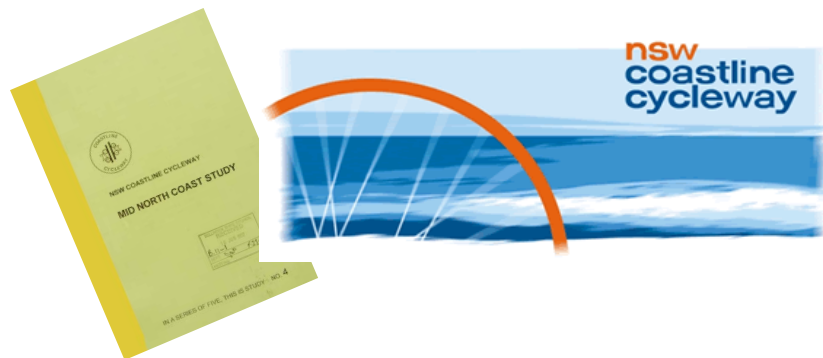


## Submission on Woolgoolga to Ballina Pacific Highway Upgrade, SSI 4963

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We fully support the upgrade of the Pacific Highway between Woolgoolga to Ballina. We would like to bring to the planners' attention the fact that by incorporating some of the concepts of the Coastline Cycleway (CC), which has been evolving since the mid 1980's, vast sections of the CC project can be utilised to finish links which would otherwise remain only on the drawing boards for years to come.



### **We have 3 main areas of Concern**

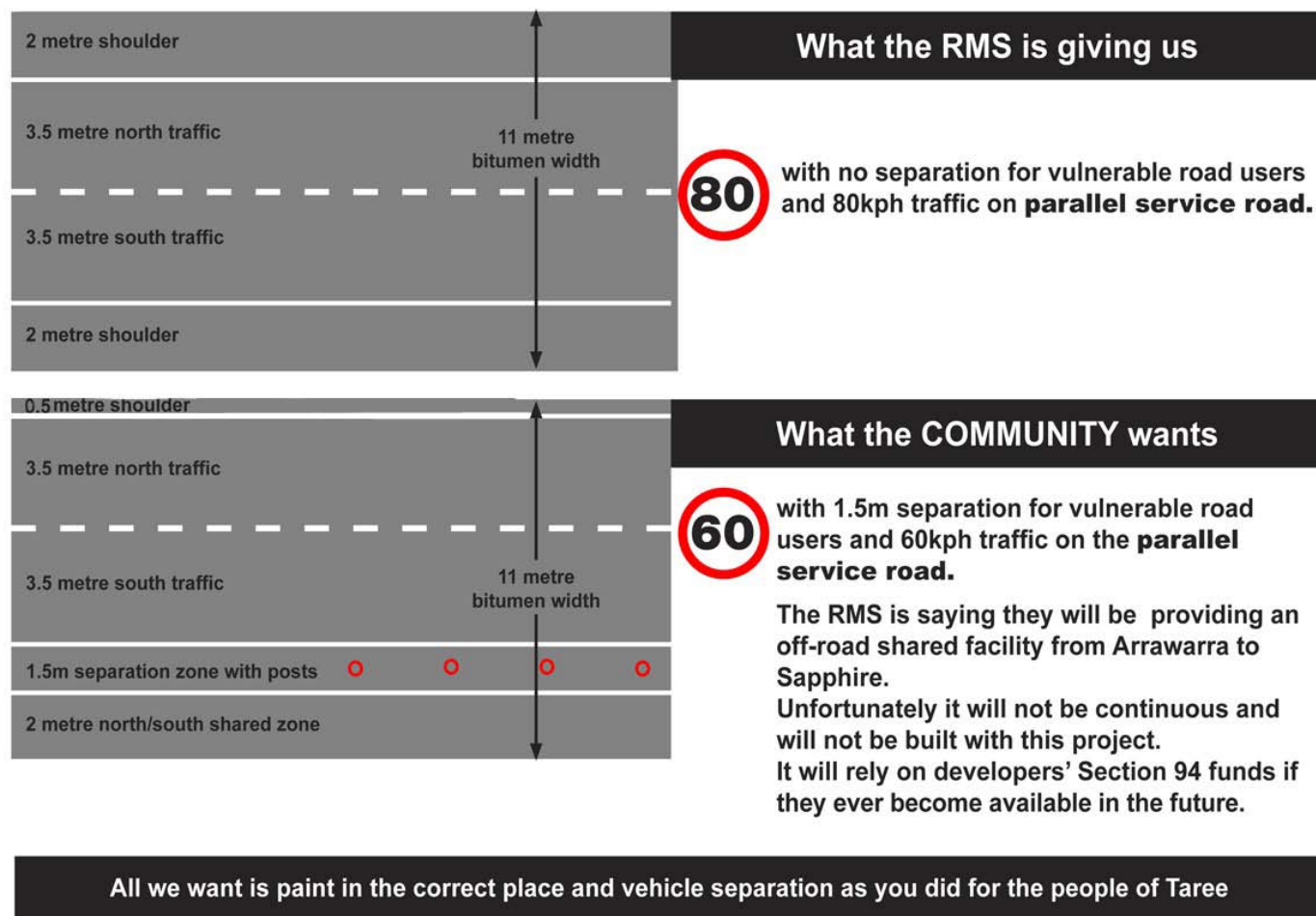
- Truck movements between Grafton and Glenugie / Tynedale via Old Pacific Highway.
- No alternative service road at Half Way Creek, already constructed.
- Seamless connection of CC from W2B with S2W and future retail development.

