

Community feedback (continued)

9. For the option you chose in Question 8 please indicate the top 5 issues (ranked 1 as most important to 5 as least important) that influenced your choice and then X next to any other important issues influencing your choice.

Issues	Rank top issues 1 to 5 & then place a X next to other issues of importance
Reduce traffic delays at the existing bridge	
Reduce accidents and injuries	
Provide an alternate emergency access	
Minimise change to existing traffic movements	
Minimise flooding impacts by the project	
Minimise the social impacts	
Minimise impacts on heritage	
Minimise visual impact of new crossing	
Provide opportunity for economic and tourist development	
Minimise impacts on the natural environment	
Minimise impacts of road traffic noise	
Minimise impacts on use of Clarence river	
Minimise need for through trucks to negotiate railway viaducts	
Reduce through traffic in the CBD	
Provide another entrance to Grafton	
Other issues (please state):	

10. Do you have any other comments to make about the route options or the RTA planning process to date?

All information in the representations received may be published in subsequent assessment documents. Where the supplier indicates at the time of supply of information that it should be kept confidential, the RTA will attempt to keep it confidential but there may be legislative or legal justification for the release of the information, for example under the Freedom of Information Act 1989 or under subpoena or statutory instrument.

Tick the box if you would like to be included on the mailing list for future information

Name: _____

Address: _____

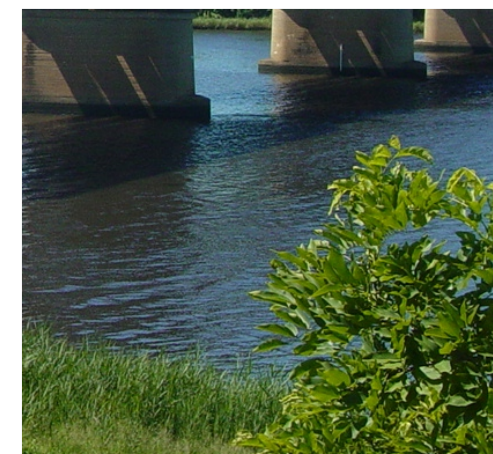
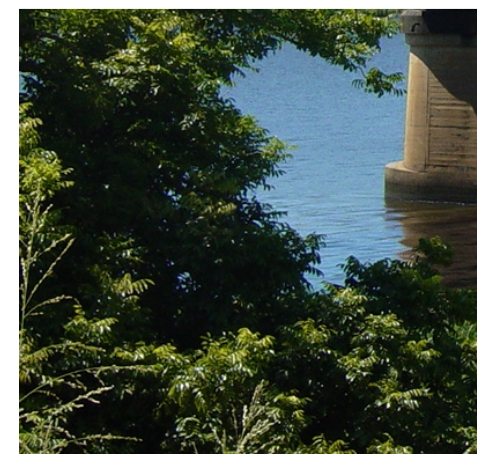
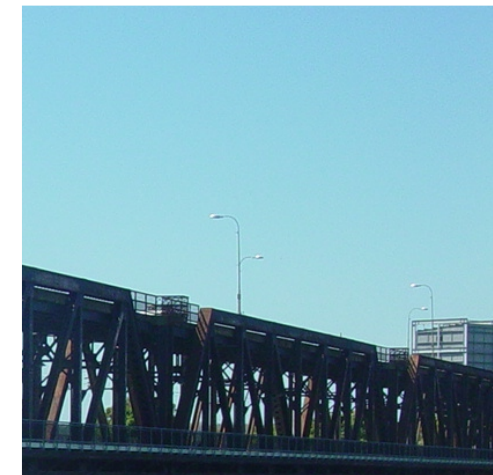


Additional Crossing of the Clarence River Grafton

Summerland Way

COMMUNITY UPDATE No. 5

April 2004



Additional crossing of the Clarence River - Grafton

A message from the Minister

A new bridge over the Clarence River at Grafton is an important State Government project. The State Government is committed to working closely with local communities to ensure everyone is invited to comment on the route options. I look forward to local involvement in this stage of the planning process.

Carl Scully
Minister for Roads



Background

In 2001 a community campaign for a new bridge at Grafton commenced. Following a public meeting in 2002 the State Government allocated \$100,000 for a feasibility study for an additional crossing of the Clarence River. This study was completed in March 2003.

