

NOWRA BRIDGE PROJECT

Consultation summary

MAY 2015

Contents

1. Introduction and background.....	3
1.1 About the project.....	3
1.2 Past community consultation	3
1.3 Project status	4
1.4 About this Consultation Summary	6
2. Future of the old Nowra Bridge	7
2.1 Possible outcomes.....	7
2.2 Potential costs for the possible outcomes	7
2.3 Proposal for the future of the old Nowra Bridge.....	8
3. Communication and consultation for the future of the old Nowra Bridge	9
3.1 Communication activities	9
3.2 Consultation activities	11
3.2.1 Community information sessions.....	11
3.2.2 Community event stands and information kiosks.....	11
3.2.3 Online survey	12
4. Community and stakeholder feedback	13
4.1 Conversations at events and information kiosks	13
4.2 Agency and interest group submissions.....	14
4.3 Survey responses and individual submissions	16
4.3.1 Retain	16
4.3.1.1 <i>Reasons why the old Nowra Bridge should be retained.....</i>	16
4.3.1.2 <i>Suggestions for how the old Nowra Bridge could be used if retained:</i>	18
4.3.2 Remove	20
4.3.2.1 <i>Reasons why the old Nowra Bridge should be removed.....</i>	20
4.3.2.2 <i>Suggestions for how the old Nowra Bridge can be remembered if removed.....</i>	21
4.3.3 Relocate.....	23
4.3.3.1 <i>Reasons why the old Nowra Bridge should be relocated.....</i>	23
4.3.3.2 <i>Suggestions for how the old Nowra Bridge could be re-used if relocated</i>	24
5. Next steps.....	26
Appendix A – Summary of responses and ideas	27

1. Introduction and background

1.1 About the project

The Nowra Bridge project is being developed to improve conditions on the Princes Highway over the Shoalhaven River in Nowra.

The NSW State Government has invested \$1.6 million in the project with the Federal Government committing \$10 million to complete planning.

During early investigations, Roads and Maritime Services identified some key issues with the river crossing:

- Increasing maintenance difficulties with the old Nowra Bridge
- Increasing congestion issues in peak times from local traffic
- Some large and heavy trucks cannot use the old Nowra Bridge
- Risk of closure of the old Nowra Bridge due to damage caused by an over height vehicle
- Increased demand from future traffic growth.

During early planning it became clear that the project should focus on a new bridge that could address these key issues.

As well as a new bridge, the project will look at reducing congestion on the Princes Highway at the intersections of Illaroo Road, Bolong Road and Bridge Road / Pleasant Way.

We will also need to consider what should happen to the old Nowra Bridge once the new bridge is built. No decision has been made.

1.2 Past community consultation

We consider consultation with the community an important part of project planning. Our aim is keep the community well informed and invite feedback throughout the project.

We spoke with the community and stakeholders in late 2013 to introduce the project and seek feedback on potential locations for a new bridge. This information was used to help select and assess five site options for the preferred location.

In June 2014, we discussed the recommended location (see Figure 1.2) for the new bridge with the community and asked for any issues that should be considered during the next stage of project development.

We received a largely positive response from the community about the recommended option and also noted that there was a strong expectation from the community that the project should address traffic issues at the Bolong Road, Illaroo Road and Bridge Road / Pleasant Way intersections.

1.3 Project status

In July 2014, the NSW Minister for Roads and Freight announced the preferred location for a new bridge.

Now that the preferred location has been identified (see Figure 1.2), we have started work on concept designs for a new bridge, and has started investigations into the intersections at Bolong Road, Illaroo Road and Bridge Road / Pleasant Way.

Consideration is being given to what should happen to the old Nowra Bridge once a new bridge is built. Consultation was carried out in late 2014 to talk to the community about the possible outcomes. Consultation outcomes are one input to reaching a decision on the future of the Nowra Bridge.

Roads and Maritime is planning to make a recommendation on the future of the old Nowra Bridge in the middle of 2015.

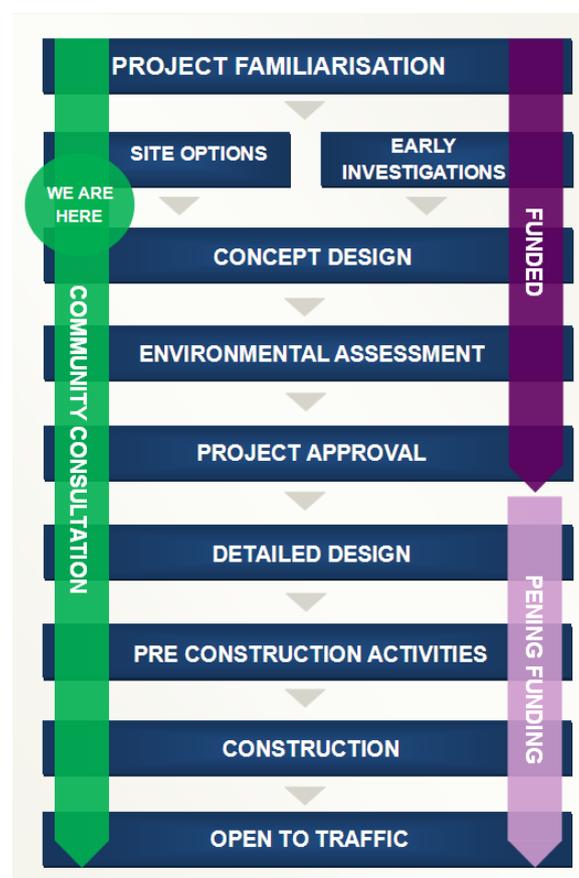


Figure 1.1 – Planning and delivery process



Figure 1.2 – Preferred site option for a new bridge in Nowra

1.4 About this Consultation Summary

This *Consultation Summary* outlines the communication and consultation activities carried out in late 2014 around the future of the old Nowra Bridge. It also provides a summary of the comments and ideas received from stakeholders and the community during this period.

The feedback has been grouped into categories and sub-categories and is presented in Chapter 4 with a more extensive summary in Appendix A.

2. Future of the old Nowra Bridge

The old Nowra Bridge was completed in 1881 and is a rare example of a pin-jointed 'Whipple' truss bridge. It is listed on a number of different heritage registers as having both local and state significance including the *Roads and Maritime Services Section 170 Heritage and Conservation Register*.

As part of this listing, Roads and Maritime has a responsibility, where feasible, 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.

During 2013 a structural inspection and load assessment on the old Nowra Bridge occurred. This identified a number of additional maintenance and rehabilitation activities for the bridge.

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

2.1 Possible outcomes

The Nowra Bridge project is planning for a new bridge to carry highway traffic over the Shoalhaven River in Nowra. Once open, highway traffic would be transferred off the old Nowra Bridge. There are three possible outcomes for the old Nowra Bridge once this happens.

