

# Meeting Notes



Transport  
Roads & Traffic  
Authority

MARCH 2011

## Additional crossing of the Clarence River at Grafton

### COMMUNITY FORUM

3 March 2011

1pm to 3pm

On Thursday 3 March 2011 two community forums were held, one in the afternoon and one in the evening at the Grafton Community Centre, with presentations by the Project Manager followed by questions and answers.

More than 110 people attended the forums.

The forums discussed three key areas:

- Community feedback from the postal survey.
- Methodology to short list community options.
- Development and delivery of the telephone survey.

Presentation notes are available on the project website.

Questions, comments and responses made at the forum have been captured broadly below.

With the approval of the attendees, the sessions were videoed. For the full presentation, community discussion and question and answer details please view the recordings available on the project website.

QUESTION/COMMENT	RESPONSE
Will the RTA factor demand management into their studies and will the RTA give a commitment to provide assumptions upfront in their reports?	Demand management will be considered as part of the investigations.  The RTA will identify and document assumptions made and include these in reports as part of the transparent process.
If the Summerland Way connects with the new bridge location, how will the Wells Crossing to Iluka project connect in and how	Wells Crossing to Iluka upgrade will connect the Glenugie upgrade to the Pacific Highway at Tyndale and pass to the east of Tucabia. Traffic modelling for a new bridge crossing will take

QUESTION/COMMENT	RESPONSE
will this affect heavy vehicles in the future?	into consideration the upgrade of the Pacific Highway.
How much thought has gone into the proposed highway through Casino, consideration for a super highway from Armidale Road through to the Summerland Way?	Traffic studies for the Pacific Highway have looked at issues in the Northern Rivers Region, from Hexham to the Queensland border. A traffic study that was conducted a few years ago looked at freight routes along the Summerland Way. This study ( <i>Upgrading the Pacific Highway, Technical Review of inland corridor (via Summerland Way) September 2006</i> ) has been uploaded onto the project website.
<b>Presentation I – Community feedback from the postal survey</b>	
Are you going to provide the popularity percentages of the options selected by people who responded to the survey?	A break-up of the numbers will be included in the detailed report on the postal survey when the full context of issues raised will also be presented.
The CBD area of Grafton is such a small area, yet options A to I seem to funnel traffic into the CBD.	Certainly some of the options direct traffic to the CBD. Some submissions did make comment that they were supporting options to divert traffic away from the CBD.
How many trucks go into the CBD to deliver and how many go straight through? When will the report be available?	Data on this is in the Heavy Vehicle Traffic Study which will be available in the near future, before the forum on the 16 March. This data will be discussed then.
In regard to the Heavy Vehicle Traffic Study, where and when was the study conducted, how was the study done and by who?	Data was collected in August 2010 and the information has been analysed and a report, the Heavy Vehicle Study, prepared. The report was done by traffic consultants GTA who also managed the field studies.
Given that you will identify the percentage of where people live who filled out the survey, will you provide the popular options?	We will provide the numbers of those who expressed opposition or support for the options included in the December 2010 Community Update and if the respondents identified themselves or were anonymous.  Responses from the postal survey will feed into the phone questionnaire which will be conducted before the postal survey report is available.
If no preferred option has been made, will options A, B, C & D still be pursued?	All options A to M are still on the table. The route assessment process needs to be thorough and the process needs to look at all options. What needs to happen now is to

QUESTION/COMMENT	RESPONSE
	work through a process on how to short list the 28 new community options.
Will the percentage popularity of options from the postal survey be provided separate from the phone survey? I believe we need the percentages from the written survey prior to being able to make an informed decision in the phone survey. The RTA should show the percentages to meet the Council Resolution.	Separate reports will be provided for the two surveys. The phone survey will give people an opportunity to put forward their views.
The Coalition government have made it clear about the position of the bridge not being in the CBD or residential areas of Grafton. Will we have to redo all of the work that has been done to date if the Coalition does make government at the election? Will the RTA change the process?	<p>The RTA is a public service organisation and will fulfil the requirements of the government of the day. As public servants we are not in a position to comment on political issues.</p> <p>There is a wide range of views in the community and we need to get representative views through the phone survey and need to understand all impacts, including congestion, heritage, etc and allow people to understand the issues.</p>
The phone survey is not representative, why not do a survey by identifying those on the bridge, where they are coming from and going to? It is currently an emergency issue and the commitment from Andrew Stoner MP will need to consider the heavy vehicle issue and other development that is happening in Grafton. Consider the amenity and not funnelling traffic into Grafton.	Some details of the phone survey and how it will be run will be covered further on in the presentation. At the next forum we have suggested that we talk about the Heavy Vehicle Traffic Study report.
The phone survey will only reach 500 people and is hardly representative. Why can't we just survey every car for a week that goes over the bridge?	The Heavy Vehicle Traffic Study surveyed traffic at 12-15 different locations. The report on the study will be available in the near future and will be the main topic for discussion on the next forum.
<b>Presentation 2 – Methodology to short list community options.</b>	
At what point will demand management be included in the process?	Demand management measures may delay the need for a second crossing but a future second crossing will still be needed. It will be considered throughout the entire process.
Why have the project objectives changed from the 2003/04 process to those included in the February 2010 Community Update?	There has been some rewording of the objectives but we don't see that they have fundamentally changed if you look at them in total and the RTA doesn't think the changes will have any impact on the assessment and analysis of the route options.