We also believe the co-funding of the CC project with local councils at the present time is under threat from so many other areas which need extra funding to be found. Climate extremes are causing these extra demands on their budgets, especially here on the north coast of NSW.

With little change to the old Pacific Highway, that will remain to service community access, and for minimal expense, our concept provides a valuable addition to community infrastructure for vulnerable road users of all ages. Cost-wise, it only needs re-configuring the white lines by adding one more line and using flexible bollards to visually define the safe separation between the vulnerable road users and motor vehicles and freight trucks.



Our concept is currently being negotiated for implementation on the Parallel Service Road, which is being built for the entire length of the Sapphire to Woolgoolga Upgrade, recently named the “Solitary Islands Way”. This facility will provide access back to the Community, which has been denied them over the years as more and more traffic and freight volumes have increased and totally isolated communities from alternative forms of transport.



Our concept above is designed around 11 metres road surface width but obviously can be reconfigured to wider lane width and greater speed zones where topography allows.

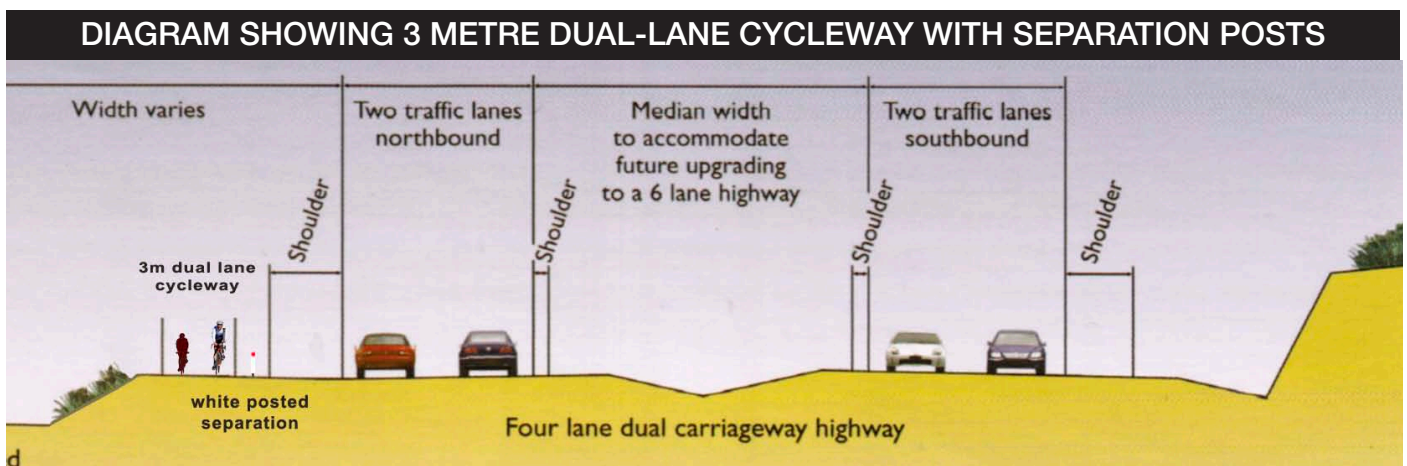
The separation width works hand in hand with the speed differential between vehicles and the vulnerable road user.

