

# Historic Nowra Bridge

Community consultation summary report

---

August 2022



[transport.nsw.gov.au/OldNowraBridge](https://transport.nsw.gov.au/OldNowraBridge)

T: 1800 684 490

E: [NowraBridgeProject@transport.nsw.gov.au](mailto:NowraBridgeProject@transport.nsw.gov.au)

Nowra Bridge Project  
PO Box 477 Wollongong NSW 2520

#### **Translating and interpreting service**

If you need help understanding this information, please contact the Translating and Interpreting Service on 131 450 and ask them to call us on 1800 684 490.

#### **Disclaimer**

While all care is taken in producing this work, no responsibility is taken or warranty made with respect to the accuracy of any information, data or representation. The authors (including copyright owners) expressly disclaim all liability in respect of anything done or omitted to be done and the consequences upon reliance of the contents of this information.

#### **© Transport for New South Wales**

Users are welcome to copy, reproduce and distribute the information contained in this report for non-commercial purposes only, provided acknowledgement is given to Transport for NSW as the source.

#### **Privacy**

Transport for NSW (“TfNSW”) is subject to the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (“PPIP Act”) which requires that we comply with the Information Privacy Principles set out in the PPIP Act. All information in correspondence is collected for the sole purpose of assisting in the delivery this project. The information received, including names and addresses of respondents, may be published in subsequent documents unless a clear indication is given in the correspondence that all or part of that information is not to be published. Otherwise TfNSW will only disclose your personal information, without your consent, if authorised by the law. Your personal information will be held by TfNSW at 27 Argyle Street, Parramatta. You have the right to access and correct the information if you believe that it is incorrect.

August 2022  
TfNSW 22.177  
ISBN: 978-1-922875-18-1

# Contents

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Consultation approach</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Summary of results</b>	<b>12</b>
Overview and participation	13
Community suggestions	18
Agency and interest group submissions	30
Individual submissions	33
<b>What happens next?</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>Appendix</b>	<b>36</b>

# Introduction



## Future of the historic Nowra Bridge

The heritage listed old Nowra Bridge crosses the Shoalhaven River and is an unofficial gateway to the South Coast. The historic bridge was completed in 1881 and is a rare example of a pin-jointed Whipple truss bridge.

The future of the bridge has been the subject of extensive consultation. In 2014 during the early planning stages of the Nowra Bridge project, community feedback was sought to inform a decision to retain, relocate or remove the old bridge. The majority of submissions at that time indicated the bridge should be retained and a number of key themes emerged from suggestions on how the bridge could be used.

In 2018 a decision was made to retain the bridge for adaptive reuse as a pedestrian and cyclist path. This decision was based on the historical significance and heritage value of the bridge, while also taking into consideration the expected benefits and community feedback.



Photo courtesy of Howard Mitchell



Our goal is to create a place where locals and visitors can explore, learn and interact. We want to create a place that celebrates the heritage of the bridge and the region. We want to create a place that's connected to the environment around it, functional, inclusive, connects communities and promotes active transport.

### **Project status**

The Nowra Bridge project started construction in early 2020 and will provide a new four lane bridge over the Shoalhaven River and upgrades to 1.7 kilometres of the Princes Highway.

The Nowra Bridge project is well underway and when the new bridge opens, the historic bridge will be retired for road traffic. Work will then begin to repair the bridge and repurpose it as a pedestrian and cyclist path.

From December 2021 and February 2022, the community was invited to submit feedback on what opportunities the repurposing creates, and what else could be included to create a sustainable, flexible and exciting future for the historic bridge.

Investigations for the repurposing are being carried out which include bridge inspections to inform the maintenance and repair work required to continue its safe usage into the future.

### **Purpose of this summary report**

Community consultation carried out from late 2021 to early 2022 is the focus of this summary report.

This summary report outlines communication and consultation activities undertaken by Transport for NSW for the purposes of seeking community feedback on the repurposing of the historic Nowra Bridge.