The study concluded that it was feasible to construct an additional crossing. The more feasible location identified at that time, based on traffic and environmental information, was in the vicinity of the existing bridge. However, even though this location appeared feasible it was recommended that further investigations would be required to identify the impacts of a crossing in the Grafton area, between Susan and Elizabeth Island.

As a result of the feasibility study and the State Government's commitment to proceed with the next stage of planning, the RTA formed a project team to build on work completed in the feasibility study. Investigations of the study area were undertaken and broad localities identified that may improve road safety, reduce traffic delays and provide improved access for the local and statewide road network.

Purpose and objectives

The project has a defined purpose and broad objectives that it must achieve in considering an additional crossing of the Clarence River:

The purpose of the project is to provide an additional crossing of the Clarence River in order to improve safety, reduce traffic delays and provide improved access for the local and State road network between north and south of the Clarence River.

The broad objectives of the project are to:

- Significantly improve traffic efficiency.
- Significantly reduce the potential for road crashes and injuries.
- Be socially acceptable to regional and local communities.
- Support economic development.
- Minimise the impact on the environment.
- Provide value for money.

The process

The following diagram shows the process being undertaken.



Update

Since the last Community Update, issued in September 2003, the RTA has completed a number of route selection studies.

These studies involved investigations into environmental (noise, ecology, heritage, social and flooding), traffic and geological issues. The main issues identified in these studies are:

Traffic studies

- The large majority of traffic using the existing bridge is local traffic travelling between Grafton and South Grafton.
- The further a crossing is located away from the existing bridge the less likely it is to attract traffic.

Community feedback sheet

To assist in the selection of a preferred option, the RTA invites your views on the options shown in the public display and Community Update No.5.

Please complete the following and return it in the reply-paid envelope or put into the box at the RTA display at Grafton Shopping World.

1. (A) Have you inspected the public display of route options? YES NO

(B) Have you read Community Update No.5? YES NO

2. Are you a local resident of the Grafton/South Grafton area? YES NO

3. If NO to Question 2, in which area do you live?

Clarenza Coutts Crossing Waterview Heights/Seelands

Junction Hill Other: Please specify _____

4. Are you a local business owner/operator? YES NO

5. Would you benefit from an additional crossing of the Clarence River? YES NO

Please specify your reasons: _____

6. How often do you currently use the existing Grafton bridge?

Daily Weekly Less frequently

7. Have you attended any previous community workshops or meetings organised by the RTA for the additional crossing of the Clarence River project? YES NO

8. Please indicate with a cross (X) the route option you prefer for the additional crossing.

OPTION 1 - Villiers Street

OPTION 2A - Adjacent to the existing bridge, directly upstream.

OPTION 2B - Adjacent to the existing bridge, directly downstream.

OTHER (Please indicate location): _____

Community involvement

A Community Focus Group was formed with representatives from the former Grafton City Council, Copmanhurst Shire Council, Pristine Waters Council and the local community.

As part of the community consultation process, initial workshops were held in October 2003 to discuss the project and identify key issues.

During December 2003 and February 2004 further workshops were held to update the community and discuss the proposed shortlisted localities identified by the RTA. The RTA also outlined the next stage in the selection process for an additional crossing.

What happens next?

The options for an additional crossing are on display from Saturday 3 April to Sunday 25 April 2004.

Community feedback will be considered as part of the process in selection of a preferred option. Each option will be compared to identify the crossing that achieves the best balance between social, environment, safety, traffic, engineering and cost factors while providing for the future needs of road users and the Clarence Valley.

At the conclusion of the display period an Option Evaluation Workshop will be held to recommend a preferred route option. Participants will include government agencies, members from the Community Focus Group and the RTA.

The recommendations will be considered and any additional investigations arising from this workshop will be undertaken by the RTA for consideration in the selection of a preferred route.

How to comment

A main display and smaller displays are located within the Grafton area for the community to view and provide comment.

The displays show the crossing options and includes additional information, plans and details the investigations to date.