In a letter received from the Minister Duncan Gay MLC Minister for Roads and Ports on the 12th February 2013 via Local State Member Andrew Fraser, states quite clearly,

*‘Once resolved, cycleway facilities will be installed including signage and line marking to ensure the safe separation of cyclists from vehicles.’*



As can be seen from the Google street view above, a large distance of the Old Pacific Highway was treated the way we're seeking when the Taree Bypass was established.



Much of the W2B upgrade transverses larger distances which are far more remote in location as well being void of service roads that can be utilised as sections of the Old Pacific Highway.

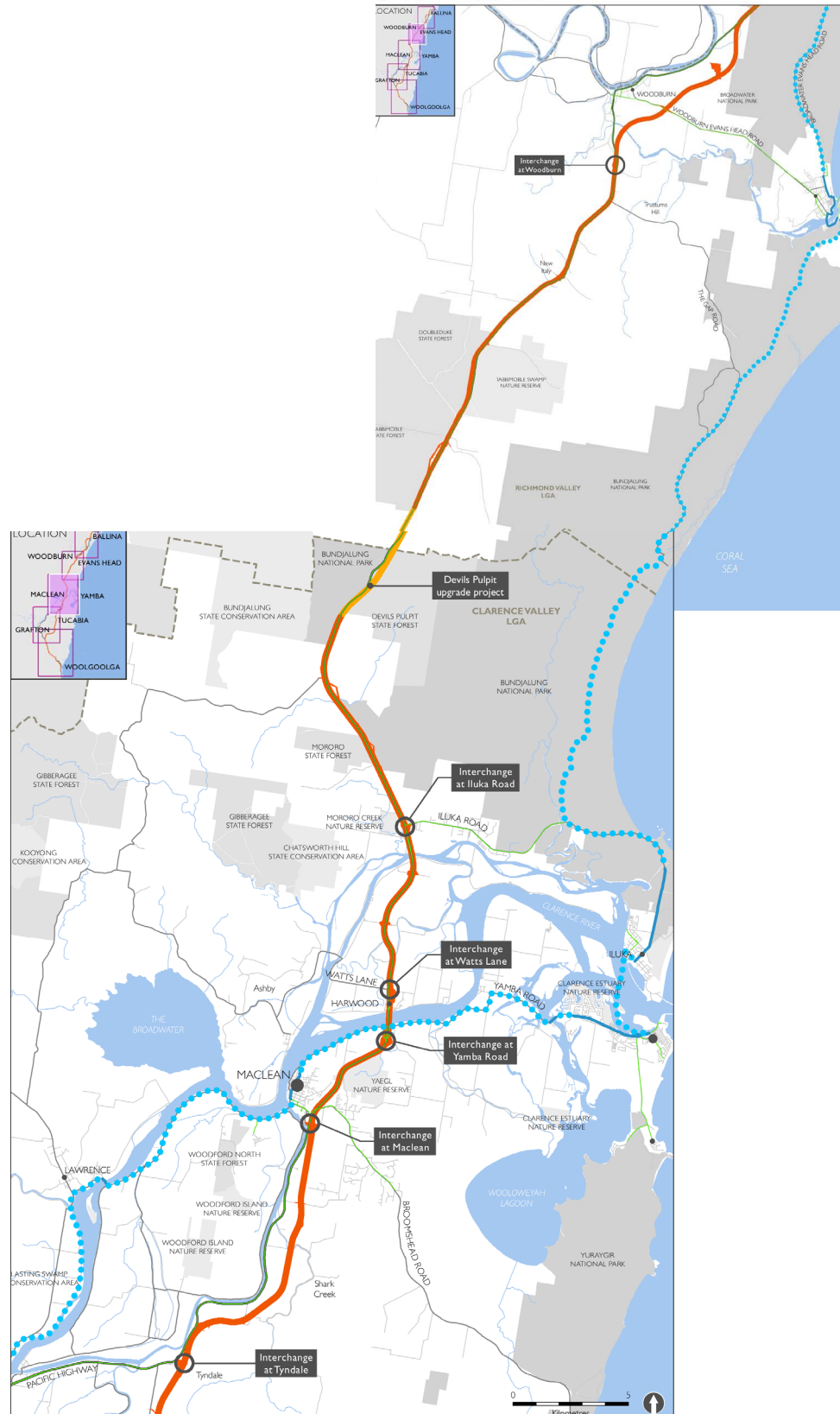
In these instances a 3 metre wide, separated 2 way cycleway should be implemented within the design constraints of the freeway or motorway.