This report also provides a summary of the survey results, comments and ideas received during the consultation period. Feedback received from the community, stakeholders, visitors and transport customers will help inform the Review of Environmental Factors (REF) and assist the development of a repurposing proposal for the bridge.

# Consultation approach



“We just hope Shoalhaven gets to keep this historical bridge as a mark of respect for those who built it and those, like ourselves, that have used it and accept it as a part of the Shoalhaven history.”

(675)

## Objectives

During late 2021 and early 2022 Transport for NSW consulted with the community on the repurposing of the historic Nowra Bridge.

Feedback was invited over eight weeks from 9 December 2021 until 4 February 2022 to capture community and stakeholders, as well as visitors to the area over the holiday period.

The objectives of the consultation were to:

- Understand how the community and stakeholders see the role of the repurposed bridge and what is important to them
- Inform the community and stakeholders of where the project is up to and provide detailed information to allow for informed feedback
- Utilise feedback from the 2014 consultation to understand whether previously suggested themes and ideas are still supported or not supported by the broader community. These themes were:
  - Celebrating heritage and history
  - Acknowledging Aboriginal history and ongoing connection to Country
  - Interactive elements on the bridge
  - Making the bridge a tourist drawcard
  - Incorporating planting or vegetation on the bridge or approaches
- Manage community expectations on what is feasible and not feasible for repurposing
- Provide information about the maintenance and repair work which the bridge would require prior to the repurposing
- Obtain specific feedback on the bridge deck and attached pathway, as well as give an opportunity for other ideas for the repurposing.

## Target audience

Our target audience included:

- Communities and residents in Nowra, North Nowra, South Nowra, Bomaderry as well as the broader South Coast region
- Transport customers including pedestrians, cyclists and motorists including commuters
- Local businesses
- Visitors and tourists to the area
- Community interest groups and active transport groups
- Shoalhaven City Council
- Other key stakeholder groups with an interest in the repurposing

## Consultation methods

An online survey was prepared to allow for community and stakeholders to easily provide feedback. This was the primary feedback tool and was available for the duration of the consultation period. Community and stakeholders were also able to submit feedback via mail, email and phone.

The survey was promoted on all communications materials and media releases. It was linked on the project webpage and was also accessible from printed material such as the project update and posters via QR code. Participants were also able to access the survey via direct link in email blasts and Facebook posts. Hard copies of the survey were also available at pop up displays.

The online survey had a mixture of qualitative and quantitative questions which drew on previous feedback from the 2014 consultation.

## Survey questions

A copy of the questions used in the survey is included below.

1. Which best describes you? (Select all that apply)
    - Local resident
    - Community or stakeholder group
    - Active transport customer (cyclist, pedestrian etc.)
    - Local business
    - Travel to the area for work
    - Frequent visitor/holiday maker to the area (three or more times a year)
    - Infrequent visitor/holiday maker to the area (less than three times a year)
  2. When the historic Nowra Bridge reopens without traffic, what do you see its role being? (Select all that apply)
    - Pedestrian and cyclist access across the river
    - A place to meet and interact
    - A place to learn about the bridge's heritage
    - A place to learn about the area
    - A tourist attraction
    - A place for events
    - No opinion
    - Other
    - The bridge should not be retained
      - Why shouldn't the bridge be retained?
  3. The bridge is an important heritage item, but it is also a public space. Which of the following do you think would be appropriate or not appropriate as part of the bridge's new role?
    - Signage about the history of the area and the bridge (appropriate/not appropriate)
    - Recognition of Aboriginal history and continuing Aboriginal presence (appropriate/not appropriate)
    - Planting and green space (appropriate/not appropriate)
    - Seats, picnic areas or rest stops (appropriate/not appropriate)
    - Viewing stations (appropriate/not appropriate)
    - Holding events on the bridge (appropriate/not appropriate)
    - Pop up cafés or vendors (appropriate/not appropriate)
    - Feature lighting (appropriate/not appropriate)
    - Open comments
  4. Do you have any suggestions for the bridge deck? We are interested to know whether it could be timber, concrete or other material, and if design elements could be incorporated into it.
    - No opinion
    - Open comments
  5. Do you have any suggestions for the attached pathway? We are interested to know whether it should be removed or whether there are other opportunities for it.
    - Keep it
    - Remove it
    - No opinion
    - Open comments
  6. Do you have any other suggestions for the historic Nowra Bridge?
    - Open comments
  7. Do you have any other comments about what should NOT be included as part of the repurposing?
    - Open comments
- Do you want to join the email list for the Nowra Bridge project?
    - Yes/no/already registered
  - Do you want to join the email list for the Old Nowra Bridge project?
    - Yes/no
  - Name:
  - Email:
  - Please indicate your age group:
    - Age 0-9, 10-19, 20-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59, 60-69, 70-79, 80-89, Over 90

