

## 5. Consultation

This chapter discusses the consultation undertaken to date for the proposal and the consultation proposed for the future.

### 5.1 Consultation strategy

Roads and Maritime has endeavoured to keep the community and stakeholders informed and proactively consulted throughout the development of the proposal. Consultation has been carried out in accordance with the Community and Stakeholder Engagement Plan prepared for the proposal. The purpose of consultation is:

- To keep community informed and increase understanding of the proposal
- To gain local knowledge and consider comments and issues relating to the proposal and preferred route option
- To ensure stakeholders potentially impacted by the proposal are provided clear information about possible property impacts
- To provide clear and timely information and advise the community on how they may obtain information and communicate concerns, complaints and suggestions.

Refer to Sections 5.2 to 5.5 for a summary of consultation carried out to date.

The REF is to be displayed for a minimum four week period. During this time, community information sessions would be held. Stakeholders and the community would be encouraged to participate, provide feedback and make a submission on the REF.

### 5.2 Community involvement

#### ***Community engagement to select preferred bypass route***

Community consultation was carried out in 2015 to inform the community and stakeholders of the three shortlisted route options, invite feedback and gather local knowledge to help with the selection of a preferred bypass route.

The three shortlisted options were displayed for community and stakeholder feedback between 28 September and 23 October 2015 and 168 submissions were received in response to the display. Responses included 97 emails, 27 letters and 44 telephone calls.

A total of 27 issues were raised in the submissions received. Commonly raised issues relevant to the proposal included potential impacts to flooding, property impacts (including acquisition, fragmentation and land value), traffic forecasts and impacts to local businesses.

A number of submissions included a preference for a particular route option along with key reasons for this preference. Options A and B were roughly equal in preference ahead of Option C. The community feedback received on the three shortlisted options, along with technical investigations and cost benefit analysis was used to select Option B as the preferred bypass route. In December 2016, the preferred bypass route was announced and a community update was distributed.

Option B has progressed into concept design, with some design refinements adopted as part of the proposal.

## Consultation activities since selection of a preferred bypass route

Roads and Maritime has involved the community during the concept design planning phase and the REF preparation phase of the proposal. Consultation activities have been carried out during the preparation of the concept design and REF, including:

- Community update was distributed to the community in August 2018
- Operation of a dedicated website for the proposal
- Operation of a dedicated proposal phone number and email address to allow the community to ask questions and provide feedback
- Meetings with land owners, and local businesses
- Consultation with government agencies
- Briefings with Singleton Council and local Members of Parliament.

Key issues raised during this phase are summarised in Table 5-1.

Community and stakeholder consultation was carried out as part of the Socio-Economic Impact Assessment Technical Working Paper (AECOM, 2019) which was prepared to identify the potential socio-economic impacts that may arise as a result of the proposal and to inform Section 6.12 of this REF. The community and stakeholder consultation included business surveys of 39 businesses and 257 stopper surveys in November and December 2018.

The findings of the business impact survey and stopper survey are provided in more detail in Section 6.12 and Appendix D.

Table 5-1: Summary of issues raised during consultation

Key issue	Response
	<p>Potential impacts to property are assessed in Section 6.11.</p> <p>The proposal would involve full and partial property acquisition which would be carried out in accordance with the <i>Land Acquisition (Just Terms Compensation) Act 1991</i> (NSW). The concept design has aimed to minimise the need for property acquisition while achieving the proposal objectives.</p> <p>Roads and Maritime are consulting directly with potentially affected property owners in relation to property acquisition.</p> <p>All properties affected by changed access arrangements as a result of the proposal would be provided with restored or new permanent access arrangements, in consultation with the property owner.</p>
Property values	<p>Many aspects influence property values such as location and use. Landowners are encouraged to contact the project team to discuss their circumstances and property impacts, including the process of acquisition. Directly affected landowners are being consulted where property acquisition is required. Appropriate compensation would be negotiated in line with the Land Acquisition Information Guide (Roads and Maritime 2014c) and the <i>Land Acquisition (Just Terms Compensation) Act 1991</i>.</p>
Next steps	<p>The ongoing consultation process, display of the REF and submissions report is described in Section 5.6 and Section 5.7.</p>
Impacts to adjacent land uses	<p>Potential impacts to adjacent land uses are assessed throughout Section 6.0.</p>

Key issue	Response
Traffic forecasts, and use of local roads	<p>The proposal would improve traffic flow, travel times and safety through Singleton by reducing traffic volumes and the movement of heavy freight vehicles through town. It is expected that up to 1500 vehicles per hour (two-way) would be removed from the existing New England Highway through Singleton, improving traffic conditions and reducing congestion.</p> <p>The traffic assessment for the proposal is summarised in Section 6.5.</p>
Changes to hydrology and potential impacts to local flooding	Changes to hydrology and flooding are summarised in Section 6.2. Flood modelling indicates that the proposal would result in minor increases and decreases the peak flood level in different locations.

