

McKanes Bridge upgrade

Frequently asked questions – October 2019

About the project

What is happening?

The community is invited to have their say on a proposal to upgrade and restore McKanes Bridge in South Bowenfels near Lithgow.

The NSW Government is providing \$10 million for the project to ensure the State heritage significant timber truss bridge continues to serve the community while reducing maintenance needs in the future.

The proposal includes replacing old timber elements with new timber and new heritage sympathetic materials to strengthen the bridge, while still retaining the appearance and design of the original bridge.

Roads and Maritime Services has prepared a Review of Environmental Factors (REF) to determine the environmental and social impacts for the upgrade work to McKanes Bridge.

The REF is now on display for public information and comment.

What is a Review of Environmental Factors?

A Review of Environmental Factors (REF) is an environmental assessment that is required as part of the assessment of activities needing approval under NSW legislation. An REF examines the significance of likely environmental impacts of a proposal and the measures required to mitigate any adverse impacts to the environment.

An REF is a publicly available document that provides information on a proposal, including its environmental impacts and mitigation measures.

The REF for the McKanes Bridge upgrade investigates the environmental and social impacts for the restoration work. It also explains the proposed restoration work involved and the proposed method to carry out the work.

Your feedback will further allow Roads and Maritime to continue the REF assessment.



McKanes Bridge over Coxs River on McKanes Falls Road at South Bowenfels.

Why is the bridge being upgraded?

McKanes Bridge is listed as having State heritage significance on the Roads and Maritime Section 170 (s170) Heritage Register. A conservation strategy has also been developed within the Timber Truss road bridges - A strategic approach to conservation (RTA, 2011) which places a high importance on maintaining the heritage value of McKanes Bridge.

The timber side rails do not meet Roads and Maritime requirements for traffic barriers. The condition of the bridge poses a safety hazard to road users while the load limit reduces local and regional efficiency as vehicles over 15 tonnes cannot cross the bridge.

What options were considered?

Roads and Maritime has investigated multiple options for McKanes Bridge which would address the existing structural and safety issues. This was supported by the structural assessment carried out by Roads and Maritime in 2017.

The six options included a like for like replacement, upgrade truss capacity only, upgrade truss capacity and traffic barriers, demolish and replace bridge or convert the bridge to a pedestrian bridge.

Upgrade truss capacity and traffic barriers was selected as the preferred option as it best met all the objectives of the proposal and the strategic need to improve freight access.

What are the key features of the project?

- Upgrading the structural capacity of the bridge
- Retaining the original McDonald timber truss design
- Upgrading critical structural elements of the bridge with superior and more durable elements
- Upgrading the existing bridge to allow safe use by vehicles up to general mass limit (GML) standard.

How will the bridge be upgraded and restored?

- Install a temporary supporting structure that would take the weight of the existing bridge
- Dismantle the existing bridge
- Reconstruct the bridge using new and refurbished materials
- Remove the temporary supporting structure.

What will the capacity of the bridge be once the upgrade is complete?

The bridge will be capable of taking general access vehicles to general mass limit (GML) standard and reduce maintenance requirements.

How will traffic be impacted during the upgrade work?

To facilitate the upgrade of the bridge it is proposed McKanes Falls Road would be closed to traffic for about 12 months, with a detour in place via Jenolan Caves Road and the Great Western Highway. The detour is expected to add five minutes extra travel time.

Will the work impact the Coxs River?

McKanes Bridge crosses the Coxs River, and as such is within the Coxs River catchment. The work will not have an adverse impact on the river or the environment. When construction is carried out, Roads and Maritime will use best practice environmental controls.

Will the work be noisy?

There will be some noise during construction but this will be limited to daylight hours and will be in accordance with specified environmental standards. We will consult with properties expected to be impacted and provide appropriate notice prior commencing these works.

How do I provide feedback on the REF?

Roads and Maritime is seeking feedback on the REF until Wednesday 20 November 2019. If you would like to provide feedback on the REF for the McKanes Bridge upgrade, written submissions should be sent to Roads and Maritime via email at western.projects@rms.nsw.gov.au, post at PO Box 334 Parkes NSW 2870, phone 1800 167 499, website rms.work/mckanesbridge or in person at the community drop in sessions at Lithgow Plaza on Thursday 7 November from 12pm to 2pm and 4pm to 7pm or Old Hartley School Hall on Wednesday 13 November from 4pm to 7pm.

What happens next?

Feedback on the REF will be considered and a submissions report will be published. Roads and Maritime will then complete the final design and prepare for construction. We will continue to keep the community updated as the project progresses.

Where can I find more information?



1800 167 499



western.projects@rms.nsw.gov.au



rms.work/mckanesbridge



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