## Communication activities

A range of communications tools and activities were used to encourage participation from a wide audience and enable the community and stakeholders to give informed feedback.

Communication activities included media announcements, letterbox drops, social media and email campaigns, digital advertising and face-to-face displays.

Details of the consultation and communication activities carried out are listed below. Examples of collateral distributed is included in the appendix.

- Media announcement on Thursday 9 December by The Hon Barnaby Joyce MP, Senator Hollie Hughes, The Hon Paul Toole MP and The Hon Shelley Hancock MP
- Distribution of 15,000 project updates to residents living near Nowra Bridge in Nowra, North Nowra and Bomaderry
- Digital advertising campaign encouraging community participation in the survey
- New project webpage with project specific information including FAQs and link to online survey
- Email campaigns on 10 and 20 December 2021 sent to 1,425 Nowra Bridge project registered stakeholders
- Digital advertising on the South Coast Register's website from 17 December 2021 to 4 February 2022
- Two face-to-face pop up displays held in Stockland Nowra on Tuesday 14 December and Thursday 16 December from 10am-12pm. An additional two pop-up displays planned for January were cancelled due to COVID-19 concerns.
- Placement of information material, posters and decals at key public locations across the Shoalhaven, including:
  - Nowra Bridge project site and community display centre
  - Nowra Administration Building
  - Nowra Library
  - Ulladulla Civic Centre
  - Nowra Aquatic Centre
  - Bomaderry Aquatic Pool
  - Ulladulla Leisure Centre
  - At rest areas across the Shoalhaven
  - Along the existing public path network adjoining the Nowra Bridge
- Social media campaign for the duration of the consultation which included five posts on the NSW Roads Facebook page
- Radio interviews with the Nowra Bridge project manager throughout the consultation period
- Shoalhaven City Council shared information about the consultation via their channels including Shoalhaven Weekly email and social media.



Photo courtesy of ABC Illawarra

# Summary of results

## Overview and participation

Transport for NSW received a total of 1,209 feedback responses during the consultation period. This included:

- 1,194 online survey responses
- 15 email or mailed submissions

Over 80 people were also engaged with at two pop up displays in Stockland Nowra and a further 338 comments were received on social media during the eight week campaign.

“It’s an icon of the South Coast.”  
(23)