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Can you please follow-up why the objective “to be socially acceptable to regional and local communities” has been omitted from the current project objectives?	A response, possibly on the project website, will be provided.
I see there are two problems: Traffic flow and heavy vehicles. A northern bypass should be essential. The heritage factor seems to limit the ability to change the bridge but if you could improve the ends of the bridge and remove the deck and replace with 4 lanes, which would solve the immediate problem with a bypass to follow in the future.	Noted.
How to minimise the 41 suggestions down to a manageable number is related to question 2 in the survey. You should minimise options and reduce options that way – look at the areas to avoid.  You should only include those that are interested in the postal survey in the phone survey. Everyone has an opinion but it is not an informed opinion if you haven't bothered to reply to the written survey. I hope I would be rung.	Thank you for your feedback. Consideration will be given to the issues you raised. One method to discount options could be to look at the engineering and environmental issues within corridors.  The methodology for the phone survey will be addressed later in the presentation.
How can we get a guarantee that the bridge will ever be built? It has been discussed since I moved here in 1989.	There is a need to get on with the planning for an additional crossing. For example with the Pacific Highway we are going through a process to preserve the corridor and respond to applications to purchase properties based on hardship. Preserving the corridor will assist with providing certainty.
Information placed on the website is not available to everyone.	The project team is located in the Pacific Highway office on Prince Street, anyone is welcome to come into the office and access any of the information available on the website.
The project needs to service two aspects, the national interest as well as Grafton.	Noted.
Demand management should be included up front irrespective of which methodology is chosen.	Noted.
In relation to the methodologies, the cost, assumptions, ratings, etc are the things that need to be included in the information to help to short list options.	Assumptions will be provided in the technical reports.
Get heavy vehicles off the bridge.	Noted.

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Can the short listing of localities report in 2003/04 be uploaded onto the website?	We will upload all publically available reports onto the website prior to the next forum.
To limit the options, please include the issues that have arisen from the survey, e.g. flooding, etc onto the plan to provide more information.	Noted.
Please mark on the plan what the CBD is. Also given there are limited places for large vehicles to cross under the railway line, show on the plan the high level vehicle route. Also please show the levy location on the map.  Please show not just flooding impacts but also the local ponding areas on the map.	Noted.
When people are drawing suggestions are they including connections from the old or new Pacific Highway?	Connections will be from the existing Pacific Highway which will provide access from Grafton to the new highway.
<b>Presentation 3 – Development and delivery of the telephone survey.</b>	
Because the survey needs to be random, it seems better if the phone survey is held after the next forum so that people have more information and will be able to respond.	The Heavy Vehicle Study Report will be available on the website before the telephone survey and the forum.
Some of the options are impractical. For example, suggestions that traverse Susan Island. What about the bats?	The maps that have been provided are purely suggestions that have come from the community and have not been. The December 2010 community update identified that options involving Susan Island would not be considered due to ecological and heritage issues.
What time of the day will the survey be conducted? What percentage of people will be asked that are regular users of the bridge?	The survey will be conducted in the late afternoon and evening and is voluntary. 80-90 residents outside Grafton or South Grafton will participate in the survey, the remainder will be from Grafton or South Grafton. One of the questions will be whether the respondent is a regular user of the bridge.
You should be catering for the future of Grafton, looking at Clarenza and Junction Hill, consider the development in 20-30 years' time.	Noted.
How will the separate survey targeting businesses be undertaken?	The phone survey to the businesses is still in the early stages of development. The process will be similar to the one to the residents but it will target businesses and in particular the business owners or managers.
Is there any way that the Heavy Vehicle Study	The study will be available on the website and

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Report can be included in the newspapers as a summary to allow people to be more informed?	copies can be collected from the RTA's office.
What is being provided to the company undertaking the survey? Will there be a listing of where people are from who respond to the survey?	The survey will be random.
Are the questions being asked in the phone survey going to be presented to us today?	No. One of the purposes of a random survey is that we get an immediate response rather than a pre-prepared answer.
Can we have an open forum to discuss the findings of the surveys and the update to the Community Liaison Plan?	The findings of the surveys will be discussed in a future forum.
Regarding the survey will you only ring 500 people or are you seeking 500 responses? You should consider text messaging as a way of reaching young people and opening up to the online option.	500 responses are being sought. It might take 1500 calls to get them.
Would the survey be able to survey key transport companies not necessarily in Grafton?	The Heavy Vehicle Traffic Study included a survey of key transport businesses in Grafton. However there is a high probability that the phone survey to businesses will include some trucking companies.
No local trucking companies were contacted. I contacted 4 of the main trucking companies in Grafton and none of them had received a questionnaire from the RTA or a representative.	Over 30 trucking companies were contacted and invited to participate in the heavy vehicle questionnaire. The heavy vehicle study includes a summary of the heavy vehicle questionnaire responses.
I am concerned about the transparency of the consultation and the change in the community liaison plan between the original and the 2010 one.	Noted.
Just back to trucking companies. Were bus companies in the local area contacted? Can you disclose those companies who were contacted?	Bus companies were contacted. The Heavy Vehicle Traffic Study Report doesn't identify who was contacted or who provided responses but it does indicate numbers and the survey used is included in the report.
Can we change the blue background of the forum presentation slides as it is difficult to read?	Noted.
Will there be other forums on any other issues, e.g. environmental, heritage, flooding?	If there is a demand for other forum topics then we can do more.

## PROJECT CONTACT INFORMATION / DETAILS

Community phone number for the project is 1800 633 332.

Information is also available on the RTA website – [www.rta.nsw.gov.au/graftonbridge](http://www.rta.nsw.gov.au/graftonbridge)