Display locations

You can view the crossing options at the following locations:

The main display will be located at:

Grafton Shopping World, Duke St, Grafton

This display will be staffed from 3pm to 7pm on Thursday 8 April and 10am to 4pm on Saturday 17 April 2004. It will provide an opportunity for people to ask questions and discuss the options in more detail with the RTA project team. A comment form will also be available for input to the RTA.

Smaller displays will be located at:

- **Clarence Valley Council, Prince Street, Grafton.**
- **Clarence Valley Council, Victoria Street, Grafton.**
- **Clarence Valley Council, Through Street, South Grafton.**
- **RTA Motor Registry, King Street, Grafton.**
- **RTA Regional Office, 31 Victoria Street, Grafton.**

If you wish to comment on issues that are not included in the attached form, additional written submissions are also welcome.

Disclaimer

All information in the representations received may be published in subsequent assessment documents. Where the supplier indicates at the time of supply of information that it should be kept confidential but there may be legislative or legal justification for the release of the information, for example under the Freedom of Information Act 1989 or under subpoena or statutory instrument.

For further inquiries

Freecall: **1 800 005 756**
Website: www.rta.nsw.gov.au
Email: Peter_Black@rta.nsw.gov.au
Project Manager, Peter Black
Postal Address: PO Box 576,
Grafton NSW 2460

- The existing bridge caters for approximately 26,000 vehicles (both ways) during a working day.
- Less than 1,000 (4%) of the total daily traffic is through (bypass) traffic.
- Up to 1,600 vehicles (6%) of the total daily traffic are heavy vehicles over 4.5 tonnes. Up to 400 of these are articulated vehicles (e.g. semi-trailers), of which up to 90 are through (bypass) traffic.
- Traffic on the existing bridge is predicted to increase at 1% each year and the delays experienced in the morning and afternoons would increase.
- Some businesses appear to alter their business operations (trips and/or timing) due to morning and afternoon traffic peaks on the existing bridge.

Heritage / ecological investigations

- Susan Island and Elizabeth Island have high ecological and indigenous heritage values.
- The areas upstream of the Grafton bridge, on both sides of the river, have high heritage values.

Flooding investigations

- Any significant road embankments constructed for an additional crossing would impact on flood levels and the existing levee wall.

As part of the investigation process a number of broad localities were identified. A total of seven localities between Susan Island and Elizabeth Island were identified for further analysis. These were:

- Two localities upstream of the existing bridge in the vicinity of Prince Street and in the vicinity of Villiers Street.
- One locality adjacent to the existing bridge, either directly upstream or downstream of the existing bridge.
- Four localities downstream of the existing bridge in the vicinity of Bacon, Dobie, Arthur and North Streets.

A workshop, comprising staff from the previous Grafton City Council, Copmanhurst Shire Council, Pristine Waters Council and the RTA assessed the seven broad localities to shortlist the localities that substantially met the project objectives. As a result of the workshop, two localities were short-listed for further investigation and were presented to community workshops in December 2003. The two localities short-listed were in the vicinity of Villiers Street and adjacent to the existing bridge, either directly upstream or directly downstream.

Community members at the workshops requested the RTA to consider a locality in the vicinity of Turf Street. The RTA investigated this locality and assessed it against the project objectives. The assessment of this locality was presented to the Community Focus Group and community workshops in February 2004.

As a result of the workshops and further investigations the following broad localities were not considered further:

Downstream of the existing bridge - Bacon, Dobie, Arthur and North Street localities

These locations were not considered further due to:

- Increase in traffic in residential streets.
- Increase in road traffic noise for residential areas.
- Impacts on flooding on residents and on the levee wall.
- High social impact on residential areas.
- Loss of amenity in residential areas.
- Safety in residential streets - access, pedestrians, parking.
- Potential severity of crashes at a connection with the Pacific Highway.
- No significant reduction in traffic delays on the existing bridge in the long term (30 years).
- Inadequate navigational clearances for water vessels.
- Unacceptable value for money.

Prince Street locality

This location was not considered further due to:

- Increased traffic directly in the CBD area.
- Impact on safety at intersections, parking and pedestrians.
- Impact on Memorial Park, the rowing club and access to the river.
- Impact on Susan Island.
- High visual impact for views over the Clarence River from recreation areas.
- Increased road traffic noise in the shopping areas.
- No significant reduction in traffic delays on the existing bridge in the long term (30 years).

