



Australian Government

BUILDING OUR FUTURE



M1 Pacific Motorway extension to Raymond Terrace

Environmental impact statement –
Chapter 1: Introduction

Transport for NSW | July 2021



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1. Introduction

This chapter introduces the project, providing a brief outline of its need, scope, and location. It also outlines the structure of this environmental impact statement (EIS).

1.1 The proposed project

Transport for NSW (Transport) proposes to construct the M1 Pacific Motorway extension to Raymond Terrace (the project). Approval is sought under Part 5, Division 5.2 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act) and Part 9, Division 1 of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act).

The project would connect the existing M1 Pacific Motorway at Black Hill and the Pacific Highway at Raymond Terrace within the City of Newcastle and Port Stephens Council local government areas (LGAs). The project would provide regional benefits and significant productivity benefits on a national scale. The project location is shown in **Figure 1-1** within its regional context.

The project would include the following key features (refer to **Figure 1-2**):

- A 15 kilometre motorway comprised of a four lane divided road (two lanes in each direction)
- Motorway access from the existing road network via four new interchanges at:
 - Black Hill: connection to the M1 Pacific Motorway
 - Tarro: connection and upgrade (six lanes) to the New England Highway between John Renshaw Drive and the existing Tarro interchange at Anderson Drive
 - Tomago: connection to the Pacific Highway and Old Punt Road
 - Raymond Terrace: connection to the Pacific Highway.
- A 2.6 kilometre viaduct over the Hunter River flood plain including new bridge crossings over the Hunter River, the Main North Rail Line, and the New England Highway
- Bridge structures over local waterways at Tarro and Raymond Terrace, and an overpass for Masonite Road in Heatherbrae
- Connections and modifications to the adjoining local road network
- Traffic management facilities and features
- Roadside furniture including safety barriers, signage, fauna fencing and crossings and street lighting
- Adjustment of waterways, including Purgatory Creek at Tarro and a tributary of Viney Creek
- Environmental management measures including surface water quality control measures
- Adjustment, protection and/or relocation of existing utilities
- Walking and cycling considerations, allowing for existing and proposed cycleway route access
- Permanent and temporary property adjustments and property access refinements
- Construction activities, including establishment and use of temporary ancillary facilities, temporary access tracks, haul roads, batching plants, temporary wharves, soil treatment and environmental controls.

A detailed project description and the proposed construction methodology is provided in **Chapter 5**.

The project is one of the last major upgrades required to complete a free flowing dual carriageway route between Sydney and Brisbane along the coastal road route of the National Land Transport Network (NLTN). The other remaining major upgrade proposed along the Pacific Highway corridor is the Coffs Harbour Bypass.

The benefits of the project to the NLTN and the road network in the Hunter Region include:

- Greater road network capacity and improved traffic flow
- Provision of infrastructure for higher productivity vehicles along the NLTN
- Improved flood immunity and accessibility along the NLTN
- Improved route reliability and improvements to major holiday peak flows
- Improved road safety
- Improved accessibility to major employment and commercial centres in the Hunter Region including the City of Newcastle, the Port of Newcastle, Hunter Valley, Newcastle Airport, Tomago, Beresfield and Port Stephens.

The need for the project and project objectives are described in **Chapter 3**.

The project would be funded by the Australian and NSW governments. Subject to project approval and funding availability, construction of the project is proposed to start in 2023 and would take about four to five years to complete, weather permitting.

