



ADDITIONAL CROSSING OF THE CLARENCE RIVER AT GRAFTON

Updated community liaison plan

December 2010

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Review and update

The community liaison plan will be progressively reviewed and updated to include project requirements and community feedback.

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I Introduction and background

I.1 Overview

The Roads and Traffic Authority (RTA) is currently working towards the identification of a preferred option for a new crossing of the Clarence River at Grafton. The NSW Government is funding these investigations.

I.2 Background

During 2003-04 the RTA, in consultation with the community, investigated options for a crossing of the Clarence River in the Grafton area. No formal decision on the bridge location was made at the time.

In July 2008 the Minister for Roads asked the RTA to review all studies including traffic data and cost estimates for the construction of a new bridge. A further traffic study report was published in December 2009.

In February 2010 the community was invited to provide feedback on four preliminary options.

In April 2010 the Minister for Transport and Roads announced that the RTA would review all the issues highlighted by the Grafton community during the initial stage of consultation. A May 2010 community consultation report was prepared and is available on the project website.

In August 2010 two community focus groups discussed the community liaison plan. The community requested that further opportunities for consultation, including a survey, be developed to encourage the community to have input. The focus groups requested that the study area be expanded to consider other route options proposed by the community.

In September 2010 the Clarence Valley Council wrote to the RTA and to the Minister for Roads in support of a survey to encourage the local community to have input on the location of the additional crossing of the Clarence River at Grafton. Council supported the view that route options outside the existing study area should be considered.

In December 2010 the RTA announced a new consultation process. This is described in the December 2010 community update. The RTA recognises that the community wants to examine the merits of different options for a second crossing; both close to and separate from the existing river crossing.

1.3 Communications process

The revised process for identifying a route for a second crossing of the Clarence River at Grafton is shown in Appendix A.

A program of consultation activities aims to engage the community in the development of route options and preferred route.

The key stages in the consultation process are summarised below:

1. Identification of preliminary route options for further investigation.
2. Undertake community surveys on all options, and the issues that need to be considered when planning a second crossing.
3. Hold community discussion evenings to discuss key issues around route options.
4. Display the preliminary route options, including additional options proposed by the community.
 - a. Receive community submissions on the preliminary route options.
 - b. Hold evaluation workshops with the community to explain, evaluate and assist in identifying a shortlist of route options for consideration by the RTA.
5. Display the shortlisted route options.
 - a. Community discussion evenings to discuss key issues for the shortlisted route options.
 - b. Community submissions on the shortlisted route options.
 - c. Value management workshop with the project team, Council, agencies, other key stakeholders and the community collectively comparing the options.
6. Display the recommended preferred option.
7. Receive community submissions on the recommended preferred option.
8. Announce a preferred route option.
9. Preservation of the route in local plans.

The activities are described at Appendix B, 'Community liaison activity plan'. The appendix will be updated as the project progress.

1.4 Purpose of this plan

This updated community liaison plan describes how the project team will engage with the community to assist with the identification of a preferred route option for the crossing of the Clarence River. Community issues, ideas and concerns along with information from the technical and environmental studies, will assist the project team to determine firstly a shortlist of options and then a preferred route option.

This community liaison plan outlines:

- Strategies for community liaison and consultation.
- Communication activities to implement these strategies.
- How the community liaison process will be monitored, evaluated and reported back to the community.

The project team will make it a priority to:

- Engage with the local Council and the business community, as well as potentially directly affected landowners and other key stakeholders.
- Clearly explain the needs and purpose of a second crossing and its relationship to any future upgrading of the Summerland Way.
- Engage with the community to develop and refine the route options for consideration.
- Engage with the community and key stakeholders to better understand their issues and concerns and provide opportunities for feedback.

A range of consultation and communication tools will be used to inform and involve the community and provide opportunities for the community to provide feedback. The consultation approach will be transparent and refined based on feedback from the community. The community will be engaged and kept informed during each stage of the project.

1.5 Key messages

The key messages for this project include:

- The RTA is currently working towards the identification of a preferred route for an additional crossing of the Clarence River at Grafton.
- The consultation process is to be inclusive, transparent and flexible.
- It is important to plan now for a future crossing and to provide certainty for the future development of Grafton.
- The preferred route for the crossing of the Clarence River and any road connections will be selected by assessing which option represents the most appropriate balance between traffic, social, environmental, engineering and cost factors.