1. Retain 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.

2. Relocate it (whole or in parts)

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

3. Remove it

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

2.2 Potential costs for the possible outcomes

Early estimates for the potential costs of maintenance activities, as well as possible costs if the old Nowra Bridge was to be relocated or removed have been completed.

Wherever possible, historical maintenance and removal costs were used in partnership with industry expertise to reach the cost ranges for the different outcomes.

These costs (see figure 2.1) are early planning *estimates* and will be refined after further investigation. There is currently a large range of costs for each outcome as there are a number of variables that are still unknown.

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	✓		
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.	

KEY

✓ = required maintenance included in estimated costs. ~ = work subject to further investigation - not included in cost estimate.

Figure 2.1 – Estimated costs for the possible outcomes for the old Nowra Bridge

2.3 Proposal for the future of the old Nowra Bridge

To help form a proposal for the future of the old Nowra Bridge, the following will be considered:

- The heritage value of the bridge and our responsibilities to conserve it
- Community input and ideas
- Community value of the bridge
- Cost and feasibility of the various future outcomes

As part of these considerations, we have spoken to and gathered feedback from the Nowra community and other stakeholders.

3. Communication and consultation for the future of the old Nowra Bridge

During late 2014 we spoke to the community about the future of the old Nowra Bridge. Feedback was invited from 15 October 2014 until 19 December 2014.

The aims of the community and stakeholder consultation were to:

1. Inform the community and stakeholders of relevant detailed information to allow for informed submissions and feedback
2. Provide a range of opportunities and avenues for the community and stakeholders to provide feedback
3. Help gain a better understanding if, and why, the old Nowra Bridge is/is not important to community and stakeholders
4. Give the community and stakeholders an opportunity to provide ideas for the future use of the old Nowra Bridge
5. To be open and transparent on how this feedback will be used in the decision making process.

3.1 Communication activities

A range of communications materials were developed to enable the community and stakeholders to give informed feedback. This included providing information on the structural condition and heritage significance of the old Nowra Bridge, the possible outcomes being considered and the likely cost implications for each.

To communicate information and encourage feedback the following communication activities were carried out:

- Media announcements made by the Federal Member for Gilmore, the NSW State Member for Kiama and NSW State Member for South Coast
 - 20 October 2014
 - 16 December 2014
- Flyers (see Figure 3.1) sent to 14,000 households on 17 October 2014
- Emails to around 400 registered stakeholders
 - 15 October 2014
 - 1 December 2014
- Update to the project website rms.nsw.gov.au/nowrabridge
- Information materials available on the website, at information sessions, information stands, Shoalhaven River Festival event stand, Shoalhaven Library and local MP offices
- 11 Facebook posts throughout October, November and December 2014
- Six advertisements placed in the South Coast Register and the Nowra News

Nowra Bridge Project



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

Over the next few months we will be considering what will happen to the old Nowra Bridge once this occurs and would like to hear from you.

During October and November we will be at the following locations to talk with the community.

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



We understand that this is an important decision and will be taking feedback and formal submissions until **Friday 19 December 2014**.

For more information about the options and to participate in an online survey, please visit the project website rms.nsw.gov.au/nowrabridge



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

1 800 331 713 (free call)

@ NowraBridgeProject@rms.nsw.gov.au

Nowra Bridge Project, PO Box 477 Wollongong NSW 2520

Figure 3.1 - Flyer

3.2 Consultation activities

To provide a range of opportunities for the community and stakeholders to talk with and provide feedback to the project team, a number of consultation activities were carried out.

3.2.1 Community information sessions

Two community information display sessions were held during the consultation period.

- Wednesday 12 November at the North Nowra Community Centre from 5pm to 7.30pm
- Saturday 22 November at the Nowra School of Arts from 10am to 1pm

A variety of information was displayed at these events with Roads and Maritime specialists available to talk to attendees. Attendees were encouraged to provide feedback via the on-line survey (available at the session) or to send in individual submissions.

A total of 55 people attended these sessions.



Figure 3.2 – Community members talking with Roads and Maritime at the North Nowra Community Centre

3.2.2 Community event stands and information kiosks

An event information stand was set up at the Shoalhaven River Festival on Saturday 25 and Sunday 26 October 2014. A variety of information was displayed and Roads and Maritime specialists were available on the day to talk to attendees.

Conversations were held with around 1,500 people over the two days of the festival.

We also ran a number of information kiosks in Stockland Nowra. These kiosks were staffed by members of the project team who spoke to the community about the project and encouraged people to have their say.

- Tuesday 4 November 2014
- Thursday 6 November 2014
- Saturday 8 November 2014
- Tuesday 11 November 2014
- Friday 14 November 2014

We had conversations with around 300 people at these sessions.



Figure 3.3 – Nowra Bridge project event information stand at the Shoalhaven River Festival

3.2.3 Online survey

To capture feedback, we developed a short online survey on the potential outcomes of the old Nowra Bridge (see Figure 3.4).

The survey was available for the duration of the consultation period on the project website and on the Roads and Maritime Princes Highway Facebook page. Ipads were available at all community sessions and information kiosks to access the survey. The survey was promoted on all communication materials and media releases.

The survey had a mixture of qualitative and quantitative questions. There were three 'main' questions and three 'sub' questions. The 'sub' questions asked were based on answers given to the preceding 'main' question.

