

Cardwell Range Realignment

The Cardwell Range Alliance, comprising the Department of Transport and Main Roads, Abigroup Contractors and Snowy Mountains Engineering Corporation, is currently constructing a four kilometre upgrade of the Bruce Highway on the Cardwell Range.

The \$115 million federally-funded upgrade will improve traffic flow and safety on this section of the Bruce Highway. It extends from the short overtaking lane on the southern side of the Cardwell Range to the bottom of the range on the northern side.

The project commenced in late July 2010 and the anticipated completion date for the upgrade is mid-2012.

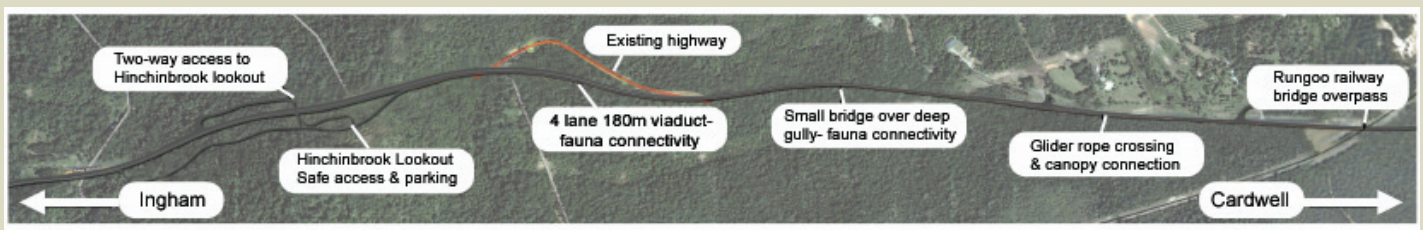
Why upgrade?

As the National Highway and primary transport corridor between Cairns and Brisbane, the Bruce Highway experiences high levels of freight, tourist and local traffic. Strong population and economic growth in North Queensland has placed increasing pressure on the efficiency, safety and reliability of this corridor, in particular through the Cardwell Range.



What does the upgrade involve?

- realignment of the road to reduce the gradient and tight curves of the current alignment
- heavy vehicle overtaking lanes on both sides of the Range
- wider road shoulders
- construction of a 180 metre long, four lane viaduct (bridge across a deep gully)
- new access roads to an enhanced Hinchinbrook Lookout
- a cutting through the crest of the range to reduce the road gradient
- an overpass of the North Coast Rail Line at the northern end of the Range



What is the project's background?

Concept planning was undertaken for the project in 2006 which included the development and assessment of alignment options and feedback from the community. A preferred alignment was recommended to the Commonwealth Government in 2007. In mid-2008 further consultation was undertaken with key stakeholders as part of the Preliminary Design Phase which was completed in 2009.



Many people in the local community provided valuable feedback during the earlier phases of consultation. Many of the suggestions have been incorporated in the final design. Below is a summary of the key issues and how the project team has addressed them in the current design of the upgrade.

You told us	What we're doing
Traffic management and road safety	• Two lanes of traffic maintained during construction • Slow vehicle passing lanes on both sides of the Range • Four lane viaduct to enable longer passing lanes • Reduced interaction between road works and road users
Environment	• Reduction in project disturbance/ footprint • Water quality treatment devices • Revegetation of redundant sections of the existing road • Rope bridges for Mahogany Gliders • Bridges and underpasses for Cassowaries to pass beneath the road
Hinchinbrook Lookout	• Lookout redeveloped and improved • Includes viewing shelter and platform • Includes interpretive signage • Separate access road for northbound and southbound traffic
Railway crossing	• Realigning the location of the railway overpass to enable the existing crossing to remain in use during construction • Reduced interaction between road and rail facility
Adjacent landowners	• Access fully maintained and retained during works • Mitigation strategies in place for blasting

Community involvement

The Cardwell Range Alliance is working closely with the local community during construction. This will include regular communication with nearby landowners, local residents, industries, interest groups, councils and other government agencies.

Newspaper advertisements, fact sheets, construction notices, letters and project updates will be developed throughout the project to keep the public informed about its progress.

For further information contact the Cardwell Range Alliance:

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Australian Government

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