2 Stakeholders and issues

2.1 Key stakeholders

The project team will continue to consult with the community and stakeholders. The stakeholders include a wide range of interests from the communities of Grafton, South Grafton and surrounds, Clarence Valley Council, residents, businesses and landowners. At this stage of the process, given there is no preferred option the consultation approach needs to be broad and communicated extensively.

The key stakeholders and community groups who will be engaged during the project include:

- Those communities within the area directly and indirectly impacted by possible options.
- Clarence Valley Council.
- Local businesses of Grafton and South Grafton.
- Grafton Chamber of Commerce & Industry.
- South Grafton Progress Association.
- 2003/2004 Community Focus Group members.
- Local Schools (including Clarence Valley Anglican School, South Grafton Primary School, Beautizone Kindergarten, Jack & Jill Pre-School, Gummyaney Aboriginal Pre-School).
- Transport and heavy vehicle operators (including the Australian Trucking Association).

- Emergency Services (including NSW Police, NSW Fire Brigade, NSW Ambulance, SES).
- Tourism Operators (including Clarence Valley Tourism, Clarence River Tourism, Clarence River Historical Society).
- CountryLink.
- Australian Rail Track Corporation.
- Local environmental groups (including Clarence Valley Environment Centre, Landcare Lower Clarence Catchment).
- Local Aboriginal groups (including Grafton Ngerrie Aboriginal Land Council)
- Recreational river user groups.
- Interest groups and resident groups.

2.2 Likely critical issues

Based on feedback received from the community discussions in February/March 2010 and the community focus groups in August 2010, the issues that will need to be considered when determining the preferred route option include:

Process issues

- Ongoing community involvement in the decision making process.
- Access to technical information and reports.
- Clarity regarding the needs and purpose of the second crossing.
- Consideration of options outside the existing study area, presented in February/March 2010.

Technical issues

- Cost/ benefit and funding of the project.
- Social impact and loss of amenity caused by the construction of a second crossing.
- Property acquisition impacts.
- Economic impact of the project on the local economy.
- Impacts of the project on Aboriginal heritage.
- Heritage impacts (including impact on the local residential streets).
- Environmental impact of the project (including noise, dust, fauna and flora, emission, health of the river).
- Potential traffic increases in local streets.
- Potential increase in heavy vehicle traffic in local streets.
- Safety implications of increase in traffic.
- Construction impacts (including noise, dust, traffic impacts).

3 Communication activities

3.1 Telephone and email contact line

A 24 hour toll free information line (1800 633 332) and project email address (graftonbridge@rta.nsw.gov.au) have been established. These communication channels will be promoted on information materials to provide the community with a free and readily available means of communicating with the project team.

3.2 Community surveys

On 28 September 2010, Clarence Valley Council passed a resolution which asked the RTA to undertake a community survey and consider the issue of Summerland Way when considering route options for the second crossing of the Clarence River at Grafton. The community has also requested that a survey be undertaken and has requested the opportunity to have input into the survey questions.

An initial community survey will be undertaken to help identify project constraints and issues, refine the project objectives and seek the community's feedback on options for a second crossing of the Clarence River. The survey questionnaire will be included in the December 2010 RTA community update.

A second survey will be conducted early in 2011. The second survey will be a random phone survey of a sample of residents of Grafton and surrounding areas. Members of the community will have an opportunity to have input into the survey questions. The survey will assist in locating additional route options and also in refining the criteria for shortlisting the preliminary route options.

Further surveys may be conducted during the route selection process to gather additional community input for the consideration of the preferred route.

3.3 Community discussion evenings

Community discussion evenings will be used to discuss critical issues with the community. The discussion evenings will be open sessions in a local venue. They will be good exchanges of views and information. The feedback provided will be considered during the identification and refinement of the options.

Experts in the field will provide information to the discussion evenings. Issues identified for discussion include:

- Traffic modeling.
- Heavy vehicles and the need for a bypass.
- Landuse and heritage issues.
- Evaluation methods/criteria for decision making.

Presentations and community feedback from the discussion evenings will be reviewed by the project team and uploaded to the project web site.

