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# New England Highway bypass at Scone and town centre rail bridge

July 2015

The Australian and NSW governments are providing \$90 million to build a New England Highway bypass and town centre rail bridge at Scone to improve traffic flow, travel times and safety for road users. This project update provides information about planning progress and upcoming activities.

## Background

The New England Highway is part of the inland Sydney to Brisbane National Land Transport Network and the primary route connecting the Upper Hunter with Maitland and Newcastle.

In Scone, the highway intersects with the Great Northern Railway at Kelly Street. The Kelly Street rail level crossing is the only remaining level crossing on the New England Highway.

The highway south of Scone carries 8400 vehicles a day, peaking in town at 14,000. Around 8000 vehicles use the Kelly Street crossing every day, including 1200 heavy vehicles.

There is a poor crash history on this four kilometre section of highway with 29 crashes in the five years to June 2014.

In April 2014 the Australian and NSW governments announced the preferred option for the future upgrade of the New England Highway at Scone would include a highway bypass and town centre road over rail bridge to address rising road and rail volumes and safety issues.

The announcement followed the completion of an options assessment and feasibility study which is available to view on the Roads and Maritime Services website [rms.nsw.gov.au/roadprojects](http://rms.nsw.gov.au/roadprojects)

The project has now moved to concept design and environmental assessment to refine the design and identify potential impacts of the proposal and mitigation activities.

## The proposal

Key features of the proposal include:

- A two lane highway bypass to the west of Scone, which would pass through the Scone Golf Course and bridge over the rail line south of town, Kingdon Street and Liverpool Street
- Access to and from the bypass to the north and south of town and midway at St Aubins Street which would provide for all turning movements
- A town centre rail bridge for local traffic and emergency services.

## Benefits

Key benefits of the proposal include:

- Improved traffic flow and amenity for local traffic through town
- Improved travel times for freight and long distance traffic
- Improved safety for all road users.

The bypass aims to support freight and long distance travel as part of the Sydney to Brisbane National Land Transport Network and would benefit the NSW and national economy.

Bypassing Scone also aligns with the NSW Long Term Transport Master Plan's focus on providing essential access for regional NSW by providing town bypasses to improve travel and amenity within towns, reduce delays caused to freight traffic, increase safety and improve urban amenity through reduced noise, lower emissions and less traffic.

## Planning update

Roads and Maritime is continuing to work closely with Upper Hunter Shire Council to develop the proposal.

Since April 2014, investigations have been carried out to develop the concept design and review of environmental factors (REF) for the highway bypass and strategic design options for the town centre rail bridge.

This has included investigations into hydrology and flooding, biodiversity, heritage, traffic and operational impacts to refine the preferred option with consideration of intersection layouts, flooding and drainage, signage and impacts to community facilities.

More information about the proposal and investigations will be available when the proposal is displayed for community feedback late this year.

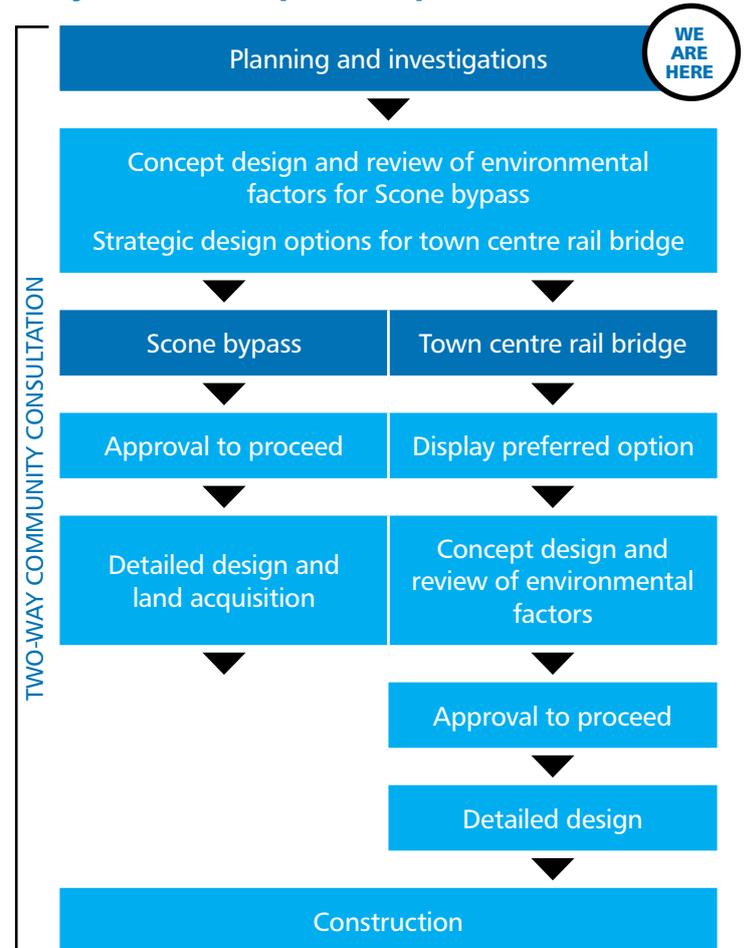
## Next steps

Upcoming planning activities include:

- Finalise the bypass concept design and REF for display
- Finalise the town centre rail bridge strategic design options for display
- Community and stakeholder consultation.

The bypass concept design and REF, together with the town centre rail bridge strategic design options, are scheduled to be displayed for community and stakeholder feedback in late 2015.

## Project development process



## Contact Us

For more information, please contact the project team on:

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July 2015  
RMS 15.512



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