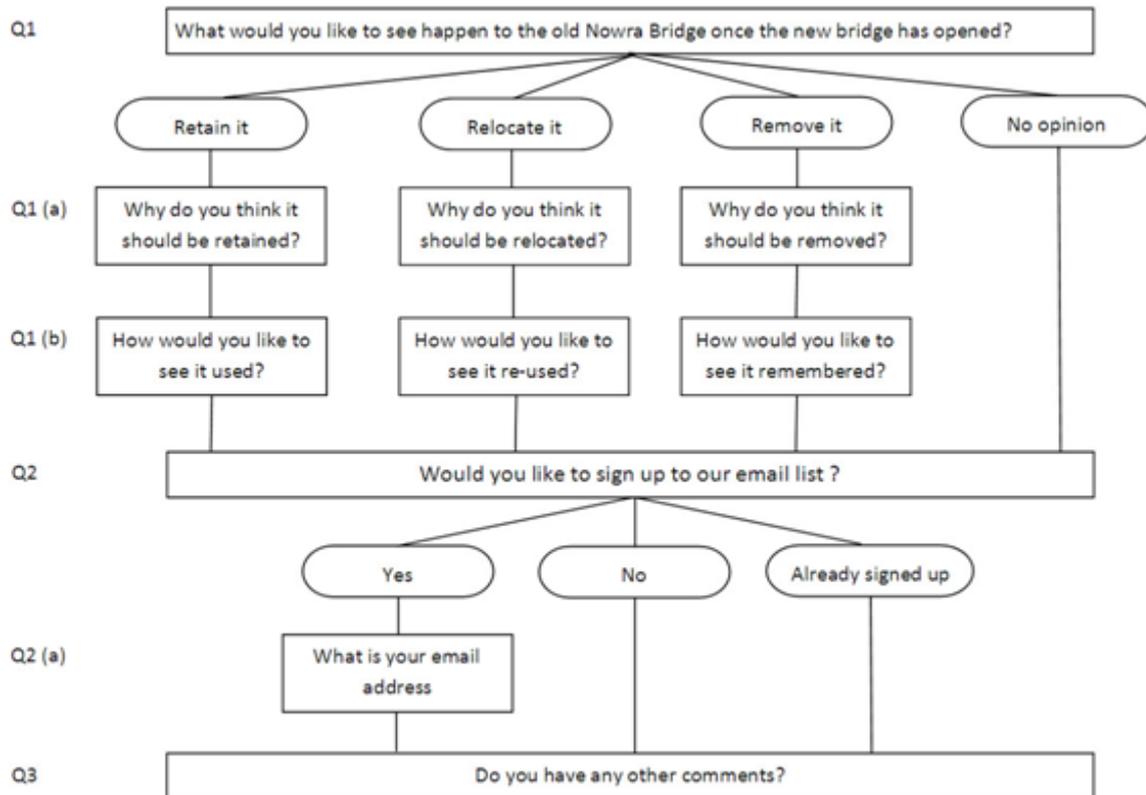


Figure 3.4 – Online survey questions

4. Community and stakeholder feedback

As part of the consultation activities we:

- Spoke to over 1,850 people
- Received 38 email or mailed submissions
- Received around 676 online survey submissions
- Received six suggestions on Facebook

4.1 Conversations at events and information kiosks

Over the course of the consultation period we had conversations with around 1,850 people at a range of different events.

Through these conversations people had the opportunity to talk with us about the community value of the bridge and the costs involved for the different options. Community members were encouraged to offer an opinion on:

- How they felt about the bridge
- Why they felt this
- What they thought should happen to the bridge in the future
- If they had any ideas for its future use.

Though there was support for all options, most people who spoke with us thought the bridge should be retained in some form. Those with strong connections to the historical significance of the bridge thought the bridge should be retained and conserved in its current location. Many who felt a personal connection with the bridge were more open to options that involved relocation in addition to use in its current location.

Popular suggestions for the future use of the bridge included a shared path / cycleway, markets, pop-up cafes, or other entertainment uses such as festivals or fun runs. Other transport related suggestions included using the old bridge for light traffic, incident management or seasonal peak holiday traffic, or for a future rail extension across the Shoalhaven River into Nowra.

There was a small proportion of the community that wanted to see the bridge removed completely. There were also some people who initially supported retention of the bridge who adjusted their position once they became aware of the possible maintenance costs of the different options.

There were members of the community who stated a preference that the money that might be spent maintaining the old bridge would be better spent on additional Princes Highway or local road upgrades, or other infrastructure within the area.

4.2 Agency and interest group submissions

As part of the consultation, Roads and Maritime received written submissions from the following agencies and interest groups:

- National Trust of Australia
- Engineers Australia
- NSW Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH)
- Shoalhaven Historical Society

All of these agencies referred to the historic significance of the old Nowra Bride and voiced their opposition to any options that would see the old Nowra Bridge demolished or relocated. All also outlined the importance of the bridge to be kept in use.

The Engineers Australia submission stated that every effort should be made to conserve the bridge for purposes such as a local traffic crossing or other re-use options. The submission acknowledged there may costs involved in the retention of the old Nowra Bridge, but emphasised that cost should not decide its future. The submission stated

that a price cannot be placed on heritage and as a custodian of our major infrastructure; Government has an obligation to conserve its heritage.

The National Trust of Australia submission stated that the old Nowra Bridge is highly significant and should be retained for future generations. The submission said the old Nowra Bridge had recently been listed on the National Trust Register in September 2014 and approved by the board in October 2014. The submission supported a range of future uses for the old Nowra Bridge and stressed the importance of the bridge not to be made functionally redundant. It emphasised a responsibility of Roads and Maritime to manage heritage assets and stated that it is not acceptable to transfer the care and control of the bridge to any organisation that does not have the means to properly maintain it. The submission supported the preferred location of the new bridge (immediately to the west of the concrete bridge) as it provides flexibility and has the least impact on the fabric and context of the old Nowra bridge.

The Heritage Division of OEH confirmed that the old Nowra Bridge is not currently listed on the State Heritage Register but indicated the bridge may be worthy of inclusion and invited Roads and Maritime into a discussion about the possibility of listing the bridge on the State Heritage Register. The submission supported the retention of the bridge in its current location and opposed the demolition or relocation of the bridge. The submission also supported the reuse of the bridge, whether it continues to be a road bridge or is adapted for another purpose.

The Shoalhaven Historical Society submission agreed with the high historic significance and heritage values of the old Nowra Bridge stated in the Roads and Maritime *Nowra Bridge Project Site Options Development Report*. The submission identified the old Nowra bridge as not only of heritage significance but an important Nowra icon. The submission detailed the demand for heritage and cultural tourism in NSW and identified an area for economic growth within this sector in the Shoalhaven area. It stated the closure of the old Nowra Bridge to traffic presented a unique opportunity for the planning and development of a sustainable Heritage and Cultural precinct for the Shoalhaven. The submission supported any endeavour that would enable a sustainable and vibrant future for the bridge in its current location, fully intact, undamaged and with its unique profile preserved. It provided a list of possible uses as a starting point.

The Shoalhaven Historical Society submission further identified the State Government, Shoalhaven City Council and the Shoalhaven community as having important roles and obligations regarding the old Nowra Bridge's future. With reference to the NSW Heritage Asset Management Guidelines and the *Heritage Act 1977* the submission referred to the State Government as a custodian of state significant items who must follow due process in all dealings concerning the old Nowra Bridge. The submission indicated that any decision to demolish the bridge would be as the last resort after following due process.

4.3 Survey responses and individual submissions

As part of this consultation, Roads and Maritime received 38 individual submissions, 676 online survey responses and six Facebook suggestions.

These submissions captured what people thought should happen to the old Nowra Bridge and why, as well as how it could be used or remembered in the future.

Of the 720 submissions received:

- 540 indicated the old Nowra Bridge should be retained.
- 80 indicated the old Nowra Bridge should be removed.
- 69 indicated the old Nowra Bridge should be relocated.
- 31 indicated they had no opinion either way.