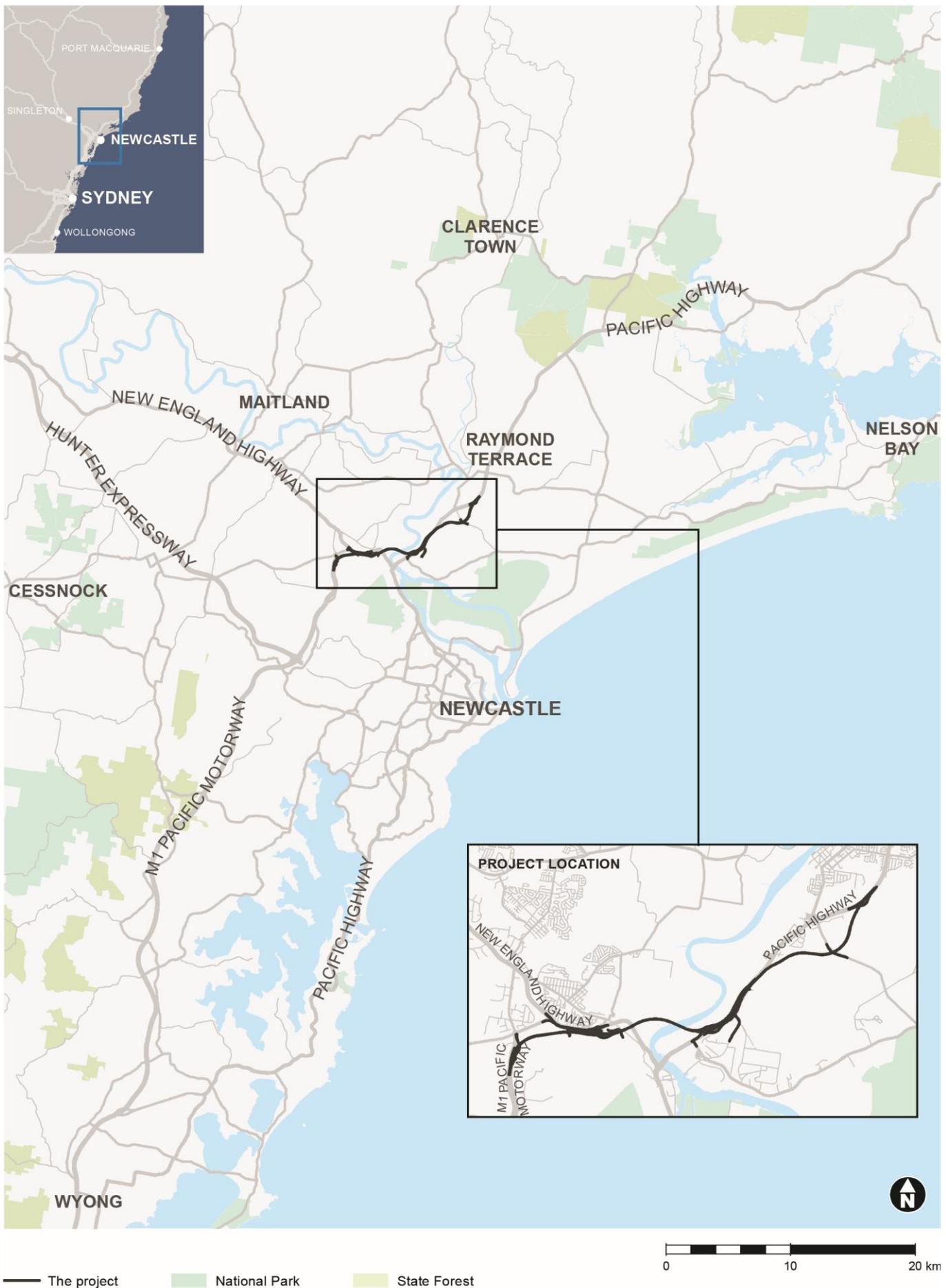
