MEDIA RELEASE

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MAJOR MILESTONE FOR KEMPSEY - ARMIDALE ROAD RECONSSTRUCTION

Armidale Regional Council has awarded the contract for the delivery of the Kempsey-Armidale Road Restoration Project, marking a significant milestone to deliver the largest phase of reconstruction work following extensive damage caused by successive natural disasters.

Following a competitive procurement process, Bielby Holdings Pty Ltd has been appointed to deliver major restoration works between Big Hill and Blackbird Flat, where multiple landslips and extensive road damage have impacted access since the 2019 bushfires and subsequent flooding from 2020.

Jointly funded by the Australian and NSW governments under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA), the $319 million contract will deliver a significant component of the Kempsey-Armidale Road reconstruction program, the largest Essential Public Asset Restoration (EPAR) project ever undertaken in NSW.

The project will restore 43 kilometres of Kempsey-Armidale Road and a five-kilometre section of Lower Creek Road, improving the resilience and reliability of this important regional transport link.

Kempsey-Armidale Road is a critical east-west transport link connecting Armidale in the New England region with Kempsey on the Mid North Coast, supporting local communities, agriculture, tourism, businesses and emergency services.

The contract award marks a significant milestone for the project, with work now progressing from planning into detailed design and delivery.

Site mobilisation and early works are expected to commence in the coming months, with major construction anticipated to begin in 2027. The project will have more than 220 workers during peak construction, with completion anticipated by the end of 2029, weather permitting.

Armidale Regional Council Mayor Sam Coupland said:

"This is the largest infrastructure project being delivered by a local council, and its importance to our community and the regional economy cannot be overstated.

"Council appreciates the patience and ongoing engagement of residents and businesses throughout what has been a long and challenging recovery process.

"We look forward to working with Bielby to deliver this major project and restore a critical connection for our region.

"A fully restored Kempsey-Armidale Road will improve access for local communities, support agriculture and business, and open up a beautiful part of our region to greater tourism and economic opportunities.

Acting General Manager, Alex Manners, said the project would deliver long-term benefits for the region.

"This investment is about restoring connectivity, supporting regional economies and ensuring communities remain connected during future events."

"Council appreciates the ongoing engagement and patience of residents since recovery work began. This is the largest infrastructure project being delivered by a local council and we recognise the importance to our community and regional economy. A fully restored Kempsey-Armidale Road will open up a truly beautiful part of our region to tourism and further economic benefits."

For the latest project information, visit www.karrp.gov.au.

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