



# **Gareth Ward MP**

## **Deputy Government Whip**

### **Member for Kiama**

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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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13 February 2015

## **WARD OFFICIALLY OPENS OMEGA BRIDGE TO TRAFFIC**

Member for Kiama Gareth Ward has today officially opened Omega Bridge to traffic, marking a major milestone as part of the \$329 million Princes Highway upgrade at Gerringong.

Mr Ward said that the new bridge, which replaces the railway level crossing at Fern Street Gerringong, is a key feature of the Princes Highway upgrade between Mount Pleasant and Toolijooa Road.

“So many said ‘you’ll never deliver this project’. Today we get to celebrate yet another tremendous step forward to completing this job,” Mr Ward said.

“This is a great day for the community and motorists accessing Gerringong.

“The 350 metre long and 460 tonne bridge links Fern Street with the Princes Highway just north of Gerringong and provides a safer crossing over the rail line for all motorists and will improve traffic flow.

“Omega Bridge is already somewhat of a local landmark as it curves up out of a flat surrounding landscape, making it highly visible from the nearby highway and countryside.”

Work on the bridge started in late 2013 with a specialised technique known as ‘incremental launching’ used to build it.

“This means the bridge was pushed across the railway line with each segment moved forward, allowing space for the next segment to be made directly behind it,” he said.

“This building method was chosen to reduce the impact on the local community, traffic and the railway line which are in a narrow corridor between the existing highway, Fern Street and the railway line.”

The name Omega Bridge was suggested by the Gerringong and District Historical Society and some community members.

“The bridge crosses the site where the old Omega railway station once stood,” he said.

“The Omega station was built when the railway line opened in 1893 and was named after the Omega estate on Mount Pleasant.

“The Princes Highway upgrade at Gerringong provides 7.5 kilometres of two lane highway between Mount Pleasant and Toolijooa Road.

“The upgrade includes two new interchanges for access to Gerringong and Gerroa.

“Gerringong has also seen an economic boom from the highway upgrade with 250 local and transient workers using the town and surrounds as their base during work.

“The upgrade is expected to be finished mid-2015, weather permitting.

“I know that this past week has seen heavy delays for Gerringong residents. I extend my apologies for any difficulties faced by locals. We can now see the light at the end of this tunnel,” Mr Ward concluded.

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