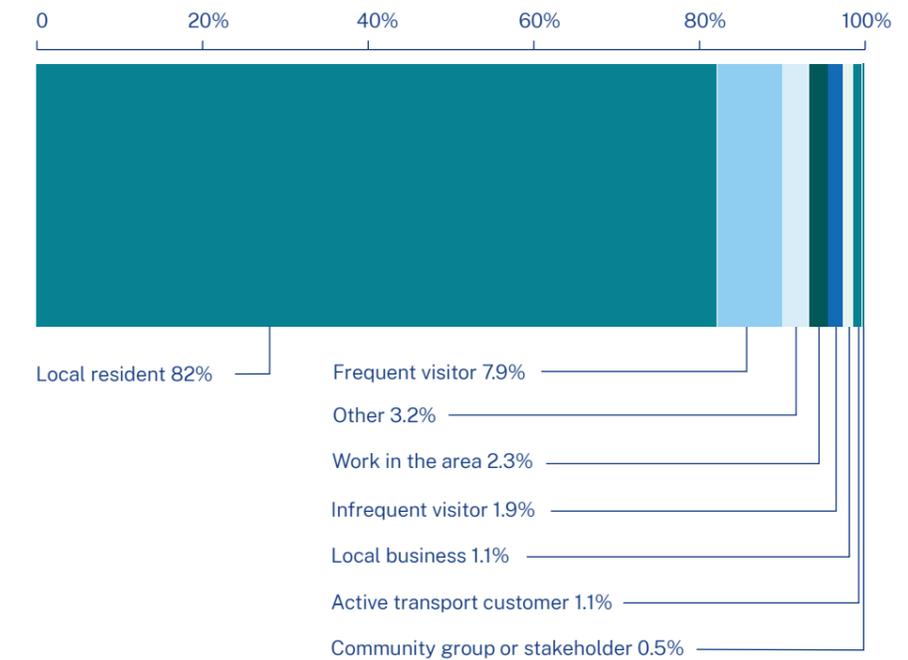


Photo courtesy of Howard Mitchell

## Survey respondents

An online survey was the primary tool for collecting feedback during the consultation period. Participation rates in the survey by profile are shown below.

82% of people who completed the survey were local residents. This was by far the largest group of respondents, followed by frequent visitors or holiday makers to the area (7.9%).



## Age of respondents

The consultation reached a broad demographic of participants with people of all ages completing the online survey.

- 21.2% of respondents were aged 60-69
- 18.3% of respondents were aged 50-59
- 15.5% of respondents were aged 20-29
- 15.1% of respondents were aged 40-49
- 14.5% of respondents were aged 30-39
- 13.3% of respondents were aged 70 or over
- 2.1% of respondents were aged 10-19



## Role of the repurposed bridge

Participants were asked to identify what they saw as the role of the repurposed bridge and tick any that applied, with the options presented drawn from previous feedback.

The most selected role for the repurposed bridge was to provide pedestrian and cyclist access across the river, with 68% of respondents selecting this option.

Around half the participants also identified that the role of the bridge should include a place to meet and interact, a place for events and a tourist attraction. Some participants identified the role of the bridge being a place to learn about the bridge's heritage and a place to learn about the local area and wider region.

Responses to other questions in the survey indicated strong support for these roles. While they are not considered the primary role of the bridge, they are supported as features to incorporate as part of the repurposing.



Transport for NSW will repurpose the bridge as a pedestrian and cyclist pathway as its primary role. Other options will be included as part of the repurposing where feasible.

