

Community Update



OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2014



Nowra Bridge Project

Planning is now underway for a new bridge over the Shoalhaven River in Nowra. Once open, highway traffic would be transferred off the old Nowra Bridge.

The NSW State Government has already invested \$1.6 million in this project with the Federal Government committing \$10 million to finalise planning. As part of this planning, we need to consider what would happen to the old Nowra Bridge once the new bridge opens.

We want to know what the old Nowra Bridge means to you, if you have ideas on what it could be used for if it's retained and how it could be remembered if it's removed.

There are a number of ways you can have your say and we will be taking feedback and submissions until **Friday 19 December 2014**.



Why do we need a new bridge?

During the early planning, the project team identified some key issues with the Princes Highway crossing of the Shoalhaven River at Nowra. It became clear that planning should focus on a new bridge that could address these issues. Some key issues are:

1. Increasing maintenance difficulties with the old Nowra Bridge
2. Increasing congestion issues in peak times from local traffic
3. Some large and heavy trucks cannot use the old Nowra Bridge
4. High risk of damage and closure of the old Nowra Bridge from an impact by an over height vehicle
5. Increased demand and future traffic growth.

What is the future of the old Nowra Bridge?

No decision on the future of the old Nowra Bridge has been made and we are looking to have a proposal ready in the first half of next year. To do this we need to look at the heritage value of the bridge and our responsibilities to conserve it, community input and ideas, and the cost and feasibility of potential outcomes.

Possible outcomes for the old Nowra Bridge could be:

- **Retaining it**

This would see the old Nowra Bridge repaired and maintained. It could be refitted for a variety of different uses. Once the old Nowra Bridge is repaired it would be continually maintained for ongoing use.

- **Relocating it (whole or in parts)**

This would see the old Nowra Bridge removed and relocated to preserve the history of the bridge. Relocation would occur after the new bridge is built and there may be some maintenance work needed until this happened.

- **Removing it**

This would see the old Nowra Bridge removed completely and would only be considered if no other feasible solution can be found. Removal may occur after the new bridge is built and there may be some maintenance work needed until this happened.

Potential costs for retaining or removing the old Nowra Bridge

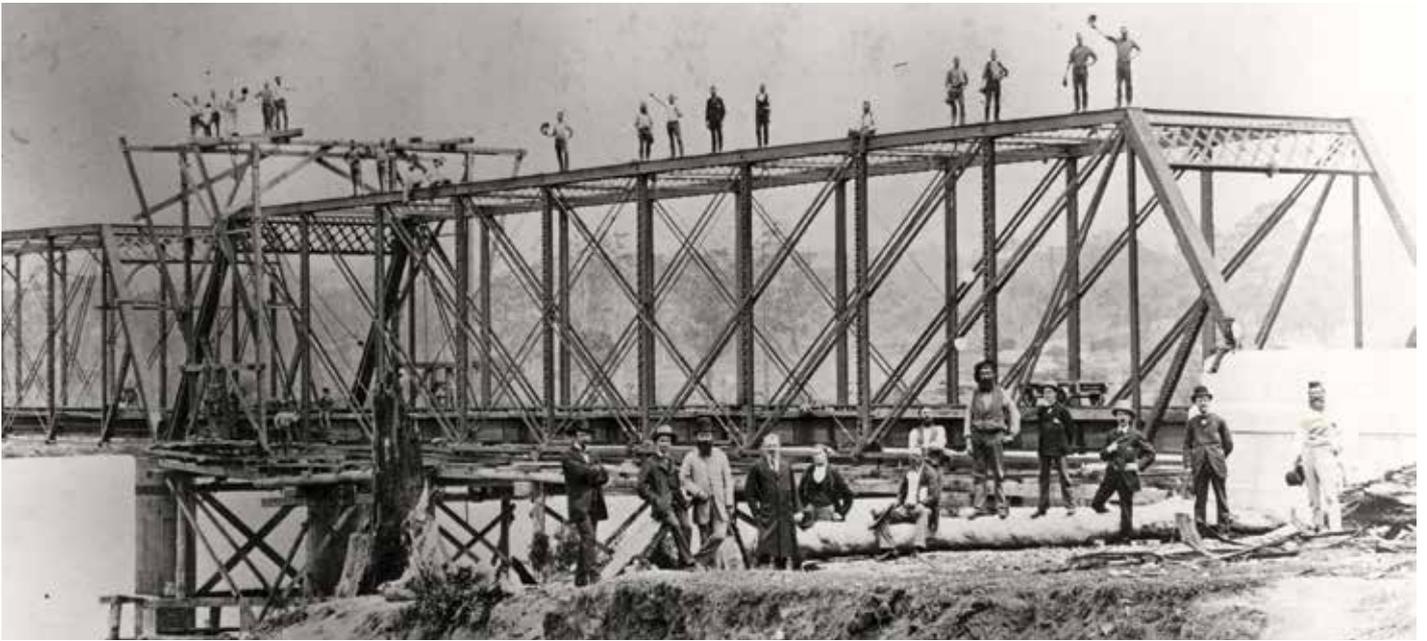
The costs outlined below are early planning estimates that need further investigation. There is a large range of costs for each outcome as there are a number of variables that are still unknown.

