Oxley Highway
Wrights Road to the Pacific Highway, Project summary

The new 6 kilometre Oxley Highway Upgrade between Wrights Road roundabout and the Pacific Highway commenced construction in 2008 and opened to traffic on 7 February 2012. The project was fully funded by the NSW Government.

Project benefits

The new Oxley Highway upgrade provides local access and allows commuters and freight access to Port Macquarie, Wauchope and other regional centres.

This project provides major benefits:

• Improved road safety.
• Improved travel times for motorists travelling from Wauchope and surrounding areas into Port Macquarie.
• Extensive landscaping and urban design initiatives including a gateway feature at the entrance to Port Macquarie.
• Animals able to safely cross the new road using fauna underpasses, glider crossings and a rope bridge for other tree based animals.

Facts and figures

Construction of the 6km long dual carriageway involved:

• 340,000 m³ of earthworks.
• 190,000 tonne of bridging layer rock.
• 38,000 m³ of concrete pavement.
• 4 metre noise wall panels on a one metre earth mound for 1.5km.
• 4 bridges (2 pairs) over local roads.
• 36 culvert cells installed for drainage across the highway.
• Over 200 staff worked on the project.
Oxley Highway Upgrade between Wrights Road and the Pacific Highway.

Western end intersection

A multi lane roundabout has been constructed just east of the existing roundabout at the Pacific Highway service centre. This roundabout will provide access to the new highway into Port Macquarie as well as John Oxley Drive.
Philip Charley Drive is 2km from Wrights Road roundabout. This interchange offers a grade separated connection to John Oxley Drive. Construction is continuing on the Philip Charley Drive Interchange. This interchange is expected to be competed by May, weather permitting. Prior to completion, access to the Philip Charley Drive roundabout and surrounding area is only via John Oxley Drive. When completed, motorists travelling west towards the Pacific Highway have an opportunity to enter the new Oxley Highway using this interchange.
Wrights Road roundabout was constructed as part of preliminary works. It is a multi-lane roundabout that allows for access into the Hospital and John Oxley Drive at the eastern end of the project. A slip lane will provide an opportunity for eastbound traffic to bypass the roundabout.
A new gateway to Port Macquarie

- A gateway for the main entrance into Port Macquarie consisting of round aluminium poles that form two distinct forms:
  - One group stands firmly on the ground, symbolising the domestic space, protective and nurturing.
  - The second is inverted symbolising individuals, reaching outward, open to the sky, the world, and symbolising the 'connected community, mobile and open.
  - These two forms by their complimentary interaction create a third diamond like shape, symbolising strength through culture, where the two positive trends in society form the true heart of the community.

Environment. What did we achieve?

- Relocation of 12 koalas to an area 20km south west of the site. The koalas have adapted to their new environment. New koalas are prevented from entering the new highway by floppy topped mesh fencing.
- Nest boxes placed in surrounding trees in the western timbered section of the project. These are in compensation for the hollows lost in trees removed.
- Glider poles for squirrel gliders and yellow bellied gliders. These poles are 28 m in height.
- A rope bridge providing safe crossing opportunities for possums and other tree canopy animals.
- Hydro-mulched embankments that included native tree seeds in the mulch sprayed. The tree species include feed trees for koalas and the glossy black cockatoo.
- There are some stands of threatened species Melaleuca biconvexa on the southern side of the alignment. The alignment was shifted to the north in the design stage to avoid these trees.
- Box culverts were provided as combined drainage / fauna underpasses.
- Two dedicated fauna underpasses that include “furniture” such as poles, rocks and logs used for animals to take refuge in the crossing.
- New bridges in the western section go over the future Carlie Jane Drive that will link with the traffic lights near the new school.

Community involvement in construction

Since construction started residents have been kept informed on the progress of this project. Local residents received phone calls, notifications, letters and emails. A dedicated project website and an information line were established.

Activities such as site tours and presentations helped communicate with the local community. These were well received and an interesting way for the community and stakeholders to learn about the project.

The project team held community information sessions where attendees gained an understanding of the complexities of constructing a new highway and appreciated learning about the project.

Regular community updates and notifications informed the community of significant milestones.
Our final celebration

In December 2011 RMS held a community day to celebrate the imminent opening. This was an opportunity for residents to visit the upgrade before it was officially opened to traffic on 7 February 2012.