



**SENATOR TONY SHELDON
SPECIAL ENVOY FOR DISASTER RECOVERY
SENATOR FOR NSW**



**THE HON JENNY AITCHISON MP
MINISTER FOR REGIONAL TRANSPORT AND ROADS**

JOINT MEDIA RELEASE

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**FLOOD-RESILIENT BRIDGE AND ROADS TO KEEP MAITLAND
COMMUNITIES CONNECTED**

Maitland residents are set to benefit from commitments to fund a new Melville Ford Bridge and improvements to Maitland Vale and Melville Ford roads.

Communities and commuters who rely on the bridge will soon experience improved traffic flow and safety as well as better resilience against flooding.

When the new bridge is complete, it will be higher, wider and better able to withstand extreme weather conditions, keeping communities connected for longer.

The new bridge will be funded by all levels of government, including joint funding of over \$2.5 million from the Albanese and Minns Governments under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements' *Regional Roads and Transport Recovery Package*, as well as \$2.5 million from a NSW Government election commitment, and funding through the *Fixing Country Bridges Program*.

Transport for NSW has also been working with Maitland City Council and other key stakeholders in the region to ensure its roads are better equipped to deal with flood events.

The NSW Government has also committed \$6 million towards improvements, which Council will use to rebuild two sections of Maitland Vale Road and a section of Melville Ford Road, helping ensure residents and road users can rely on these vital routes.

Quotes attributable to Federal Special Envoy for Disaster Recovery, Senator Tony Sheldon:

“The Albanese Government is proud to partner with the NSW Government to co-fund this important transport link in the Hunter region.

“The new Melville Ford Bridge will help to ensure the Maitland region remains flood resilient for generations to come.

“The new bridge will help community connections remain intact during extreme weather events, improve access to essential services and response times during emergencies.”

Quotes attributable to Senator for New South Wales, Deborah O’Neill:

“The Albanese Government is delivering on its commitment to supporting rural and regional communities.

“The Melville Ford Bridge will provide crucial support and interconnectedness to the Maitland community, particularly during adverse weather events.”

Quotes attributable to NSW Regional Transport & Roads Minister Jenny Aitchison:

“Today’s announcement delivers on the commitment we made during the election to deliver safer and more reliable road networks in the regions.

“NSW Labor committed \$6 million towards improvement works for Maitland Vale Road and Melville Ford Road, and \$2.5 million for the Melville Ford Bridge, to ensure they remain reliable routes during all kinds of weather.

“I’m pleased to announce Maitland City Council now has access to this funding and will use it to help deliver that security for the people who use the local road network every day.

“We know during construction of the Singleton bypass there will be extra pressure on Maitland Vale Road and Melville Ford Road.

“Coupled with new growth in Maitland, there is a clear need for upgrade work to help relieve pressure on the road network.”

Quotes attributable to Meryl Swanson MP, Federal Member for Paterson:

"The replacement of Melville Ford Bridge is long overdue and a vital piece of local infrastructure.

"It's a great example of 3 levels of government working together for our region.

Quotes attributable to Minister for the Hunter Yasmin Catley:

"As a NSW Government we said we'd do this for the Hunter and now it's being delivered.

"This \$6 million investment will enhance people's quality of life in a booming part of the Hunter.

"These upgrades to Maitland Vale Road and Melville Ford Road will keep people moving through the Hunter with the Singleton bypass still to come."

Quotes attributable to Duty MLC Emily Suvaal:

"This funding is a huge win for the Upper Hunter electorate as these projects will ensure improved safety and connectivity for residents in the event of severe weather.

"The new Melville Ford Bridge will replace the existing low-level, one-lane crossing over the Hunter River from Aberglasslyn to Melville.

"The NSW Government is prioritising regional NSW by providing funding to improving the local roads that people use every day to travel to work, see their families and get to medical appointments.

Quotes attributable to Maitland Council Mayor Philip Penfold:

"Council is proud to deliver these important upgrades for the people of Maitland.

"We're going to build a new bridge that's twice as wide, twice as high so that when minor flooding events do occur the impacts on the community, particularly for people living in suburbs like Bolwarra, Lorn and Largs will be reduced.

"Work will involve the construction of a new dual lane, concrete bridge over the Hunter River to replace the existing timber bridge and raising the bridge which will reduce the time that the road is closed or avoid road closures completely.

"We want to make sure Maitland residents are cut off less frequently and for less time during floods and upgrading Maitland Vale Road and Melville Ford Road will help mitigate that.

"Council is working closely with the NSW Government to determine the exact scope of work and timelines."

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