KEY

 = included in cost estimate.

 = work subject to further investigation - not included in cost estimate.

Retain	Relocate / Remove
Could cost between \$15–\$25 million	Could cost between \$10–\$20 million
Pier strengthening 	Pier strengthening 
Investigate pin joints 	Investigate pin joints 
Fix damage from heavy vehicle impacts 	Remove 
Remove corrosion and check condition of bearings and bottom chords 	
Repainting 	
Strengthening of remaining piers – if needed 	Relocate and re-use 
Replace pin joints – if needed 	
Replace bridge deck – if needed 	
Additional costs	
Annual maintenance – around \$15 million over 50 years	Nil – assuming there is no ongoing maintenance cost after the bridge is removed and/or relocated and re-used.



The old Nowra Bridge during its construction, around 1880.

Historical significance of the old Nowra Bridge

The old Nowra Bridge is 133 years old.

Completed in 1881 it was designed by the renowned American Engineer C Shaler Smith. Its unique design is a rare example of a pin-jointed 'Whipple' truss bridge. It is the only 'Whipple' truss bridge used for road traffic in Australia and is the only bridge of its type still in use in NSW. The Sadliers Crossing Railway Bridge in Queensland is only other 'Whipple' truss bridge still in operation in Australia.

At the time of its construction it was the largest bridge project in NSW and remained the largest until 1889 when the Hawkesbury River Bridge was completed.



The old Nowra Bridge during its construction, around 1880.

Heritage registers

The old Nowra Bridge is listed on a number of different heritage registers as having both local and state significance. It is listed on the Roads and Maritime Services Section 170 Heritage and Conservation Register.

As part of this register it is listed as having state significance under each of the seven criteria outlined in the NSW Heritage Manual: Assessing Heritage Significance, NSW Heritage office (2001).

- Historical Significance
- Aesthetic / Technical Significance
- Social Significance
- Research Significance
- Rarity
- Representative of its type
- Integrity / Intactness.

Roads and Maritime has a responsibility to conserve the bridge for continued use in its existing location. If this is not feasible re-use would be investigated before removal would be considered.

We would need to notify the Heritage Council of any significant change to the structure, including changes to its use or its removal.



The old Nowra Bridge with trusses completed, around 1880.

What does the old Nowra Bridge mean to you?

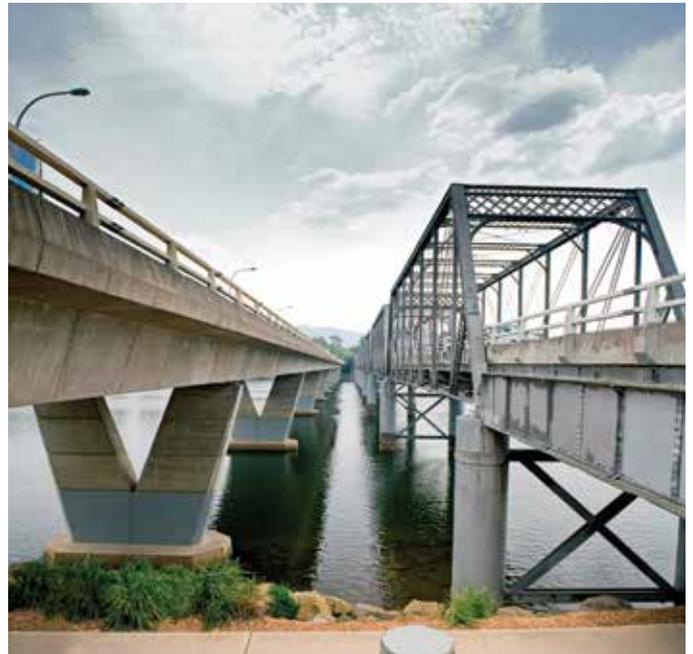
The old Nowra Bridge is 133 years old. However, we understand that its importance may not be limited to just its historical value and we want to hear from you.

Community input will be an important part of any proposal and we would like to know what the bridge and its setting on the Shoalhaven River really means to you.

We have developed an online survey that will help us understand your thoughts about the bridge. You can access the survey on the project website, on our Facebook page or using your smartphone scan the QR code below.



Find us on facebook at facebook.com/PrincesHighwayUpgrade
QR code smart phone scan.
Learn more about the Nowra Bridge Project at:
rms.nsw.gov.au/nowrabridge



Come see us in October and November

Come talk to us at our information displays:

Saturday 25 and Sunday 26 October
Shoalhaven River Festival

Wednesday 12 November
North Nowra Community Centre, 5pm to 7.30pm

Saturday 22 November
Nowra School of Arts, 10am to 1pm



Next Steps

During October and November the project team will be talking to the community about the old Nowra Bridge.

No decision has been made and we aim to have a proposal ready by the first half of 2015. To do this we will need to consider:

- The heritage value of the old Nowra Bridge and our responsibilities to conserve it
- Ideas, feedback and submissions collected
- Community value of the old Nowra Bridge
- Cost and feasibility of the various options.

Contact us

 rms.nsw.gov.au/nowrabridge

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Roads and Maritime Services

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