Some answers to frequently asked community questions are provided below.

**Package 1 - Duplication of the Barton Highway from the ACT border towards Murrumbateman**

**What is happening now?**
We are currently carrying out investigation work to help inform the concept design and environmental assessment. These assessments include identifying archaeological artefacts, carrying out engineering surveys and contamination inspections, geotechnical test pitting and sampling, potholing to locate utilities, noise monitoring and drainage, environmental and other field investigations as needed.

Detailed design will focus on the technical aspects such as culverts, bridges, drains, signs, lines, intersections and property access.

**When will the design and construct contract be awarded?**
Roads and Maritime Services, on behalf of the NSW Government, is seeking Registrations of Interest from industry to design and construct Package 1.

Shortlisted contractors enter into a competitive tender process to demonstrate innovation to maximise the length of duplication and deliver value for money outcomes, without compromising on safety. The contract is expected to be awarded in early 2019.

**When will this section of duplication be finished?**
Once detailed design has been completed in 2019, it is anticipated construction will start in late 2019.

**Why is the duplication starting from Hall and not Murrumbateman or Yass?**
We have started duplication from the ACT border as this section has higher traffic volumes and a higher crash rate. It will also meet the growing transport demands and ease congestion approaching the Canberra Region.

**What will the traffic impacts be during construction?**
It is yet to be determined what the traffic impacts to the existing highway could be during construction however temporary closures of traffic lanes, changes to accesses at intersections and driveways and reduced speed limits would be likely at times. We will advise road users of changed traffic conditions during construction.

**Is a cycle path being considered?**
Current funding is focussed on providing as much duplicated highway as possible from the ACT border towards Murrumbateman.

The provision of a cycleway will be considered as part of the strategic business case for the Barton Highway.

**What impacts will the project have on native animals in the area?**
We are currently carrying out ecology surveys to identify the different flora and fauna in the area.

Ecology assessments will be available in the Review of Environmental Factors (REF), including how we propose to mitigate potential impacts.

**What noise impacts will there be to residents along the highway?**
Noise assessments are being carried out to identify existing noise levels along the highway.

Further to these investigations, engineering assessments will determine the predicted noise levels based on the proposed road design and the surrounding environment.

The outcome of these investigations will be available in the REF and will include recommendations to mitigate noise.
What impact will the project have on trees and native vegetation in the area and how will these impacts be lessened?

Construction of Package 1 is likely to result in the removal of some native vegetation, including trees. The concept design seeks to minimise impacts to native vegetation and where possible avoid the need to remove trees.

We will work with key stakeholders and Yass Valley Council to determine how the removal of trees and native vegetation can be offset in accordance with legislative requirements. The locations and types of plantings would be considered as part of the detailed design for the project.

Package 2 - Concept planning and environmental assessment for future duplication of the Barton Highway

What is the timeframe for duplication of the next section

Similar to Package 1, we will be carrying out concept planning and some environmental assessment to examine potential impacts. This will include geotechnical, engineering, road safety and environmental investigations.

Package 2 will be staged and prioritised within the business case for future work.

What is happening with the Murrumbateman bypass?

The strategic business case for the Barton Highway will provide a staging and prioritisation strategy for future duplication that will guide future investment. This will include the Murrumbateman bypass.

A bypass of Murrumbateman would be investigated further during the detailed design phase of that section of highway.

Package 3 – Strategic business case for future duplication of the whole length of the Barton Highway

What is a business case?

A business case is a government agency internal document that determines priorities for future work. It uses technical investigations such as traffic data and modelling and cost benefit analysis.

The strategic business case for the Barton Highway will provide a staging and prioritisation strategy for future duplication.

Package 4 – Safety work

What work has been carried out so far?

Since November 2017 we have upgraded signage and line marking, installed about seven kilometres of safety barrier, cleared and trimmed vegetation, and widened and flattened road shoulders.

Upcoming work involves removing some mature trees and replacing stormwater drainage structures to continue to improve clear zones along the highway.

Why have you installed more safety barrier?

Safety barriers reduce the severity of crashes if motorists lose control and veer off the road. You are four times more likely to be killed or seriously injured in a crash on a regional road compared to roads in metropolitan areas.

The majority of these crashes are head on collisions or happen when a vehicle runs off the road and into a roadside object, like a tree. Safety barriers reduce these types of crashes from happening by more than 85 per cent.

Why are traffic barriers on the sides of the road instead of the centre to separate traffic lanes?

The existing road is narrow and would require significant work to accommodate the installation of traffic barrier down the centre.

Central barrier systems perform best when there are no breaks. On the Barton Highway breaks would be required because of the large number of property accesses and intersections.

What intersections are you upgrading?

We will upgrade the intersections at Hillview Drive, Valencia Drive and Gooda Creek Road as part of safety works. Concept plans are currently being developed with construction starting in 2019.

Nanima Road intersection will be upgraded as part of Package 1.

Why are you upgrading intersections when the highway will be eventually duplicated?

While planning is under way for future duplication, it is important that we address safety issues at these intersections in the short term.

What are you doing about incident management on the Barton Highway?

We have completed a feasibility study which identifies suitable locations for intelligent transport systems such as closed circuit television and variable message signs.

As part of current work, we will be installing permanent variable message signs at either end of the Barton Highway to help inform motorists of changed traffic conditions. This allows drivers to make decisions about their journey.

This work is currently being developed.

Will there be any work carried out in Murrumbateman?

We are currently working with Yass Valley Council to investigate options for improving safety for cyclists, pedestrians and horse riders in Murrumbateman village.

How will bus stop locations be improved?

We are continuing to review bus stop locations to determine options for improvements, including relocation.

What is being done to address driver behaviour along Barton Highway?

Public education campaigns targeting road worker safety and speeding were rolled out between April and June 2018 using outdoor billboards, radio and social media.

The Animals on Country Roads radio campaign also ran during June 2018.

Other opportunities are being investigated to promote road safety messages that address specific issues on the Barton Highway identified through crash data analysis.