Gerringong to Bomaderry
Princes Highway upgrade

ROUTE OPTIONS DEVELOPMENT
APPENDIX O - PRELIMINARY PROPERTY IMPACTS REPORT
NOVEMBER 2007
Quality Information

Document: Preliminary Property Impacts Report
Ref: DEV06/04-EN-MA-Prelim Property Impacts
Date: 26 October 2007
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Reviewed by: Michael Daly

Revision history

<table>
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<th>Name/Position</th>
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<td>26/10/2007</td>
<td>For issue</td>
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RTA acceptance

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<td>DEV06/04</td>
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1.0 Background

Maunsell was engaged by the RTA in December 2006 to carry out an Options and Route Selection Study, Concept Development and Environmental Assessment (EA) for upgrading the Princes Highway (SH1) between 42.6 km to 74.6 km south of Wollongong. Maunsell has engaged a number of prominent sub-consultants to contribute to the delivery of this project.

The work includes development of route options and concept development based on the identified preferred route, environmental assessment, public displays and handover period to allow for finalisation of all activities and reports following the announcement and display of the Preferred Route, the Environmental Assessment and the Conditions of Approval.

The project will provide a bypass of Berry. The northern extremity of the project is in the vicinity of the Mount Pleasant Lookout (north of Gerringong at the termination of the four lane configuration) and the southern extremity of the project is the intersection (roundabout) of the Princes Highway with Cambewarra and Moss Vale Roads at Bomaderry.

Community involvement is a key aspect of this project and will afford the broader community the opportunity to make a demonstrable input to the process and to ensure that the requirements and aspirations of the community will be adequately and appropriately addressed. This is particularly relevant to:

a) Any potential impacts on rural and residential areas within the study area;
b) Social and economic impacts;
c) Accessibility of the road network for local and through traffic;
d) Potential impacts on water quality;
e) Potential impacts on wetlands;
f) Potential impact on flooding;
g) Potential impacts on land uses;
h) Threatened flora and fauna species;
i) Indigenous and non-indigenous heritage;
j) Visual impact;
k) Noise; and
l) Air quality.

Several studies have been undertaken since the early 1990s to identify a preferred route to upgrade sections of the Princes Highway between Kiama and Nowra including a bypass around the town of Berry.

These studies include:

m) The 1991 Gerringong to Berry Route Study;
n) 1998 North Street Berry Bypass Corridor; and
o) 2004/05 Quantm Study from Kiama to Nowra.

Sections of the highway between Gerringong and Bomaderry have a poor accident record and limited safe overtaking opportunities.

Due to the significant changes in traffic, land use and population since 1991, the NSW State Government, in March 2006 committed to investigating an area where it is likely a preferred route would be located to upgrade the Princes Highway between Mount Pleasant at Gerringong and Moss Vale / Cambewarra Road at Bomaderry to meet current road standards.
2.0 Objectives of report

The objective of this report is to present the methodology for determining properties potentially affected by the route options and outline the framework for commencing discussions with potentially affected property owners.

The report discusses issues associated with property severance and acquisition and how these will be managed with potentially affected property owners over the course of the study. The report presents the methods to be used to ensure that property owner’s preferences and concerns are captured and acted upon.

It is not the purpose of this report to present the outcomes of discussions with property owners. Any relevant outcomes of discussions with property owners, such as mitigation measures to be adopted for specific properties, will be presented in a Property Acquisition Plans and Impacts Report for each property at the environmental investigation and assessment stage of the study.
3.0 Property ownership information

Property ownership details were obtained by the RTA from The Department of Lands in mid 2006. Property owner contact details were sourced from Kiama and Shoalhaven councils. A Whitepages search was undertaken to consolidate contact details. This data has also been updated through contact with the community at information sessions and the freecall project information line.

Property owner, lot and deposited plan details were entered into a graphical information database to allow transposition of the route options.

Since the property ownership details are only current at the time that they are sought from the Department of Lands or council, it is expected that some information will become out of date over time. This will become apparent during the first round of contact with potentially affected property owners, and the data will be updated accordingly. However, the current data has been validated by a manual cross-check of the information from the two sources with assistance from the RTA Property Section.
4.0 Potentially affected properties

4.1 Directly versus indirectly affected

Seven options have been identified for public display and comment. These form the basis for determining the properties potentially directly affected by the highway upgrade.

Each option is bounded by an envelope which represents the possible extent of alignment refinement for that option. If, following community feedback, a particular option is identified as the preferred option, further investigation and refinement of the design could mean that the final design resides anywhere within the bounds of the envelope. Hence properties affected by the envelope are considered “potentially directly affected” by an option. Properties deemed to be potentially directly affected by an option could be considered for partial or full acquisition.

A band of 400 m width either side of the centreline of the preliminary concept design was plotted for each option. This band was considered to capture properties which were “in the immediate vicinity of the option”. Properties deemed to be in the immediate vicinity of an option will not be considered for full or partial acquisition but could require alternative access arrangements to be negotiated.

Figures attached in Appendix A highlight those properties potentially directly affected and in the immediate vicinity. It is possible for one property to be potentially directly affected or in the immediate vicinity by two or more options. Appendix B is a table summarising the total number of properties affected by each option.