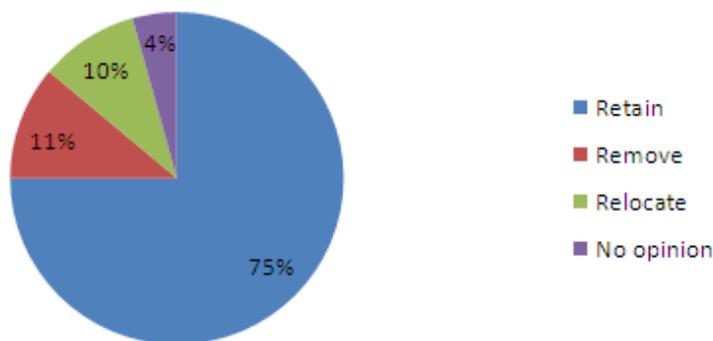


Figure 4.1 – Breakdown of what respondents thought should happen to the old Nowra Bridge

4.3.1 Retain

4.3.1.1 Reasons why the old Nowra Bridge should be retained

Of the 540 submissions for retention, 475 people gave a reason why. The reasons can be grouped into six main themes as shown below, although some submissions dealt with reasons in more than one theme. Figure 4.2 shows the percentage of submissions mentioning each theme.

See Appendix A for a summary list of responses.

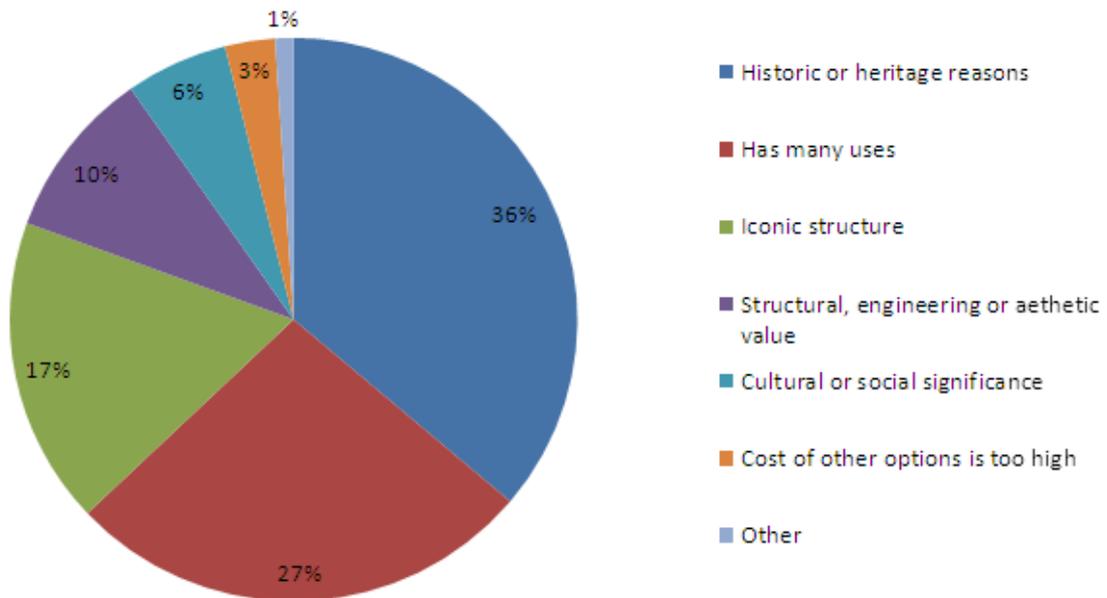


Figure 4.2 – Breakdown of why respondents thought the old Nowra Bridge should be retained

For historic or heritage reasons

These responses outlined the historic and heritage value of the old Nowra Bridge. Some pointed out that it is one of the last bridges of its kind still in use in NSW, while others described its place in the history of the area. A large number of responses mentioned that many of Nowra’s heritage items have been lost over the years and it is important that heritage items like the old bridge are maintained for future generations.

It is still viable and has many uses

These responses maintained the old Nowra Bridge is still in good condition and should be re-used. Many responses listed these uses which are captured better in section 4.3.1.2 and in Appendix A. Some responses outlined a possible need for the bridge to carry traffic in the future as local and highway traffic grows.

It is an iconic structure for Nowra

These responses described the old Nowra Bridge as a local icon or landmark. Some talked about it as a gateway to the south coast that gives the town its sense of place.

It has structural, engineering and aesthetic value

These responses talked about the features of the old Nowra Bridge including its rare and unique design.

Some respondents thought it is a good example of our engineering past, while others described its favourable visual appeal and beauty.

It has cultural or social significance

These responses outlined the importance of the old Nowra Bridge to individuals and residents of Nowra. Some noted that there are many memories and stories associated with it.

The cost of removal and relocation is too high

These respondents thought that the cost for removal and relocation of the old Nowra Bridge was either too much, that it would be cheaper to maintain than replace it or that the money from the removal could be better spent elsewhere.

Other comments around why it should be retained

- So the memorial on the northern bank is not disturbed
- To increase safety for pedestrian and cyclists
- Because it should be looked after just like our national parks are
- Agree with the Roads and Maritime *Site Options Report's* assessment of the significance of the old bridge
- Who will pay for this?

4.3.1.2 Suggestions for how the old Nowra Bridge could be used if retained:

Of the 540 submissions for retention, 470 gave suggestions as to how the old Nowra Bridge should be used. Three main categories emerged although some submissions dealt with ideas in more than one category. Figure 4.3 shows the percentage of submissions mentioning each category.

We received a submission from the year 3 class of the Nowra Christian School. Students submitted ideas for the future use of the old Nowra Bridge and assumed that the bridge would be retained. For the purposes of this summary we have counted this as one submission with a number of different ideas.

See Appendix A for a summary list of responses.

