Transport for NSW

M1 Pacific Motorway extension to Raymond Terrace

Project update

September 2025

Australian Government | BUILDING AUSTRALIA

NSW GOVERNMENT

Construction of 2.6-kilometre viaduct progressing from Tarro to the Hunter River

The Australian and NSW Governments are investing in the M1 Pacific Motorway extension to Raymond Terrace project to ease congestion, improve traffic flow and reduce traffic volumes on the surrounding road network.

Work continues to progress across the 15-kilometre alignment. Careful planning, smart construction sequencing and strong partnerships with John Holland Gamuda Joint Venture and Seymour Whyte Constructions are driving results despite unusually wet weather.

Over the past three months, we have opened three new bridges, built major bridge structures and achieved progress on pavement and utility works.

This update highlights recent achievements and outlines the next steps as we move closer to delivering this vital infrastructure for the Hunter region.

Construction progress

To stay updated including monthly construction updates with photos and drone footage, please visit our construction progress webpage:

Visit the project webpage

Transport for NSW acknowledges the Wonnarua, Worimi and Awabakal people as the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which the M1 Pacific Motorway extension to Raymond Terrace project is being built and pay our respect to Elders past and present.

Progress update

Southern Section (Black Hill to Tomago – 10 km)

Key progress includes:

- new sections of Tomago interchange and Black Hill interchange open to traffic, including two new bridges, with all bridges now under construction
- approximately 70% of headstocks constructed, 65% of girders placed, and 40 % of decks poured on the 2.6-kilometre viaduct
- installation of seven of nine pile cap shells on river piles
- placement of final pavement layers between Black Hill and Tarro
- foundation treatments and embankment construction in the northern fill areas (between Tomago and Heatherbrae)
- relocation of electrical and other utilities services
- topsoiling and landscaping
- ongoing installation of permanent water quality treatment devices including basins and bioswales
- asphalt works underway, including repairs on the existing highway and new permanent pavements
- installation of street lighting, barriers and guardrails.

Northern Section (Heatherbrae Bypass – 5 km)

Key progress includes:

- power pole relocations are now complete, including associated outages across the project
- installation of civil works for Intelligent Transport Systems is ongoing and close to completion
- drainage installation has passed 80% completion
- bulk earthworks are now finished
- work continues on the northbound carriageway of the Pacific Highway at Raymond Terrace, with a traffic switch planned in the coming month
- bridge barriers, safety screens and batter treatments are progressing at the Masonite Road overpass, with a traffic switch scheduled for the coming month
- all bridge decks have been poured at Windeyers Creek, with bridge barrier works progressing.

Progress on bridge barriers, safety screens and batter treatments at Masonite Road overpass bridge

Upcoming out of hours work

We will schedule construction activities during the day whenever possible. However, it may be necessary to work outside standard construction hours to ensure the safety of road users and workers and to minimise disruptions during peak travel times.

Work planned to be carried out outside of standard construction hours over the next three months includes:

- construction of roadside signage, guardrail and barrier installation
- utility relocations including electrical and communications
- construction of temporary and permanent traffic arrangements and traffic switches
- roadside maintenance and landscaping
- clearing of trees adjacent to roads
- earthworks including delivering, hauling and placement of material
- construction of drainage and operational water quality structures
- oversized deliveries for bridge construction and heavy equipment
- bridge work including concrete pouring and installation of barriers, safety screens and girders
- use of site compounds for deliveries and stockpiling
- asphalting including removal and placement of material and line marking.

Read more details on our planned out of hours activities between September and November 2025

Thank you for having your say

The latest community sentiment survey for the M1 extension shows strong support for the project. 95% of people who responded believe the upgrade will improve travel once it's finished. Feedback about how we communicate and engage with the community was also positive.

Read more about the results of our latest sentiment survey

Greener, smarter: M1 design earns ‘Leading’ sustainability rating

The M1 extension is recognised for its sustainable design under the Infrastructure Sustainability Council’s v1.2 rating scheme. The team delivering the 10-kilometre southern Black Hill to Tomago section achieved a ‘Leading’ Infrastructure Sustainability Design rating surpassing the project’s ‘Excellent’ rating benchmark.

