

Foxground and Berry bypass

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) on the project website updated June 2012

Southern Berry bypass review

On Monday 25 June 2012 the NSW Government announced it was proceeding with a northern bypass alignment as the cost of a southern route is not financially feasible compared to the northern route.

Q. Is Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) reviewing a southern bypass of Berry?

A. Yes. RMS has costed a southern Berry alternative to compare with the cost of the preferred northern bypass alignment.

Understanding the relative cost difference between the two has assisted RMS in determining the financial viability of the suggested southern Berry bypass route and recommending a way forward to the Minister for Roads and Ports.

Q. How was the decision made?

A. RMS Chief Executive provided the Minister for Roads and Ports with a recommendation, along with the RMS technical information group report and the SMEC independent review report. The Minister then made the decision to proceed with a northern bypass alignment.

Q. What were the respective costs?

A. The initial costs estimates:

- northern preferred route is \$546 million;
- southern suggestion is \$694 million.

Some infrastructure items can be added in and some can be removed from these costs. This is described in the Fact Sheet on the documents page. Even without adding the cost of the sewerage treatment plant realignment to the southern suggestion and with including cost of the northbound off ramp under Kangaroo Valley Rd to the northern route, the difference between the routes is still over \$130 million.

Q. What were the respective construction timeframes?

A. The overall design and construction completion times from the date of award of contract, following the environmental assessment, including providing for inclement weather, are estimated at:

- northern preferred route, starting approximately mid 2013 – 32 months;
 - southern route suggestion, starting approximately late 2014 – 40 months.
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The start time for construction is later because the environmental assessment and concept design process has been ongoing for the northern but not started for the southern.

Q. How can the community respond to the Minister's decision?

A. For information on the materials provided to the Minister, the community can contact the 1800#, visit the project website, go to the Berry project office, attend a community meeting or write to RMS project team. RMS will continue this engagement with the community by providing access to and information about the reports provided to the Minister's office so the community can understand the investigations, the decision and its implications. They will be able to participate further in the project under the Department of Planning and Infrastructure environmental impact statement phase. Please see our contact details below:

- Project information line 1800 506 976
- Project email
foxgroundandberrybypass@rms.nsw.gov.au
- Project website
<http://www.rms.nsw.gov.au/fbb>
- Berry project office (Broughton Court) shop 3.113 Queen Street Berry (open on Fridays 10am – 5pm)
- Regular contact with the project email database
- Letterbox drop project updates
- Meetings on request with individuals, groups and stakeholders

Q. What was the technical investigation group?

A. RMS established a technical investigation group of people of 27 industry experts from seven organisations to collaborate on this investigation. This gave RMS a strong level of assurance about the robustness of the design. Notes from this group, the brief for the technical investigation group and its weekly reports were posted on the project website. Cost estimates for the two routes including details behind the cost categories, such as structures and embankments are available in the *Report on Route Feasibility Comparative Cost Estimates*, June 2012. This report was provided to the Minister.

The technical investigation group consisted of RMS personnel, RMS's engineering consultants AECOM and independent experts in the field of construction, bridge design, geotechnical investigations and estimating.

Determinations were made on the basis of evidence gathered from fieldwork and desk top research for design elements such as the concept road height above sea level, the type of structures carrying the roadway, flood levels, and the draft cost estimate assumptions. For example peak flood levels were determined from the flooding and hydraulic studies, and this information was discussed by the technical investigation group and considered to be reasonable.

The independent review

Q. What was the independent review and what did this include?

A. An iterative, twofold check was carried out by:

- An internal RMS estimating review team totally separate to the technical investigation group and its process, located in Parramatta.
- An external independent review, led by Dan Reeve, the General Manager of SMEC Transport Group.

Broadly, the scope of the reviewers covered testing the robustness of the information in the report published by the technical investigation group. In doing so the reviewers:

- Had access to all information sources the technical investigation group used.
- Were able to request meetings with any of the technical investigation group to interrogate and challenge assumptions made.
- Attended technical investigation group meetings as required, community meetings and any other meeting they felt appropriate during the investigation process.

A [report](#) detailing the findings of the independent reviewers is available on the project website. This report was provided to the Minister.

Q. Who was appointed to undertake the role of external independent reviewer?

A. SMEC, a multi-disciplinary engineering services company with extensive experience in highway and road design and delivery, was

appointed to undertake the role of independent reviewer.

Q. Who paid for the external independent reviewer?

A. Following standard procurement procedures for RMS work, the external independent reviewer was engaged by RMS.

Q. How were the independent reviewers involved in the process?

A. The independent reviewers had ongoing involvement with the technical investigation group as it carried out its investigations and prepared its report (to challenge ideas, decisions and assumptions made) and also undertook a final review of the report after it was submitted.