Turf Street locality

This location was not considered further due to:

- Impact on Susan Island (heritage and ecology).
- Impact on existing businesses in Turf Street on the Grafton approach.
- Access difficulties for existing residences and businesses.
- Increase in road traffic noise on existing residences in Turf Street.
- Traffic from the bridge would use residential streets (Bacon and Oliver Street) to enter the CBD.
- A 6.1 metre height clearance over the railway line and Pound Street would have high visual impact.
- No direct access to Pound Street from the crossing.
- No significant reduction in traffic delays on the existing bridge in the long term (30 years).

Route options design

Following the short-listing of the two localities, additional investigations were undertaken and route options were developed within each of the broad localities. These route option investigations took into consideration the information gathered from the studies and community input.

The investigations included flooding, heritage, ecology, aesthetics, railway clearances, social impact and analysing designs for the modification of the 'kinks' on the existing bridge.

The existing bridge is listed on the NSW Heritage Office State Heritage Register. Any modifications to the kinks on the existing bridge would require consultation and approval from the NSW Heritage Office.

The area upstream of the existing bridge is within the Grafton Conservation Area and any impacts within this area would require consultation with Clarence Valley Council and NSW Heritage Office.

The three route options that have been identified within the two shortlisted localities are shown on the map on the opposite page. Details of each route option are:

Option 1 - Villiers Street

This option connects from Abbott Street, South Grafton to Villiers Street, Grafton. The new bridge and existing bridge would be two lanes, with each bridge having two-way traffic flow.

Advantages

- Improves access to the CBD for South Grafton and areas to the west.
- Reduces volumes of vehicles on the existing bridge in the short-term.
- Direct connection to Villiers Street for heavy vehicles.
- Southern connection would become more attractive for commercial development.
- Provides value for money.
- Provides alternative access for emergency vehicles.

Disadvantages

- Substantial increase in road traffic noise on adjacent schools, businesses and residences.
- Does not reduce through traffic from the CBD.
- Height restrictions at the railway viaducts.
- Safety issues with schools and local streets.
- Loss of amenity/character of residential streets.
- Impact on recreational use of the river.
- Non-indigenous heritage impact on the fig tree located in Villiers Street.
- Property access issues and land acquisition.

Option 2A - Adjacent to existing bridge (directly upstream)

This option connects from Bent Street to Craig Street and is directly upstream from the existing bridge. This option would require modification to the 'kinks' on the existing bridge. The new crossing and existing bridge would be two lanes, each with one way traffic flow.

Advantages

- Significantly reduces delays at the existing bridge in the long-term.
- Reduces potential for crashes on the existing bridge.
- Minimises the potential for increased road traffic noise in comparison to the other localities.
- Benefits businesses on the existing approaches.
- Minimises flooding impacts.
- Minimises natural environment impacts.
- Provides value for money.

Disadvantages

- Height restrictions for heavy vehicles at the railway viaducts.
- Does not reduce through traffic from the CBD.
- Impact on Heritage Conservation Area.
- Requires upgrade of Fitzroy/Villiers Street and Bent/Through Street intersections in the long term (20-30 years).
- Continued high traffic flow for existing residences.
- Property/business access issues.
- Social impacts including land acquisition.

Option 2B - Adjacent to existing bridge (directly downstream)

This option connects from Bent Street to Craig Street and is directly downstream of the existing bridge. This option would require modification to the 'kinks' on the existing bridge. The new crossing and existing bridge would be two lanes, each with one-way traffic flow.

Advantages

- Significantly reduces delays at the existing bridge in the long-term.
- Reduces potential for crashes on the existing bridge.
- Minimises the potential for increased road traffic noise in comparison to the other localities.
- Benefits businesses on the existing approaches.
- Minimises flooding impacts.
- Minimises natural environment impacts.
- Provides value for money.

Disadvantages

- Height restrictions for heavy vehicles at the railway viaducts.
- Does not reduce through traffic from the CBD.
- Requires upgrade of Fitzroy/Villiers Street and Bent/Through Street intersections in the long term (20-30 years).
- Continued high traffic flow for existing residences.
- Property access issues.
- Social impacts including land acquisition.

Additional crossing of Clarence River Grafton

Summerland Way

ROUTE OPTIONS