This rating celebrates the project’s commitment to smarter, greener design. Sustainability highlights from the design phase include:

- introduced solar-powered safety bollards, an Australian-first under the rating scheme, reducing reliance on fuel-based lighting
- reduced use of high-carbon materials like concrete and steel by optimising drainage infrastructure, including vegetated swales instead of concrete-lined channels and basins
- retained vegetation during design and construction planning, saving more than 30 hectares of native bushland
- used concrete mixes with high levels of supplementary cementitious material
- delivered on-site native revegetation, landscaping and biodiversity offsets to improve ecological value.
- refined the land-based pile design of the viaduct, removing 61 concrete and steel pile caps.

2.6-kilometre viaduct from Tarro spanning the Hunter River and surrounding flood plains

Celebrating NAIDOC Week: art competition winner announced

We were proud of Year 11 student Matilda Moore, from Catherine McAuley Catholic College Medowie, who won the M1 extension 2025 NAIDOC Week Art Prize.

The competition invited local Aboriginal high school students to create artwork reflecting this year’s theme, *The Next Generation: Strength, Vision and Legacy*. Matilda’s winning design will proudly feature across the project, including on high-visibility vests, shirts and other project materials – celebrating culture while supporting worker safety.

Matilda Moore with her winning artwork

The award was presented during a NAIDOC Week event at the Heatherbrae compound. Finalists toured the project, watched a bridge deck pour at Windeyers Creek, and enjoyed a bush tucker lunch by Murrook, where the Johnny cakes proved a favourite.

Matilda received her prize from Deb Barwick, CEO of the NSW Indigenous Chamber of Commerce – a 12-month mentorship with a local Aboriginal art organisation, generously supported by contractor Seymour Whyte.

Read more about the 2025 NAIDOC Week Art Prize in this article

Traffic changes help move the M1 extension forward

Two recent traffic changes mark big steps for the M1 extension project. Drivers heading north on the Pacific Highway are now using a new bridge at Tomago, near Tomago Road. This change means traffic movements at the intersection of Old Punt Road and the Pacific Highway will be restricted so work can continue on the new Tomago interchange.

Southbound drivers from Beresfield can now use the new bridge at the Black Hill interchange to join the existing M1. These changes are important for keeping the project on track and making sure future connections work well.

Find further information about traffic changes at Tomago and Black Hill on the M1 project webpage

Community shares feedback on flood resilience for M1 extension

Residents from Millers Forest and Raymond Terrace recently attended drop-in sessions to discuss how the completed M1 extension may affect local flooding.

Around 80 community members took part, asking questions and sharing feedback with the project team. Discussions focused on how the motorway's design aims to keep people safe, meet engineering standards, comply with strict conditions of approval set by the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure, and protect the environment and surrounding communities.

Transport for NSW outlined the changes made to the project to help reduce flood impacts and support long-term flood resilience for the region.

Thank you to everyone who attended and shared your thoughts. Your feedback helps shape how we engage with the community and deliver infrastructure that meets local needs.

Read more about flood risk management on the M1 extension

Community at Millers Forest discuss operational flooding with Transport for NSW

Primary students swap bucket hats for hard hats

The classroom turned into a construction site for Year 4-6 students from Black Hill and Tarro Public School during a site visit to the M1 extension. Sixty students donned hard hats and hi-vis vests to tour the Black Hill to Tomago section, hosted by the John Holland Gamuda Joint Venture project team.

Civil engineers explained the clever design of the Black Hill interchange, including how a curved bridge is angled to keep vehicles safely on the road. The Environment and Sustainability team shared how 99% of non-hazardous construction waste and 67% of office waste have been recycled to date.

Students got hands-on with seed bombs made from native plants, learned about water treatment and toured the new M1 alignment.

This visit is part of the project's science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) School Engagement Program designed to connect local students with real-world careers in STEM and construction. The program gives young people the chance to see how classroom lessons in science, technology, engineering and maths are applied to major infrastructure projects.

Black Hill Public School students learned about safety around large machinery and had lots of questions

