

Summerland Way – Additional Crossing of the Clarence River at Grafton

Route Selection

COMMUNITY FOCUS GROUP MEETING

Wednesday 10 December 2003

5.00pm – 7.30pm

Grafton Community Centre, Duke Street Grafton

Minutes

Attendees:

Peter Black	RTA Project Manager
Peter Collins	RTA Regional Manager
Sonia Williamson	RTA Project Team
Simone Garwood	RTA Project Team
Brian Kerwick	RTA Project Team
Donna Martin	RTA Project Team
Geoff Smyth	RTA Project Team
Vicki St Lawrence	Community Participation Coordinator
Cr Shirley Adams	Grafton City Council
Cr Max Murray	Grafton City Council
Cr Neil Payne	Copmanhurst Shire Council
Cr Cecil Hyde	Pristine Waters Council
Ron Bell	Grafton Chamber of Commerce
Robert Blanchard	Road Transport Sector
Paul Covington	Kent Street Action Committee
Frank Falkenstein	Clarence Environment Centre Inc
Scott Flynn	Susan & Elizabeth Islands Trust
Greg Hayes	Grafton Shopping World
Kel Kearns	South Grafton Traders Association
Laurie Marchant	South Grafton Residents Progress Association Inc
Bill Noonan	Clarence Valley Conservation Coalition Inc
Heather Roland	Riverside, Bent and Through St Precinct
Brian Scrivener	Waterview Community
Amanda Steiner	Fitzroy St Precinct
Karen Thompson	Greaves St Precinct
Mary Watson	Schools
Chris Wheelahan	McHugh St Precinct
Don McLeod	Clarence River Yacht Club

Apologies:

Peter Morgan	National Parks Association
Gordon Poynter	Clarenza Community
Darryl Mercy	Ngerrie Aboriginal Land Council

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1.0 Welcome and Purpose of meeting

- The purpose of the 2nd CFG was to provide data for the 7 localities between Susan Island and Elizabeth Island and to convey the recommendations of the locality short listing workshop.

2.0 Project Information

➤ CFG members Feedback

◆ Summary of Key Issues

(RTA comments in italics)

- Selection of the location is critical
- Heavy traffic should not use the CBD
- Timing of construction – *(timing of construction would be dependant on development of the project and funding)*
- Current traffic congestion at peak times
- Rail viaduct clearance for heavy vehicles
- Emergency vehicles access
- Cost / property acquisition will be high
- Flooding issues downstream of existing bridge
- Heritage items– existing bridge structure and trees *(existing rail bridge is State Heritage listed)*
- Adjacent to existing bridge is preferred for traffic reasons
- Transparency of data from RTA is required
- Feel the decision is already made *(Recommendation for a preferred option will come from the Route Evaluation Workshop comprising community members, Government agencies and RTA project team)*
- Urban design / bridge design brief *(Urban design requirements will be considered as part of the project)*
- More information on noise measures *(Noise study report and other specialist reports will be made available to the CFG in January 2004)*
- Use of river by boats – height downstream *(navigation clearances will be considered)*
- Peak traffic times – if not near existing bridge will not solve this issue
- Pollution – air / environmental
- Value of properties
- Bat colony and rainforest – both islands have ecological value
- Indigenous heritage at Susan Island
- Through traffic using Summerland Way
- Rail usage for freight

➤ Project Information

Refer to attached slides

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➤ Assessment of localities

Refer to attached slides

3.0 Discussion of Issues

- Q If there is no preferred option, why are there bridge designers in place?
A Bridge designers have been engaged to identify the design constraints of a second crossing at all locations, particularly the location at the existing bridge. The design will need to consider how the kinks could be reduced as this is one of the constraints of a crossing at the existing bridge.
- Q Are documents available to be viewed?
A Yes specialist reports relating to the analysis of localities will be made available to the CFG members in January 2004.
- Q What is with the red car survey? Not one person in my street drives a red car.
A The main purpose of the origin and destination survey was to determine the through traffic percentage of articulated vehicles only. (Classification 6 to 12 on the attached Vehicle Classification System). The 'red' car survey was a sample selection only to give a general indication of light vehicle movements.
- Q How are project objectives weighted?
A The project objectives will be weighted by the attendees at the Route Evaluation Workshop.
- Q Why was a locality upstream of Susan Island not considered?
A Any locations upstream of Susan Island to Seelands were eliminated in the Feasibility Study.
- Q Has consideration been given to the impacts of putting local traffic onto the Pacific Highway for downstream options?
A Yes, and these would add congestion on the existing highway and increase the potential of the severity of accidents.
- Q Has the RTA considered closing the existing bridge?
A No, as railways own the existing bridge and the RTA would be still responsible for the maintenance of the roadway and approaches. The bridge still has many years of service still available to it.
- Q Will it be a big or small bridge?
A It would be a two lane bridge that would provide flood clearance for all localities and navigational clearance for the downstream localities.

