



Artist's impression: Sunshine Motorway leading to the Mooloolah River Interchange (looking south towards Birtinya)



Project background

Between 2007 and 2010, extensive planning and community consultation for an upgrade of the Sunshine Motorway interchange at Mountain Creek and a new connection to Kawana Way across the Mooloolah River was undertaken as part of the Multi-Modal Transport Corridor (MMTC) study.

Significant community feedback was received and considered by TMR, with design variations explored and further consultation taking place. This focused on the new connection across the Mooloolah River.

In 2014, the MRI project was established, which focused on refining the design to address functionality, safety, congestion and connectivity issues while providing a value for money solution. The updated design included a new, largely land-based alignment for the Mooloolah River crossing with a series of bridge structures over waterway crossings. This solution significantly reduced the environmental impacts to the Mooloolah River and is more cost effective.

Key drivers

The purpose of the MRI project is to deliver a safe, efficient and effective transport network that meets the current and future transport needs of the Sunshine Coast region.

The MRI is being developed to:

- provide new north–south connectivity between Maroochydore, Birtinya, Caloundra and southern growth areas
- improve safety by reducing crashes and traffic weaving at the MRI and its approaches and departures
- provide improved transport capacity, reliability and safety to support population growth on the Sunshine Coast
- deliver an effective and reliable transport network to support key regional economic growth areas, including the new Maroochydore City Centre and the Sunshine Coast University Hospital and health precinct
- improve active transport connectivity and amenity in the local area, including new connections across the Mooloolah River
- increase capacity on the east–west section of the Sunshine Motorway between Kawana Way and the MRI
- improve access for local communities in the Mooloolaba, Mountain Creek, Birtinya and Brightwater areas.

Key benefits for all stages

- Improved average peak period travel speeds on the Sunshine Coast by up to 16 per cent resulting in faster and more efficient travel throughout the region.
- Better connectivity to improve north–south travel and access to key economic, employment, health and residential centres.
- A new direct connection between the Sunshine Motorway and Kawana Way will save drivers travelling between northern Sunshine Coast suburbs and the Sunshine Coast University Hospital up to 13 minutes per trip, if constructed by 2026, and up to 22 minutes per trip by 2041.
- Better local access via a new road link between Karawatha Drive in Mountain Creek and Brisbane Road in Mooloolaba.
- Improved safety for motorists including significant reduction of existing traffic weaving issues.
- Improved active transport opportunities through the inclusion of 7.5km of new shared pedestrian and bike rider pathways for faster and more direct connections.
- Bruce Highway to Maroochydore peak travel times will reduce by up to three minutes, if constructed by 2026, and up to 22 minutes by 2041 helping drivers arrive at their destination sooner.
- Duplication of the Sunshine Motorway between Kawana Way interchange and the new MRI will boost the capacity of this section by 27 per cent, helping to address current peak-hour congestion and significantly improve travel times.
- Reduced annual trips on congested northern sections of Nicklin Way (by 5.3 million) to free up capacity and improve traffic flow.

Timeline

- 2007–2010 Planning and community consultation for the Multi-Modal Transport Corridor (MMTC).
- 2013/2014 MRI project established to address functionality, safety, congestion and network connectivity issues in response to community feedback.
- May 2014 MRI supplementary preliminary evaluation focused on options for a more affordable solution with staged construction.
- November 2015 MRI preliminary business case confirmed the suitability of the land-based design option. Community consultation undertaken and early property acquisition commenced.
- 2019/2020 MRI detailed business case refined previous planning. This includes environmental and cultural heritage investigations, a detailed evaluation of costs and project benefits to ensure value for money and providing an update to the community.
- 2021 Funding for Stage 1 (detailed design and construction) allocated. Project will progress to detailed design following community consultation on the planning layout. Construction timing will be confirmed during the detailed design stage.

Next steps

The MRI project will enhance north–south passenger and freight travel between the northern Sunshine Coast and Brisbane to support population, economic and tourism growth in one of Australia's fastest growing regions. It was identified as a 'Priority Initiative' on the Infrastructure Australia Priority Infrastructure List (published on 5 August 2020).

The completion of the detailed business case is a critical step in confirming the cost and benefits of the MRI to support funding applications to the Australian Government. With joint funding allocated by the Queensland Government and Australian Government, the project will progress to detailed design and construction. TMR is seeking community feedback on the planning layout, which will be considered as part of the detailed design process. TMR will continue to inform and engage stakeholders and the community as the project progresses.

Contact us

For further information, contact the project team on:

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*Free call from anywhere in Australia, call charges apply for mobile phones and payphones. Check with your service provider for call costs.



Artist's impression: New overpass connecting Nicklin Way northbound with Brisbane Road in Mooloolaba (Mooloolaba to the right)



Artist's impression: Mooloolah River Interchange (Mooloolaba to the left)

July 2021

Mooloolah River Interchange

Birtinya | Mountain Creek | Mooloolaba

The Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR) has completed planning to support the delivery of the Mooloolah River Interchange (MRI) project. The Queensland Government and the Australian Government have jointly funded the \$320 million Mooloolah River Interchange (Stage 1). This major transport infrastructure project will deliver a number of much needed transport improvements to benefit the Sunshine Coast, one of Australia's fastest growing regions.

The MRI will provide improved safety for motorists and improved connectivity for pedestrians and bike riders, along with greater road network capacity.

It will support population and economic growth for the Sunshine Coast region and will provide efficient and reliable transport links to key economic hubs such as the new Maroochydore City Centre development, Birtinya town centre and the Sunshine Coast University Hospital health precinct.

