The NSW Government is funding plans for a major restoration of the Briner Bridge, near the village of Tucabia. To help Roads and Maritime Services develop these plans, the community is invited to attend information sessions about the project.

Background

Roads and Maritime Services manages 48 of the 63 remaining timber truss bridges in NSW. Built between about 1860 and 1936, these bridges represent an important part of the heritage of NSW, with 29 currently listed on the State Heritage Register.

In 2011, following significant stakeholder and community consultation, Roads and Maritime finalised a strategy for the sustainable conservation of heritage timber truss bridges. It was proposed 26 of those timber truss bridges would be retained, including Briner Bridge. Briner Bridge, which was built in 1908, is a Dare truss bridge located between the villages of Ulmarra and Tucabia on Coldstream Terrace. The single span bridge crosses the Upper Coldstream River and is one of six operable Dare truss bridges and one of two single-span Dare truss bridges in NSW.

You can read more about the timber truss strategy and Briner Bridge online at www.rms.nsw.gov.au/brinerbridge.

Restoring the bridge

To improve the bridge’s longevity and reduce future maintenance costs, Roads and Maritime is developing plans to upgrade the bridge. While the bridge is not currently on the State Heritage Register, the structure is an important heritage item in the region. Subsequently, it will be submitted to Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH) for approval to be listed on the State Heritage Register prior to the start of building activities.

The proposal to upgrade the bridge includes:

- Improving the structural capacity of the bridge
Replacing the bridge deck with an approved heritage arrangement to allow two lanes of traffic as close as possible to the truss.

Restoring the bridge for elevation to the State Heritage Register.

In developing plans to upgrade the bridge, Roads and Maritime has been working closely with OEH to ensure the bridge’s heritage features are retained.

Work to upgrade the bridge is expected to start in mid-2017 and will take about a year to complete, weather permitting.

**Temporary bridge closure**

While we are proposing to deliver the project in stages to minimise the disruption to traffic and nearby communities, there will still be significant impacts during construction.

At this stage we are proposing to close the bridge for up to four months from late 2017, weather permitting, to allow for the new superstructure to be built.

Under this proposal, traffic travelling between Tucabia and Ulmarra would be required to use Tucabia-Tyndale Road, while traffic travelling between Tucabia and Grafton would use Wooli Road and Eight Mile Lane.

A map highlighting these detours is included in this update.

We estimate these detours add between 10-15 minutes to journeys.

Of all the options considered for building the bridge, the closure was considered the most effective from a safety and efficiency perspective.

While we acknowledge closing the bridge for up to four months would be an inconvenience, it would ensure the work can be carried out faster and reduce the risk to workers and motorists.

**Community drop-in sessions**

We have already started approaching organisations and groups potentially affected by the proposed bridge closure. We will work with the local community – including schools, bus companies and emergency services – to address any issues the proposed bridge closure may cause.

We are holding community drop-in sessions to hear your thoughts about the project and give you an opportunity to speak to the Briner Bridge restoration project team.

Our project team will be available at:

- Tucabia Community Hall, Clarence Street
  - Monday 10 October 2016
    - 3pm-7pm
  - Tuesday 11 October 2016
    - 3pm-7pm

**What happens next?**

We will continue to work with the community as the project is developed and during construction.

Later this year the community will also be asked to provide feedback on the project’s review of environmental factors (REF) when it goes on public display.

Any feedback received will be considered as we finalise plans for the bridge restoration.

**For more information**

For more information about the project, or to register your interest in the project, please contact the project team by:

**Phone:** 131782

**Email:** grafton.regional.office@rms.nsw.gov.au

Detours for proposed bridge closure

Map showing the detours and approximate travel times for proposed closure of Briner Bridge during construction