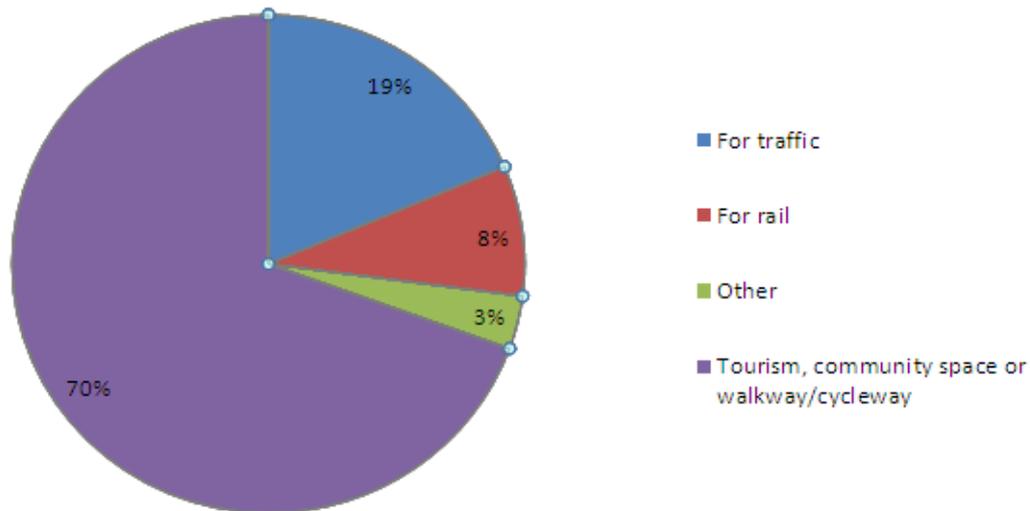


Figure 4.3 – Breakdown of how respondents thought the old Nowra Bridge should be used if retained

Tourism /community space or a cycleway / walkway

These responses mainly dealt with ideas around the old Nowra Bridge providing more community and public facilities around the foreshore area.

Many responses outlined a unique opportunity to revitalise Nowra and open up the foreshore for tourists and local residents. Popular ideas to transform Nowra into a destination rather than a ‘pit stop’ included market stalls, a community garden or linear park, a unique event space and shops such as tourist information centres, cafes and restaurants. Some responses suggested leasing arrangements in an attempt to regain some of the costs of the on-going maintenance.

Responses also talked about the old Nowra Bridge providing an opportunity to address the growing need for safer pedestrian and cycling access and how it could be used to link walking tracks in the area.

Use it for traffic

These responses talked about using the old Nowra Bridge to carry traffic either as it is now or for selected traffic such as emergency vehicles or local traffic movements.

Some responses outlined the need for more lanes on the Princes Highway crossing of the Shoalhaven River. Suggestions included using it as either emergency relief or as an overflow bridge for peak holiday periods.

Use it to carry trains

These responses suggested that the old Nowra Bridge could carry either a railway or light railway across the Shoalhaven River in its current location.

Other ideas for the future use if retained

- As a bridge (not specific)

- Unsure
- Anything at all as long as it's not pulled down
- Include a combined community theatre/public hall at either end of the bridge
- Used it as a viewing platform for a water park on Pig Island

4.3.2 Remove

4.3.2.1 Reasons why the old Nowra Bridge should be removed

Of the 80 submissions for removal, 70 gave a reason why. These reasons can be grouped into four main themes as shown below, although some submissions dealt with reasons in more than one theme. Figure 4.4 shows the percentage of submissions mentioning each theme.

See Appendix A for a summary list of responses.

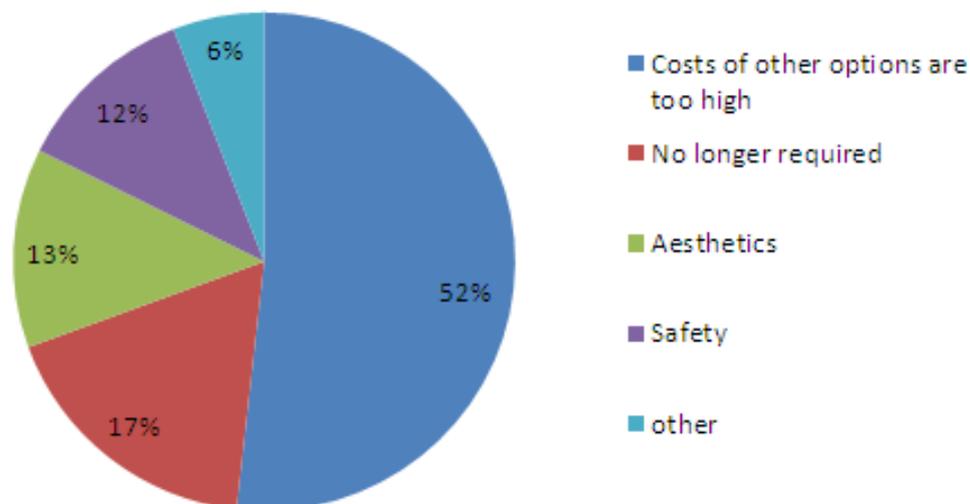


Figure 4.4 – Breakdown of why respondents thought the old Nowra Bridge should be removed

Cost of maintenance and refurbishment is too high

These responses talked mostly about the high cost to refurbish the old Nowra Bridge and about the need and cost for on-going maintenance. Responses argued costs would have to be met by ratepayers or taxpayers and could be better spent elsewhere. Some suggested that the costs outweighed potential benefits.

Not required after constructions of new bridge

These responses pointed out that once the new bridge is built there would be no practical need for the old Nowra Bridge. This was mainly because the new bridge and the existing concrete bridge would be able to cater for traffic as well as cyclists and pedestrians. Some said that the old Nowra Bridge had past its use by date and we need to move on.

Aesthetics

Most of these responses described the removal of the old Nowra Bridge as an opportunity to modernise or create an updated foreshore area. They spoke about three bridges in the one spot being too many and that the old Nowra Bridge would eventually become an eyesore.

Some respondents noted that the old Nowra bridge was ugly.

Safety

These responses spoke about the old Nowra Bridge becoming unsafe as it ages either with or without the proper maintenance. Some said that safety standards have changed and it does not meet these new standards while others pointed out the narrow lanes and height restrictions as a safety concern now.

Other reasons why the old Nowra Bridge should be removed

- To give the natural environment an opportunity to recover
- Scrap it / recycle it for money
- To avoid continued pollution into the river
- If it's not going to be used for rail – get rid of it

4.3.2.2 Suggestions for how the old Nowra Bridge can be remembered if removed

Of the 80 submissions for removal, 62 gave suggestions as to how the old Nowra Bridge should be remembered. Five main categories emerged although some submissions dealt with ideas in more than one category. Figure 4.5 shows the percentage of submissions mentioning each category.

See Appendix A for a summary list of responses.

