

## The process and steps in planning and selecting a preferred route for the Princes Highway upgrade

STEPS	PROCESS	INPUT (What is considered and obtained during the process)	OUTPUT (What is produced after investigations)
Step 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community and stakeholder consultation.</li> <li>Preparation of contract brief (for consultants).</li> <li>Desktop analysis (no field work).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Previous studies.</li> <li>Project constraints.</li> <li>Study area.</li> <li>Information days.</li> <li>Community workshops.</li> <li>Have your say forms.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understanding of critical issues.</li> <li>Clear understanding of how the community wants to be involved.</li> <li>A brief for route options and preferred route selection process.</li> </ul>
Step 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage consultant.</li> <li>Community and stakeholder consultation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Risk management plan.</li> <li>Environmental studies:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Flora and fauna.</li> <li>Aboriginal and European heritage.</li> <li>Water and air quality.</li> <li>Climatic assessment.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Social impact investigations:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Socio economic impacts (agricultural).</li> <li>Noise studies.</li> <li>Community impacts.</li> <li>Visual impacts.</li> <li>Property impacts.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Engineering investigations:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Geo-technical investigations.</li> <li>Traffic and transportation studies.</li> <li>Road safety audit.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Design requirements:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Roads and bridges.</li> <li>Urban and rural landscape.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Utilities and service investigations.</li> <li>Community consultation:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tools to provide information.</li> <li>Sessions to exchange views and data.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A range of road corridors.</li> <li>A range of feasible routes within road corridors.</li> </ul>
Step 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Compare a long list of options.</li> <li>Develop a shortlist of options.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analyse all information obtained through steps 1 and 2.</li> <li>Preliminary cost estimates.</li> <li>Identifying road construction staging opportunities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shortlist of feasible options.</li> <li>Displays for stakeholder and community feedback.</li> </ul>
Step 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Select a preferred option.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Options placed on display.</li> <li>Stakeholder and community discussions.</li> <li>Community submissions assessed.</li> <li>Preferred option identified.</li> </ul>	Preferred option.
Step 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Refine the preferred option.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Potential for further targeted engineering and environmental investigations to confirm viability.</li> <li>Modifications to the preferred option placed on display.</li> <li>Consideration of community feedback.</li> </ul>	Preferred route.
Step 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seek route approval.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Submissions to the Minister recommending the preferred route.</li> </ul>	Route approval.

## Why was 'the sandtrack' excluded from the study area?

A number of community members have expressed the following reasons why 'the sandtrack' should be included as an option because:

- The alignment is already there and would bypass Berry, Bomaderry and link with a new crossing of the Shoalhaven.
- It would reduce environmental impacts.
- It would eliminate high impact on property and the Toolijooa community.

Other community members have rejected 'the sandtrack' as an option because:

- It would adversely affect on the dunes and coastal sensitive areas.
- High property impacts - Gerringong, Gerroa and Shoalhaven Heads.
- A link road would also be needed to maintain access to Berry.

Preliminary investigations (Quantm) concluded that 'the sandtrack' was not a feasible option to be considered for the Princes Highway upgrade.

'The sandtrack' option would require a full reconstruction of the existing two lane rural road to a four lane highway standard road.

Initial analysis of this corridor found that:

- 'The sandtrack' was feasible in engineering terms.
- 'The sandtrack' offered no advantages over the existing highway.
- 'The sandtrack' had significant disadvantages due to technical and environmental constraints (see below).

## Critical issues regarding 'the sandtrack' option

- It is longer than any other potential route.
- Significant potential impact on Seven Mile Beach National Park.
- High potential impact on Foys Swamp wetlands.
- Would require the RTA to import a significant amount of embankment material (fill).
- Flooding issues – obvious issues include the Shoalhaven River, Broughton Creek and Crooked River.
- May require the construction of a link road from the Sandtrack to Berry or significant improvements and maintenance to the existing highway to maintain access to Berry.
- There is no opportunity to take advantage of sections of the existing highway which reduces opportunities for staging the upgrade.

Following on from above, this route would have significantly higher costs and require:

- The design and construction of a complex interchange with Bolong Road and the Princes Highway, Bomaderry.
- The design and construction of a major interchange at Bolong Road and Meroo Street.

