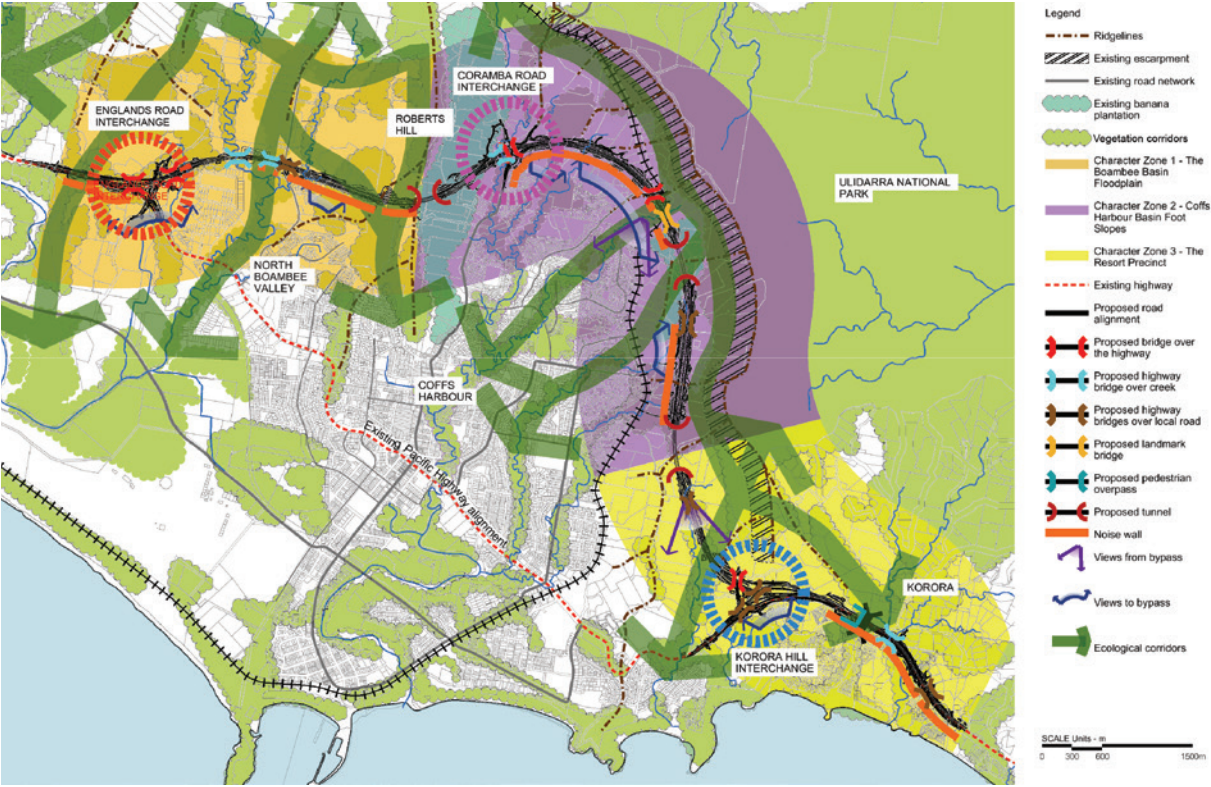


Figure 1-4 Map outlining the character zones for the draft Place Design and Landscape Plan

The landscape design and revegetation strategy has been developed to provide a strong emphasis on creating a well-vegetated corridor with distinctive intersections, and interchanges. Planting will be used at key areas of decision or focus. Emphasis is placed on the use of seed mixes to revegetate the corridor with tree seedlings used beyond the first bench above or below the corridor to ensure compliance with sightlines and maintenance requirements. The underlying landscape strategy responds to the three distinct character zones along the alignment:

Character Zone 1 – The Boambee Basin with plant community types including:

- Blackbutt being Tallowwood moist ferny open forest of the coastal ranges of the NSW North Coast Bioregion
- Paperbark swamp forest of the coastal lowlands of the NSW North Coast Bioregion and Sydney Basin Bioregion.

Character Zone 2 – Coffs Harbour Basin Foothills with plant community types including:

- Blackbutt/Turpentine being Tallowwood shrubby open forest of the coastal foothills of the central NSW North Coast Bioregion
- Brush Box/Tallowwood being Sydney Blue Gum tall moist forest of the ranges of the central NSW North Coast Bioregion.

Character Zone 3 – The Resort Precinct with plant community types including:

- Sydney Blue Gum open forest on coastal foothills and escarpment of the North Coast
- Turpentine moist open forest of the coastal hills and ranges of the NSW North Coast Bioregion
- Blackbutt being Tallowwood moist ferny open forest of the coastal ranges of the NSW North Coast Bioregion
- Blackbutt/Turpentine – Tallowwood shrubby open forest of the coastal foothills of the central NSW North Coast Bioregion.

The design of the interchanges seeks to provide a robust landscape commensurate with the scale of the intersection and road infrastructure. An emphasis is consequently placed on the establishment of canopy to define and lead the road environment through the intersection. Plant selection is being informed by response to country with engagement ongoing in relation to species selection and its meaning. Tree selection aims to be distinctive and of the place and considers colours, texture and flowering of the species used.

The project is working with Gumbaynggirr artists on design to be incorporated into the alignment and particularly the noise walls which will be made from recycled plastic. Noise wall heights will not be reduced from what was previously advised in the 2020 Amendment Report with final heights to be informed by the Operational Noise Report.

The project's draft Place Design and Landscape Plan will be placed on public display later in 2023 for community and stakeholder feedback.

3.5 Cyclists

There were requests for extra provisions for cyclists, including links to the service road at Englands Road, a shared path from Charlesworth Bay Drive to Diggers Beach and the building of a cycleway at McCauleys headland.

Response to cycling and pedestrian feedback

The project is providing extensive cycling access across the alignment. There is a new shared path being built on the eastern side of the Pacific Highway to connect to existing cycleways. These will provide better access for cyclists and pedestrians between Coffs Harbour and Sawtell Road. The new service road is expected to accommodate significant truck movements and will therefore not have a cycleway.

Provision of cycling paths along local roads is the role and responsibility of City of Coffs Harbour. Extensions to cycling paths at Charlesworth Bay Drive, Diggers Beach and McCauleys headland are outside the scope of the Coffs Harbour bypass project.

3.6 Consultation

Negative feedback was received about the times for the community information sessions, with criticism being they weren't held outside of working hours.

Response to consultation feedback

The project team held two community information session outside of standard working hours. These were at the Coffs Harbour Racecourse on Saturday 4 February from 10am to 3pm and the Coffs Harbour Golf Club on Monday 6 February 2023 from 3pm to 6pm.

The project team was also available via its 1800 number and email to provide information on the detailed design refinements. The project team continues to be available on its 1800 number, email address and will do community information sessions and pop-up events across Coffs Harbour to provide information, answer questions and receive complaints.



4. Next steps and further information

Community feedback has been passed to the project's design team which is considering it as they continue to refine and finalise the design. However, significant changes are not expected at this stage.

The project is proactively continuing to engage with the community and stakeholders including doing regular pop-up sessions, using the community information van, across Coffs Harbour.

The project team will continue to consult with the community and stakeholders. You can contact the project team at:

Phone: 1800 550 621

Email: community@chbteam.com.au

Post: Coffs Harbour bypass project, PO Box 565, Toormina

Visit: www.pacifichighway/coffsharbourbypass.nsw.gov.au for details of upcoming community information sessions and pop-up events.



Coffs Harbour bypass community information van



Korara Hill Interchange - view from north bound lanes

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