



Transport  
Roads & Maritime  
Services

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# **ADDITIONAL CROSSING OF THE CLARENCE RIVER AT GRAFTON**

Appendix C – Draft community  
consultation strategy

AUGUST 2014



## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Community and stakeholder involvement is an essential component of the successful delivery of the Additional Crossing of the Clarence River at Grafton (Grafton Bridge).

The project's community involvement plan aims to inform and engage community and stakeholders in a constructive, transparent and fair process. It encourages public participation at each phase of the project, including the environmental assessment, construction and commissioning.

Under the plan, community and stakeholder involvement is tailored to each phase of the project, enabling appropriate consideration and balancing of community and stakeholders' social, economic, environment and functional issues to achieve best project outcomes.

This document provides an overview of the Grafton Bridge project and the involvement plan. As background supporting community involvement plan implementation, the document also presents a summary of stakeholders, risks and opportunities and key messages. The document describes how the relevant communication and engagement methods will be used at each project phase. The document also outlines a range of protocols to support a collaborative and effective relationship with the project's proponent, Roads and Maritime Services.

## Table of Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....	2
1.0 GRAFTON BRIDGE PROPOSAL OVERVIEW .....	5
1.1 Background.....	5
1.2 Proposed scope of works .....	5
1.3 Statement of need .....	6
1.4 Project delivery .....	7
2.0 COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT PLAN.....	8
2.1 Purpose of this document.....	8
2.2 Roads and Maritime Services engagement standards and guidelines.....	8
2.3 Guiding principles .....	9
2.4 Addressing the Minister's Conditions of Approval.....	9
2.5 Involvement objectives .....	10
2.6 Tailoring the involvement approach .....	11
3.0 STAKEHOLDER IDENTIFICATION .....	13
3.1 Socio-economic profile .....	13
3.2 Stakeholder groups.....	13
4.0 UNDERSTANDING ISSUES, RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES .....	15
4.1 Potential issues.....	15
4.2 Risks .....	16
4.3 Opportunities.....	16
5.0 KEY MESSAGES .....	17
5.1 Strategic messages .....	17
5.2 Key messages .....	17
6.0 COMMUNICATION AND INVOLVEMENT METHODS .....	20
6.1 Community Relations Manager .....	20
6.2 Working with stakeholders.....	20
6.3 Communication tools .....	21

6.4	Project displays.....	23
6.5	Project website – <a href="http://www.rms.nsw.gov.au/graftonbridge">www.rms.nsw.gov.au/graftonbridge</a> .....	23
6.6	Response to community representations .....	24
6.7	Community relations inductions and training.....	26
6.8	Visual records .....	27
6.8.1	Photography.....	27
6.8.2	Audiovisual.....	27
7.0	COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT PLAN FRAMEWORK.....	28
7.1	Stakeholder categories.....	28
8.0	PROTOCOLS .....	33
8.1	Environmental Assessment consultation.....	33
8.2	Working in partnership with Roads and Maritime services .....	34
8.3	Media and government relations .....	35
8.4	Notification of works and temporary impacts.....	36
8.5	Correspondence and enquiries protocol .....	37
8.6	Materials approved .....	38
8.7	Logos and branding .....	39
8.8	Site inspection by visitors .....	39
8.9	Compliance with the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998.....	39
8.10	Compliance with NSW Government and Roads and Maritime Services guidelines.....	39
8.11	Project display material, activities and award submissions .....	39
8.12	Incident and emergency response communications.....	40
9.0	CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT .....	41
9.1	Key performance indicators.....	41
10.0	PROJECT COMMUNICATIONS TEAM.....	42
10.1	Contact details .....	42

## 1.0 GRAFTON BRIDGE PROPOSAL OVERVIEW

### 1.1 Background

Planning for an additional crossing of the Clarence River at Grafton was initially funded by the NSW Government, starting from 2002. Investigations were deferred in September 2005 and restarted in 2009.

In December 2010 Roads and Maritime Services (formerly the Roads and Traffic Authority) announced a revised approach to engage more effectively with the community and stakeholders in identifying a preferred route for an additional crossing. A community update issued in December 2010 identified 13 preliminary route options and invited community comment via a postal survey. Subsequent phone and business surveys were also carried out.

In June 2011 Roads and Maritime published the *Feasibility Assessment Report* which described the assessment undertaken on the 41 suggestions identified following the December 2010 to March 2011 community consultation period. Twenty-five preliminary route options in five corridors were identified for engineering and environmental investigation.

In January 2012 six route options were announced for further investigation. The short-listed options and short-listing process are documented in the *Preliminary Route Options Report – Final* (RMS, January 2012).

Design refinements and further field and technical investigations were undertaken on the six route options. These were documented in the *Route Options Development Report* (Roads and Maritime, September 2012).

The six route options were subject to an assessment process in October and November 2012 to identify a recommended preferred location for an additional crossing of the Clarence River at Grafton. The assessment process was based on community feedback, technical investigations undertaken to date, the outcomes of a value management workshop and Roads and Maritime review of the options. The process initially identified Option E and Option C for moving forward for further consideration. Further comparative assessment resulted in Option C being preferred over Option E as the recommended preferred option.

The assessment process and the resulting recommended preferred option are documented in the *Recommended Preferred Option Report* (Roads and Maritime, December 2012).

The Preferred Option was announced in April 2013 with the Preliminary Concept Design released for public comment in November 2013. The project team has undertaken detailed investigations for seeking approval under Part 5.1 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*.

### 1.2 Proposed scope of works

The main components of the project are:

- Construction of a new bridge over the Clarence River about 70 metres downstream of the existing road and rail bridge (which is to be retained)
- Upgrades to parts of the road network in Grafton and South Grafton to connect the new bridge to the existing road network, including:
  - Widening Iolanthe Street to four lanes
  - Widening the Gwydir Highway to four lanes between Bent Street and the Pacific Highway
  - Realigning the existing Pacific Highway to join Iolanthe Street near Through Street

- Providing a new roundabout at the intersection of the Pacific Highway and Gwydir Highway
- Providing a new roundabout at the intersection of Through Street and Iolanthe Street
- Limiting Spring Street and the Old Pacific Highway to left in and left out only where they meet Iolanthe Street
- Realigning Butters Lane
- Widening Pound Street to four lanes between Villiers Street and the approach to the new bridge
- Providing traffic signals at the intersection at Pound Street and Clarence Street
- Closing Kent Street where it is crossed by the bridge approach road
- Realigning and lowering Greaves Street beneath the new bridge
- Realigning Bridge Street to join directly to the southern part of Pound Street (east of the new bridge approach). There would be no direct connection between Pound Street south and the new bridge approach
- Widening Clarence Street to provide formal car park spaces
- Minor modifications to the existing Dobie Street and Villiers Street roundabout.
- The existing rail viaduct section across Pound Street would be replaced with a new bridge structure to provide sufficient vertical clearance for the upgrade of Pound Street
- Construction of a pedestrian and cycle path and signalised pedestrian crossings for access to and across the new bridge and throughout Grafton and South Grafton
- Flood mitigation works, which includes raising the height of sections of the existing levee upstream of the existing bridge in Grafton and South Grafton
- Ancillary works such as public utility adjustments, construction compounds and stockpile areas and water management measures.

### 1.3 Statement of need

Currently, the Grafton Bridge is the only crossing of the Clarence River in the Grafton area. The bridge forms part of Main Road 83 Summerland Way, a classified road that provides an inland link between southern Queensland to the north, and the Richmond River and Clarence River Valleys in northern NSW.

The Grafton Bridge is a steel double deck bridge completed and opened to traffic in 1932. The upper deck of the bridge supports one northbound lane and one southbound lane for vehicles connecting to Bent Street in South Grafton and Fitzroy Street in Grafton. The lower deck supports two-way railway lanes and pedestrian/ cyclist lanes on either side.

Road users travelling between Grafton and South Grafton, including those making both local and through trips, use the bridge as there is no practical alternative route. The bridge also forms part of the alternative regional north–south road link when the Pacific Highway is closed due to road traffic accidents or flooding.

Growth of Junction Hill and of Grafton north of the Clarence River is expected to grow moderately to 2049 with little impact on bridge demand at the peaks. However, significant growth is expected from South Grafton and the Clarenza development, south east of the city. Growth of the Clarenza development area alone is expected to be in the order of an additional 7,000 people over this period.