4.2 Discussions with property owners

Property owners potentially directly affected will have different queries and concerns to those in the immediate vicinity. Accordingly, the method of contacting and arranging to meet with each of these parties differs.

Initial contact with property owners potentially directly affected will be by letter. This letter will advise the owner that their property is considered potentially directly affected by one or more of the options and provides the owner with details of how to seek further information. This letter also advises that a member of the project team will make contact to arrange for a meeting with the owner to provide information specific to their property and to seek their preferences and concerns.

Property owners located in the immediate vicinity will also be contacted by letter. The letter advises the owner that their property is in the vicinity of one or more of the options, but is currently not potentially directly affected. The owner is provided with details of how to seek further information regarding the project, including a free call phone number.

It is likely that many property owners are already aware that the RTA is undertaking route option investigations for the upgrade. A number of information sessions, open to the general public, have been conducted.

The first formal contact with potentially directly affected and in the immediate vicinity property owners will be as soon as practicable following the formal announcement of the route options.

Meetings will be arranged with potentially directly affected property owners at a mutually agreed time. The purpose of these meetings will be to provide specific information regarding the route option(s) in the vicinity of their property, identify the owner’s preferences and concerns, and explain the owner’s rights in relation to property acquisition. The project team will be seeking information from property owners regarding the way in which their property is used and how the proposal could impact on that use.
Any preferences and concerns of potentially directly affected and in the immediate vicinity property owners, as well as general community members, will be noted. These concerns will be considered in the further evaluation of the options. Once a preferred route is announced, another formal round of discussions will be arranged with property owners directly affected by the preferred route. The discussions at this time will be more detailed in nature and will consider the specific preferences and concerns of each owner in the concept design of the preferred route.

The collation of information from discussions with potentially directly affected property owners and other property owners via the free call information line or the project office will influence both selection of the preferred route and aspects of the design of that route.
5.0 Property issues and mitigation measures

5.1 Issues

Impact on property by the proposed upgrade of the highway is inevitable. The RTA is committed to improving the safety and efficiency of the road network and has stipulated a high standard upgrade of the existing highway. A high standard upgrade cannot be contained within the RTA’s existing road reserve for the highway.

As previously mentioned, an option may potentially directly impact on a property, and require full or partial acquisition, or it may be in the immediate vicinity of a property and not require acquisition of any part of that property. Direct impacts could range from the acquisition of “strips” on the edge of a property, to severance of large lots, to acquisition of the whole property and dwelling.

Property owners potentially directly affected by a route option will have differing concerns and questions to those in the immediate vicinity.

Issues to be considered by the project team, and likely to be of concern to potentially directly affected property owners, include:

a) Full acquisition of house and land;
b) Partial acquisition of land and loss of amenity and impact on property value and continuing viability of operations; and

c) Severance of land parcels and continuing viability of operations.

Issues to be considered by the project team, and likely to be of concern to in the immediate vicinity property owners, include:

d) Loss of amenity and impact on property value with no monetary compensation; and

e) Alternative property access arrangements (although no property acquisition).

5.2 Mitigation measures

Property issues have been considered in the development of options and will continue to be considered in the further development of the preferred route. Many considerations affect the position of the road alignment. Wherever possible the proposed road alignment has been sited such that direct impact on dwellings is avoided. The orientation of property boundaries has also been considered such that severance of properties is minimised.

Where properties are directly impacted, the RTA will enter into negotiations with the affected property owner to acquire all or part of the land. Where only a part of a property is required, the RTA will seek to acquire only that part needed for the road. The RTA is not required to purchase land in addition to that required for a road, however the Roads Act 1993 includes the provision for the RTA to consider the purchase of a whole property in particular circumstances.

A number of road design techniques have been considered to reduce the impact on adjacent land uses and dwellings. These measures include the use of earth mounding and walls to reduce the impact of noise and the use of vegetation and landscaping techniques to reduce visual impact and integrate the road into the landscape.
Where a land parcel is severed such that the property is divided into two parts, a suitable, safe and economically justifiable means of connecting the severed portions of land will be considered and discussed with the property owner prior to the RTA acquiring one of the severed portions. A suitable means of connecting a severed portion of land is generally likely to be considered only where the road formation is in fill and underpasses could be incorporated to allow the movement of vehicles, farm machinery, and stock.
6.0 Conclusion

Property ownership has been collated for the study area. Potentially directly affected and in the immediate vicinity properties have been identified in relation to the seven options.

Impacts have been identified in the process of determining the short-listed options and a framework established to commence and maintain contact with owners. This framework will be developed over the course of preferred route selection and concept design. Among other things this will set final boundaries for future environmental assessment and property acquisition.
Appendix A  Properties potentially affected
GERRINGONG TO BOMADERRY - PRINCES HIGHWAY UPGRADE

POTENTIALLY DIRECTLY AND INDIRECTLY AFFECTED PROPERTIES

SECTION A - MOUNT PLEASANT TO SOUTH GERRINGONG
Appendix B  Summary of properties affected
## Appendix B - Summary of properties affected

### Potentially directly affected landowners

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### Potentially in the vicinity affected landowners

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