## 5.3 Aboriginal community involvement

The Aboriginal community has been involved throughout the development of the proposal in accordance with the requirements of DPIE's *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Consultation Requirements for Proponents* (DECCW, 2010) (Consultation Requirements) and Roads and Maritime's Procedure for Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Consultation and Investigation (PACHCI), which is a staged process for investigating potential impacts to Aboriginal cultural heritage as a result of Roads and Maritime road planning, development, construction and maintenance activities.

The four stages of PACHCI and the Aboriginal community consultation carried out in each stage are identified below in Table 5-2. Consultation carried out with the Aboriginal community is documented in Appendix E and summarised in Table 5-2.

Table 5-2: Summary of Roads and Maritime Procedure for Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Consultation and Investigation carried out for the proposal

Stage	Description
Stage 1	<p><b>Initial Roads and Maritime assessment</b></p> <p>An initial desktop risk assessment was carried out by Roads and Maritime as part of the initial scoping to determine if the proposal is likely to harm Aboriginal cultural heritage or not. No direct consultation with the Aboriginal community was completed during this stage.</p>
Stage 2	<p><b>Site survey and further assessment</b></p> <p>The aim of Stage 2 is to undertake further assessment and a survey with specific Aboriginal stakeholders and an archaeologist to assess the proposal's potential to harm Aboriginal cultural heritage, and to determine whether formal Aboriginal community consultation and a cultural heritage assessment report is required.</p> <p>Aboriginal stakeholders consulted as part of the Stage 2 PACHCI assessment include the Plains Clans of the Wonnarua People (PCWP) registered native title claimant group and the Wanaruah Local Aboriginal Land Council (Wanaruah LALC). Both parties participated in an archaeological survey of the proposal area carried out over five days (26 to 29 March 2018 and 3 April 2018).</p>
Stage 3	<p><b>Formal consultation and preparation of a cultural heritage assessment report</b></p> <p>Stage 3 of the PACHCI requires a formal program of Aboriginal community consultation in accordance with legislative requirements and DPIE's 'Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Consultation Requirements for Proponents' (DECCW, 2010) and the preparation of an</p>

Stage	Description
	<p>Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report (ACHAR).</p> <p>Consultation activities carried out as part of Stage 3 have included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information regarding relevant Aboriginal persons and organisations requested from following agencies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE)</li> <li>○ Wanaruah Local Aboriginal Land Council</li> <li>○ New South Wales Aboriginal Land Council</li> <li>○ Office of the Registrar, <i>Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983</i></li> <li>○ The National Native Title Tribunal</li> <li>○ NTSCORP Limited</li> <li>○ Singleton Council</li> <li>○ Singleton Catchment Management Authority.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Aboriginal organisations and persons identified by the agencies were issued invitations to register interest in participating in the proposal's community consultation process.</li> <li>• Public notices published in four newspapers (National Indigenous Times, Koori Mail, Singleton Argus and Newcastle Herald) outlining the proposal and its location and calling for expressions of interest</li> <li>• Draft assessment methodology sent to all Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAPs) with minimum 28 day review period</li> <li>• An Aboriginal Focus Group (AFG) was held to discuss the assessment methodology which all RAPs were invited to attend</li> <li>• Proposed assessment methodology was revised following RAPs feedback. A copy of the updated draft assessment methodology was subsequently forwarded to all RAPs with additional minimum 28 day review period</li> <li>• All RAPs were provided the opportunity to nominate cultural knowledge holders from the community to participate in a cultural values assessment. Ten cultural knowledge holders participated in the assessment</li> <li>• Issue of a draft ACHAR, to all RAPs for their review and comment, with minimum 28 day review period</li> <li>• A second AFG on to discuss the draft ACHAR. All RAPs were invited to attend.</li> <li>• Comment period for draft ACHAR extended by a week</li> <li>• Issue of final ACHAR report which details the above consultation in full. Refer Appendix E.</li> </ul>
Stage 4	<p>Implement environmental impact assessment recommendations</p> <p>This stage will be implemented after project approval and approval of an AHIP.</p>

## 5.4 ISEPP consultation

Consultation with councils and other public authorities is provided for by Clause 13 to 16 of the ISEPP, which applies to development carried out by or on behalf of a public authority that may be carried out without consent. Consultation is required in relation to development that impacts on:

- Council related infrastructure or services (Clause 13)
- Local heritage (Clause 14)
- Flood liable land (Clause 15)
- With public authorities other than councils (Clause 16).

Singleton Council has been consulted about the proposal as per the requirements of clause 13, 14 and 15 of the ISEPP. Singleton Council provided a response on 11 May 2018. Issues that have been raised by Singleton Council in relation to impacts to Council infrastructure, local heritage and flood liable land, and

subsequent responses are outlined below in Table 5-3. Other comments raised by Singleton Council not relating to ISEPP matters are addressed in Table 5-4.

