

**Foxground and Berry Bypass  
Environmental Assessment Submission  
Berry Landcare DoP Submission on E.A. for Foxground and Berry Bypass**

**Document Title:** **BERRY LANDCARE Inc.  
Foxground and Berry Bypass**

**Report No:  
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## **INTRODUCTION**

This document presents an initial submission by Berry Landcare to object to aspects of the environmental assessment report prepared by the RMS in relation to the Foxground and Berry Bypass. Berry Landcare requests the authority to add responses to this version, until 7<sup>th</sup> January, as offered to the Berry Alliance.

## **REFERENCED DOCUMENTS**

NSW Government, Planning, "Director-General's Requirements for a Project Application for the Princes Highway Upgrade – Foxground and Berry Bypass", 11 February 2011.  
Transport NSW, Roads & Maritime Services, "Foxground and Berry Bypass, Princes Highway Upgrade. Environmental assessment and appendices", November 2012.

## **REVIEW OF THE DIRECTOR GENERAL'S REQUIREMENTS**

Berry Landcare is encouraged by the rigour imposed by the Director General's requirements and has highlighted a number of issues for which Berry Landcare believes the approach adopted by the EA is deficient or inappropriate.

## **REVIEW OF THE RMS ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT REPORT**

The structure of Berry Landcare's review report has reflected the section headings of the environmental assessment report so as to assist the Director General in cross-referencing our concerns with the EA document itself. Important comments follow referencing the section 7.3 Biodiversity and Appendix F part 1.

Section 7.3 refers to the 7 Mile Beach N.P. To Barren Grounds Nature Reserve wildlife corridor. This corridor is known as the "Berry Corridor" and crosses the Princes Highway between Tindalls Lane and Austral Park Road junctions. It is clearly shown in the South Coast Regional Conservation Plan Dec 2010. The corridor has secured NSW government funding for fencing and reforestation and its connectivity to Barren Grounds is clearly threatened by the bypass. Berry Landcare commends RMS for their efforts to ameliorate the impact of the bypass with several fauna crossings in the area, planned in consultation with SCRMA and Berry Landcare. However, Appendix F only refers to Broughton Creek corridor and mapping does not show the Berry Corridor at all. The context of the fauna crossings is thereby lost. The SCRMA Berry Corridor needs to be considered as a separate Landscape Character sub Unit, and the bypass impact as "High".

Appendix F iii section 5.3 Corridors and Connectivity notes on Riparian corridor vegetation "control of exotic aquatic species". By virtue of the importance of the riparian corridors for land dwelling fauna movement we would recommend the removal of the word "aquatic". That is, all exotic weeds, both in the streambed and the stream banks should be controlled.

Page F-66 last sentence states "describe in detail the proposed design and location of these structures" referring to fauna crossings and fauna fencing. Whilst the location of fauna fencing is described there is no specification given. Berry Landcare understands the fauna fencing specified for the Stage 1 (Gerringong) section is not entirely adequate and believes that very specific design specification should be given to tenderers and in this document for community comment.



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Page F-68 specifies the fauna fencing to be erected 200 metres "either side". This should be clarified to spell out the fencing to be erected either side of the underpass etc **and** either side of the bypass.

Page F-73 specifies fauna fencing only on the northern side of the western end of the "Bridge at Berry" It is not clear if the noise wall extends to cut off the south side for fauna transit fully. If not fauna fencing on the south side will be required. Also there is good vegetation on the NE corner of this bridge and fauna fencing should be considered to the N and S of the Eastern end of the Berry Bridge.

Figure 5-2 Berry Landcare recommends extending the south side fauna fence an additional 200 metres to the west, recognising that there needs to be a gap for property access. Fauna approaching the bypass from the south (across cleared paddock) will be attracted by the vegetation visible across the bypass and roadkill could be reduced by extending the fence. Figure 5-3 Berry Landcare recommends fauna fencing either side of the 3 Broughton Creek bridges to effectively funnel wildlife under the bypass bridges.

F-80 section 5.6 Roadkill monitoring - Berry Landcare recommends RMS letterdrop residents in the area inviting them to report roadkill incidents (preferably on an interactive website). This would be far more effective than periodic monitoring by council etc. The E.A. Needs to state who is responsible for remedial development and what level of roadkill would trigger such activity.

Rural (cleared) land fencing alongside the highway should avoid the use of barbed wire to minimise bird, bat and glider kills. It should also include a strong lower mesh to prevent wombats and other smaller native fauna from penetrating through to the roadway. The design of the mesh should be such that it is an effective barrier without the possibility of entrapping fauna species. By the lack of fauna fencing etc. the Environmental Assessment implies that cleared land and degraded bush are not inhabited by native fauna. This is entirely wrong, and for safety reasons it is clearly most important to try to prevent large fauna such as wombats from venturing onto the highway.

Berry Landcare recommends only locally sourced indigenous species, from the tree list already supplied to RMS, be used for revegetation, and the project be of an extended duration to ensure:-

- a) an adequate supply from local nurseries
- b) the opportunity to avoid planting at times when the temperature would overly stress the trees
- c) the opportunity to replace trees that do not survive.

Local species are not common nursery stock. Their propagation in numbers adequate for the mass planting required at the planting out phase of the work will require preplanning of at least two or three years.

Berry Landcare understands that the construction of the bypass will result in a significant number of isolated pockets of land which are likely to become weed-infested and act as a weed seed-source to neighbouring areas. DoP should insist that the Environmental Assessment includes the identification of all such pockets together with the strategy to maintain them in a weed-free state post-construction.

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**OTHER REFERENCE DOCUMENTS WARRANTING REVIEW BY PLANNING NSW**

Berry Landcare believes there are important issues reported in a small number of recent documents that are relevant to this Project. In particular, these provide high level guidance on aspects of corridors and the protection of biodiversity assets that we believe should be considered in the review of the Project.

South Coast Regional Strategy

South Coast Regional Conservation Plan Dec 2010

Berry Town Creek flood study, commissioned by Shoalhaven City Council

The objective in providing these references is supplement the criteria proposed by the Director General through the authorities responsible for the documents then relied upon by the Proponent. We are concerned that: the assessment of risk submitted by the Proponent within the application is incomplete, and that future decisions, made by others, regarding what is “reasonable” mitigation treatment will be made without adequate regard for the consequences.