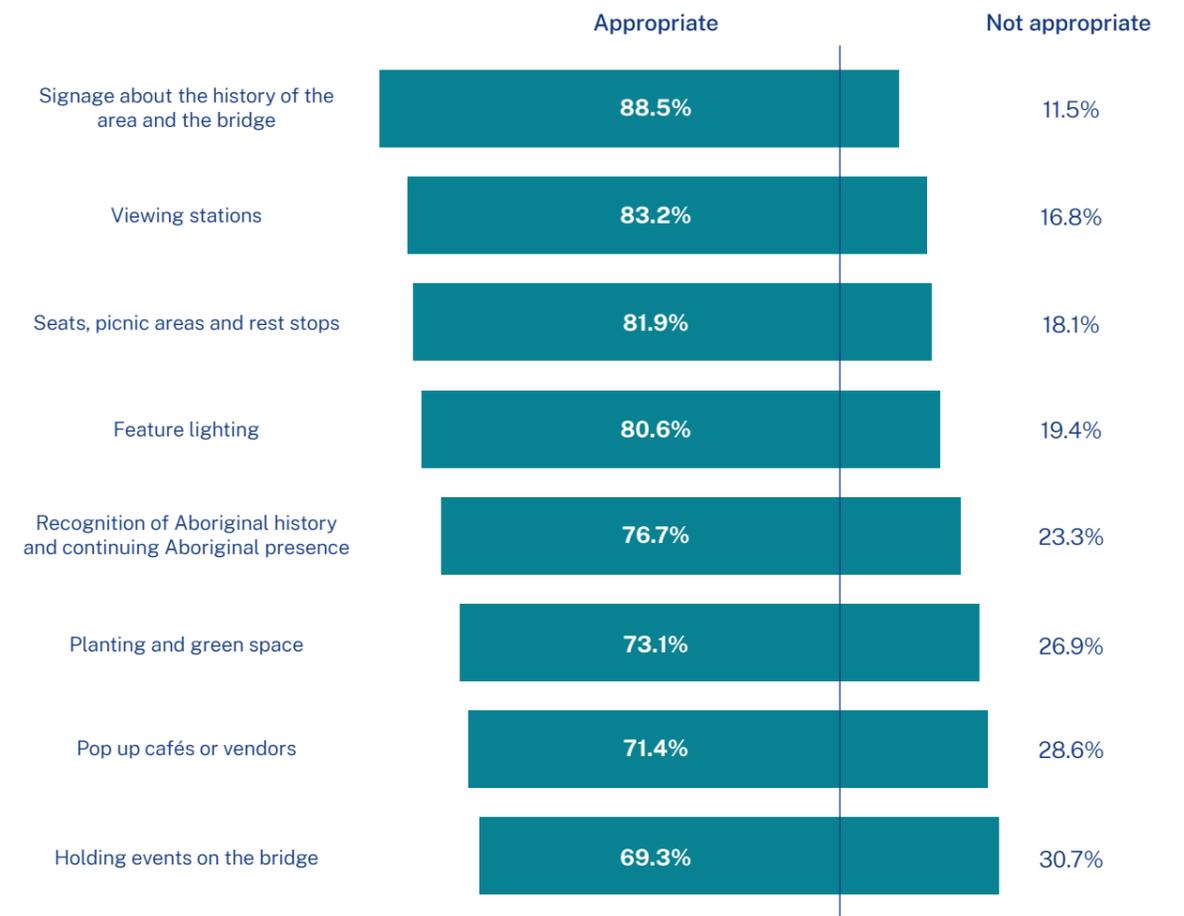
## New features or additions

Participants were asked to identify what they considered as appropriate or inappropriate features or additions to the repurposed bridge. The options presented were drawn from feedback received in the 2014 consultation and were included to understand broader community sentiment about these previously suggested ideas.

The majority of participants indicated each feature was appropriate, however each feature also received some responses 'against'.

The most supported features included:

- Signage about the history of the bridge and the area
- Viewing stations
- Seats, picnic areas or rest stops
- Feature lighting
- Recognition of Aboriginal history and continuing Aboriginal presence



These features will be assessed and included in the proposed design for the repurposing where suitable, in consultation with Shoalhaven City Council.

## Bridge deck

Once traffic is moved off the bridge, the existing concrete deck will need to be repaired or replaced. The bridge deck will be a central feature of the repurposed bridge and community were asked for their ideas.

- 52.8% of participants had no opinion on the bridge deck
- 47.2% of participants had an opinion and some provided comments.

Of the participants who provided comments, the majority were about material options for the bridge deck. The most common material suggestions were:

- Timber
- Concrete
- Low cost or low maintenance material

Other suggestions included pavers or glass panels so the river can be viewed from above. Unfortunately, these options are not suitable for this project.

Some participants also made suggestions about what could be incorporated into the bridge deck, including art and art relating to Indigenous heritage, and garden beds or planter boxes.

Suggestions for the design of the bridge deck and options for material will be further assessed in the design phase of the repurposing. Consideration will be given to ongoing maintenance, cost, safety and heritage, which may preclude major changes to the appearance of the bridge structure.



## Existing pathway

A pedestrian path was attached to the old Nowra Bridge in 1980. The bridge itself will be repurposed for pedestrians and cyclists and we asked the community whether the attached path should be removed or whether there are other opportunities for it.