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- Q Has data been compared to the last 10 years?
A Yes, traffic growth on the bridge has been generally at 1% for the past 25 years based on previous traffic figures. 1% traffic growth has been assumed in the traffic analysis.
- Q RTA's assumption of heavy vehicles is different to community understanding?
A Yes, the origin and destination survey considered vehicle classifications 6 to 12 only, i.e., articulated vehicles, as these are generally long distance haulage vehicles, to determine the percentage of through trucks. RTA classifies light vehicles as Class 1 to 2 and heavy vehicles Class 3 to 12. Following is the traffic figures (refer to slide 7 of the attached presentation), which have been adjusted to represent the RTA classification for light and heavy vehicles.

VEHICLE TYPE	TIME OF DAY	VOLUMES	% OF TOTAL VOLUME
Light Vehicles (Class 1 and 2)	7AM-7PM	21399	80%
	7PM-7AM	3794	14%
	Sub-Total	25193	94%
Heavy Vehicles (Class 3 to 12)	7AM-7PM	1259	5%
	7PM-7AM	323	1%
	Sub-Total	1582	6%
	TOTAL	26775	

- Q Noise monitoring would have been better done on Bent Street?
A Current noise levels can be predicted on Bent Street using existing traffic volumes, percentage of heavy vehicles and distance to residences. The noise monitoring instruments were placed at residences below the bridge to determine accurate levels as this was a unique situation.
- Q Noise levels– do you take into account height of bridge?
A Yes this would be considered.
- Q Shouldn't talk about the kinks being reduced because they are heritage listed.
A Yes the reducing of the kinks would need to consider the heritage value of the bridge. A heritage impact assessment would be required as part of the environmental impact assessment if the preferred route was next to the existing bridge.

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- Q Has the County Council been involved?
- A Yes Clarence River County Council have been consulted in regards to flooding.
- Q You are saying that negative social impact doesn't seem to be as great near existing bridge when a large number of residents are affected?
- A Residents will be affected to some degree at all the localities. The additional social impact would be greater at those localities that are currently not exposed to a high trafficked road.
- Q Remove kinks is incorrect, should be reduce kinks.
- A Yes, the term reduce will now be used.
- Q Is the criteria fairly weighted? Strongly recommend an independent assessment be done. Why is it stated that locality 2 and 3 are in and other localities are out.
- A The short listing workshop was independently facilitated and did not weight the criteria as the purpose of the workshop was to recommend to the community a short list of localities that sufficiently met the project objectives to warrant further investigation. Localities 2 and 3 have been recommended for further investigation subject to community consultation and input.

Workshop Feedback

Group 1

- Turf Street should be analysed for further consideration.
- Locality 1 & 2 - Impact on use of river (recreational)
- Locality 2
 - Major issues – heritage/schools
 - Traffic in CBD
 - Impacts on Villiers St intersection
- Locality 3
 - Traffic in CBD
 - 2 lanes in same direction for additional crossing
 - Future 4 lanes
 - Downstream options have issues
 - Viaduct alterations need to be considered

Group 2

- Locality 2 & 3 - Planning issues, lower clearance and access Support 2 & 3 for local traffic. Possible consideration to be given to Turf Street, but approaches would be a concern.

Group 3

- Locality 3
 - Generally supported
 - Issue with traffic in CBD
 - Consider directly downstream

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- Height of bridge
 - Least impact of noise in this location.
- Group 4**
- Locality 1 - Not across Susan Island (should be upstream of locality 1)
 - Locality 2 - Impacts on traffic / schools
 - kinks, merging lanes
 - more trucks
 - Locality 3 - Property acquisitions
 - Traffic / schools
 - Downstream should be considered.
 - Locality 4 – 6 - Flooding issues
 - Less residents impacted on Locality 7

Note: The RTA will analyse a locality at Turf Street and assess its feasibility against the project criteria. The results will be issued to CFG members prior to the next meeting prior to a final recommendation.

Peter Black is available to talk to residents or if you represent a group would be available to meet with that group.

4.0 Next Meeting

Note: The next CFG meeting will be held on Wednesday 18th February 2004 from 5pm to 8pm. An agenda and background information will be issued prior to the meeting.