3.4 Evaluation workshops

The evaluation of options will be a three part process. In the evaluation workshops participants will examine the options, evaluate the options, and assist in developing a shortlist of options. The community will be invited to nominate representatives to be part of this process.

1st workshop – Explanation of options

2nd workshop – Evaluation of the options based on project objectives, technical criteria and community input.

3rd workshop – Develop a shortlist of options to be considered by the RTA along with the technical investigations.

The community will be invited to nominate representatives to be part of the evaluation process. Representatives will need to:

- Be able to participate in three workshops at the agreed times.
- Represent a stakeholder or interest group, community organisation, business organisation or government agency, particularly those identified in this CLP.
- Be willing and able to represent and consider differing views.

Nominated representatives will come from a range of geographic locations (Grafton, South Grafton and surrounds) and stakeholder interest groups.

The nomination process will be advertised and should nominees exceed the number required, selection shall be determined by the RTA.

Presentations and notes from these workshops will be uploaded to the project website.

3.5 Value management process/workshop

The value management process includes a facilitated technical workshop with the participants from the project team, Council, agencies, other key stakeholders and the community. A value management workshop will be held to consider the shortlisted route options.

Presentations and notes from the workshop will be uploaded to the project website.

3.6 Meetings with key stakeholders

The RTA will meet with key stakeholders to provide briefings on the project, and discuss the consultation process going forward. These meetings will be held as required and will be noted in the meeting register on the project website.

3.7 Meetings with individual stakeholders

The RTA will meet with individual stakeholders to discuss the project, give and respond to feedback and discuss the consultation process going forward. These meetings will be held as required or requested. For privacy reasons, meetings with individual stakeholders will not be noted in the meeting register on the project website.

3.8 Staffed and static (unstaffed) displays

Staffed displays will be held to give the community the opportunity to provide feedback on the route options proposed. All planned staffed displays will be advertised in the nominated local newspapers and radio station. Dates, times, locations of staffed display will be confirmed and advertised with suitable prior notice.

Static (unstaffed) displays will be located at the follow locations:

- RTA Pacific Highway Office (project team location).
- RTA Motor Registry Office Grafton.
- RTA Regional Office Grafton.

The RTA where possible, will make project display material available at the following additional locations:

- Clarence Valley Council Library.
- Coldstream Gallery, Ulmarra.
- Newman's News agency, South Grafton.
- General Store Coutts Crossing.
- Bunnings, South Grafton.
- Junction Hill Family Store, Junction Hill.

3.9 Community updates

Community updates will be produced at project milestones to keep the community informed about the project investigations and consultation process. These updates will be available on the project web site, the RTA Pacific Highway and Regional offices, Grafton and distributed in the local area, including to potentially directly affected property owners and residents on the project contacts database.

3.10 Letter box notifications

Letter box notifications to residents will support the newspaper and radio advertisements.

3.11 Project website

The RTA will continue to manage and update a dedicated project page on the RTA website <http://www.rta.nsw.gov.au/graftonbridge>. The website will provide regular updates on the project's

progress and includes project information such as community updates, media releases, presentations and notes of meetings, reports and other background information.

3.12 Advertisement

Newspaper advertisements will be placed in the local '*Daily Examiner*, '*Lower Clarence Review*' and '*Coastal View*' to advise of project milestones such as the revised approach, route options and consultation activities such as staffed displays and evaluation workshops. Radio advertisements on 2G/FM104.7 will also be used to advise the community of activities.

3.13 Media

The RTA will supply local media with regular project information including at project milestones such as the revised approach, route options and consultation activities such as staffed displays and evaluation workshops to provide to the broader community.

3.14 Emails to registered stakeholders

The project email address is used to keep residents in regular contact regarding the revised approach, route options and consultation activities such as staffed displays and evaluation workshops. The emails are an additional prompt for registered stakeholders. Stakeholders can request to be placed on or taken off this email list at any time.

4 Enquiries and complaints management

4.1 Contact management system

All enquiries and complaints received will be entered into a community and stakeholder contact database, referred to as the contact management system, to allow for a record and tracking system to ensure enquiries and complaints are managed in line with agreed timeframes.