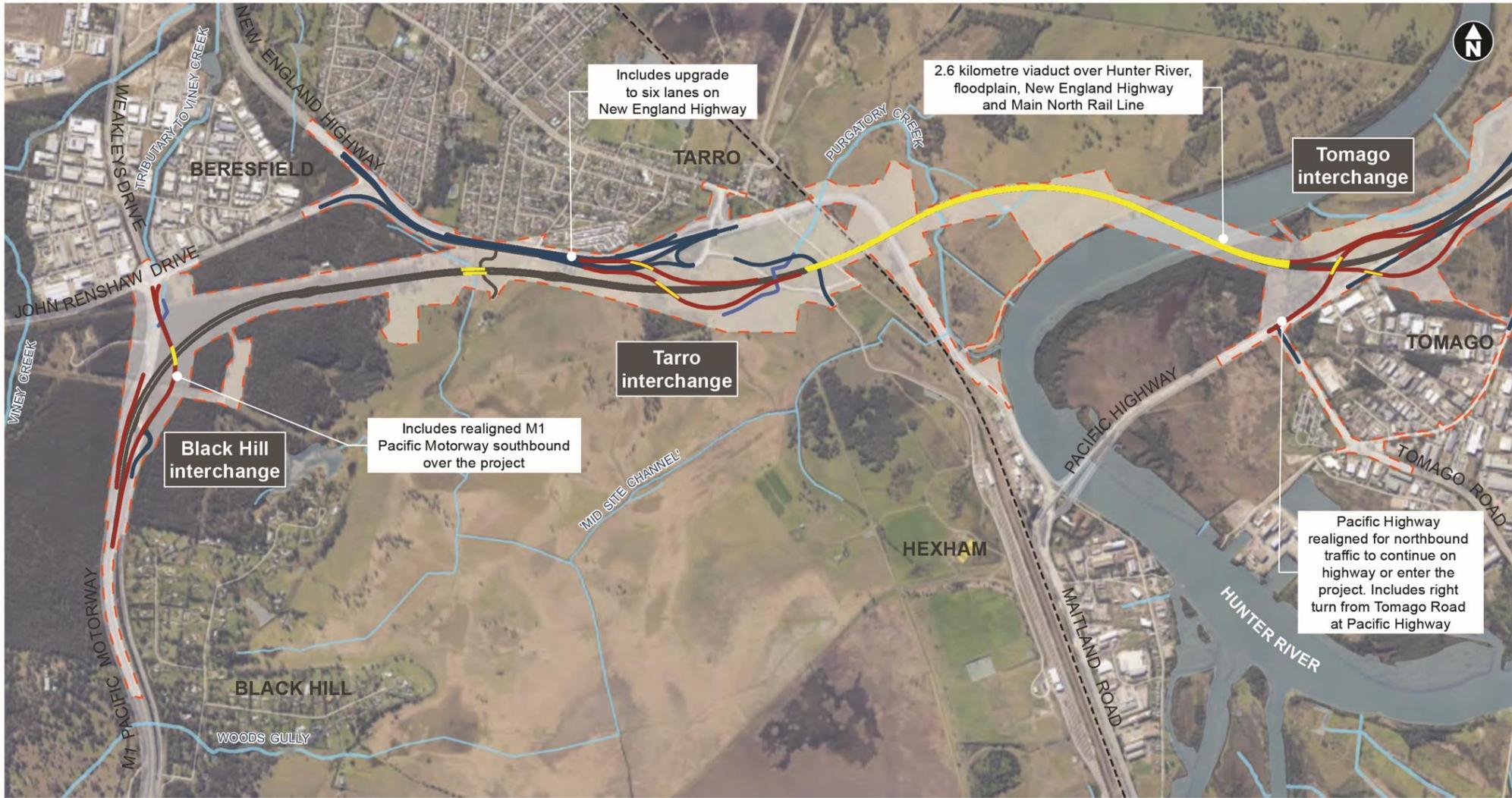