- 59.9% of participants want the attached path to stay
- 26.2% of participants want the attached path to be removed
- 13.9% of participants had no opinion

9.2% of participants provided a suggestion with their response on how the attached path could be used. The most common themes or uses included:

- Keep it as a second pedestrian pathway
- Use it as a dedicated cycleway
- Viewing platform or fishing platform

Transport for NSW will consider community feedback when making a decision to retain or remove the attached pathway. Heritage, ongoing maintenance, use and safety will also be considered.



“Nowra is a hub and gateway to the south, and the bridge offers an amazing opportunity for development and tourism.”  
(209)

“Pleased to see it is staying and hoping it can become more of an icon as the entry to the South Coast.”  
(225)

“It is part of our past & should therefore be preserved for the future.”  
(928)

“Definitely needs to be kept. It’s our local heritage and needs to be preserved, respected and inviting to tourists, along with utilisation of both sides of the river would be nice.”  
(345)

“I would support an open area on the existing bridge with seating options and access for both pedestrians and bike users. There should also be viewing options and informative signage along with planter boxes with local plant species featured in the landscaping.”  
(149)

## Community suggestions

Participants were given the opportunity to provide any other suggestions for the repurposing in an open question.

A wide range of responses were received with the recurring ideas and suggestions summarised in the following tables.

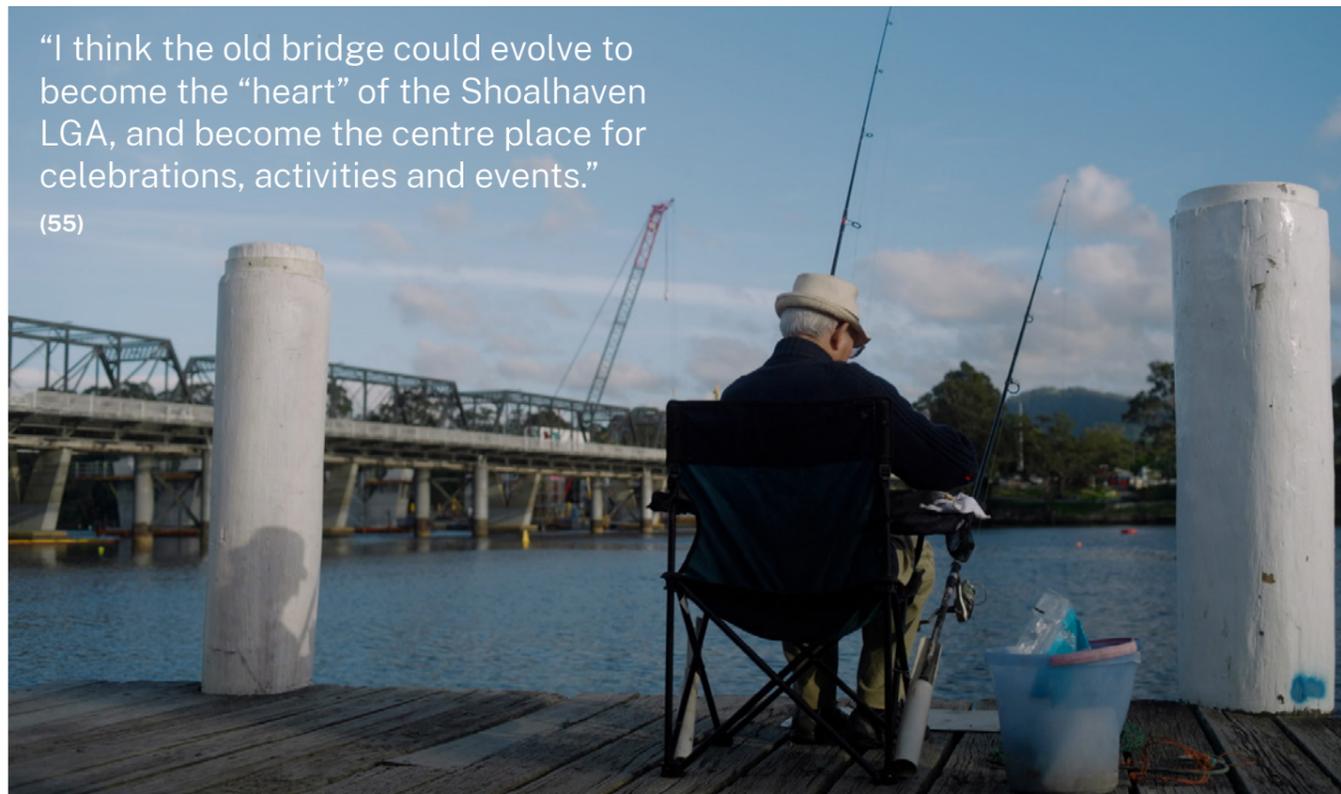
A common theme included ensuring that the repurposing is developed with community and visitors in mind, and that it should be appealing to and inclusive of every age group.