Due to the complexity of this project it will need to be delivered in stages to keep traffic flowing and minimise inconvenience to the community.

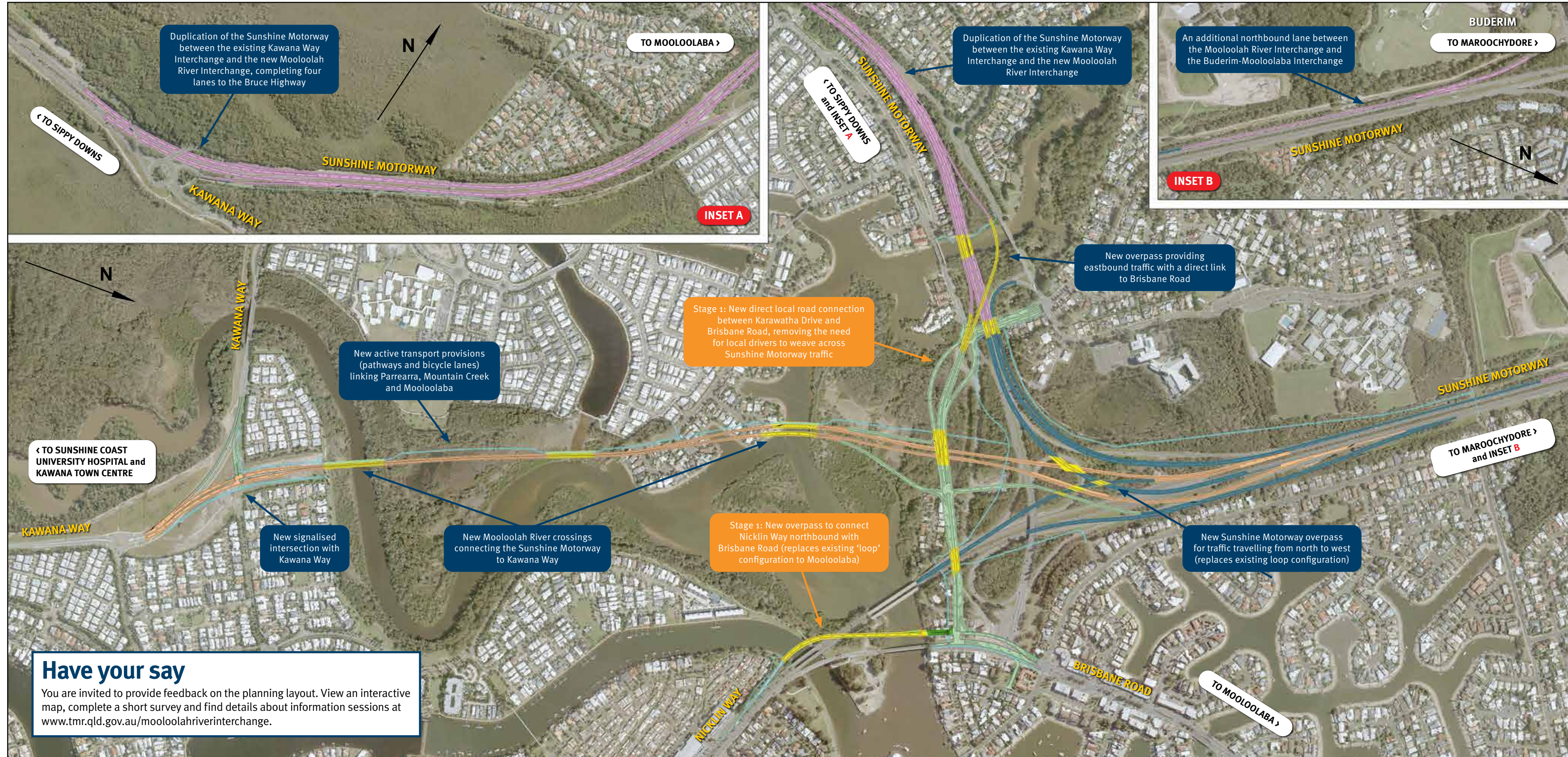
Stage 1 involves:

- a new local connection between Karawatha Drive in Mountain Creek and Brisbane Road in Mooloolaba
- a new overpass to connect Nicklin Way northbound with Brisbane Road in Mooloolaba.

Have your say on the planning layout.
See details on the layout inside this fact sheet.

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Mooloolah River Interchange – key features



Key design features

Key features of the project include:

Stage 1

(funded for detailed design and construction):

- a new overpass to connect Nicklin Way northbound with Brisbane Road in Mooloolaba
- a new local connection between Karawatha Drive in Mountain Creek and Brisbane Road in Mooloolaba

Future stages

- a new crossing of the Mooloolah River connecting the Sunshine Motorway to Kawana Way at Parrearra
- a major new interchange (the MRI) with connections to the Sunshine Motorway (to the west and north), Nicklin Way (to the south-east) and Kawana Way (to the south)
- an upgrade of the Sunshine Motorway from two to four lanes between the existing Kawana Way Interchange and the new MRI
- a new high-speed connection for the Sunshine Motorway (north to west)
- an additional northbound lane on the Sunshine Motorway between the new MRI and Buderim-Mooloolaba Interchange
- enhanced active transport facilities and connections (pathways and bicycle lanes).

LEGEND

- Sunshine Motorway
- Sunshine Motorway duplication
- Brisbane Road overpass
- Mooloolah River crossing
- Local road connections
- Bridges
- Active transport

Have your say

You are invited to provide feedback on the planning layout. View an interactive map, complete a short survey and find details about information sessions at www.tmr.qld.gov.au/mooloolahriverinterchange.