9 June, 2017

PLANNING PROGRESSES FOR NEW ENGLAND HIGHWAY BYPASS OF SCONE

Michael Johnsen MP, Member for Upper Hunter today announced work on the New England Highway bypass of Scone is progressing well, with further field investigations now completed to help finalise the detailed design.

“The Australian and NSW governments are jointly providing $120 million to build the Scone bypass which aims to improve traffic flow, travel times and safety,” Mr. Johnsen said.

“With the environmental assessment for the bypass finalised in April last year, the proposed bypass has been approved and detailed design is progressing well.

Additional field investigations were carried out earlier this year to inform detailed design and included surveying to find underground services and geotechnical investigations to understand ground conditions along the bypass,” Mr. Johnsen added.

Mr. Johnsen Roads and Maritime Services is also continuing to work with Upper Hunter Shire Council to consider options for a rail bridge.

“Timing for a future rail bridge is not confirmed and would be dependent on planning approval and funding availability,” Mr. Johnsen said.

“Roads and Maritime thanks the community for providing feedback and remaining actively engaged throughout the planning process.

There were 211 submissions received in response to the environmental assessment public display and 187 submissions received about the three rail bridge options in late 2015 and early 2016,” Mr. Johnsen said.
A number of changes were made to the bypass concept design as a result of the feedback, with the main issues relating to lack of connectivity at the southern and northern bypass intersections, the proposed speed limit, loss of passing trade, traffic and access impacts, concerns about the St Aubins Street intersection, other alternatives and impact to emergency services.

There was limited support for the displayed rail bridge options with some submissions questioning the need for the rail bridge once the bypass is completed and others suggesting a bridge over the rail line to the north of town may be more appropriate.

Roads and Maritime expects tenders for construction of the bypass to be called in the next three months.

Further information about the New England Highway bypass of Scone including a project update is available online at www.rms.nsw.gov.au and will posted to residents in the coming weeks.

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