Both the Clarenza and South Grafton developments are expected to generate traffic levels that will push the bridge beyond reasonable congestion levels for a regional NSW city. Further, origin-destination traffic studies undertaken for Roads and Maritime suggest that the problem of bridge capacity is essentially a locally-generated problem with only about 3 per cent of traffic crossing the bridge being through traffic, having an external origin and destination. About 35 per cent of all peak hour trips within the Grafton area are dependent on use of the current bridge.

Roads and Maritime considers that the project is needed to improve road safety and the efficiency of the local traffic network. This stems from the following issues with the existing bridge:

- Kinks in the alignment: The bridge has pronounced kinks in its horizontal alignment at the northern and southern ends. Long, heavy vehicles cannot negotiate the kinks without crossing the centreline, creating a risk of crashes and causing traffic in both directions to slow, which contributes to congestion and delays. This is compounded by narrow lane widths and reduced lateral clearances on the existing bridge.
- Delays due to merging: There are two lanes of traffic in each direction approaching the bridge (Fitzroy Street carries southbound traffic, and Bent Street carries northbound traffic). However, the bridge has only one lane in each direction, so the two lanes of traffic must merge into a single lane in each direction. This merging contributes to queuing and delays on the bridge approaches.
- Peak hour congestion: Due to the above issues, traffic flows across the bridge during peak periods are slow; in the morning peak hour, northbound traffic speeds are 16 kilometres per hour. Lower speeds affect the efficiency of commuter and freight movements across the bridge
- The alignment of the existing bridge limits freight efficiency.

The primary drivers of this project are (i) the need to relieve current and future congestion, (ii) the provision of greater accessibility (measured in terms of travel times and reliability) for the journey to work, other private travel, freight and commercial activities and (iii) to ensure that the road environment is as safe as possible for all users. There will be environmental and social impacts from the construction of the bridge. However, over the next few decades environmental impacts are expected to be generally positive in that energy use and emissions are reduced or maintained at current levels.

#### **1.4 Project delivery**

The Grafton Bridge project is currently seeking planning approval under Part 5.1 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*. At this stage a construction program has not yet been determined, however it is expected construction would take about three years. Once the construction timeframe is made clearer with an approval in place and construction funding available, the type of construction contract to deliver the project will be decided.

## **2.0 COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT PLAN**

### **2.1 Purpose of this document**

The community involvement plan was developed to support delivery of the Grafton Bridge project. This document presents the plan's objectives, guiding principles, delivery framework and the potential issues the project needs to manage. It also presents the communication tools, key messages, protocols and evaluation process which will support project construction and implementation.

The plan has been prepared by the Grafton Bridge project team responsible for community and stakeholder involvement during the route selection process and the planning approval stage. The plan addresses each phase of the project including the environmental assessment phase and the building and commissioning phases. The project will meet the reasonable needs and desires of the community for information and consider their views.

It is acknowledged that under the umbrella community involvement plan, action plans for each section will evolve over the life of the project. Flexibility will be necessary to identify and be responsive to emerging interests and issues at each phase of the project.

It is also important to note that the project will be delivered within a dynamic environment as the Pacific Highway upgrades take place, which will have implications for the South Grafton area. The plan therefore is also designed to provide the project and Roads and Maritime with an agreed approach to community and stakeholder involvement, open communication channels and clear protocols. These elements aim to enable the project and Roads and Maritime, working together, to be responsive to emerging issues and each organisation to meet their corporate obligations and reporting requirements.

Detailed communication action plans will be developed in consultation with Roads and Maritime in advance of each phase of the project.

### **2.2 Roads and Maritime Services engagement standards and guidelines**

The community involvement plan has been prepared in accordance with the Roads and Maritime Community Involvement and Communication Draft: A resource manual for staff (June 2008) and recognises the Roads and Maritime Community Involvement Policy.

The Plan seeks to ensure the following outcomes from community and stakeholder engagement (Roads and Maritime Community Involvement and Communication Draft: A resource manual for staff, 2008, p7):

- Efficiency
- Equity
- Accountability
- Participation
- Flexibility
- Integrity
- Representativeness
- Cost-effectiveness
- Certainty.

### 2.3 Guiding principles

The project’s overall approach to community and stakeholder involvement is guided by the following key principles:

- Be inclusive. Ensure all stakeholders have access to information about the project, its approvals process and its works program.
- Be proactive. Inform and engage stakeholders early in the process, ensure they remain fully informed and demonstrate that stakeholder issues have been considered and addressed in a transparent process.
- Be responsive. Respond to all stakeholder contact in a timely manner and manage a transparent issues resolution process.
- Be sensitive. Make every effort to carry out works with minimal impact on local communities.
- Honour all obligations of the Director General’s Requirements, Conditions of Approval, Statement of Commitments (if applicable) and commitments made by the project team.
- Undertake activities in reference to the global best practice AA1000 Stakeholder Engagement Standard.

### 2.4 Addressing the Minister’s Conditions of Approval

The community involvement plan documents the Grafton Bridge project community communications strategy. It complies with the project’s Scope of Work and Technical Criteria (SWTC) and will be used to guide communication and consultation activities through the project’s environmental assessment phase.

The Plan is being developed concurrently with the project seeking planning approval. Once this has been obtained, the Plan will be updated to comply with any relevant Minister’s Conditions of Approval.

The relevant Director General’s Requirements for community consultation are listed in the table below:

**Table 1**

<b>Director General’s Environmental Assessment Requirements for the Additional Crossing of the Clarence River in Grafton</b>	
Social and Economic	<p>A draft Community Consultation Strategy identifying relevant stakeholders, procedures for distributing information and receiving/responding to feedback and procedures for resolving community complaints. Key issues that should be addressed in the draft Strategy should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• traffic management (including property access, pedestrian access)</li> <li>• landscaping/urban design matters</li> <li>• construction activities including out of hours work, and</li> <li>• noise and vibration mitigation and management</li> </ul>

<p>Consultation</p>	<p>During the preparation of the EIS, you must consult with the relevant local, State or Commonwealth Government authorities, service providers, community groups and affected landowners.</p> <p>- Local, State and Commonwealth authorities including the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environmental Protection Authority,</li> <li>• Office of Environment and Heritage (including Heritage Division)</li> <li>• The Heritage Council of NSW</li> <li>• Department of Primary Industries</li> <li>• NSW Office of Water, and</li> <li>• Clarence Valley Council</li> </ul> <p>- Specialist interest groups, including Local Aboriginal Councils, Aboriginal Stakeholders Utilities and service providers</p> <p>- The public, including community groups and adjoining and affected landowners.</p> <p>The EIS must describe the consultation process and the issues raised, and identify where the design of the project has been amended in response to these issues. Where amendments have not been made to address an issue, a short explanation should be provided.</p>
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This Plan seeks to address the first dot point in providing a Draft Community Consultation Strategy for construction. The Environmental Impact Statement will include details of the consultation process leading up to the development of the actual report, consistent with community consultation strategies to be used for the construction phase.

## 2.5 Involvement objectives

Community and stakeholder involvement will be tailored to each phase of the Grafton Bridge project, enabling appropriate consideration and balancing of community and stakeholders' social, economic, environment and functional issues to achieve best for project outcomes.

In summary, the community involvement plan will:

- Provide an open, accountable and transparent involvement process which can demonstrate how community and stakeholder input has been considered within project development and impact mitigation
- Provide a range of accessible opportunities for stakeholders, interested groups, and the wider public to be sufficiently informed about the project and contribute informed input
- Provide two-way communication channels enabling timely intervention aimed at resolving issues raised by community and stakeholders
- Facilitate a positive reputation outcome for the project and Roads and Maritime that supports future operations, builds on existing relationships and results in constructive working relationships with the community and stakeholders.

## **2.6 Tailoring the involvement approach**

### **2.6.1 Environmental assessment phase**

- NSW Government declaration of the project was announced in October 2013. A Planning Focus Meeting was held on 16 September 2013. During the development of the environmental assessment, consultation was undertaken with State and local government bodies to identify issues, potential impacts and appropriate mitigation strategies. The purpose of this consultation was to inform stakeholders of the project scope, proposed investigations, the approvals process and details of the public exhibition period.
- Consultation was also undertaken in this period with targeted stakeholders including businesses and industry groups as per the Director-General Requirements. Consultation with these targeted stakeholders sought to gain an understanding of their insights, and areas of interest and concern which needed to be considered in the concept design, the preparation of the environmental assessment, and detailed design development phase.
- During preparation of the environmental assessment, the Plan focused on keeping the Grafton community and the general public informed of project progress. A range of communication tools were used to inform the community of the project, its assessment process and opportunities to contribute specific feedback during the public exhibition.
- The consultation approach will be developed to encourage stakeholder and community participation in the public exhibition period. A submissions report will be developed to provide responses to issues raised by participants and demonstrate how feedback was considered, along with a range of technical studies, a concept design and a construction methodology to minimise impacts and achieve best for project outcomes.