## What happens next?

The RTA is finalising documentation to engage a consultant to undertake the process of selecting a preferred route as outlined in this community update.

The RTA will then organise forums at Gerringong, Berry and Bomaderry to introduce the consultant to the community who will provide an overview of their program.

→ Obtaining local knowledge is a very important part of this process. We encourage all residents, property owners and business owners to share information with us.

→ For more information contact the RTA's project manager Ron de Rooy.

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A New South Wales Government Initiative



# Gerringong to Bomaderry

Princes Highway upgrade

COMMUNITY UPDATE  
SEPTEMBER 2006



## Workshop feedback

Community workshops and information days were held in May 2006 at Gerringong, Berry and Bomaderry to discuss the study process for upgrading the Princes Highway between Gerringong and Bomaderry.

Each workshop was well attended by the community with approximately 350 participants at the combined three workshops and many more at the information stands.

All three workshops discussed the process to plan the highway upgrade, the opportunity for community discussion and input, and sought community opinion on how this would be achieved.

A 'have your say' survey sought community feedback on how they might prefer to be consulted during this process.

Out of the 147 survey responses received to date, the following preferences were indicated:

### How do you like to receive information?

By email and by mailing list.

### What methods do you like most when you are being asked for ideas and input?

- Whole of community surveys and whole of community workshops.

### Other communication tools preferred by the community?

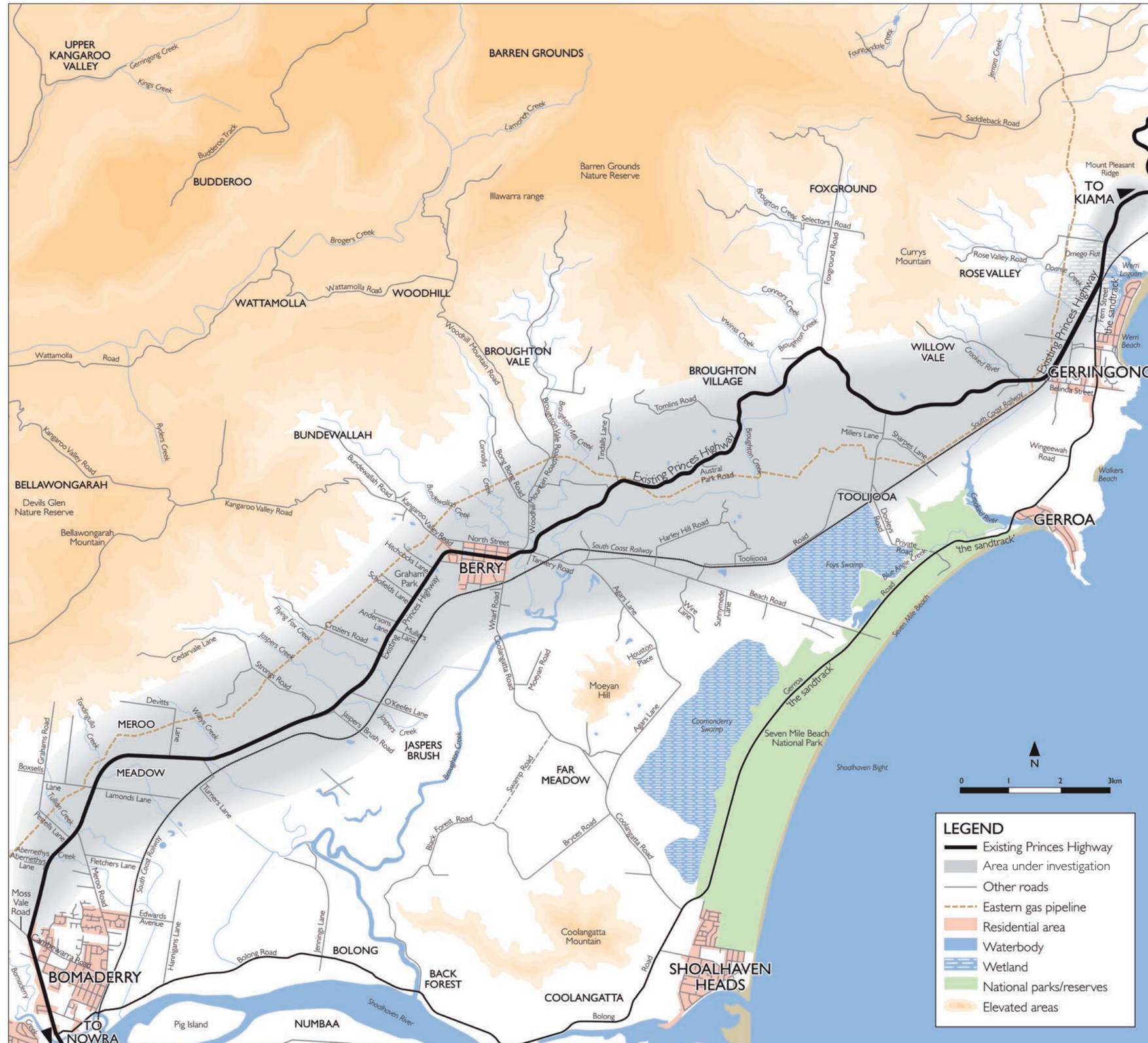
- Issue mapping – so community members can see one another's ideas and issues.
- Newsletters.
- Field inspections.
- 3D model and display could be shown at shopping centres or places of public interest.
- Workshops in which everyone can be actively involved.