The separation here continues the backbone of the CC. If it were not to be continued through these sections, the amount of retro-fitting needed to complete the CC as a full-length project would be beyond funding. This is why it is imperative that it be included and designed with the W2B project.



Currently the CC is shown transversing through the Bundjalung National Park. We believe this section would benefit from being incorporated within the Motorway boundaries as access to facilities like water would be far more logical via highway rest stops.

Figure 2-13 NSW coastline cycleway

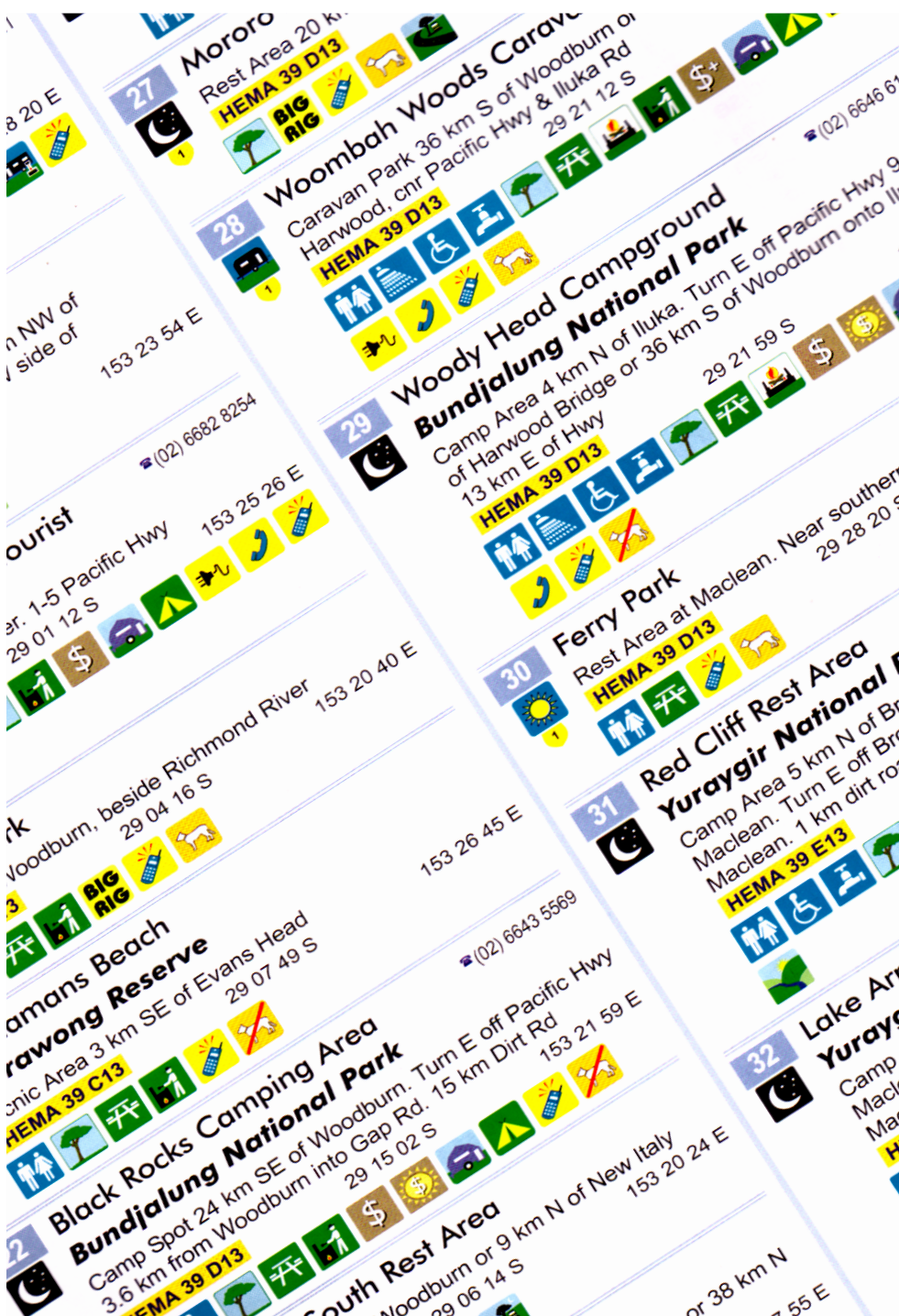


## Tourism Benefits

Along this entire section of Pacific Highway upgrade, together with what is planned for the S2W, it cannot be denied that the tourism potential is enormous. Along a great deal of the Pacific Highway to the south, many towns have had to re-invent themselves after having lost the passing trade.

If we merge the CC potential with the W2B upgrade during construction, these facilities will provide huge tourism potential to build on what is becoming one of the biggest growing social activities today of “cycle-tourism”.

Today our cycle tourists are often professionals. They have dollars in their pockets, and they will spend them if we can convince the planners that their highways don't have to cater for only cars and trucks.



## Community Benefits

Although we call this type of infrastructure 'cycleway', a far better terminology would be 'shared facility'.

The Pacific Highway once upon a time way back in the 1800's was actually a cycleway. Grafton streets were full of bicycles as it was a cheap way of getting around. Today it is still a cheap way of getting around, but unfortunately even walking the Pacific Highway can be a terrifying experience. Families and individuals want to be able to get around safely to both improve their health and wellbeing as well as spend time with family and friends. Country areas are still very lacking in public transport, so for our authorities to give us back a facility which the population can use as an alternative, to us is only common sense.

The increasing older population who are now getting around with electric 'go-phers' is a sign of the times. Your statisticians may have very few statistics on these types of road users, but the stats are rising and a little forethought must be implemented when such a huge chunk of taxpayers' money is being spent.