### **2.6.2 Construction phase**

The project will continue to identify and manage issues of interest or concern during the pre-construction and construction phase, consistent with any Minister's Conditions of Approval.

Communication and consultation activities undertaken during the route development and concept design phase have provided the project team with an understanding of the context of the key stakeholders and their expectations. It is anticipated input from the community during the environmental impact statement consultation period will build on this. This will also form a foundation for ongoing two-way communication during the preconstruction and construction phases of the project. Two-way communication will be used to effectively address and manage issues as they emerge during construction and support the delivery of optimum outcomes for the project, stakeholders and the broader community.

During the construction phase, the project focus is on providing information about the construction program, minimising potential impacts and providing timely responses to concerns raised by stakeholders. Providing accurate and current information is essential to managing community expectations and encouraging a broader understanding of the project and its benefits.

Principal objectives of the project's construction strategy include carrying out the works in a safe, timely and efficient manner, and ensuring impacts are minimised through the provision of appropriate management measures. In line with these objectives, the community involvement plan strategies will be integrated into construction planning to minimise construction impacts. This will also support the provision of early notification of potential impacts for local residents, motorists and the broader community.

The Plan will support communication to the travelling public, with information about changed traffic conditions made available on the project website and advertising undertaken where necessary. Primary real time communication with motorists - by way of real time variable message signs (VMS) - will be managed by the project's traffic management team and cleared by the project communication team in keeping with protocols for approval from Roads and Maritime.

Due to the complex nature of the project in local road upgrades on both sides of the river, as well as a bridge, it is anticipated there may be several construction sites in operation concurrently with some variation in scheduled works. As a result, potential impacts on stakeholders, including road users and the adjacent property owners, may differ from one area to the next.

To address any potential disparities and ensure that timely and relevant information regarding the progress of construction is provided to the appropriate audience, it is intended that a communication action plan be developed for the construction area.

The action plan will detail specific construction staging and communication activities planned to manage specific impacts and risks in each local area. The action plan will be a living document.

The project, as a component of the Grafton Bridge project strategic community engagement program, will incorporate overarching themes into project communication materials.

Consideration of themes will include:

- Road safety during construction – including heavy vehicles, buses/taxis, general motorists, cyclists and pedestrians
- The project's environmental objectives, particularly in relation to the Clarence River
- Informing and engaging with the local community to maintain and support existing relationships and groups.

A suite of communication tools and activities will be utilised to target various community members based on the nature of work and potential impacts to provide clear, effective and timely information. Based on this structure the community would, for example, be provided with and/or have access to:

- Project wide information including the project website, community update brochures, advertising media
- Area specific information including project website updates, community update brochure, letterbox drops regarding specific impacts or changes to planned works
- Two-way communication – includes a 24/7 community information and complaints line, website feedback form, email platform and community information sessions
- On-road communications – including the use of variable message signs (VMS).

### **2.6.3 Commissioning phase**

A range of communications tools will be used to support transition of each phase of the project through to opening to traffic. In particular, focus will be applied to travelling public education about changes on the local roads and the Pacific and Gwydir highways to ensure a safe and effective transition.

## **3.0 STAKEHOLDER IDENTIFICATION**

A range of organisations and groups will have an interest in and/or be affected by the project and works undertaken to construct the Grafton Bridge project.

### **3.1 Socio-economic profile**

Grafton is located in the Clarence Valley Local Government Area (LGA), approximately 630km north of Sydney and 340km south of Brisbane. Located on the banks of the Clarence River, Grafton is approximately 36.5km inland from the coast.

One of four major regional centres within the Mid North Coast Region, Grafton City is a focal point for regional road, river and other transport networks and focus of higher order services including retail and administrative services, a base hospital, Grafton TAFE Campus, community health centre and high schools. A large number of Grafton's community and recreation facilities are located near and along the length of the Clarence River or the Summerland Way.

In 2011 the Grafton Urban Centre Locality (which includes Grafton and South Grafton urban areas) had a population of 16,598 people and was recorded as having 6,404 occupied private dwellings in 2011 with the majority being separate houses.

The Grafton Bridge study area is generally characterised by residential uses and some commercial / light industrial and educational uses on the Grafton side, with the South Grafton side being predominantly big box style retail with some light industrial and farmland. The study area for social and economic assessment includes the corridor, adjacent land uses and the wider catchment of Grafton and South Grafton residential areas.

The Mid North Coast Regional Strategy identifies that the Clarence Valley Local Government Area has significant capacity to increase both its population (through infill development and land releases such as those around Clarenza and Junction Hill) as well as its industrial capacity. Within the Grafton area, the Clarence Valley Settlement Strategy 1999 predicted that by 2016 the population will reach 11,100 in Grafton and 7,250 in South Grafton. These predictions are likely to be exceeded, with the Mid North Coast Strategy establishing a minimum target of 7,100 dwellings for the Clarence Valley sub-region, with Council documents indicating around a third of this would occur in Grafton City.

Currently the Grafton Bridge is the only crossing of the Clarence River in the Grafton area. The bridge forms part of the Main Roads 83 Summerland Way, and also forms part of the alternative regional north-south road link when the Pacific Highway is closed due to road traffic accidents or flooding.

Given the Grafton Bridge is the sole link between Grafton and South Grafton, and the existing bridge is at or near capacity at peak times, the project would provide a stimulus for the predicted residential and industrial development through improvements in the capacity of Summerland Way and surrounding local street networks.

### **3.2 Stakeholder groups**

Comprehensive and representative stakeholder lists and a general mailing database have been established for the project. These are based on information gathered during the project route development, environmental assessment and concept design development phases. The database is periodically updated to ensure all stakeholder details are correct and

interested parties are added or removed when requested. Six stakeholder groups have been identified for the project, as presented in Table 3.1.

**Table 3.1 Grafton Bridge stakeholder groups**

Group	Stakeholder Category	Indicative Members
<b>Tier 1 Stakeholders</b>		
1.	New South Wales State Government Agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Department of Planning</li> <li>• Transport for New South Wales <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Roads and Maritime Services</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Office of Environment and Heritage <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Environmental Protection Agency</li> <li>○ Heritage Council</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Department of Primary Industries (Fisheries)</li> <li>• New South Wales Office of Water</li> </ul>
2.	Local Government Authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarence Valley Council</li> </ul>
<b>Tier 2 Stakeholders</b>		
3.	Interest Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Traffic and Transport <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Busways</li> <li>○ ARTC</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Cyclists <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Bicycle user groups</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Education Institutes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Grafton TAFE</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Business / Industry <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Grafton Chamber of Commerce and Industry</li> <li>○ South Grafton Progress Association</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Land Council <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Grafton Ngerrie Local Aboriginal Land Council</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Tier 3 Stakeholders</b>		
4.	Grafton Bridge community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Directly affected properties (property acquisition cases)</li> <li>• Neighbouring properties – directly adjacent to route and construction compounds</li> <li>• Businesses</li> <li>• River users</li> <li>• Properties along Grafton / South Grafton levee</li> </ul>
5.	General public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grafton and South Grafton residents</li> <li>• Greater Clarence Valley Council area</li> <li>• Media</li> </ul>
6.	Motorists and bridge users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Motorists using the new bridge</li> <li>• Motorists using the Gwydir Highway / Pacific Highway</li> <li>• Pedestrians and cyclists using the new bridge</li> </ul>

## 4.0 UNDERSTANDING ISSUES, RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES

This section provides a summary of the project's potential issues, risks and opportunities.

### 4.1 Potential issues

The potential issues associated with the project likely, or known, to be of interest or concern to community and stakeholders are presented below. It is likely that these issues will be more precisely defined and further issues identified throughout the construction and commissioning phases. Emerging issues will continue to be tracked through the Consultation Manager Database and proactively managed through the regular communications meetings.