The contact management system shall be a web based data system which allows the following information to be recorded:

- Name and contact details of the caller.
- Time and date of the contact.
- Location details.
- Issue type and details.
- Actions taken.
- Personnel handling the representation and current status details.

4.2 Enquiries and complaints management procedure

The procedure proposed for the management of enquiries and complaints includes:

- The enquiry/complaint received
- Nature of the enquiry/complaint is determined and recorded in the database system Consultation Manager.
- Enquiry/complaint is either dealt with immediately or requires further action/investigation.
- If dealt with immediately the enquiry/complaint is closed in Consultation Manager. If further action/investigation is required it is recorded in Consultation Manager.
- Response is provided within 15 business days of receipt of correspondence (unless otherwise agreed with respondent) and enquiry/complaint is closed in Consultation Manager. If a response can not be provided it will be escalated as appropriate.

5 Monitoring and evaluation

5.1 Monitoring and evaluation

The project team will monitor the performance and effectiveness of the communication activities on a regular basis. The project team will modify the community liaison plan and communication activities following feedback or issues identified in the process.

Evaluation of the consultation process and communications activities may involve feedback forms/surveys that may be provided to the community at meetings, workshops and staffed displays. This will invite the community's feedback on the following:

- Satisfaction of the consultation process and communications activities
- Value of community updates and other public information.
- Availability, quality and distribution of information about the project to the local community and stakeholders.
- Responsiveness of the team.

Key elements of overall evaluation include:

- Currency and accuracy of the contact management system.
- Nature of issues/complaints raised and level of responsiveness and appropriateness of action taken by the team.
- Response time frames.
- Attendance at information sessions or meetings with stakeholders.
- Determining community satisfaction about the consultation process and communications activities by a quantitative community and stakeholder survey.

Appendix A – Revised process for identifying a route for a second crossing of the
Clarence River at Grafton

Revised process for identifying and preserving a route for a second crossing of the Clarence River at Grafton

**WE
ARE
HERE**

**December
2010**

Announce community surveys and revised approach to engage more effectively with the community in identifying a preferred route

**February
2011**

Further community forums on route options

**April
2011**

Display preliminary route option reports including constraints for community comment

**May
2011**

Evaluation workshops including the community to assist in identifying a short list of route options

Announce and invite comment on short list of route options

Consider public submissions

Value Management workshop

RTA investigations

**Late
2011**

Identify and announce recommended preferred option for community comment

Consider submissions from display of recommended preferred route option

Identify and announce preferred route option

**Early
2012**

Consideration and decision by the RTA and the Minister for Roads on the preferred route and preserve the route

Appendix B – Community liaison activity plan (program of activities)

For further information on each of these specific activities refer to Section 3 Communication activities.

Activities and timings outlined below are indicative and depend partly on the issues raised by the community.

Activity	Detail	Indicative Timing
Ongoing communication with the community	Project website http://www.rta.gov.au/grafonbridge Project email address grafonbridge@rta.nsw.gov.au . 24hr project information line 1 800 633 332 (toll free)	On going
Logging and tracking of all correspondence, enquiries and complaints	Consultation Manager, a web based contact data base will log and track community contact All issues will be tagged enabling specific issues to be monitored.	On going
Meetings with key stakeholders	Project team will meet regularly with key stakeholders including council, business groups and residents (see Section 2.1 Key stakeholders). The purpose of these meetings will be to provide a briefing on the project and discuss the consultation process going forward.	Ongoing
Meetings with individual stakeholders	Project team will meet with individual stakeholders as required or requested. The purpose of these meetings will be to provide a briefing on the project and discuss the consultation process going forward.	Ongoing
Community surveys		
Community surveys	An initial survey questionnaire will be included in the December 2010 community update. Feedback will be invited on important issues to be considered when planning a second crossing, as well as other possible route options. A further targeted phone survey will also be conducted early in 2011.	December 2010 Early 2011
Publication of survey results	Results from the December 2010 community survey and phone survey conducted early in 2011 will be provided to the community.	April 2011
Display and assessment of preliminary route options		
Release of community update	A community update will provide an update on the project and outline the consultation process going forward. This includes preliminary route options for further consideration.	December 2010