Figure 1-1 Regional context of the project

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- Main alignment
- Bridges/ Viaduct
- Adjustments to existing roads
- Construction footprint
- New ramp
- Waterways
- Creek realignment
- Main North Rail Line

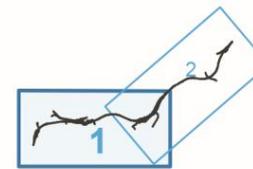
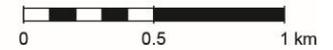
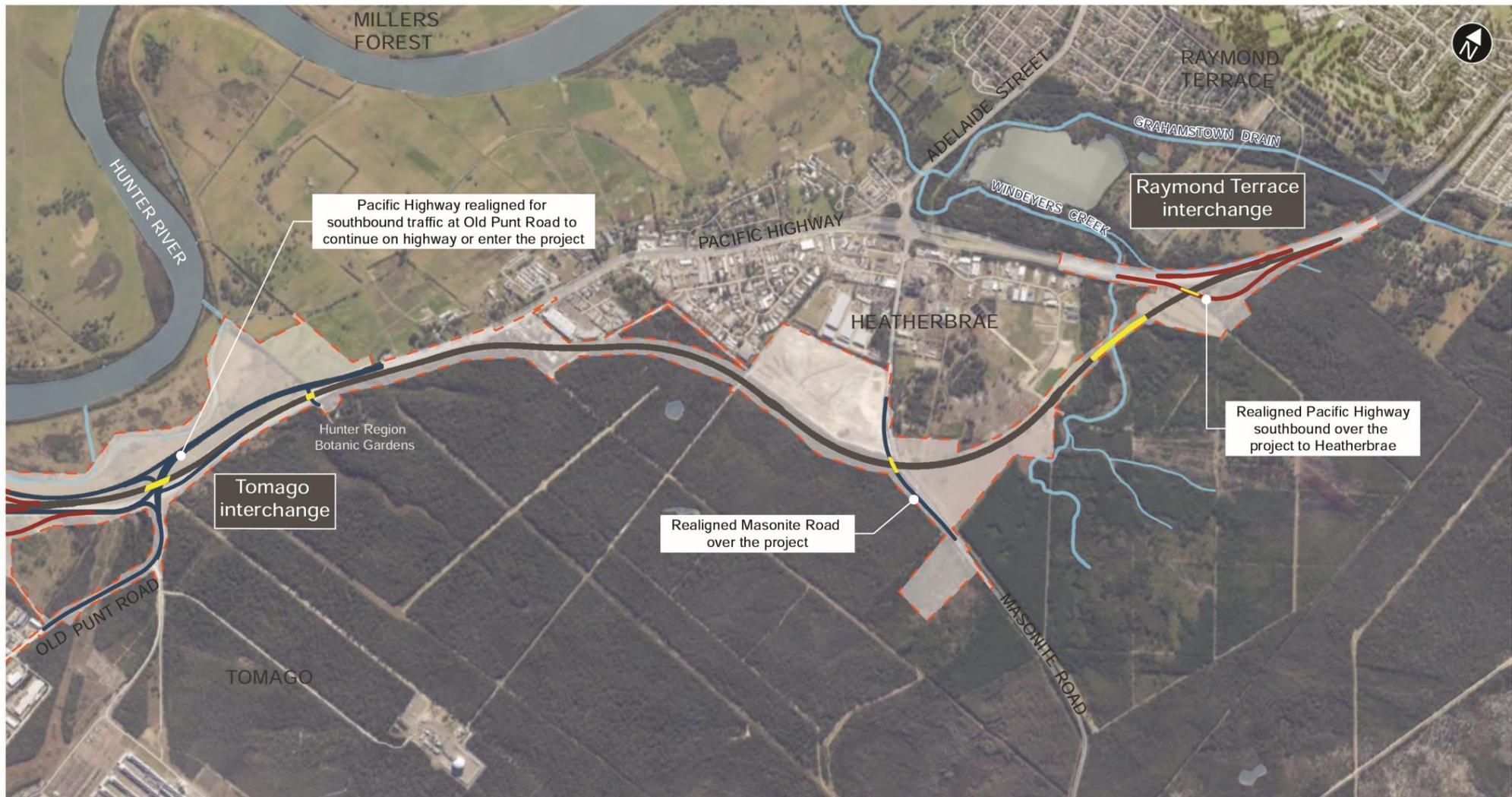
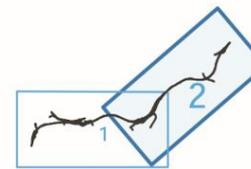


Figure 1-2 Project key features (map 1 of 2)

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- Main alignment
- Bridges/ Viaduct
- Adjustments to existing roads
- Construction footprint
- New ramp
- Waterways



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Figure 1-2 Project key features (map 2 of 2)

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1.2 Project location

The project is located in the NSW Lower Hunter region, north of Newcastle as shown in . The southern extent of the project is located about two kilometres south of the John Renshaw Drive and Weakleys Drive intersection and the northern extent of the project is located about 2.3 kilometres north-east of the Masonite Road and Pacific Highway roundabout at Raymond Terrace.

The project is located within the City of Newcastle and Port Stephens Council LGAs and traverses the suburbs of Black Hill, Beresfield, Tarro, Tomago, Heatherbrae and Raymond Terrace.

As shown in **Figure 1-2**, the project is predominantly located in greenfield areas, generally aligning with existing infrastructure and development.

The topography in and around the project includes low rolling hills to the south, the Hunter River and associated flood plain through the central section of the project and sandy, vegetated areas in the northern extent.