#### 4.1.1 Key consultation issues

Potential key issues and concerns being proactively addressed include:

##### **Socio-economic issues**

- Local community burden – bearing project construction and operational impacts for the gain of bridge users
- Temporary and long term impacts to local area development control, property value and amenity – noise, visual and air quality
- Temporary and long term impacts to local business viability
- Uncertainty around project scale and design
- Pedestrian and cyclist safety and access
- Location of additional/replacement cycle ways, residential security
- Fair property acquisition
- Project benefits – positive community and environment legacy
- Unresolved, historic or existing issues (including matters relating to existing flooding concerns and the existing bridge which are not directly related to the proposed works)
- Appropriate consultation and communication throughout the construction and commissioning phases

##### **Functional issues (transport / traffic / construction)**

- Integration with State and regional planning objectives
- Effective management of construction impacts – property access, vibration, noise, dust, traffic, parking, services interruption, public transport operations, restoration
- Traffic congestion and travel delays due to construction
- Transparency of financial arrangements
- Effective management of the transition to operations phase
- Urban design issues – including the use of vacant land after the project is complete.

##### **Environment**

- Transparent and accountable decision making process – management of community involvement and environmental approvals
- Project alignment with local council planning and community objectives
- Acceptance of the approvals process and consultation approach
- Compliance with all approval conditions
- Management of sensitive environmental factors associated with the project including:
  - noise and vibration
  - dust and air pollutants
  - creeks and waterways
  - flooding and run-off

- heritage
- weeds and pest
- sediment and erosion control
- local vegetation/landscaping
- air quality
- climate change and construction linked emissions

The management and mitigation of the key environmental issues nominated will also be addressed in the Construction Environment Management Plan and its component sub-plans when developed. Key issues will also be identified and discussed in any communication action plans developed as part of the project.

The community relations team will use a number of communication tools to provide information and receive community input relevant to these issues and other project related issues. These include providing communication materials such as fact sheets, placing information on the website and facilitating face to face consultation through meetings, briefings and hosting community information sessions.

## **4.2 Risks**

Management of the environmental assessment process, construction and transition to operation is continually scrutinised.

Any gap between actual and best practice in approvals, consultation process, construction, environment, community and safety management standards will provide opportunity for criticism of the design solution, the project, Roads and Maritime and the Government. This could potentially decrease local and public acceptance of the Grafton Bridge project.

The risks of the project are enhanced by the nature of the project area with regards to flooding, and proposed works to the existing levee system, which need to be undertaken prior to the placement of structures into the Clarence River associated with the new bridge.

The project community relations team will be required to integrate construction communication activities with existing community engagement on the Grafton Bridge project including messaging and activities, where desirable, to establish and address concerns.

## **4.3 Opportunities**

The Grafton Bridge project also presents a valuable opportunity for Roads and Maritime and the project to:

- Accurately position the project as a commitment to an efficient, sustainable, regional transport network
- Build community and stakeholder confidence in the project by clearly communicating the benefits of the additional crossing and the cost of inaction
- Proactively engage and inform the Grafton community about road improvements
- Demonstrate best practice community engagement and communications
- Encourage resident participation in activities that will support the project's sustainability and environmental outcomes
- Be recognised for implementing a best practice road upgrade and leaving a positive legacy.

## 5.0 KEY MESSAGES

### 5.1 Strategic messages

Project positioning is guided by the following strategic messages:

- The Summerland Way is a key transport corridor for the north coast region, with more than 20,000 vehicle movements per day crossing the Clarence River via the existing Grafton Bridge.
- The Grafton Bridge project will reduce congestion in peak periods, improve access between Grafton and South Grafton, and provide better service efficiency for bus services using the existing crossing.
- Demand for crossing the Clarence River in Grafton will increase over the next twenty years, with growth forecast to occur in the Clarenza area (on the southern banks of the river) and the main employment area concentrated in Grafton.
- The project will stimulate development in the Iolanthe Street precinct, stimulating economic activity for the regional centre as well as employment opportunities
- Major project benefits include:
  - Reduction in congestion during morning and afternoon peak periods
  - A new bridge over the Clarence River in Grafton that will provide an alternative crossing in the event the existing bridge is closed to traffic due to a traffic incident or maintenance
  - Removal of time of day restrictions on heavy vehicles crossing the Clarence River
  - Increased capacity to accommodate planned residential and business growth
  - Improved local road and pedestrian / cycling infrastructure

### 5.2 Key messages

In addition to the strategic messages listed above, the following key messages were used to support accurate and consistent communication during the project's establishment phase. These key messages address a range of potential issues, and will be reviewed prior to construction starting to ensure they remain relevant to the Grafton Bridge project.

**Table 5.1 Key Messages**

Key Issues	Messages
Public information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Documentation relating to the route selection process, as well as the environmental assessment documents are available on the project website <a href="http://www.rms.nsw.gov.au/grafonbridge">www.rms.nsw.gov.au/grafonbridge</a> or by contacting the project team</li> <li>• The Department of Planning and Infrastructure published the SSI application report and the Director-General's requirements on its website</li> <li>• The SSI application report provides a description of the Additional Crossing of the Clarence River in Grafton and key environmental issues relevant to the project</li> </ul>
Approval process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approval for the project is being sought under Part 5.1 of the <i>Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979</i>, requiring a comprehensive assessment of potential project impacts and include opportunities for community input and consultation.</li> <li>• A submissions report will be prepared by Roads and</li> </ul>

	<p>Maritime and the project team to address / respond to any submissions received during the consultation period prior to submitting the final report to the Department of Planning and Infrastructure for approval.</p>
Community consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The EIS will present the study findings as per the DGRs, and placed on public exhibition in the second half of 2014.</li> <li>• During the preparation of the EIS, consultation was undertaken with relevant State and Local Government bodies, interest groups and affected landowners.</li> <li>• Community and stakeholder engagement has been tailored to each phase of the project, enabling appropriate consideration of social, economic, environment and functional issues.</li> </ul>
Project description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Grafton Bridge project comprises of a 480m long bridge linking Grafton to South Grafton via Pound Street, Grafton and the Pacific Highway / Gwydir Highway roundabout via Iolanthe Street, South Grafton.</li> <li>• The bridge will be located approximately 70 metres downstream of the existing bridge, and will become part of the Summerland Way.</li> <li>• The bridge will be one lane in each direction, with a shared pedestrian and cycle path provided on the upstream side</li> <li>• The existing bridge would be retained with a single northbound and southbound traffic lane and with a shared path on both upstream and downstream sides at the existing rail level</li> <li>• The heavy vehicle route (B-doubles and semi-trailers) would be over the proposed bridge. It is not anticipated that time of day restrictions would be placed on heavy vehicle use of the proposed bridge. Buses and smaller heavy vehicles would be able to use either bridge.</li> <li>• The piers of the new bridge will align with the existing bridge piers, with two clear navigable channels with a minimum width of 35 metres and a minimum vertical clearance of 9.1 metres</li> <li>• There will be upgrades to the local street network in Grafton and South Grafton to allow connection to the new bridge, and flood mitigation works to ensure no worsening of flooding within Grafton and South Grafton resulting from the project works.</li> </ul>
Project objectives	<p>The purpose of the project is to address short-term and long-term transport needs within Grafton and South Grafton.</p> <p>The project objectives are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhance road safety for all road users over the length of the project</li> <li>• Improve traffic efficiency between and within Grafton and South Grafton</li> <li>• Support regional and local economic development</li> <li>• Involve all stakeholders and consider their interests</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide value for money</li> <li>• Minimise impact on the environment</li> </ul>
Project scope	<p>The main components of the project are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Construction of a new road bridge approximately 70 metres downstream of the existing road and rail bridge (which is to be retained)</li> <li>• Upgrade of the road network in Grafton and South Grafton to allow connection of the new bridge while maintaining efficient operation of the surrounding road network</li> <li>• Upgrade of drainage to overcome existing local flooding issues particularly on the section of Pound Street around the existing rail viaduct.</li> <li>• Replacement of the existing three span reinforced concrete arch section of the existing rail viaduct which crosses Pound Street in Grafton</li> <li>• The project would also include other ancillary works, structures and facilities required to construct the project.</li> </ul>
Pedestrian and cycle pathways	<p>The project will include a shared pedestrian and cycle pathway over the new bridge, with connections to Clarence Valley Council's own pedestrian and cycle network in Grafton and South Grafton.</p>
Timing for construction	<p>A construction program has not yet been determined, however it is expected construction would take about three years.</p> <p>The project is seeking approval from the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure, and once funding becomes available, a construction timetable will be released to the community, as well as a construction management plan.</p>

## 6.0 COMMUNICATION AND INVOLVEMENT METHODS

The community involvement plan sets the requirements for the project about access to information, complaints and enquiries procedures and community consultation.

