



Newsletter

December 2025

Kempsey-Armidale Road
Restoration Project



Road widening work on Big Hill

Road widening work started on Big Hill in late September 2025 and was completed by mid-December 2025.

This work was being funded under the Fixing Country Roads program.

The work involved inside batter cutting and road widening works at four locations to accommodate 19-metre long vehicles.

The work also involved the replacement of drainage grates on Big Hill that have grates with larger apertures to improve water flow into drainage lines as well as extending a culvert.

Annual maintenance grading

The annual maintenance grading of K2A was undertaken in July and August 2025.

The crew started at Blackbird Flat. The grading included K2A, Lower Creek Road, part of Petroi Road and Lagoon Creek Road.





Culvert lining works

Culvert lining works were undertaken on two culverts at Blackbird Flat, four at Flying Fox Cutting and one culvert at Big Hill as part of defect remediation works in early June.

The defects were picked up by CCTV footage of the new culverts. Defect remediation works do occur on construction projects.



Lower Creek Community Hall opening

The new community hall at Lower Creek was opened on 11th September 2025.

Dignitaries included the Mayor Sam Coupland and the Member for New England, Barnaby Joyce.

A barbecue lunch and refreshments were provided for attendees.

An update on the status of the K2A project also was provided at the event.

Progress on engaging a contractor for the project's main restoration works

Further progress is being made on the restoration of K2A to pre-disaster condition with the release of the Request for Tenders for the project on 11 November 2025.

The Request for Tenders for the design and construct project, jointly funded by the Australian and NSW State Governments under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements, has been sent to the short-listed applicants from the Expression of Interest process who were announced in July 2025.

The shortlisted applicants from the Expression of Interest process, in alphabetical order, are:

- Bielby
- CMC McIlwain Joint Venture
- Seymour Whyte SEE Civil Joint Venture

The three shortlisted applicants were invited to prepare detailed proposals for the main construction works.

These proposals will be carefully reviewed through a formal evaluation process. Council will support the applicants as they develop their submissions, with the process expected to wrap up in the first quarter of 2026. Following formal approvals, the successful applicant is expected to be announced in mid-2026.

A site inspection for the three short-listed applicants was held on 18th November with more than 20 representatives attending from the potential contractors and K2A project staff.

Branch Creek bridge repairs

Bridge repairs were undertaken on the Branch Creek bridge on Lower Creek Road in early May. To permit the replacement of a bridge girder, the bridge was closed for two days during work hours.



Spraying and inspections for the priority weed Tropical Soda Apple (TSA)

Spraying and inspections of K2A for TSA by Council's biosecurity department began in July 2025 and continued throughout the year.

From mid-November, Local Land Services have also been undertaking inspections for Tropical Soda Apple on travelling stock routes as well as ground truthing for extra signage regarding the priority weed.



Petroi Road stabilisation works

Work began in August 2025 to stabilise three washouts on Petroi Road.

The work to stabilise the three washouts on Petroi Road has been completed.

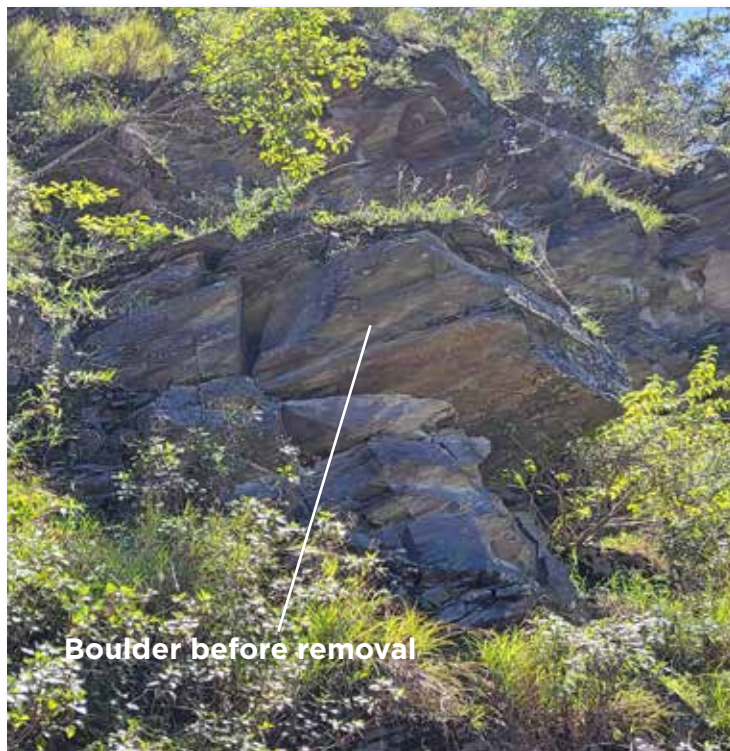
The work was not funded out of the funding for K2A but a separate grant under the Local Government Recovery Grants Program.

