Barwon Water

**Dear Gherang & Wensleydale Surrounds community group,**

As you will be aware, Barwon Water has closed the Wurdale Road channel crossing bridge. We sincerely apologise for the closure and the impacts on travel in the area.

During our most recent condition assessment, the bridge was found to have significant structural issues, creating safety risks and uncertainty around its load carrying capacity. As a result, we have closed the bridge as a precautionary measure to protect public safety while we prepare for renewal works.

Wurdale Road channel crossing bridge will remain closed until the bridge works are complete.

**The Wormbete Station Road and Wensleydale Station Road detour**

Surf Coast Shire is responsible for the designated detour route via Wormbete Station Road and Wensleydale Station Road (see below map). We're working closely with Council and have funded additional maintenance to ensure the road remains in good condition while the crossing remains closed. We'll monitor road conditions and adjust the detour's maintenance as required.




**How long will the bridge upgrade take?**

The Wurdale Road channel crossing bridge is the highest priority in our construction window between January and April, when the channel is empty.

Surveying, geotechnical investigations and design are underway. We anticipate construction will begin in early January 2027, and be complete by late February, subject to weather and ground conditions.

**What we've heard**

We've spoken with some of you and your key concerns relate to the impact the detour has on your travel time, the length of the closure, concerns about the upcoming fire season and emergency access, the need for additional and improved signage, potential temporary options, the quality of the detour and lack of communication. Thank you for your feedback.

**What we're doing now**

- We've funded additional grading requirements along the detour route and will monitor road conditions until construction is complete. You may have noticed that the first grading has been done. We'll seek additional maintenance as required.
- We've explored a range of temporary crossing options and engaged with specialists to determine if there are viable options. We haven't found one that would address timing constraints. We'll continue to investigate alternatives and keep you posted.
- We're assessing if an emergency services access route beside the bridge during construction in the fire season is viable. We'll keep you posted.
- We've requested our traffic management and sign contractors to better secure our signs, to extend these further down Wurdale Road, and install a sign in the Paddy's Swamp Campground. We've also placed a notice in the Winchelsea Post Office.
- We're expanding our communication with as many of you as possible – via letterbox drops, occasional advertisements in the Winchelsea Star, updates on our Your Say page (below) and on your Gherang and Wensleydale Community Board Facebook page via a nominated community member. If you would like to keep up to date by email, please send your details to projects@barwonwater.vic.gov.au.
- We'll continue to work with you and welcome any feedback you may have on considering opportunities to minimise disruption where possible.

In the meantime, please don't hesitate to contact us at projects@barwonwater.vic.gov.au or call 1300 656 007.

Again, we apologise for any inconvenience and appreciate your patience and understanding while we get these essential works done.

**For more information and to stay up to date, please go to Wurdale road channel crossing closure | Your Say Barwon Water or use the QR code below**