The NSW State Emergency Services (SES) has also been consulted about the proposal as per the requirement of clause 15AA for development with impacts on flood liable land. No response was received from the SES for inclusion in the REF.

Appendix F contains an ISEPP consultation checklist that documents how ISEPP consultation requirements have been considered.

Table 5-3: Issues raised through ISEPP consultation

Agency	Issue raised	Response / where addressed in REF
Singleton Council	Impact of the proposal on flooding levels, particularly within the Doughboy and Glenridding areas. Council requested the following information in the REF: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How the impacts of the flood modelling will be addressed, particularly in relation to flooding levels within the Doughboy and Glenridding areas.</li> </ul>	Section 6.2 – Surface water, hydrology and flooding and Appendix J
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What factors will be put in place that address livestock evacuation.</li> </ul>	<p>Potential impacts to access during construction and operation are described in Section 6.11.</p> <p>Livestock would utilise the temporary access arrangements during construction and restored or new permanent access arrangements during operation in the event that evacuation is required.</p>
Singleton Council	Council queried the location of potential connections on the proposed bypass route, and requested the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A full interchange at Putty Road</li> </ul>	<p>Section 3.2.3 Major Design Features</p> <p>The Putty Road connection would include a southbound exit ramp and northbound entry ramp.</p> <p>There are no southbound entry and northbound exit ramps proposed for this location. Traffic modelling confirmed that traffic demand for these ramps is low (refer to Section 6.5).</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A northbound exit and southbound entry at the southern end of the bypass</li> </ul>	<p>Section 3.2.3 Major Design Features</p> <p>The southern connection would include a northbound exit ramp and southbound entry ramp.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A northbound entry and southbound exit at Magpie Street</li> </ul>	<p>Section 3.2.3 Major Design Features</p> <p>The northern connection would include a southbound exit ramp, a southbound entry ramp and a northbound entry ramp.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Gowrie Gates exit is not</li> </ul>	Section 3.2.3 Major Design Features

Agency	Issue raised	Response / where addressed in REF
	essential and could be removed from the concept design, with the Magpie Street exit being sufficient to service the locality.	The connection with the New England Highway at Gowrie Gates would include a southbound entry ramp and a northbound exit ramp.
Singleton Council	Council requested that the REF details the impacts that the proposal would have on water infrastructure, with specific reference to the large mains that connect across west and east sides of the Hunter River and assets including Water Works Lane Depot, Army Camp Water Pump Station and Control Valve 2.	Section 3.5 Public utility adjustment  Consultation has commenced with Singleton Council regarding impacts on water infrastructure. This consultation is ongoing.

## 5.5 Government agency and stakeholder involvement

Various government agencies and stakeholders have been consulted about the proposal, including:

- AAPT/PowerTel
- Australia Rail Track Corporation (ARTC)
- Ausgrid
- NSW Department of Primary Industries – Fisheries, DPIE
- Environmental Protection Authority
- Hunter Freight Group
- Local Land Services – Hunter
- Jemena
- Subsidence Advisory NSW
- NBN Co.
- Crown Land, DPIE
- Water group, DPIE
- Resources Regulator, DPIE
- Heritage Division, Department of Premier & Cabinet
- Singleton Business Chamber
- Singleton Council
- Telstra
- NSW SES.

A letter was sent to each agency on 16 April 2018. A summary of the issues that have been raised as a result of consultation with these agencies and stakeholders are outlined below in Table 5-4. A copy of the responses received is provided in Appendix G.

Table 5-4: Issues raised through agency and stakeholder consultation

Agency	Response received	Issue raised	Response / where addressed in REF
Singleton Council	11 May 2018	Council requested that the REF detail the following:	
		How the impacts of the flooding will be addressed?	Section 6.2.4.  A flood response management plan will be prepared as part of the CEMP.
		What factors will be put in place that address livestock evacuation during flood events?	Section 6.2.3.  Flood behaviour within and surrounding the proposal area is well understood, with adequate advance flood warning available to evacuate equipment and protect the work prior to inundation.  The infrastructure for the proposal would also provide additional flood evacuation routes in the event of an early-warning flood evacuation for Singleton.
		Which properties have been impacted by the preferred route?	Section 3.6 – Property acquisition (Table 3-8)
		What are the proposed impacts of the preferred route on those identified properties?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Section 3.6 (Table 3-8)</li> <li>• Section 6.11.2</li> <li>• Section 6.12.3.</li> </ul>
		Full details in regard to how those impacts will be addressed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Section 6.11.3</li> <li>• Section 6.12.4.</li> </ul>
		What will be the impacts on property values?	Many aspects influence property values such as location and use. Landowners are encouraged to contact the project team to discuss their circumstances and property impacts, including the process of acquisition. Directly affected landowners are being consulted where property acquisition is required. Appropriate compensation would be negotiated