<p>Staffed displays Static (unstaffed display)</p>	<p>The staffed displays will give the community an opportunity to consider the identified preliminary route options; ask questions of the project team regarding the new consultation process and provide an opportunity for the community to give feedback.</p> <p>Staffed displays will be arranged for certain days and times (this information will be communicated prior) at the following locations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Shopping World' (staffed display). • Bi Lo Shopping Complex, South Grafton (staffed display). <p>Static (unstaffed) displays where possible, will be located at the venues outlined in Section 3.8 Staffed and static (unstaffed) displays.</p>	<p>December 2010</p>
<p>Series of community discussion evenings</p>	<p>The community discussion evenings will address specific issues raised during the December consultation period, along with technical issues being considered as part of the project investigations. The discussion evenings will be open to the community and be conducted in a local venue. Experts in the field will provide input with the discussion evenings lead by an experienced facilitator.</p>	<p>February 2011</p>
<p>Release of community update</p>	<p>The April community update will outline the key technical investigations undertaken along with the evaluation workshop process for developing a short list of options. The update will also identify (if required) additional preliminary route options arising from the December 2010 display for further consideration by the community</p>	<p>April 2011</p>
<p>Display of preliminary route options report for community comment</p>	<p>Report on preliminary route options will be provided to the community for comment.</p>	<p>April 2011</p>
<p>Staffed displays Static (unstaffed display)</p>	<p>Staffed displays will be arranged at certain locations, days and times (this information will be communicated prior) as venue availability may change.</p> <p>Static (unstaffed) displays where possible, will be located at the venues outlined in Section 3.8 Staffed and static (unstaffed) displays.</p>	<p>April 2011</p>

<p>Evaluation workshops</p>	<p>A three part evaluation process will be used to gain community input, along with technical investigations, for the shortlisting of the preliminary route options.</p> <p>1st workshop – Explanation of options</p> <p>2nd workshop – Evaluation of the options based on project objectives, technical criteria and community input.</p> <p>3rd workshop – Develop a shortlist of options to be considered by the RTA along with the technical investigations.</p> <p>The process for the evaluation workshops, including how community representatives will be involved, will be developed with community input.</p>	<p>May 2011</p>
<p>Display and assessment of shortlisted route options</p>		
<p>Announce the shortlisted options for wider community comment</p>	<p>Reports on the shortlisted options, along with technical investigations, will be put on display for community comment</p>	<p>After May 2011</p>
<p>Staffed displays Static (unstaffed display)</p>	<p>Staffed displays will be arranged at certain locations, days and times (this information will be communicated prior) as venue availability may change.</p> <p>Static (unstaffed) displays where possible, will be located at the venues outlined in Section 3.8 Staffed and static (unstaffed) displays.</p>	<p>After May 2011</p>
<p>Series of community discussion evenings</p>	<p>The community discussion evenings will address specific issues raised during the April 2011 consultation period, along with technical issues being considered as part of the project investigations. The discussion evenings will be open to the community and be conducted in a local venue. Experts in the field will provide input with the discussion evenings lead by an experienced facilitator.</p>	<p>After May 2011</p>
<p>Release of community submissions report</p>	<p>The community submissions report will be released prior to the Value Management Study.</p>	<p>After May 2011</p>
<p>Value management process</p>	<p>Representatives of the project team, Council, agencies, other key stakeholders and the community will work through a value management process to provide input into the recommended preferred option.</p>	<p>Late 2011</p>

Display of the recommended preferred option		
Display of the recommended preferred option	The recommended preferred option will be displayed for public comment.	Late 2011
Staffed displays Static (unstaffed display)	Staffed displays will be arranged at certain locations, days and times (this information will be communicated prior) as venue availability may change. Static (unstaffed) displays where possible, will be located at the venues outlined in Section 3.8 Staffed and static (unstaffed) displays.	Late 2011
Announcement of the preferred option and preservation of the route		
Identification of the preferred route option	Consideration of submissions from display of recommended preferred option and identification of preferred route option	After late 2011
Announcement of the preferred route option	The preferred route option to be announced by the RTA and the Minister for Roads	After late 2011
Preservation of the route for the preferred option	Action to preserve the route for the preferred option	Early 2012
Evaluation of consultation process	Key stakeholders, such as Council, agencies and community participants will be invited to take part in a qualitative survey and the results of the evaluation process will be placed in the project website.	Mid 2012