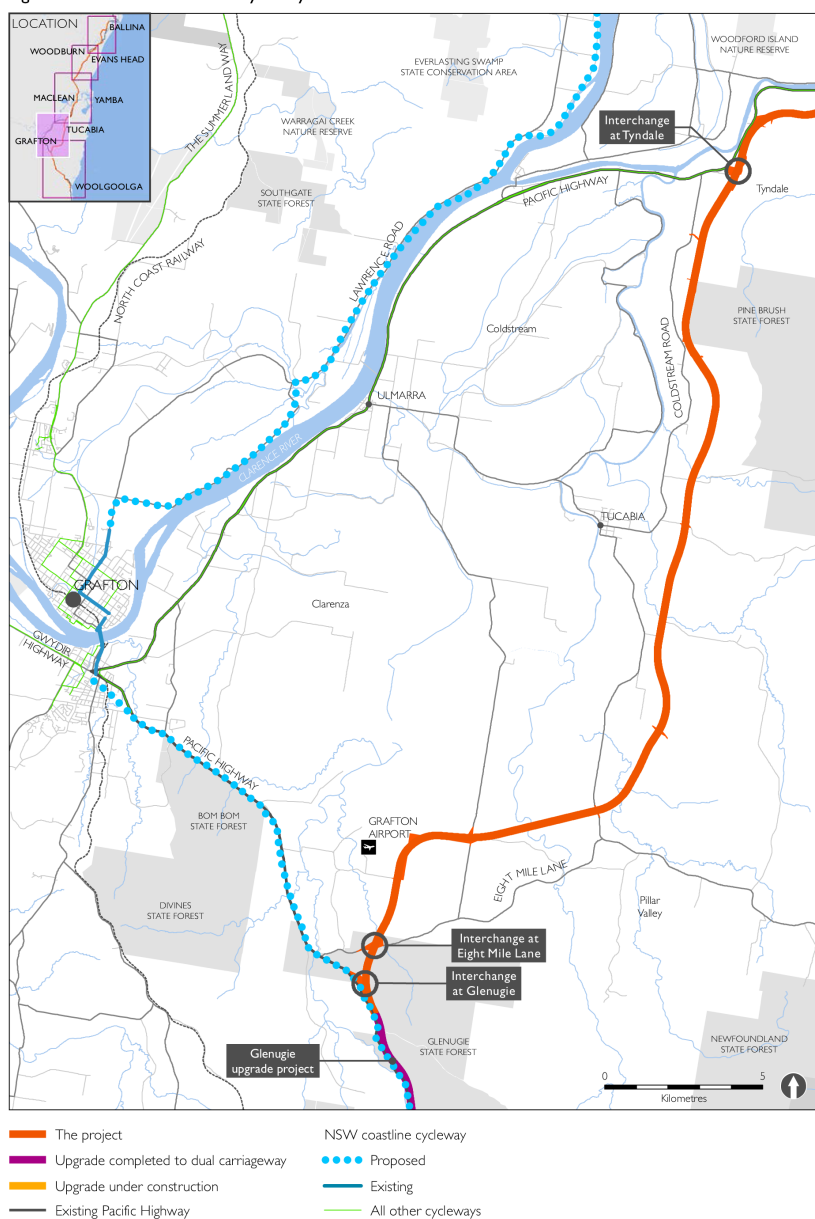
## Area of Concern 1

The CC north and south of the Grafton CBD is an area of concern. Both these sections of the Old Pacific Highway are fairly treacherous under current traffic flows.

The amount of heavy traffic utilising Grafton to head west or enter from west to head north or south can only be determined once the Motorway is opened.

The current plan for the CC is to the north of the Clarence on the Lawrence Road side. A great deal of this road is default 'country road' speed of 100, which without separation is not reasonable. A recent review of Red Rock speed resulted in the default 'country road' speed being dropped to 90. Although this road is not within the W2B project, many similar village roads are and will be utilised by vulnerable road users if the CC expands. A review of how these unrealistic road speeds are determined is necessary.