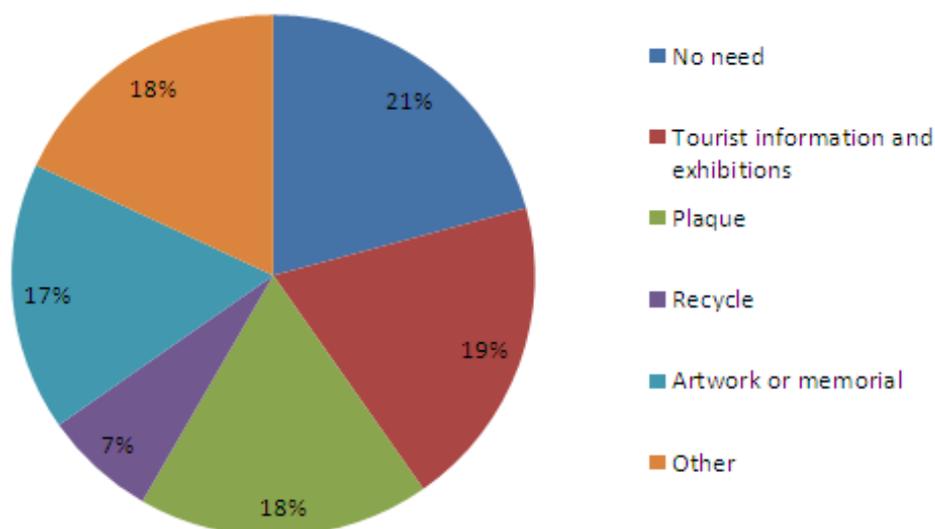


Figure 4.5 – Breakdown of how respondents thought the old Nowra Bridge should be remembered if removed

No need

These responses noted that there was no need to remember the old Nowra Bridge.

Tourist information and exhibitions

These responses described the need to remember the old Nowra Bridge with some sort of exhibition in a museum or tourist information display.

Plaque

These responses thought a plaque either on the new bridge or in a nearby park would be suitable.

Artwork / model / memorial

Most of these responses outlined the idea of using parts of the old Nowra Bridge to create a variety of different of artwork pieces or memorial signage in the area.

The creation of a model in a nearby park or garden was also mentioned.

Recycle

These responses talked about either recycling the metal by ‘scrapping it’ or melting the metal down to make something useful such as commemorative keepsakes to sell to tourists.

Other ideas included:

- Not sure
- Name a park after it
- Relocate it

4.3.3 Relocate

4.3.3.1 Reasons why the old Nowra Bridge should be relocated

Of the 69 submissions for relocation 52 gave a reason why. The reasons can be grouped into seven main themes as shown below. Some submissions dealt with reasons in more than one theme. Figure 4.6 shows the percentage of submissions mentioning each theme.

See Appendix A for a summary list of responses.

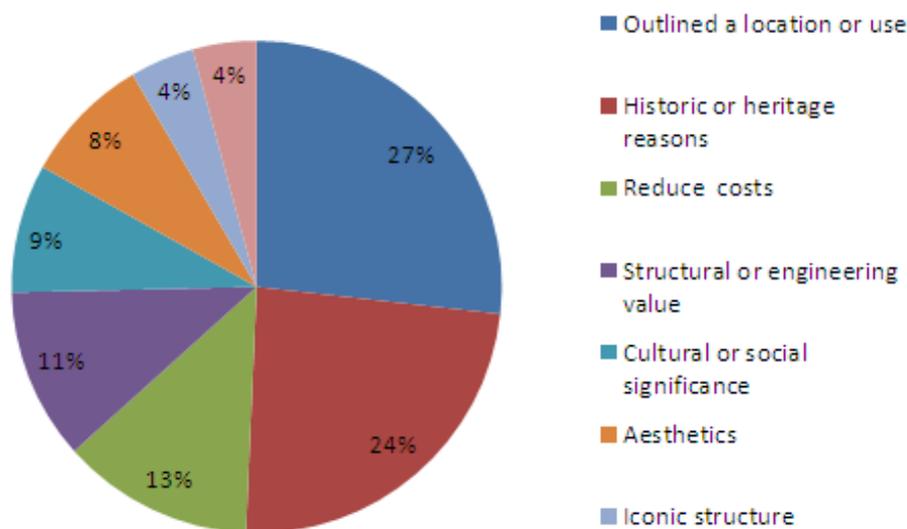


Figure 4.6 – Why respondents thought the old Nowra Bridge should be relocated

Outlined where and how it could be used

These responses described where the old Nowra Bridge could be relocated to or how it could be re-used. This is captured in Section 4.3.3.2 and Appendix A.

For historic or heritage reasons

These responses outlined the historic value of the old Nowra Bridge and that relocating it would allow part of Nowra's history to be kept. Some mentioned that it has outlived its current use but still should be remembered or re-used in a more appropriate way.

To reduce the cost of refurbishment and on-going maintenance

These responses thought that the cost for refurbishment and on-going maintenance would be reduced by relocating the old Nowra Bridge. Some also mentioned that the money from the on-going maintenance could be better spent elsewhere.

It has structural and engineering significance

These responses talked about the features of the old Nowra Bridge including its rare and unique design. Some respondents also thought it is a good example of our engineering

past. Responses indicated that relocating it would still allow it to be kept for future generations.

It has cultural or social significance

These responses outlined the importance of the old Nowra Bridge to individuals and residents of Nowra. Some noted that there are many memories and stories associated with the it and that relocation would still allow it to be kept for future generations.

Aesthetics

Most of these responses described the relocation of the old Nowra Bridge as an opportunity to modernise or create an updated foreshore area. They spoke about three bridges in the one spot being too many and relocating it would improve the views. Some thought it would eventually become an eyesore.

It is an iconic structure for Nowra

These responses described the old Nowra Bridge as a local icon or landmark that should still be located somewhere in the region.

Other reasons why the old Nowra Bridge should be relocated included:

- It shouldn't be scrapped
- Relocation will provide more space for navigation
- It could become a danger if kept where it is

4.3.3.2 Suggestions for how the old Nowra Bridge could be re-used if relocated

Of the 69 submissions for relocation, 55 gave suggestions as to how the old Nowra Bridge could be re-used. Five main categories emerged although some submissions dealt with ideas in more than one category. Figure 4.7 shows the percentage of submissions mentioning each category. See Appendix A for a summary list of responses.

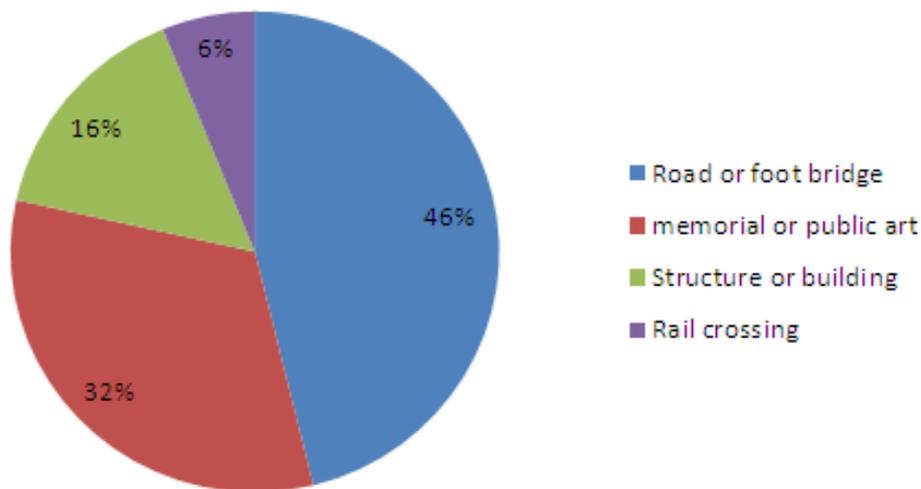


Figure 4.7 – How respondents thought the old Nowra Bridge could be reused if retained

A road or foot bridge

These responses described places where the old Nowra Bridge could be re-located for use as either a footbridge or for light vehicles.