### 6.1 Community Relations Manager

The project provides a Community Relations Manager (or a delegate that is authorised to carry out the functions of the Manager) who acts as a key project contact for community and local residents. During the environmental assessment stage, the community relations manager or an agreed delegate was available for contact by local residents and community representatives during office hours at the project office in Grafton.

It is intended a similar arrangement will be in place during the construction phase. The community relations manager, or an appropriate delegate, will be available to speak with community members during office hours as well as construction times which fall outside of normal 9am to 5pm business hours.

The community relations manager will be able to respond to complaints received and provide an overview of any action to be taken by the project in response to the complaint.

### 6.2 Working with stakeholders

Stakeholder consultation was used during the environmental assessment phase targeting particular groups along the project alignment to ensure specific concerns were heard, and solutions identified to mitigate impacts where possible.

#### 6.2.1 Special interest groups

The project team conducted informal stakeholder group meetings to seek views on various aspects of the project, and assist in refining the concept design for the environmental impact statement.

Groups included:

- Business owners along Pound Street, impacted by upgrades to Pound Street and the Clarence Street intersection, and consolidation of on-street parking
- Greaves Street residents who will have impacts from the bridge, both in construction and once operational due to land acquisitions in the vicinity, changes to the surrounding local street network, and the proximity of the new bridge which will cross Greaves Street
- Grafton TAFE impacted by changed access arrangements, as a result of proposed intersection treatments and proposed changes to on-street parking.

Notes from meetings were recorded in the Consultation Manager Database. Consultation will continue with these stakeholder groups as the project moves into the construction phase to ensure information is provided to assist understanding of the project, seek views on aspects of the construction where appropriate, and ensure there are 'no surprises' for residents and business owners adjacent to the project footprint.

The project may also establish groups as required to most effectively inform and consult with the community including those who may be potentially indirectly affected. For example such groups may be established for a short or longer term and address:

- Construction areas

- Construction activities
- Issues such as noise wall, urban design
- User impacts – pedestrians, cyclists or motorists
- Environmental management
- Flood mitigation works

Engagement with these groups may use a variety of tools, including, but not limited to, group briefings, feedback discussions with group representatives, or phone surveys.

Requirements for potential community groups, group structure and meeting arrangements will be explored by the project community relations team during construction based on risk management drivers.

### 6.2.2 Properties receiving architectural treatments

In accordance with any conditions of approval the project will liaise with property owners whose properties were identified during the environmental assessment phase as being eligible for acoustic assessment to reduce the impact of operational noise associated with the Grafton Bridge project.

Correspondence will be sent to eligible property owners identified in the environmental assessment phase and any operational noise review to notify them they are eligible for an architectural assessment to be undertaken at their property. If found eligible for architectural treatment, owners will be provided with an offer of appropriate architectural acoustic treatment for their residence, with an expectation some aspects of treatment may be negotiated. The Grafton Bridge project will be responsible for costs associated with this process.

## 6.3 Communication tools

A range of communication tools are being used to inform the community and stakeholders and facilitate their contact with the project team.

**Table 6.1 Grafton Bridge communications procedures and methods**

Communication Tool	Duration and Schedule
Toll free telephone number (1800 number)	During environmental assessment phase operates business hours. During construction will operate outside of these times, with exact time period to be decided prior to commencement of construction. A member of the project team will be available to respond to enquiries lodged via this channel. The timeframe for response is to be decided prior to commencement of construction.
Project website	Throughout the life of the project. This will include documents relating to the route selection, environmental assessment and construction management phases.

Media releases and traffic alerts including notification of traffic impacts	Ongoing and prior to major traffic changes including initial traffic management phase.
Community information sessions with project displays	Approximately six monthly or according to project milestones.
Question and Answer (Q & As) documents and community fact sheet	As required, produced in response to issue of widespread interest and placed on website
Letter (addressed and unaddressed) containing details of forthcoming construction activity and requesting feedback	Prior to the commencement of a construction activity in a new location.
Complaints audit	A six monthly audit of complaint management provides the opportunity to follow up corrective actions taken in relation to complaints with stakeholders and to identify potential improvements.
Face to face individual briefings and/or resident meeting	Prior to activities that are likely to impact on residents (such as night works or local road upgrades that may impact on access) and in response to concerns raised
Print and broadcast media advertising – traffic changes and work hours	Prior to start of construction on the project and other significant project milestones
Electronic message signs	To advise of traffic changes on local road relevant to the project and other significant activities that adversely impact local residents and the travelling public.
Community updates containing a six monthly construction look ahead along with details to environmental management processes will be distributed to the Grafton and South Grafton communities, with updates also provided on the project website.	Six monthly

The use of 'opt-in' communication tools for mobile device users (eg mobile phones, tablets, etc) such as text, voice message and email will be further explored with the project team and Roads and Maritime as more information regarding the costs, legal issues and community take-up becomes available.

### **6.3.1 Newspaper and radio advertising**

The project team will advertise any major detours, traffic disruptions or controls and work outside normal construction working hours in the local newspapers. This advertising will take place no less than seven days before the change commences. These advertisements will be subject to the approval of Roads and Maritime, as with all public information materials.

## **6.4 Project displays**

### **6.4.1 Project display material**

Project display material was made available for the public exhibition of the Environmental Assessment documentation and is used for project information displays to update the community over the life of the project.

Materials developed for display purposes must be easily understood, in a suitable format and of a professional quality.

### **6.4.2 Environmental assessment public exhibition**

During the public exhibition period project material will be made available at community information sessions, static displays and on the project website, consistent with material provided during the route selection phase.

### **6.4.3 Community information sessions**

Over the life of the project community members are being kept informed of progress. It is intended to hold at least three temporary or promotional displays (including the public exhibition) relating to the project works and milestones. Scheduling of displays will consider key local events and activities.

Community information sessions have been the main vehicles for canvassing community input into design and obtaining feedback on environmental management issues. Participants in these information sessions will also be surveyed on their response to the proposed treatment of urban design elements both for the bridge structure as well as works around the local road upgrades.

In addition, the project may use static un-staffed displays in locations such as community centres, libraries or shopping centres.

Community information sessions are anticipated to be conducted at six monthly intervals based on project milestones and in co-ordination with Roads and Maritime. At these sessions, project team members will be available to discuss issues and receive feedback from community members in relation to all aspects of the Grafton Bridge project including environmental management, final design and delivery of the project.

## **6.5 Project website – [www.rms.nsw.gov.au/graftonbridge](http://www.rms.nsw.gov.au/graftonbridge)**

A website has been established for the project and is being maintained to assist in disseminating community information, receiving feedback and providing responses to common enquiries.

The website will provide project news and updates on a regular basis. In relation to the running of this website:

- All material will be approved by the Roads and Maritime representative before being loaded onto the website.
- A minimum of ten working days is required for approval prior to uploading major updates eg. display of environmental assessment and project opening.
- A minimum of five working days is required for approval prior to uploading minor updates.
- Where short timeframes are required to provide community updates, such as major changes to work schedules and traffic conditions, these changes will be coordinated with Roads and Maritime on a case-by-case basis.

The website maintains the Roads and Maritime terms and conditions of use and privacy policy and follows the Australian and NSW Government guidelines for accessibility.

The website will continue to operate for the duration of the project and as a minimum until one year after the date of construction completion.

All documents, reports, photos etc. held on the website with respect to the Grafton Bridge project remain the property of Roads and Maritime.

During the construction and commissioning phases, the website will include as a minimum:

- Programme of current construction work
- Roads and Maritime logo on the opening page of the website, and prepared in accordance with the Roads and Maritime web requirements
- Links to other Roads and Maritime websites relevant to the project for instance the Pacific Highway upgrade project
- Feedback facility
- Background information on the project, including the route selection process and project approval
- Description of the various approval authorities and their areas of authority
- Photo gallery containing images of construction, community and environmental management activities associated with the project
- Copies of current and relevant publications
- Electronic copies of environmental documents and investigations that are publicly available
- The file size of all downloadable documents will be shown
- Information for the driving community updated regularly or when traffic conditions change
- A listing of frequently asked questions and responses as agreed with the project team
- Contact phone numbers of the project team and Roads and Maritime representative
- Any other items or information of interest
- Any documentation supporting modifications to the project's approval that may be granted from time to time.