The RTA agrees these will be important communication tools to use during community consultation for this project, and from time to time will supplement with other methods of communication such as advertising or community information mornings.

### What do you see as the most significant issue/s surrounding the identification of a preferred route between Gerringong and Bomaderry?

Some of the issues identified by the community included:

- Safety.
  - Access: towns, rural properties, local road network, pedestrian facilities, emergency services and public transport.
  - Environmental impacts – "protection of endangered ecological communities, especially rainforest remnants".
  - Traffic impacts.
  - Flooding and drainage.
  - Impact on agricultural land.
  - Impact on dairy industry.
  - Impact on public utilities (eastern gas pipeline).
  - Uncertainty in the real estate market – property values and acquisitions - "least interference with property owners".
  - Community division.
  - Heritage.
  - Potential for increased traffic volumes following the completion of Main Road 92.
  - Preserving the local amenity of the area and its scenic attraction.
- A clear issue here was that:
- Everyone have an equitable opportunity to be involved.
  - There are a lot of views within the community and people want to hear about one another's views and opinions.
  - People want access to regular information.
  - People want contact, even if it is simply to say 'we don't have new information' to stop rumours etc.



### A selection of quotes from the community on the issue of what is most significant to them:

*"The highway should not go through Berry CBD. It is dangerous for pedestrians and frustrating for drivers, especially drivers of the huge trucks using the route".*

*"The sandtrack option must be included and/or fully explained."*

*"We think the RTA should choose the best road for purpose for the people of NSW who will use the road into the future. We think safety and fuel efficiency should be primary goals".*

*"This meeting is useless. ie. nonsense without plans. Political correctness gone mad".*

*"Safety. The amount of heavy vehicles that will use the highway in the future – construction needs to be satisfactory".*

*"The process sounds like an exercise in political correctness the community doesn't have the expertise in road building. Let the experts design the route and road structure".*

*"To be constructed urgently – many property owners will have these proposals hanging over their heads for probably the next 20 years".*

The updated meeting notes for the combined three workshops are available on the RTA website at [www.rta.nsw.gov.au](http://www.rta.nsw.gov.au).

The following questions were consistently raised at all three workshops:

### What is this shaded area?

The RTA website and the April 06 community update provided a locality map with a shaded area of land. It had 'fuzzy' or 'blurred' boundaries (not a defined line) showing the area within which we anticipate a route should be found.

The area to be studied is based on:

- The physical characteristics of the area. For example: mountains and wetlands are major constraints.
- Two end points of the study, Gerringong and Bomaderry - ultimately a preferred route will link into these two end points.

### What is a corridor?

A corridor is a band (envelope) of land about 100m to 200m in width depending on the location. Within a corridor there could be several route options.

Further investigations are required within the Gerringong to Bomaderry study area to identify the appropriate corridors for detailed examination of route options.

### What is a route?

A route is a specific alignment identified within a corridor. It is narrower in width than a corridor.