Agency	Response received	Issue raised	Response / where addressed in REF
			in line with the Land Acquisition Information Guide (Roads and Maritime 2014c) and the <i>Land Acquisition (Just Terms Compensation) Act 1991</i> .
		Priorities for a full the interchange at Putty Road and southbound and northbound entry and exits at the northern and southern connections and Gowrie Gates.	Section 3.2.3.  The requirement for entry and exit ramps at each connection point has been determined by traffic modelling.
		Impacts that the proposal would have on agriculture and farming and what measures would be put in place to mitigate/address these issues	Section 6.12.3
		Impact of the proposal on business and trade loss impacts.	Section 6.12.3
		Impact of the proposal on water infrastructure.	Section 3.5
NSW Department of Primary Industries – Fisheries, DPIE	11 May 2018	NSW Department of Primary Industries – Fisheries, DPIE was satisfied that the most pressing issues for the department were addressed. The department noted that if the location or design of the proposal change, DPI Fisheries will need to re-assess the proposal prior to obtaining owners consent on these amendments from Crown lands.	Noted
Environmental Protection Authority	25 May 2018	The Environment Protection Authority identified key information requirements for the proposal, including an adequate description and assessment of:	
		Impacts on water quality and site water management, with specific reference to potential impacts on the Hunter River and an assessment of background water quality.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Section 6.2</li> <li>• Section 6.3.</li> </ul> Available water quality monitoring data for the Hunter River



Agency	Response received	Issue raised	Response / where addressed in REF
			is limited to electrical conductivity. However, available monitoring data from the nearest upstream waterways has been used provide further context regarding local water quality.
		Potential noise impacts due to construction and operation with specific reference to proposed community consultation and management measures during the construction phase.	Section 6.6.
		<p>The Environment Protection Authority also provided an attachment which included recommended REF requirements and requested Roads and Maritime refer to the relevant guidelines in that attachment. The attachment included guidelines for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environmental impacts of the proposal</li> <li>• Licencing requirements</li> <li>• The proposal and premises</li> <li>• Air issues</li> <li>• Noise and Vibration</li> <li>• Water and Soils</li> <li>• Waste</li> <li>• Dangerous goods, chemical storage and bunding</li> <li>• Monitoring programs.</li> </ul>	Roads and Maritime has reviewed the attachment and the requirements relevant to this proposal have been addressed in this REF.

Agency	Response received	Issue raised	Response / where addressed in REF
Heritage Division, Department of Premier & Cabinet	11 May 2018	<p>The Heritage Division provided an attachment which included recommended REF requirements and noted that some recommendations may not be relevant to the proposal. The attachment included guidelines for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The proposal</li> <li>• Environmental impacts of the proposal</li> <li>• Aboriginal cultural heritage</li> <li>• Biodiversity</li> <li>• DPIE estate</li> <li>• Water and soils</li> <li>• Flooding</li> <li>• Coastal hazards</li> <li>• Historic heritage.</li> </ul>	Roads and Maritime has reviewed the attachment and the requirements relevant to this proposal have been addressed in this REF.
Singleton Business Chamber	9 May 2018	Noted that five members provided feedback, of which three members were in favour of a bypass of Singleton	Noted
		One member questioned the impact of the proposal on businesses within Singleton	Section 6.12.
		One member requested Roads and Maritime consider implementing clearway arrangements on George Street / New England Highway, Singleton as an alternative to the construction of a bypass	The implementation of clearway arrangements within the proposal corridor would not achieve the proposal objectives as identified within Section 2.3.1.
		Two members questioned the proposed single lane in each direction on the bypass, specifically identifying safety concerns and traffic congestion with two lanes merging into one on the New England Highway.	Section 6.5.2.

## 5.6 Consultation during the public display of the REF

Roads and Maritime is committed to continue the engagement of the community and stakeholders throughout the development of the proposal. The REF will be placed on public display and comments invited. Consultation activities during this display period would include:

- Briefings with Singleton Council and other relevant stakeholders
- Community information sessions
- Advertisement in local newspapers
- An online community engagement portal and update to the webpage
- Project updates distributed to the community and stakeholders inviting feedback on the proposal.

## 5.7 Consultation following public display of the REF

Following the public display of the REF, Roads and Maritime would prepare a submissions report which would summarise and provide a response to submissions received for the proposal. The submissions report would include a summary of any changes to the proposal in response to the submissions and other feedback during the display period.

The community would continue to be informed during the development and construction of the proposal. Roads and Maritime would also continue to consult with Singleton Council as well as other relevant stakeholders and government agencies as the proposal develops.