## **6.6 Response to community representations**

### **6.6.1 Contacts management**

The project provides documentation demonstrating how issues raised by the community have been considered and addressed in developing and delivering the Grafton Bridge project. Tools include the project's contacts database, submissions report and meeting minutes.

The project uses Consultation Manager as its contacts database to manage the receipt of and response to community and stakeholder contact, including enquiries and complaints. This allows for:

- Transparent tracking of appropriate responses to each enquiry and complaint received
- Establishment and maintenance of a complaints register from the start of construction on the project site until two months after the completion of all construction works on the project site
- Timely community response to issues raised, with target turn around within 5 business days
- Notification of receipt of correspondence will be provided within one working day of receipt of written and email correspondence
- Regular reporting on the receipt and responses to complaints received.

### **6.6.2 Complaints procedure**

In accordance with any conditions set under the Minister's Conditions of Approval (MCoA) the Grafton Bridge project will adopt a complaints management procedure for recording, responding to and reporting on complaints that complies with the Australian Standard for complaints handling in organisations, AS 4269, now updated to ISO 10002:2006.

There are a number of mechanisms which could be established to facilitate the receipt of complaints. The main vehicle for receiving complaints is via the toll free telephone service which is described below. In addition, there will be a postal address where complaints and enquiries may be sent. The project team has established an email address and project website. This email address has been well publicised and emails received will be responded to within the required timeframe.

There will be a dedicated project team member who will take the lead in receiving complaints and responding to complainants. This team member will be experienced in complaint management with their performance regularly reviewed by the relevant Roads and Maritime communications member. Regular meetings of the community relations team provide a forum for peer review and a basis for continual improvement in complaint management response.

### **6.6.3 Toll free telephone service**

#### **6.6.3.1 Business hours**

The project has established and published a toll free telephone service which will be operational until two months after the date of construction completion. The community relations team staff the phone line at all times during construction hours for the life of the project.

#### **6.6.3.2 Out of business hours**

Where construction occurs out of hours, the phone line will be manned by a member of the project community relations team 24 hours per day to facilitate issues response and complaints resolution.

#### **6.6.3.3 Consultation Manager Database**

Consultation Manager Database is a stakeholder data management software package that is being used to generate reports and statistics on the project team's daily contact with community members and stakeholders. It provides a practical tool for recording contact with

community and stakeholders with the objective of minimising risk and maximising transparency, accountability and audibility.

Consultation Manager Database will be used to:

- Establish and maintain a register of all electronic, written and verbal contact concerning the project and any works
- Monitor response to contact within an agreed timeframe of receipt
- Produce a status report, including the average and maximum times taken to respond to representations
- Provide a record of correspondence received by the project or forwarded by the Roads and Maritime Project Manager to the project and the response.

Consultation Manager incorporates an online secure collaboration tool, set up with a system of users and passwords and enabling information and the closeout of actions to be shared across the team.

#### 6.6.3.4 Issues resolution

The project will address and seek the early resolution of all complaints and claims, directed against the project by motorists, affected residents and members of the community in relation to the project. The Community Relations Manager will manage dispute resolution mechanisms and procedures to enable the prompt resolution of any claims.

The community relations team will immediately notify the relevant Roads and Maritime communications representative of all enquiries from media, politicians or the public service, or priority enquiries. Priority matters refer to:

- Priority 1- Catastrophic Incident: fatality, incident with serious life threatening injuries, major delays and media coverage, critical system failure, major asset damage, terrorist threat etc.
- Priority 2 - Major Incident: accident with serious injuries not life threatening, major congestion and media coverage, protracted incident etc.

When responding to the community member, the project will first provide an overview of the process to be taken to evaluate and address the complaint. The community member will be regularly informed of progress until the resolution of the complaint. This approach aims to foster and maintain a positive relationship with the community member.

## 6.7 Community relations inductions and training

Project induction sessions include instruction on the project's community relations commitment and protocols. Inductions include:

- The project context
- Project and community relations objectives
- Community profile
- Key issues and obligations
- Community relations protocols for working on site including:
  - response to media enquiries
  - handling community enquiries and complaints
  - personal presentation
  - noise
  - parking and site access
  - visual appearance of the site
  - accessing private property
  - caring for wildlife
  - hours of work

- notification of changes to planned work.

Induction records will be reported in the project's monthly report in the safety section.

## **6.8 Visual records**

Visual material plays an important role in communicating effectively with community and stakeholders. A schedule of milestones which will be captured through visual records will be planned with Roads and Maritime at the project's outset. The project community relations team will identify a schedule of photo opportunities to capture milestones and relevant points of interest.

### **6.8.1 Photography**

Visual material plays an important role in communicating effectively with community and stakeholders. A schedule of milestones which will be captured through visual records will be planned with Roads and Maritime at the project's outset. The project community relations team will identify a schedule of photo opportunities to capture milestones and relevant points of interest.

### **6.8.2 Audiovisual**

Where the project identifies value in obtaining audiovisual footage of construction work, the community relations team will engage a professional company with capability to take high quality footage and produce professional media. High quality footage and production might be required for induction and training, community consultation, media releases, award submissions and other promotional purposes.

## 7.0 COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT PLAN FRAMEWORK

The following tables present the community involvement plan framework to guide communications over the life of the project. The framework reflects that each phase of the project requires tailored application of the Plan's communication tools to manage the range of different risks and desired outcomes for each phase of the project.

Effective management of communication and consultation activities during the environmental assessment phase is also critical to the project's success.

Challenges are presented by the project's objective to condense the timing of each phase of the project and the high level of political and public interest in the project. Communication and consultation activities must be synchronised with the environmental assessment process steps, interagency protocols, as well as the project team, and Roads and Maritime protocols. The following table presents an overview of community and stakeholder engagement activities relevant to each project phase.

### 7.1 Stakeholder categories

For the purpose of managing communication and consultation during the Environmental Assessment phase, stakeholders were grouped into the following categories:

- Tier 1  
Roads and Maritime, State agencies, Federal agencies, State and Federal MPs, local government authorities, potentially directly affected and land acquisitions.
- Tier 2  
Interest groups – business and industry, schools, environment, cyclist, traffic and transport, community development/progress groups
- Tier 3  
Neighbouring properties, corridor community and general public.

Timing	Phase	Milestone	Key Stakeholders	Engagement Activities	Outcomes
September 2013	Application phase	Submission of SSI application to Department of Planning	RMS Dept Planning and Infrastructure	Planning Focus Meeting Announcement of process on website	Enable understanding of the project by stakeholders external to Roads and Maritime
October 2013	Application phase	Receipt of Director- General's Requirements	Roads and Maritime Dept Planning and Infrastructure	Website update	Set boundaries of environmental assessment phase
Nov 2013 – Dec 2013	Geotechnical investigations	Commencement of investigations to inform concept design	Roads and Maritime Directly impacted property owners Corridor community	Door knocking on corridor community Phone calls to directly affected residents Update on website	Corridor community aware of activities being undertaken by project.
Nov 2013 – Dec 2013	Preliminary Concept Design	Announcement of Preliminary Concept Design for community comment	Roads and Maritime Directly impacted property owners Grafton community	Letter to directly impacted property owners Community Update Website update Meetings with business owners	Consultation with Grafton community on details around concept design, including treatments around South Grafton, pedestrian / cycling connectivity, traffic lights.
Early 2014	Preparation of background studies for environmental assessment	Commencement of consultation with Tier 1 and Tier 2 stakeholders Internal review of EA Finalisation of environmental	Roads and Maritime Dept Planning and Infrastructure State government agencies	Initial consultation with state agencies Meetings with Clarence Valley Council.	Consultation with State and local government agencies identifies issues, potential impacts and