Existing features within or surrounding the project include:

- Major roads of state importance, including the M1 Pacific Motorway, John Renshaw Drive, Weakleys Drive, Hunter Expressway (via John Renshaw Drive), New England Highway, Pacific Highway and Tomago Road
- Areas of native vegetation listed as Threatened Ecological Communities (TEC) under the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* (BC Act) and EPBC Act
- Tomago Sandbeds, which form part of the Hunter Water Corporation drinking water catchment and the Tomago Groundwater Management Area, located to the east of Heatherbrae
- Hunter River, associated tributaries and extensive areas of floodplain
- Hunter Region Botanic Gardens at Heatherbrae
- Residential areas of Black Hill, Beresfield, Tarro, Heatherbrae and Raymond Terrace
- Semi-rural and urban areas of Black Hill, Tarro and Heatherbrae
- Light industrial, heavy industrial and commercial areas of Beresfield, Hexham, Tomago and Heatherbrae
- The Hunter Estuary Wetlands Ramsar site and Hunter Wetlands National Park, located to the south of the project.

1.3 Structure of this environmental impact statement

This EIS was prepared to address the requirements issued by the Secretary of the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE) (the Secretary) on 20 March 2019 and the relevant provisions of Schedule 2 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000.

The main EIS is divided into the following chapters:

- **Glossary:** provides a list of terms and abbreviations used throughout this document
- **Executive summary:** provides a summary of the project, overview of key environmental issues and next steps
- **Chapter 1: Introduction:** provides a broad overview of the project and where it is located
- **Chapter 2: Assessment process:** outlines the statutory requirements and explains the steps in the assessment and approval process
- **Chapter 3: Strategic justification and project need:** provides the strategic context, explains the need for the project and identifies the project objectives
- **Chapter 4: Project development and alternatives:** reviews the alternatives and options considered in developing the project including the consequences of not proceeding
- **Chapter 5: Project description:** provides a detailed description of the project including the project alignment, design standards, key design features and construction methods
- **Chapter 6: Consultation:** outlines the consultation activities carried out, the issues raised and how these were addressed
- **Assessment of key issues:** identifies the key environmental issues, assesses the impacts and proposes environmental management measures
 - **Chapter 7:** Traffic and transport
 - **Chapter 8:** Noise and vibration
 - **Chapter 9:** Biodiversity
 - **Chapter 10:** Hydrology and flooding
 - **Chapter 11:** Surface water and groundwater quality
 - **Chapter 12:** Aboriginal cultural heritage
 - **Chapter 13:** Socio-economic
 - **Chapter 14:** Land use and property
 - **Chapter 15:** Urban design, landscape and visual amenity
 - **Chapter 16:** Soils and contamination
 - **Chapter 17:** Non-Aboriginal heritage
 - **Chapter 18:** Air quality
 - **Chapter 19:** Waste
 - **Chapter 20:** Sustainability
 - **Chapter 21:** Climate change risk
 - **Chapter 22:** Safety and risk
 - **Chapter 23:** Cumulative impacts.
- **Chapter 24: Summary of environmental management measures:** collates all of the environmental management measures for the project identified through the impact assessment
- **Chapter 25: Environmental risk analysis:** details the risk analysis process by which the potential environmental issues for assessment were identified
- **Chapter 26: Project justification and conclusion:** presents the justification for the project, including consideration of the principles of ecologically sustainable development and the objects of the EP&A Act
- **Chapter 27: Project synthesis:** provides a summary of the project including a compilation of impacts, proposed management measures and justifications for the project
- **Chapter 28: References.**

The following appendices are included and support the EIS:

- **Appendix A:** Secretary's environmental assessment requirements and checklist
- **Appendix B:** Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000 checklist
- **Appendix C:** Schedule 4 of the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Regulations 2000 (Commonwealth) checklist
- **Appendix D:** Transport Environment and Sustainability Policy
- **Appendix E:** Community Consultation Framework
- **Appendix F:** Environmental record of proponent
- **Appendix G:** Traffic and Transport Working Paper
- **Appendix H:** Noise and Vibration Working Paper
- **Appendix I:** Biodiversity Assessment Report
- **Appendix J:** Hydrology and Flooding Working Paper
- **Appendix K:** Surface Water and Groundwater Quality Working Paper
- **Appendix L:** Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report
- **Appendix M:** Socio-economic Working Paper
- **Appendix N:** Land Use and Property Working Paper
- **Appendix O:** Urban Design, Landscape Character and Visual Amenity Working Paper
- **Appendix P:** Soils and Contamination Working Paper
- **Appendix Q:** Non-Aboriginal Heritage Working Paper
- **Appendix R:** Air Quality Working Paper
- **Appendix S:** Waste Working Paper
- **Appendix T:** Sustainability Working Paper
- **Appendix U:** Climate Change Risk Working Paper.