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**GIRDERS PLACED ON BERRY BRIDGE AS PRINCES HIGHWAY UPGRADE PROGRESSES**

Parliamentary Secretary for the Illawarra and South Coast, and Member for Kiama Gareth Ward has today inspected the first girders placed on the Berry bridge as part of the $580 million Foxground and Berry bypass project.

Mr Ward said that the Berry bridge will be more than 620 metres long and have a total of 228 girders.

“Seeing the girders placed on the bridge is a great example of the progress being made on this key Princes Highway upgrade project,” he said.

“The girders will form the bridge deck and are being lifted into place using a 500 tonne crane.

“Work will be ongoing to install the girders until mid-next year, weather permitting.

“It’s amazing to think only 10 months ago, the first sod was turned on this project and now work is progressing on all 16 bridges and underpasses being built as part of the new 12.5 kilometre four lane divided highway between Toolijooa Road and Andersons Lane.

“Girders have already been installed at two of the three crossings across Broughton Creek, while 60 of the 72 girders have been installed on the third Broughton Creek crossing, with the remaining girders to be installed early next year.

“To date, 219 out of a total of 396 large concrete beams being manufactured in Newcastle for the main bridges have been delivered,” he said.

“A further 64 smaller beams have been manufactured in Bendigo and are ready for delivery and storage on site in preparation for work on the minor bridges.

“More than 326,000 cubic metres of material has also been removed as a result of 22 controlled blasts across four locations.

“Temporary roads have also been built next to the Princes Highway near Tindalls Lane, Austral Park Road, Kangaroo Valley Road and near Schofields Lane to allow work to progress,” Mr Ward said.
“Town Creek has also been diverted into Bundewallah Creek and a section of Bundewallah Creek has been diverted to make space for some of the piers for the Berry bridge.

“There has been significant interaction with local Landcare groups about the type of native species to be used for final landscaping work.

“The bypass is expected to be completed by mid-2018, weather permitting,” Mr Ward concluded.

MEDIA: Gareth Ward 0401 499 933 or Kiama Electorate Office (02) 4232 1082