		assessment	Clarence Valley Council	Update on website when officers out in field undertaking investigations Access agreements with affected land owners	start discussion on mitigation strategies.
Mid 2014	Submission of EIS for adequacy review	Lodgement of the draft EIS with Dept Planning and Infrastructure	Roads and Maritime Dept Planning and Infrastructure	Correspondence with DPI Meetings with DPI	EIS addresses DGRs EIS is deemed adequate for lodging with DPI
Mid to late 2014	The Director General exhibits the EIS for a minimum of 30 days and invites public comment	Release of EIS for public comment Commence targeted consultation with Tier 1 and Tier 2 stakeholders	Roads and Maritime Dept Planning and Infrastructure State government agencies Clarence Valley Council Directly affected landowners Greater Grafton community	Correspondence with directly affected stakeholders Community Information sessions Community Update Targeted consultation with Tier 1 and Tier 2 stakeholders	Stakeholders and community participate in the exhibition period and provide feedback on the EIS
Late 2014	Consideration of submissions for EIS	Preparation of submissions report Refinement of concept design based on submissions received	Roads and Maritime Dept Planning and Infrastructure State government agencies Clarence Valley Council Directly affected	Web updates Community Update	Submission issues and responses documented in Submissions Report and considered in close out of EIS process

			landowners Greater Grafton community		
Late 2014 – early 2015	Seek approval for project	Submissions of EIS and Submissions report for approval  Director General prepares report for Minister’s approval	Roads and Maritime Dept Planning and Infrastructure	Web updates Submissions report provided on website Letters to all respondents that made a submission to the EIS Media release	Community and stakeholders are informed of the Minister’s determination and next steps in the project.
TBA	Pre construction	As per construction program	Riads and Maritime State government agencies Clarence Valley Council Directly affected landowners Interest groups Greater Grafton community	Community update Prepare communication action plan for Grafton – South Grafton areas – tailored to managing specific impacts and timings Early advice of construction start and liaison regarding early work, impact management to stakeholders and indirectly affected properties Establishment of stakeholder / community contact groups as required Community relations	Community and stakeholders are informed of the upcoming construction program. Site teams trained in Community Relations protocols to support consistent application on site and effective issues management

				training to all site personnel and subcontractors Broad project communications update	
TBA	Construction	As per construction program	Roads and Maritime State government agencies Clarence Valley Council Directly affected landowners Interest groups Greater Grafton community	Notifications Letters Community Updates Information sessions 1800 number Website Advertising Resident meetings	Construction communication action plan support effective issues and impacts management. Meets DPI conditions
TBA	Opening of new bridge to traffic	As per construction program – traffic switches, opening of assets, etc	Roads and Maritime State government agencies Clarence Valley Council Interest groups Greater Grafton community		Community and stakeholders will be informed in advance of changes resulting from bridge opening.

## 8.0 PROTOCOLS

### 8.1 Environmental Assessment consultation

The following protocols are to be observed throughout the project as confirmed with Roads and Maritime at each phase.

Table 8.1 Consultation protocols

Stakeholder group	Protocol
State Government Agencies	Roads and Maritime will arrange and lead consultation with Department of Planning and Infrastructure. The project will be advised of and invited to all meetings. The project will arrange and lead consultation with all other State Government agencies. Roads and Maritime will be advised of and invited to all meetings. No consultation with State Government agencies until after the Planning Focus Meeting. The project will keep these stakeholders appropriately informed throughout the construction phase.
Local government authorities	The project will arrange and lead consultation with local government authorities. Roads and Maritime will be advised of and invited to all meetings. No consultation with local government authorities until after the Planning Focus Meeting. The project will keep these stakeholders appropriately informed throughout the construction phase.
State and Federal Members of Parliament	Roads and Maritime will arrange and lead consultation with State and Federal Members of Parliament whose electorates fall within or close to the Grafton Bridge project. Roads and Maritime will communicate with State and Federal members of Parliament by correspondence. Project correspondence will advise the project's declaration and approvals process and keep these stakeholders appropriately informed throughout the construction phase.
Land acquisition property owners	Roads and Maritime will be responsible for the land acquisition process. The project's Property Working Group will determine an integrated approach whereby Roads and Maritime and the project will liaise and consult with these property owners.
Interest groups	The project will arrange and lead consultation with interest groups to support targeted stakeholder consultation. Roads and Maritime will be advised of and invited to all meetings. Development of communications action plans will continue to identify relevant interest groups and proactively inform and consult with appropriate groups in each stage of construction.
Corridor community	The project will arrange and lead engagement with the corridor community. The corridor community will be informed of the project's declaration and approvals process. The corridor community will be encouraged to participate in the public exhibition period and ongoing communication and consultation during construction.
Neighbouring properties	The project will arrange and lead consultation with those property owners and/or residents in the vicinity of

	proposed project works. Neighbouring property owners/residents will be encouraged to participate in the public exhibition period and ongoing communication and consultation during construction.
General public	The project will communicate with the general public using the project website, media and other materials as required. Subject to confidentiality, the project shall make all documents required under the project approval and available for public inspection on request.
Roads and Maritime	All project team communication with Roads and Maritime must be copied to the Project Manager and others identified as relevant RMS participants as the project moves into construction.

## 8.2 Working in partnership with Roads and Maritime Services

Throughout the project, the project team and Roads and Maritime will take a partnership approach to the management of community and stakeholder engagement. This approach will facilitate:

- Alignment on approval protocols
- Coordinated delivery of accurate information
- Consistent management and resolution of community issues
- Best for project decision making
- Best outcomes for the community
- Flexibility for each organisation to execute their different legislative and corporate responsibilities.

The principle of partnership will guide discussions amongst the project and Roads and Maritime regarding execution of the Community and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy and any relevant Scope of Works and Technical Criteria. This will enhance flexibility and responsiveness in a dynamic environment.

### 8.2.1 Working with Roads and Maritime representative

Stakeholder	Protocol
Roads and Maritime	Roads and Maritime representative is informed of all community and stakeholder engagement and community issues. They will be consulted on all decisions affecting the community and invited to all meetings, presentations and site tours attended by members of the community.
	Roads and Maritime representative is informed of all issues raised by Authorities and invited to all meetings, presentations and site tours attended by Authorities.
	Roads and Maritime representative is contacted immediately in relation to planned or unplanned local community protests that may arise during the project.

## 8.3 Media and government relations

### 8.3.1 Media and government contact

The project's manager will nominate the appropriate spokesperson relating to all media issues.

Roads and Maritime Senior Development Manager  
 Adam Cameron  
 Grafton  
 Phone: 02 6640 1054  
 Fax: 02 6640 1004  
 Mobile: 0428 247 869  
 Email: adam.cameron@rms.nsw.gov.au

Stakeholder	Protocol
Roads and Maritime representative	Roads and Maritime Services to be advised of all media contact (including industry magazines), political representatives (including Federal, State or Local Government) or their staff, as soon as possible. Enquiries are to be directed to the Roads and Maritime media unit and a nominated spokesperson will be alerted to the issues raised to provide a response as soon as possible.
	All information provided to the media, political representatives or their staff require approval by Roads and Maritime Services.
	Any briefings to media or government will be coordinated in conjunction with Roads and Maritime.
	The project will advise Roads and Maritime immediately should advertised works change making advertisements incorrect.
	Where identification of changes to the work program make published advertisements or other planned materials incorrect, the Roads and Maritime representative will work with the project to have corrected materials approved as soon as possible to support a best for project outcome.

### 8.3.2 Media events

Roads and Maritime will manage all official media events and will be responsible for coordinating community, media and political participation in such events, in consultation with the project team. The project team will co-operate with Roads and Maritime in the running of the media events and will provide the site logistics associated with media events.

Item	Notification	Roads and Maritime receipt of notice
Major milestones	Start of construction activities on project site Opening of the Grafton Bridge	Notice in writing eight weeks prior to event to enable Roads and Maritime to arrange media event
Milestones	Achievement of project milestone Opening of local roads	Addressed in community involvement plan and project control group meetings.

## **8.4 Notification of works and temporary impacts**

This protocol describes the process to managing the notification of works and temporary impacts.

The Grafton Bridge project team is responsible for communicating with stakeholders and impacted members of the community throughout the project area. Notification is a primary tool in managing disruption to residents through providing timely, accessible and regular updates from a variety of information sources.

Construction activities that have the potential to impact on the normal day to day activities of the local or broader community will generate a community notification. These activities include:

- Commencement of works in a given location
- Work outside normal construction hours
- Work that creates additional noise over an extended period, i.e. jack-hammering
- Work that temporarily changes motorist or pedestrian routes or involving a major re-route or detour.

The extent of the notification catchment areas and identification of sensitive receivers varies according to the activity and geography of the local area.