See Appendix A for specific locations identified.

A memorial or public art

Most of these responses talked about using parts of the old Nowra Bridge as public art or memorials in parks surrounding the Shoalhaven River or the council proposed gateway park.

There was also a suggestion about turning some of the pieces of the old Nowra Bridge into floating pontoons further downstream.

A structure or building

These responses talked about using some of the old Nowra Bridge to hold restaurants, bars and coffee shops or tourist information in parks in the area.

A rail crossing

These responses talked about moving the old Nowra Bridge further downstream in line with Bomaderry Station to use for a rail crossing.

5. Next steps

Roads and Maritime is planning to make a recommendation on the future of the old Nowra Bridge by mid-2015.

The community and stakeholder input and ideas collected as part of consultation is one of a number of inputs that will be assessed as part of this decision making process.

Other inputs will include further assessments into the heritage aspects of the old Nowra Bridge and our responsibilities to conserve it, as well as looking more closely at the costs and feasibility of the possible future outcomes.

The community will continue to be kept informed as the project progresses.

Appendix A – Summary of responses and ideas

Reasons why the old Nowra Bridge should be retained

Historic and heritage value	
Historic value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is an important part of Nowra and the Shoalhaven's history.
Heritage value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is listed on the Roads and Maritime Section 170 Heritage and Conservation Register • Agree with the assessment of the old Nowra Bridge's heritage importance stated in the <i>Nowra Bridge project Site Options Development Report</i> • It is important to keep and conserve heritage items for future generations • Too many of Nowra's heritage items have been lost • It is the only bridge of its kind still in use in NSW • It is the only bridge of its kind used for road traffic in Australia • It was designed by the renowned bridge designer C. Shaler Smith.
Still useful	
Still useful	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is still in good condition • It has many uses for a small amount of money.
Listed specific uses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use it as a road • Use it to carry rail • Use it as a walkway or cycleway.
Future need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It would be short sighted to remove it • There will be a need for it to carry local traffic as the population of Nowra grows • There will be a need for it to carry highway traffic as south coast tourism grows.
Iconic feature of Nowra	
Iconic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is iconic • It is an identifiable landmark of the Shoalhaven • It is a symbol of the Shoalhaven • It is featured on postcards and other tourist items • It gives the area its sense of place • It has character • It is the Gateway to the south coast / Nowra.
Structural / engineering and aesthetic value	
Structural significance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is technically significant • It has a unique and rare design.
Engineering significance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be respectful to the original builders • It is a good example of past engineering practice.
Aesthetic value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is unique • It is beautiful • It is aesthetically pleasing.
Cultural / social significance	
Cultural and social significance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It has been a unifying entity from its opening in 1881 when North and South Shoalhaven were bought together economically, politically and

	<p>socially</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is important to people • It has many local memories and stories associated it • It is a part of Nowra and all who live here.
Cost	
Cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is too costly to remove • It is cheaper to maintain than relocate / replace • Money spent to relocate/ remove could be better spent elsewhere • Cost is not a good enough reason to take it down.
Other	
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • So the memorial on the northern bank is not disturbed • To increase safety for pedestrian and cyclists • Because it should be looked after just like our national parks are • Agree with the Roads and Maritime Site Options Report's assessment of the significance of the old Nowra Bridge.

Suggestions for how the old Nowra Bridge could be used if retained

Tourism /community space and cycleway / walkway	
Markets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold daily, weekly or monthly markets <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farmers market • Flower markets • Local produce or craft markets • Hold permanent markets like the Ponte Vecchio in Florence.
Public recreation or community space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Display of historic information and photos • Display of local achievements • Incorporate its use with foreshore activities and surrounding restaurants • Convert it into an outdoor fitness park or recreational area • Build a low jumping platform under the bridge • Build an exercise path • Convert it into a public urban space • Provide fishing platforms • Display local Aboriginal artists to symbolise the link between the Dharawal and Yuin Indigenous peoples.
Community garden / park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide picnic tables, planter boxes and shade • Convert it into a public green space that is unique and distinctive - similar to the Highline in New York • Convert into a linear park or hanging gardens • Turf the centre strip as picnic areas and plant out the arches • Build something similar to the Goods Line in Darling Harbour • Provide a children's playground • Provide a family area like circular quay.
Shared pedestrian walkway and cycleway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use as shared walkway and cycleway • Use as a walkway to link Ben's Walk with the Grotto • Convert it into a public walkway like the Pyrmont Bridge in Sydney • Use it as a cycleway like the Como Railway Bridge • Convert it into an urban renewal garden walk linking the already devised Nowra districts • Use it to link Nowra and Bomaderry for cycling, running, racing and walking.
Café / restaurant / bars / toilets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set up pop up cafes and restaurants • Provide re-locatable toilet blocks • Set up permanent cafes, bars and restaurants • Set up a food precinct similar to Southbank Brisbane

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate a Nowra Bridge Library.
Used as a special event space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use as a venue for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weddings • Sculpture and art exhibitions • Dragon Boat Regattas • Vintage car shows • Long table lunches • Fundraising events • Sporting events • Breakfast on the bridge • Christmas spectacular • Spring Festival • Private functions • Open air music festivals / concerts • Pet shows • Use as a platform for Lighting, fireworks and laser displays and shows • Use as part of the Shoalhaven River Festival • Use as a training location for emergency services.
Generate money to cover maintenance costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repurpose the structure from vehicular usage to a commercial and public space • Set up licences for small mobile food vendors or restaurants • Hire it out for community and special events to fund on-going maintenance • Generate enough money to maintain the bridge through tourism, events, accommodation and attract more business to the foreshore for example abseiling into the water, adventure sports, bridge climb • There is an opportunity to enhance cultural and heritage tourism in the area.
Enhance and promote the bridge as a tourist attraction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote it as a tourist attraction and social tourist hub • Convert it into a jetty to bring in much needed business tourism • Paint it different colours for tourists – such as red to match the entertainment centre or in aboriginal colours • Convert it into a museum outlining the history of the bridge, Nowra and the Navy • Promote it as a sightseeing or viewing platform • Create a platform for viewing underneath the bridge • Hold bridge climbs • Create a public recreation space with park area, accommodation and some restaurants and shops to attract people to the area or encourage them to stop if they're driving through • Build a zoo on it • Build a theme park on it