Figure 2-11 NSW coastline cycleway

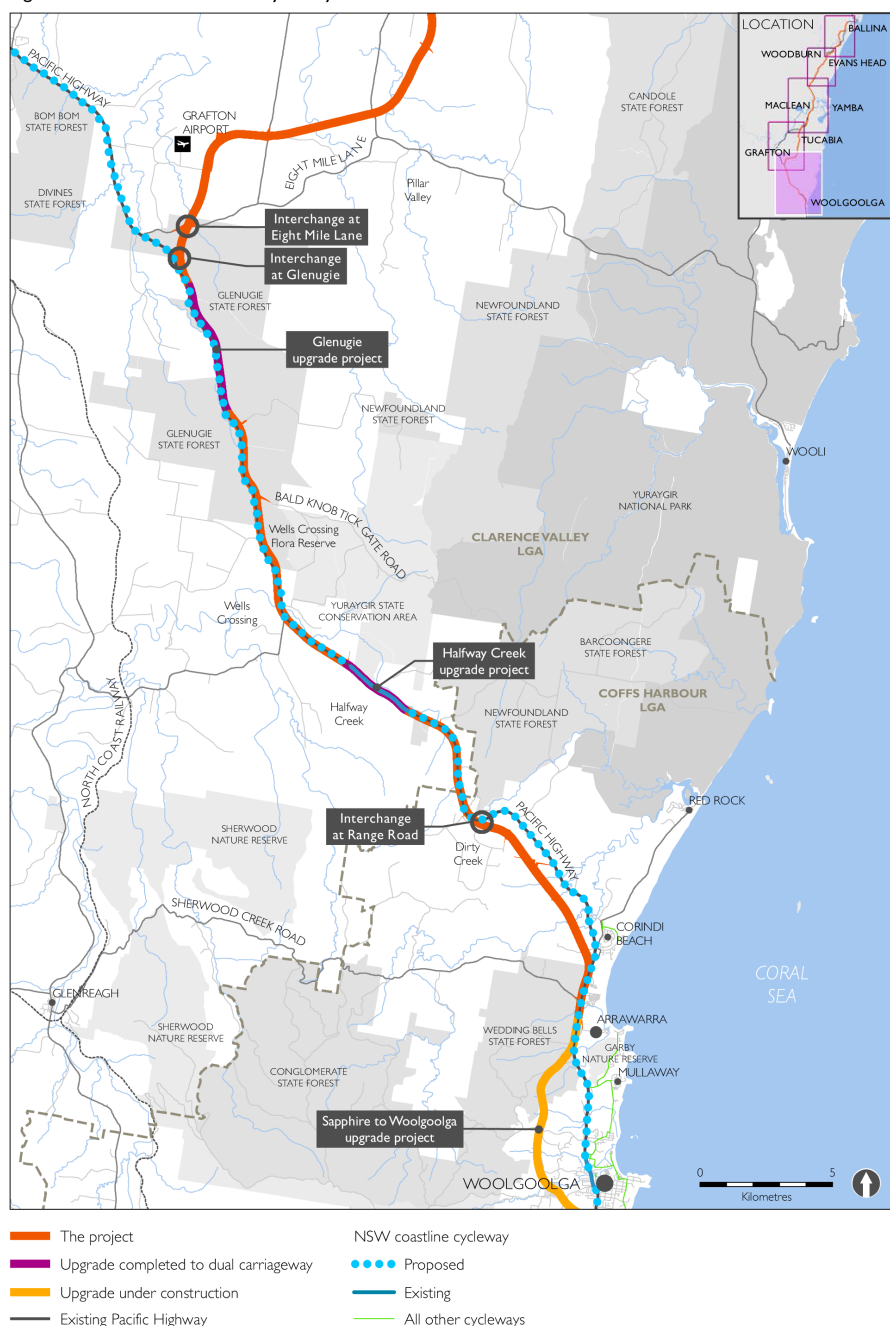


## Area of Concern 2

The CC between the Interchange at Range Road and the Interchange at Glenugie will not have a continuous service road or an alternative for vulnerable road users. There is also a large section of new Pacific Highway completed at Halfway Creek. Utilising the shoulders here is not an option with space separation of 0 metres at a speed of 100kph.

Without any separation, the build-up of traffic debris on the shoulder also adds to the hazard. At a recent meeting there was notice of a possible consideration of an alternate service road being included, which may provide a solution in this area.