### **8.4.1 Notification methods**

Notification of forthcoming construction activities will be available to the public from numerous sources as required, including:

- A 24 hour, 7-days-a-week, toll free 1800 contact and enquiries number
- Project website
- Public advertisements in relevant local newspapers
- Public advertisements placed with local radio networks for major milestones
- Signage erected on the external fence of construction compounds
- Letterbox delivery of printed notification
- Personal visits and/or telephone contact from the community relations team and other project team members, especially in relation to out-of-hours work
- Quarterly community updates
- Directional signposting (notifying motorist and pedestrian traffic impacts)
- Variable message signs (notifying motorist and pedestrian traffic impacts)
- Community updates, display posters and postcards are to be printed in accordance with Roads and Maritime guidelines for initiatives such as the use of sustainable paper, including the placement of the appropriate environmental logos.

### **8.4.2 Notification content**

Notification content will include:

- Dates of proposed activity, locations, construction hours, road closures, expected noise impacts, nature of the works, expected duration of the activities, and the types of equipment that will be used.
- For road users, notifications will include details which may impact pedestrian access, road closures, road alignment changes and changes to public transport timetables.
- For maritime users, notifications will include details which may impact on restricted usage of the river.
- Contact details including the 1800 number, project email address and community relations team phone contact number will be included on all notifications.

### **8.4.3 Notification timing**

The following notification timeframes are in accordance with Roads and Maritime policies and practice. They include the following:

- Site signage at least five days prior to commencement of works
- Construction activity notifications may involve consultation prior to confirming activities and notification seven days prior to high noise night work starting and five days for day work activities that have been identified to have potential impacts on nearby households
- Traffic changes notification – Electronic signage and directions signage to be erected in accordance with a relevant Traffic Management Plan
- Traffic changes newspaper advertising – seven to 14 days prior to change in accordance with a relevant Traffic Management Plan

### **8.4.4 Production of notifications**

The community relations team will be responsible for producing and overseeing the distribution of notifications. The communication action plan will identify notifications required and their distribution area.

### **8.4.5 Approval of notifications**

Community relations coordinators/advisors will provide draft notifications to the community relations manager, who will liaise with Roads and Maritime following the internal approval process.

### **8.4.6 Control tools**

A range of tools will be used to ensure accurate implementation of the notification procedure. These include:

- Community relations auditing
- Cross department internal communication
- Forward construction programs
- Notification register, recording relevant distribution dates and quantities

## **8.5 Correspondence and enquiries protocol**

This procedure describes the Grafton Bridge project's protocol for recording, responding to and reporting on customer enquiries and correspondence.

All contact with residents and stakeholders will be managed in accordance with Roads and Maritime requirements. Contact includes all communication (comments, enquiries and complaints) initiated by phone contact, emails, letters, and meetings. The project's contact details are as follows:

**Phone:** 1800 633 332 (toll free)

**Email:** [graftonbridge@rms.nsw.gov.au](mailto:graftonbridge@rms.nsw.gov.au)

**Post:** Grafton Bridge Project  
PO Box 546  
Grafton NSW 2460

### **8.5.1 Enquiries**

The community relations team is likely to be the main point of contact for stakeholders. Telephone calls or visitors received at reception should be directed to members of the community relations team. If the team are not able to be reached, the callers/visitors' details should be recorded and assurances made that they will be called back as soon as possible.

Project related enquiries received by other personnel should refer community enquiries to the 1800 number at all times. Site personnel have access to community information calling cards that display the 1800 number.

It is important that information provided in response to general enquiries from the wider public is accurate and consistent across all areas of the project. Fact sheets and newsletters about the Grafton Bridge project will be prepared and issued to residents with the intention of providing the level of information required by a general enquiry.

### **8.5.2 Contact recording**

Contact with the community covers communication initiated by phone contact, emails, letters, and face to face. Face to face contact and/or complaints may be received via:

- Visitors to site
- Visitors to reception on site
- Visitors to Roads and Maritime offices in Grafton
- Participants at consultation events

It is intended that the majority of phone contact with the community will be via the well publicised 1800 number, however enquiries calls may also be received at reception or by individuals.

The community relations team, as the main point of contact for stakeholders and residents, will use the Consultation Manager database to record all enquiries. Response times and effective handling/close out will be tracked via Consultation Manager. This ensures that issues, response times and outstanding actions can be monitored.

### **8.5.3 Correspondence**

Written correspondence (including emails) in the form of project enquiries or complaints will be responded to within the Roads and Maritime designated timeframe of seven days. Correspondence addressed to the project team and/or Roads and Maritime will be responded to by the nominated party with content input from the project team as appropriate.

#### **Correspondence/briefing material for Members of Parliament**

The Grafton Bridge project team will assist Roads and Maritime to draft responses. This material will be approved by the project community relations manager before it is provided to Roads and Maritime for further review and approval. The briefing materials/correspondence will be signed off and provided to the Minister's office by Roads and Maritime.

#### **Correspondence for major stakeholders**

The project team will draft the correspondence. This correspondence will be reviewed and approved for issue the project team and Roads and Maritime.

## **8.6 Materials approved**

The scheduling of materials production must allow for:

- Draft preparation
- Internal approval

- Project team and Roads and Maritime approval
- Printing
- Distribution
- Advance notification period required for public

Approval processes and timeframes will be finalised prior to start of construction.

## **8.7 Logos and branding**

Roads and Maritime will manage inclusion and placement of logos in relation to all public communications, including advertisements, publications (brochures, community updates, fact sheets) and display posters for project announcement, environmental assessment and construction phases of the project.

## **8.8 Site inspection by visitors**

Both the project team and Roads and Maritime will arrange site visits as required. Visits will be subject to coordination with the Project Manager or their delegate. The project team will give reasonable access to visitors at all reasonable times.

For visits arranged by Roads and Maritime visitors must at all times be accompanied by representatives of Roads and Maritime or other persons authorised in writing by the Roads and Maritime representative. All visitors will be required to complete a site induction and all visits will be subject to site management and visitor protocols.

## **8.9 Compliance with the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998**

The project will comply with the requirements of the *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998*.

## **8.10 Compliance with NSW Government and Roads and Maritime Service guidelines**

The project will comply with the requirements of NSW Government and Roads and Maritime guidelines and policies in relation to its community involvement obligations:

- i. NSW (Government) Guidelines for Advertising.
- ii. Roads and Maritime Community Involvement and Communications Resource Manual for Staff, 2008.
- iii. Roads and Maritime Fact Sheet: Your privacy and RMS projects.
- iv. Roads and Maritime Fact Sheet Your property and RMS projects.
- v. Roads and Maritime Fact Sheet: Access to private property.
- vi. Roads and Maritime Procedure for Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Consultation and Investigation, 2008.
- vii. Roads and Maritime Infrastructure Communications guidelines for sustainable paper and environmental logos, August, 2009.

## **8.11 Project display material, activities and award submissions**

The project must recognise and identify the Roads and Maritime role in any project display material or award submissions that it develops in relation to the Grafton Bridge project.

## **8.12 Incident and emergency response communications**

Incident and emergency response is handled by Roads and Maritime and the project team will comply with their response.

## **9.0 CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT**

The project will maintain a commitment to continuous improvement in the community and stakeholder engagement area. We will provide required training to all relevant personnel and subcontractors, and build community and stakeholder awareness into the project culture.

Our commitment to continuous improvement stems from our understanding of the value of engagement to overall success. A strong reputation, open channels of communication, and positive working relationships with community and stakeholders will support all project objectives.

The project community relations team will use Consultation Manager database to report community and stakeholder contact.

### **9.1 Key performance indicators**

The project has nominated community and stakeholder satisfaction as a key performance indicator. The intention of this key performance indicator is to measure the project's success in engaging positively with community groups and/or stakeholders.

This key performance indicator will be measured by:

- Periodic surveys conducted during construction and then at project completion.
- Measurement of response times to community enquiries/complaints.
- Performance target and weighing is will be finalised once a construction funding becomes available and a construction timetable is established.

## 10.0 PROJECT COMMUNICATIONS TEAM

### 10.1 Contact details

Contact details for the project team working on construction will be finalised once construction funding is made available, and a contract awarded for construction to start.

Until that time, the community can contact the project team at any time by:

**Phone:** 1800 633 332 (toll free)

**Email:** [graftonbridge@rms.nsw.gov.au](mailto:graftonbridge@rms.nsw.gov.au)

**Post:** Grafton Bridge Project  
PO Box 546  
Grafton NSW 2460