A Review of Environmental Factors for the work was completed and approved before work started.

The Soil Conservation Service of NSW was engaged to undertake the work. The service provides construction services to the State Government.

Materials were brought in from the Armidale end of K2A to a stockpile site near Raspberry Road before being transferred to a stockpile site on Lower Creek Road to be used in the stabilisation work.

Following about five weeks of material hauling (equating to about 1400 tonne in total), the stabilisation works started during the last week of September 2025. The works were completed in early November 2025.



Hack's Cutting

A large unstable protruding boulder on the upslope at Hack's Cutting was removed under the supervision of geotechnical engineers in late May.

An elevated work platform was used to place an inflatable bag behind the boulder which was inflated remotely using a compressor to bring the boulder down onto the road.

An excavator and a positrack were on stand-by to break it up before loading onto a truck for removal. However, the boulder shattered and was able to be removed.

Severe weather events

A series of severe weather events occurred in 2025 including Cyclone Alfred in March. The road was subject to a full closure for all traffic from 7th March until 14th March due to the likelihood of new upslope and downslope slips and the development of new hazards.

A number of trees fell following the wet weather and higher than usual winds.

During this time, some minor landslips were cleared at Big Hill and extra barriers and flagging tape were placed at locations along K2A to guide motorists away from edges. Clearing of rocks, vegetation and debris at a number of locations along K2A occurred. Investigations by Council's geotechnical engineers was also undertaken to assess upslope stability.

The weather also was a catalyst for landslips in late March and April. These were at Flying Fox Cutting, Smith's Quarry and about 300m west of the weather station at Blackbird Flat.

Regular inspections along K2A were undertaken by the project.

In May, the threshold of 40mm in a 24-hour period on K2A was met and a temporary full closure of all traffic on K2A was implemented, for safety reasons.

The volume of rainfall meant new upslope and downslope slips could occur along with the development of new hazards.

Additional barriers and flagging tape were placed at locations along K2A to guide motorists away from edges.

Following the clearing of the road, inspections were undertaken to assess the safety of the road.

In July, a warning was issued by the Bureau of Meteorology about the possibility of an East Coast 'Bomb Cyclone', for a significant amount of rainfall, possibly up to 200mm and damaging winds.

Council had crews on standby to undertake necessary assessments and clearing however the event did not greatly affect K2A.



Upcoming works

Early next year, works will be undertaken under the Fixing Local Roads funding program to extend the gravel overlay and sealed pavements at Blackbird Flat and Flying Fox Cutting.

The sealed pavement at Blackbird Flat will be extended to both the east and west.

At Flying Fox Cutting, the sealed pavement will be extended to the east and five stormwater culverts will be replaced.

Early work involves bringing material from Armidale to a stockpile location at George's Junction and establishing a site compound at the Blackbird Flat camping ground.

Work will then start at Blackbird Flat before moving onto Flying Fox Cutting.



Blackbird Flat



Flying Fox Cutting

Christmas shutdown

The project will shut down over Council's annual Christmas-New Year closure from Tuesday 22nd December 2025 until Sunday 4th January 2026.

The road between Big Hill and Blackbird Flat will remain open to local residents of the road, and emergency and essential services.

Council's K2A project team wishes everyone a merry Christmas and a happy New Year.



Want more details?



Visit the project website at www.karrp.com.au or scan the QR code shown here:



Here you can:

- View the interactive project timeline
- Download maps and documents
- Watch a project flyover video
- Explore recent updates and photos.

Quick navigation tips:

Go to the **Project Construction** tab for:

- K2A Roadmap
- Project maps

Go to the **Community Information** tab for:

- Newsletters
- Flyers & Fact sheets.

Need help or want regular updates?

Contact the project Communications Manager: Freecall 1300 136 833 and press 1, or email - k2aproject@armidale.nsw.gov.au



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