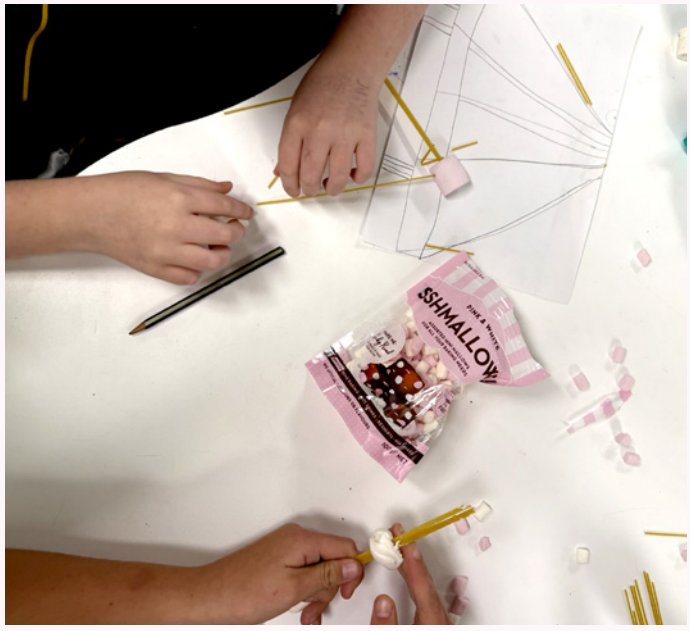
Sparks fly at Karuah Public School

Curiosity and creativity took centre stage at Karuah Public School when the M12RT STEM School Engagement Program rolled in.

Twenty-four enthusiastic Year 6 students swapped textbooks for teamwork as they tackled a hands-on civil engineering challenge designed to spark interest in infrastructure and STEM careers. Delivered in partnership with the Education Pathways Program (EPP), the workshop introduced students to the principles of bridge building in real-world road construction.

Guided by project team members, students learned how bridges are designed, built and maintained as part of major infrastructure projects like the M1 Pacific Motorway extension to Raymond Terrace.

The highlight was the spaghetti bridge challenge – where students used spaghetti and marshmallows to build the strongest bridge possible. With teamwork, experimentation and a few collapses along the way, students tested their creations by placing weight on them to see which structure held up best.



Big thinking from small teams – Karuah Public School students rise to the bridge building challenge

The classroom buzzed with excitement, creativity and curiosity as students applied STEM thinking to a real-life scenario.

These workshops are part of the four-year engagement program that supports the Industry Skills Legacy Program, connecting students with future career pathways in STEM and the civil construction industry.

Twenty-four enthusiastic Year 6 students swapped textbooks for teamwork

Final concrete deck pour completed at Heatherbrae

We have reached a major milestone with the final deck pour complete across all bridges on the Heatherbrae Bypass section of the project.

This was delivered on the 180-metre bridge over Windeyers Creek and marks a significant step in completing structural work on the northern section.

So far, we have:

- installed 72 girders
- poured more than 1,100 cubic metres of concrete.

Aboriginal cultural heritage report under way

We carried out a heritage salvage program in 2023 that included Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal sites. Since then, our project archaeologist has completed a detailed lithic assessment (the study of stone tools and artefacts) of more than 70,000 artefacts uncovered during the work.

We're now preparing an Aboriginal cultural heritage excavation report. Registered Aboriginal Parties will receive a draft of the report to review and share their feedback before the report is finalised in mid-2026.

More than 70,000 Aboriginal artefacts uncovered as part of the salvage process

Project timeframe

2004-2007
Initial planning and investigations

2008
Community consultation on the proposed upgrade

2010
Progress report advising of key changes following consultation

2015
Community consultation on the revised concept design

2016
Community consultation on design changes

2020
Develop concept design and environmental assessment

2021
Environmental assessment EIS exhibition

2022
Respond to submissions

2023
Planning approval

2023
Early work in preparation for major construction

2024
Major construction work

We are here

2025
Major construction work

2028
Open to traffic

September 2025 project scorecard

Design

100% design complete	

Key construction data

96% of 720,000 tonnes of rock imported	
11/11 bridges under construction	
265/278 bridge piles installed	
603/863 super-T bridge girders in place	
88% of 1.613 million m^3 earth moved	
68% of 20.5km total drainage pipes laid	
100% of 500km total wick drains installed	
28% of 190,000 tonnes asphalt laid	

Key people data

3,228,744 work hours	
75.5% local employment	
9% female workers	
7% Indigenous	
17% workers in training	
14% under 25	
63 apprentices	
30 trainees	
13 Aboriginal businesses engaged	

Community engagement data

2,776 emails in/out	
1,732 calls / SMS in/out	
182 meetings held	
203,894 web visitors	
107 complaints (closed)	

Sustainability data

52% office waste diverted from landfill	
424 artificial hollows and nest boxes for fauna installed	
826 logs and root balls saved for environmental rehabilitation	
96% construction waste diverted from landfill	

Contact us

24-hour Project Infoline **1800 094 895**

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nswroads.work/m12rt

Customer feedback
Locked Bag 2030, Newcastle, NSW 2300

Visit the project webpage at **nswroads.work/m12rt**

Interpreter service

For languages other than English please call 131 450

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