

📅 March 13, 2026

PORT STEPHENS **Of The Area News**



Urgent intersection fix urged as truck traffic set to soar

The Bucketts Way/Pacific Highway intersection.

March 10, 2026

A FORMER traffic engineer has expressed urgent safety concerns over two infamous highway intersections, describing the level of risk as “unacceptable”.

As reported in NOTA on 21 January 2026, the NSW Government currently has no firm plans to fix the busy and dangerous Bucketts Way/Pacific Highway intersection in the foreseeable future.

“Further investigations are underway to inform development of a business case for

staged upgrades to improve safety along this section of the M1 Pacific Motorway," Transport for NSW (TfNSW) told NOTA at the time.

"Transport advises further funding will be needed to complete development and delivery of the identified projects."

Despite the apparent lack of urgency, former senior RTA traffic engineer Gordon Chirgwin has expressed his strong concerns about both the Bucketts Way and Medowie Rd intersections.

"I believe that the intersections of the Pacific Highway with Bucketts Way at Twelve Mile Hill and Medowie Road are of high priority," said Mr Chirgwin.

"Both intersections present a high risk of serious high-speed accidents.

"From a few hundred metres north of Bucketts Way to south of Medowie Road there are... entrances to a caravan park; the Bucketts Way intersection; the entrance and exit to a southbound rest area; the entrance, bypass and exit for a southbound heavy vehicle inspection facility; entrances and exits for a northbound rest area, with a facility to enter for southbound traffic; and the Medowie Road intersection.

"With this number of conflicts, and given the traffic volumes, the potential for a serious crash is high.

"Also, there are usually traffic queues in Medowie Road and Bucketts Way, especially in holiday periods, and any impatience by drivers is highly likely to precipitate an accident.

"In my professional view, the risk of an accident is unacceptable."

The traffic situation may get worse in the near future, with several new gravel quarries set to begin operations, and an application by Yancoal to construct a renewable energy hub at Stratford.

Yancoal has indicated that 350 workers will be employed during construction, which is likely to generate significant traffic along Bucketts Way.

South of Bucketts Way the Stone Ridge Quarry and the Eagleton Quarry have both been approved, and Boral is seeking to expand the operations of its existing Seaham Quarry.

All three quarries will be serviced by the Pacific Highway and Italia Road.

When fully operational, together they will require large numbers of daily heavy vehicle trips north on the Pacific Highway through its intersection with The Bucketts Way, before performing a U-turn and heading south again.

The Deep Creek gravel quarry at Limeburners, which was approved in late 2024, is estimated to generate at least 250 heavy truck movements per day on Bucketts Way when it becomes operational.

Additionally the government is now considering whether to approve yet another gravel quarry (Hillview Quarry) in Maytoms Lane, which would pour an additional 250 trucks per day through the Bucketts Way/Pacific Highway intersection.

A 4 July 2025 submission by Boral to the NSW Planning Department said as follows: "In conjunction, the Hillview, Deep Creek, Seaham, Stone Ridge and Eagleton quarry projects may be expected to direct up to 1,135 daily heavy vehicle trips through (or across) the intersection of The Bucketts Way and the Pacific Highway's northbound lanes."

The Bucketts Way/Pacific Highway intersection is near the boundary of both the Upper Hunter and Port Stephens state electorates.

NOTA approached MPs Dave Layzell (Upper Hunter) and Kate Washington (Port Stephens) for comment about what steps they have taken, or will take, to improve the situation.

Both MPs essentially repeated what TfNSW had previously stated, with Mr Layzell adding that the Bucketts Way intersection was located outside the Upper Hunter electorate in the electorate of Port Stephens.

By John WATTS

You can help your local paper.

Make a small once-off, or (if you can) a regular donation.

We are an independent family owned business and our newspapers are free to collect and our news stories are free online.

Help support us into the future.

Donate

« PREVIOUS POST

NEXT POST »

Port Stephens Council reaffirms stance over offshore wind

Online booking now in place for beach 4WD passes

RECENT

- ▶ Housing options, health services top concerns for country women
- ▶ Hunter and Central Coast housing approvals expand in 2025
- ▶ Stinker's History: The avocado farm
- ▶ 29 Sergeant Baker Drive, Corlette is on the market with Nelson Bay Real Estate
- ▶ Letter to the Editor: Election outcomes determine mandate

PORT STEPHENS NEWS OF THE AREA

Coverage & Distribution

Send us News or Photos

Send us a Letter to the Editor

Advertise With Us - Businesses

Advertise With Us - Classifieds

Meet The Team

Printed Editions

KEY CATEGORIES

Local News

Community

Sport

Opinion

Property

Entertainment

Regional

Politics
School
Business
Police

NEWS OF THE AREA MEDIA GROUP

Company Web Page
Privacy Policy
Editorial Policy
Social Media Policy
Advertising Terms & Conditions
Complaints Policy

MASTHEADS

Coffs Coast NOTA
Nambucca Valley NOTA
Port Macquarie NOTA
Camden Haven NOTA
Gloucester District NOTA
Dungog Shire NOTA
Myall Coast NOTA
Port Stephens NOTA