The investigation

Q. What were the findings of the southern bypass costing review?

A. The findings of the southern bypass costing review have been published in the [Report on Route Feasibility Comparative Cost Estimates](#), June 2012. The investigations produced a cost estimate of \$546 million for the preferred northern alignment compared with a cost estimate of \$694 million for the suggested southern alignment.

Q. Does this mean the southern Berry bypass review was a waste of time?

A. No. In preparing the environmental assessment of the preferred northern alignment for the proposed Foxground and Berry bypass feasible alternatives for the Berry bypass need to be considered. This review of costs has confirmed the northern route provides better value for

money compared to the southern route, with a difference of over \$100 million.

Q. How much did the southern Berry bypass review cost?

A. Approximately \$3million. This included the cost of the geotechnical field studies, interpretation of data and reports, the geometric design work, all communications including the report writing and consultation activities, hydrological studies, project management, the Independent Review team, the constructability assessments, and detailed costing analysis.

Q. Did the review include consideration of factors such as amenity, heritage and noise?

A. No. The review only included construction cost items such as structures, earthworks, pavement and land acquisition. However, where it was clear that an environmental impact with a significant cost would need to be addressed, such as noise walls, a preliminary assessment of cost was made. RMS needed to understand costs first to evaluate whether a southern bypass was financially viable.

Q. How was a fair and equitable comparison made considering the preferred northern alignment has progressed so far compared to a southern suggestion?

A. RMS prepared a design for the suggested southern Berry bypass route to a level of detail that allowed costs to be compared. RMS undertook field work such as geotechnical investigations and flood studies to ensure

important engineering factors that influence cost, such as ground conditions and flooding levels, were better known to allow robust cost estimates to be produced.

Q. Why did RMS review the feasibility of the suggested southern Berry bypass route?

A. RMS received a submission in December 2011 from a local resident that challenged some of the estimates and assumptions used to discontinue investigations in 2007. This is on the website. In early 2012 the NSW Government asked RMS to investigate the cost viability of the suggested southern Berry bypass route. [View submission.](#)

Kangaroo Valley Interchange

Q. What do the revised design changes to the Kangaroo Valley Road Interchange achieve?

A. The revised design changes:

1. Would reduce noise and visual impacts on residences in the Huntingdale Park Estate and Kangaroo Valley Road;
2. Would preserve Mark Radium Park as a local park;
3. Would reduce the amount of property acquisitions on Kangaroo Valley Road;
4. Would provide pedestrian connectivity from Kangaroo Valley Road to Mark Radium Park and Victoria, Queen and North Streets; and
5. Would help reduce flooding in Berry with the diversion of Town Creek

Q. Why has RMS submitted a concept design that closes Victoria St?

A. The cul de sac option is being used so the team can proceed to complete the environmental assessment. It does not represent any 'final' decision which would only be made following community feedback during the environmental assessment display period. This decision rests with the Director General of the Department of Planning and Infrastructure. The traffic study presented at the Thursday June 14 Berry Alliance forum has been made available on the project website. RMS welcomes all community feedback on this issue to inform the 'final' decision.

Bridge over Woodhill Mountain Road and Broughton Mill and Bundewallah Creeks

Q. Is the design of the bridge finalised?

A. No. As with most road and bridge proposals, design of the bridge is being carried out in two stages, with a concept design followed by a detailed design.

The concept design of the bridge is being finalised in preparation for the public display of the environmental assessment of the Foxground and Berry bypass. The community will be able to make submissions about all aspects of the bridge design (as well as the whole proposed project) including:

- Shape and spacing of bridge piers
- Deck joints and safety railings
- Noise mitigation measures
- Landscaping
- Pedestrian amenities

- Final shape of cuttings and embankments

RMS will consider submissions received before finalising the concept design.

Once RMS has considered all the submissions and project approval has been gained, the detailed design process can begin in preparation for construction.

Q. What are the dimensions of the bridge?

A. Based on the concept design which resulted from the work by the community in 2011, the bridge dimensions are:

- Approximately 600 metres long
- Approximately 25 metres wide
- Approximately 12 metres above the Broughton Mill Creek bank level to the bridge deck as it leaves the ridge
- Approximately 6.5 metres above Woodhill Mountain Road to the bridge deck
- Approximately 3.5 metres to the bridge deck at the southern abutment

Q. Would it have visual benefits to build Woodhill Mountain Road over the bypass, based on the current concept design, therefore lowering the bridge?

A. No. A bridge of this nature would need to be of a similar height to a bypass bridge to accommodate flooding and truck clearances for the highway and the large approach embankments would also have a negative visual impact.

