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New year start for new rail bridge project

Work is expected to start in the new year on construction of a \$18.4 million project to construct a new railway overpass bridge and the build next stage of Orange's southern feeder road.

The latest Orange City Council meeting awarded the largest single contract for the project, a \$14.2 million tender for the bridge and roadworks to Haslin Constructions, a Sutherland-based firm.

The project includes :

- the next stage of the southern feeder road, involving the construction of a 720 metre new road from Huntley Road east to Elsham Ave
- a new 23 metre long bridge over the main western railway line in South Orange.
- a 400 metre extension of Edward St from McNeilly Ave alongside the former saleyards site to the new southern feeder road

Funding for the project is shared by Orange City Council, the Australian Government and the NSW Government. The funding sources for the project includes :

- NSW Government's *Congestion and Safety* program through the RMS ~ \$2 million
- NSW Government's *Fixing Country Roads* program through Restart NSW ~ \$6.82 million
- Australian Government's Heavy Vehicle Safety and Productivity program ~ \$3.45 million
- The remaining funding comes from Orange's City Council operational funding (\$400K) and reserves set aside from developer contributions ~\$5.76 million.

Member for Calare Andrew Gee believes the project will deliver a major transport connection for Orange.

"These new works will increase freight productivity and make it easier for our farmers to get their produce to market by providing an alternate and more direct route for heavy vehicles accessing the Leewood industrial area," Andrew Gee said.

"I'm really delighted that the Federal Government has delivered this significant funding boost of \$3.45 million. Good, safe roads are the lifeblood of regional communities – it means local drivers have safer conditions and local businesses can operate more efficiently. It's a great example of local and federal governments working together for a really worthwhile outcome."

Parliamentary Secretary for Western NSW Rick Colless said road projects such as this across regional NSW are vital to cutting costs at the farm gate as they ensure we get product from paddock to port more efficiently and on time.

“The NSW Government has committed more than \$8 million to this project which will benefit industries such as mining and agriculture in the Central West – and will provide long term benefits to local businesses, freight operators and farmers in local communities and in and around Orange,” Rick Colless said.

Orange mayor Reg Kidd has welcomed the milestone next stage of the project

“This project is going to make an important contribution to transport links between key areas of Orange,” Cr Reg Kidd said. “I’m delighted we can partner with other tiers of government to deliver significant boosts in local infrastructure.”

It’s expected work will begin in the new year and take around 12 months to complete.

The southern feeder is a multi-stage project designed to eventually provide a transport link around the southern side of Orange. Stage 1 involved a new intersection at Forest Road and a new multi-lane road to Anson Street.

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