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build a water park on it • Include a combined community theatre/public hall at either end of the bridge.
Use the bridge for traffic	
Continue to use the bridge for all traffic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leave it as is • Keep the extra lanes for future growth.
Use the bridge for selected traffic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use it for local traffic only • Use it to separate highway and local traffic • Use it for the left turn into Terara and visitors centre • Keep it available for emergency vehicles only • Keep it available for emergency relief if one of the other bridges is unavailable • Keep it available as overflow lanes for holiday peaks.
Use to carry trains	
Use as a rail bridge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use it to extend the rail line into Nowra • Use it to extend the rail line to connect Nowra and the South Coast into Victoria / Melbourne.
Use as a light rail bridge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construct a light rail on it to connect Bomaderry station to Nowra CBD, H.M.A.S Albatross and H.M.A.S Creswell • Construct a tramline on it to connect Bomaderry train station and Stockland Nowra • Construct a light rail on it to connect Bomaderry train station and Greenwell Point.
Other	
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use it as a bridge (not specific) • Unsure • Anything at all as long as it's not pulled down • Used it as a viewing platform for a water park on Pig Island. Pig Island could be developed into a water park (similar to one in Lima, Peru) with an interactive area where people get wet and a night-time holographic show. Being the only water park in Australia would draw tourists who visit Sydney and Canberra to this area.

Reasons why the old Nowra Bridge should be removed

Cost	
Costly to keep	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The cost of on-going maintenance is too high • The cost to refurbish it is too high.
Money saved from long term maintenance would be better spent elsewhere	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Money would be better spent: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On a Nowra bypass • On fixing up intersections on the Princes Highway through Nowra • On the North Nowra Link Road (west Cambewarra Road option) • On local roads • On fixing up the foreshore.
The community will end up paying for this	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This cost will have to be met by ratepayers • This cost will have to be met by taxpayers.
No longer required	
No longer required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It will not be needed once there is a new bridge • We don't need a bridge just for pedestrians (the other two bridges will provide this) • It's past its use by date.
Aesthetics	
Improve the look of the river	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Its removal will improve view of the river • It is ugly • Once the new bridge is built there will be too many bridges in the one spot • Its removal will provide an opportunity to establish a modern look for foreshore.
It will deteriorate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It will become an eyesore if not properly maintained.
Safety	
Current safety concerns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is too narrow • It has height restrictions • It is unstable and will fall into the river.
Future safety concerns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If its not maintained properly it will become dangerous • Safety standards have changed we need to update/move on.
Other	
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It has no heritage value • Its removal will give the natural environment an opportunity to recover • It should be scrapped or recycled for money • Its removal will avoid continued pollution into the river • If it is not going to be used for rail, get rid of it.

Suggestions for how the old Nowra Bridge could be remembered if removed

No need	
No need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no need to remember it.
Tourist information and exhibitions	
Museum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a photo exhibition of the construction • Build an 'Old Nowra Bridge' museum • Develop an exhibition at the Nowra Historical Society • Create and maintain video archives.
Display in park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build a tourist information display in a local park • Develop a photo monument in a local park.
Plaque	
Specific locations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Put a plaque on the new bridge • Put a plaque near the location of the old Nowra Bridge • Put a plaque in Harry Sawkins Park.
On the existing old Nowra Bridge plaque	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add the decommission date to the existing plaque.
Artwork / model / memorial	
Artwork	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commission artwork in the centre of the town in its remembrance • Commission artwork using parts of the bridge • Incorporate decorative metal work on the side of the new bridge • Develop a photo / pictorial piece on the new bridge • Commission an artistic interpretation in surrounding parkland • Melt it down and use it in artwork in Nowra.
Model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A model of it should be placed within a nearby garden.
Memorial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create memorial signage using parts of the old bridge • Name a park after it.
Recycle	
Recycle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scrap or melt down the metal and sell it • Melt down the metal use it to make commemorative pieces to sell to tourists.
Other	
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not sure • Relocate it.

Reasons why the old Nowra Bridge should be relocated

Historic value	
Historic value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relocation still allows part of Nowra's history to be kept • It has outlived its use as a bridge but should still be remembered.
Location and use	
Location and use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some submissions identified where it should be moved to (captured in the next section) • Some submissions identified what it should be used for (captured in the next section) • It is an end of an era and would be of better use elsewhere.
Structural and engineering value	
Structural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is technically significant • It has a unique and rare design.
Engineering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has engineering significance • It is a good example of past engineering practice.
Cultural / Social significance	
Cultural or social significance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Still allows for the bridge to be conserved for future generations • It is socially important • It holds nostalgic value.
Improve the look of the area	
Improve the look of the area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Its relocation would provide cleaner more aesthetic lines across the river • A disused / unmaintained bridge would be unsightly • Its relocation would improve the view of the river • Once the new bridge is built there will be too many bridges in one place.
Cost	
Cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relocation will reduce maintenance costs • The on-going costs of maintenance saved by relocation could be better spent on local roads.
Iconic feature of Nowra	
Iconic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is iconic • It is an identifiable landmark of the Shoalhaven.
Other	
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It shouldn't be scrapped • Relocation will provide more space for navigation • It could become a danger if kept where it is.

Suggestions for how the old Nowra Bridge could be re-used if relocated

As a memorial / sculpture / public art / relic	
Parts of the bridge used as a memorial or relic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relocate it to a nearby park • Relocate it along the river foreshore • Relocate it to the proposed council park.
Parts of the bridge used as artwork	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convert it to solid pontoons in the river • Use parts of it as public artwork or sculpture on the riverfront • Use parts of it as a feature in a local park.
As a road or foot bridge	
As a foot bridge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relate it to Harry Sawkins Park over the duck pond • Use it as a school crossing somewhere in the region • Use it as a foot bridge over regional roads or in parks • Use it over an artificial lake in a park.
As a road bridge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relocate it further downstream to improve access to Culburra, Currarong & Callala • Relocate it over a more narrow section of the river for northern access to main Road 92 • Use it to connect Bolong Road to Comerong Island Road • Relocate it to connect Myola and Huskisson (over Currambere Creek) • Relocate it east of or close to Pig Island • Use it to connect Shoalhaven heads to Numbaa / Terara for a more direct route to Nowra • Relocate it elsewhere on the Shoalhaven river • Use it to link Jindy Andy lane to Bolong Road • Relocate it to help connect Cronulla and Bundeena.
As a structure or building	
As a structure or building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relocate it for use as a tea room or coffee shop restaurant (glassed in), Tourist information centre or Hotel.
As a rail crossing	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relocate it further downstream in line with Bomaderry Station to use for rail.