In addition, the two approach ramp embankments would:

- Be in the order of 250 metres long and potentially impact flooding patterns.
- Would adversely impact access to the Camp Quality Park

Q. Am I able to get a copy of the bridge concept design?

A. Yes, these can also be viewed at RMS' Berry project office.

Concept design of the Foxground to Berry bypass

Q. When will the community be able to offer their opinions on the final concept design?

A. Community feedback on the concept design is essential. Comments can be made at any time by email, phone call or in person at the Berry project office while the design is being developed. The last opportunity to comment will be when the completed concept design is placed on public display for at least a 30 day period during the display of the environmental assessment.

Q. When would the detailed design start?

A. If the proposed upgrade is approved by the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure and funding is available, the detailed design will follow.

Q. How was the 'preferred route' of the upgraded highway originally decided?

A. The process commenced in March 2006 when RMS advised the community it was undertaking an options and route selection process within a defined study area. RMS prepared and then reduced a long list of options using a qualitative process of comparison. The community were then

asked to comment on the short list of options. The results of public submissions, the environmental and technical studies were all used to then compare the shortlisted options in the value management process. RMS conducted a value management workshop to compare only the shortlisted routes and advise of next steps.

As a result of community comment that included requests for a southern bypass of Berry to be considered in the shortlisted process, RMS conducted a peer review of the short listing process. This report is on the [website](#). Strategic costs on a suggested southern Berry bypass route were prepared from existing information. RMS then considered these studies and selected the preferred northern alignment and design. The Government announced the preferred route in 2009.

During this process RMS conducted 34 public meetings and workshops and received over 1,000 submissions which were considered in response to the display of the route options.

The request to review the costs of a southern bypass was received in December 2011. See above Q and A for more information.

Q. If the preferred route was announced in 2009, why is the preferred alignment around Berry being reviewed?

A. In August 2011, Member for Kiama Gareth Ward announced a review of the Berry bypass in the area immediately north of Berry township, noting that not enough had been done to maintain noise and visual amenity close to Berry.

RMS committed to a process to re-examine the concept design in this area with the community and invited interested members of the community to be part of a community review group. RMS agreed to work through options in more detail with the community, with a focus on improving the aesthetics and form of the Berry bridge and aiming to keep the overall alignment as low as possible to minimise environmental and community impacts.

The revised Berry bypass option was presented to the community on 6 December 2011 and the community was invited to provide feedback during a two week display period from 1 December 2011 to 14 December 2011. The [Berry bypass alignment issues report](#) provides a summary of the issues raised during the public display.

The Berry bypass update to the preferred alignment and Berry (south) interchange was announced on 11 January 2012.

Q. What do the poles along North Street represent?

A. These poles have been put in place to help the community visualise the height of the proposed noise wall and its distance from homes along North Street.

This is in line with the revised Berry bypass alignment which has been lowered by up to two metres between Alexandra and George streets adjacent to North Street. This lowering reduces the visual impacts of the noise wall.

RMS has placed eight white poles on the northern side of North and George streets. The poles have

been placed approximately (to within half a metre) on the line of the proposed noise wall between Berry and the new road.

Based on a four metre high noise wall, the top of each pole indicates the height the noise wall.

Q. Are there any environmental (flora and fauna) impacts associated with the diversion of Town Creek?

A. RMS appointed specialists will undertake studies into the impacts on water quality, flooding and aquatic and terrestrial ecology in relation to both Town Creek and Bundewallah Creek in early 2012. Findings from these studies will be documented as part of the environmental assessment.

Q. When will RMS talk to me about purchasing my property?

A. Normally RMS would commence negotiations for property purchases once project approval has been achieved and funding is available for detailed design and construction.

More detailed information on the RMS' land acquisition process is contained in its publication "[RMS land acquisition information guide, February 2012](#)".

Q. Is RMS listening to all members of the community?

A. Yes. RMS' community consultation demonstrates that there is a range of groups and individuals who hold strong views on the project. RMS has a responsibility to consult with the whole community to identify all issues relating to the project, not just those presented by the

loudest groups and individuals. RMS will continue to offer the following as part of our ongoing community engagement:

- Project information line 1800 506 976
- Project email foxgroundandberrybypass@rms.nsw.gov.au
- Project website www.rms.nsw.gov.au/fbb
- Berry project office (Broughton Court) shop 3.113 Queen Street Berry (open on Fridays 10am – 5pm)
- Regular contact with the project email database
- Letterbox drop project updates
- Meetings on request with individuals, groups and stakeholders

Q. Am I able to have a look at a copy of the draft concept design?

A. Yes, come in to the Berry project office between 10am – 5pm on a Friday and we can give you a copy of the particular parts of the project you are interested in, alternatively contact us and we can make arrangements to assist your request.