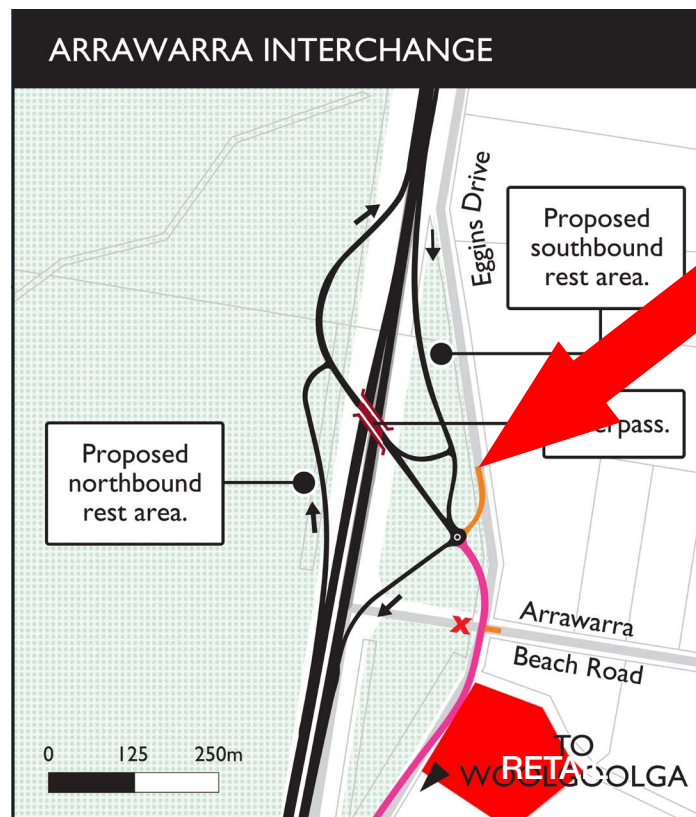
Figure 2-10 NSW coastline cycleway





### Area of Concern 3

Where the W2B project joins to the S2W project, a seamless connection of our proposal is required to maintain safe separation. It also must be maintained as a seamless connection when development happens with the retail section at this location.



With design detail (below) being advanced close to a final stage for this interchange, yet with no sign of any shared facility option available, it becomes imperative that the 2 project teams liaise together and find a suitable solution.



## Extract from the EIS

It is disappointing to find so little of this document dedicated to the vulnerable road users we represent.

### *14.2.6 Pedestrian and cycle networks*

*The Pacific Highway has limited formal pedestrian and cyclist facilities outside the major towns and regional centres. However, this is changing with a policy initiative from the Department of Planning and Infrastructure (2011) called the Coastline Cycleway (the Department is co-funding its progressive development with local government). The main objective is to provide a cycling route along the NSW coast, providing opportunities to cycle between coastal towns.*

*The coastline cycleway is a collection of individual cycle routes. In general, the intention is to avoid major roads such as the Pacific Highway. However, there are exceptions to this including along the coastline within Bundjalung National Park and near the Bundjalung bombing range.*

*Within the study area, the coastline cycleway route links with the existing cycleway at South Grafton, continuing along the existing Pacific Highway via Grafton, Lawrence and Maclean to Yamba. Elsewhere, the Pacific Highway provides the core route of the NSW coastline cycleway.*

## Extract from the Coastline Cycleway Website DoP

### *NSW Coastline Cycleway Grants Program Guidelines 2010-11*

#### *Objectives*

*The NSW Coastline Cycleway (NSWCC) Grants Program provides support funding to construct, sign and promote the Coastline Cycleway. The route was originally defined by five studies, which outline a vision for a continuous 1,400km cycle route from the Queensland border to the Victorian border, linking coastal communities and avoiding main roads where possible. Following discussions between the NSW Coastline Cycleway Project Manager (Project Manager), Councils and other stakeholders this route has been amended in places and updated maps are available from the Project Manager.*

*The Department of Planning (DoP) administers the program.*

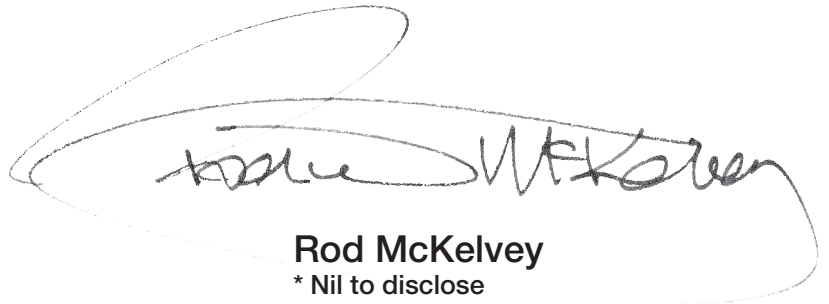
*Benefits sought from the program include:*

- i) Improved cycle access for local people to schools, work, shops and other local facilities;*
- ii) More sustainable mode share for trips in sensitive coastal areas;*
- iii) Increased participation in safe and healthy recreational activities;*
- iv) Enhanced social equity by providing for independent travel for children, the elderly and people without access to a car; and*
- v) More sustainable local economies through an increase in cycle related tourism.*



**Rick Mockridge**

\* Nil to disclose



**Rod McKelvey**

\* Nil to disclose