There is strong community sentiment and attachment towards the bridge based on its historical significance, but also as the entry to the South Coast. Feedback reflected this with wide ranging suggestions on how best to preserve and respect the heritage of the bridge, as well as explore opportunities the bridge offers for the local community and tourism.

Comments regarding access, use and aesthetics were also raised including:

- Parking and all abilities access is required to ensure the repurposed bridge offers a user friendly experience
- Traffic noise from the adjacent Princes Highway may discourage a range of recreational ideas
- Any usage or design should not be distracting for motorists driving on the adjacent bridges

Many respondents also linked the repurposing to broader development opportunities for the area, and identified the importance of the foreshores and utilising both sides of the river.



“I think the old bridge could evolve to become the “heart” of the Shoalhaven LGA, and become the centre place for celebrations, activities and events.”

(55)

## Summary of themes

### Pedestrian and cyclist path

Theme	Suggestions	TfNSW comments
Delineation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using the bridge as a shared path for pedestrians and cyclists</li> <li>• Pedestrian and cycle lanes in both directions</li> <li>• Clear cyclist and pedestrian section</li> <li>• Keeping the attached pathway designated for cyclists or pedestrians, to separate them</li> </ul>	The bridge is proposed to become a shared path for pedestrians and cyclists. Final cross section of path width will be determined based on final design solution.
Link to other paths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrated as part of larger cycleway linking Bomaderry to South Nowra or further</li> <li>• Part of a walking path that utilises other parts of Nowra</li> <li>• Should connect to extensive pathway network</li> </ul>	The bridge paths will be integrated into the newly upgraded path network constructed as part of the Princes Highway upgrade.

### Community uses

Theme	Suggestions	TfNSW comments
Markets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hold weekly or monthly markets across the bridge</li> <li>• Pop up markets</li> <li>• Twilight or night markets</li> <li>• Eat Street Food and weekend markets</li> </ul>	<p>The historic bridge is only around six metres wide.</p> <p>Markets, and food and drink stalls, present significant safety impacts given the narrow width of the bridge and strong winds.</p>
Cafés, restaurants and bars	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open cafés and stores on the bridge</li> <li>• Pop up cafés</li> <li>• Food trucks on the bridge</li> <li>• Coffee carts or kiosks</li> <li>• Pop up oyster and champagne carts</li> <li>• Local brewery stalls</li> <li>• Aboriginal food stalls</li> <li>• License it for use as a restaurant, bar or brewery</li> <li>• Long table events</li> <li>• Picnic areas</li> <li>• Fish and chip shop</li> </ul>	<p>There are also environmental concerns with run-off or pollution into the river.</p> <p>These uses may be considered on a case-by-case basis in consultation with Shoalhaven City Council once the bridge is repaired.</p>

Theme	Suggestions	TfNSW comments
Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Special events space and centre for celebrations, activities and events.</li> <li>Hold events on the bridge such as car shows, fundraising events, exercise classes and seasonal events</li> <li>Use as a platform for live music or light shows</li> <li>Decorated for special occasions such as Australia Day, Christmas, New Year</li> <li>Centre stage for river events such as boat show and kayak races</li> <li>Outdoor functions</li> <li>Fireworks viewing</li> <li>Weddings</li> <li>Annual bridge festival or combine with River festival</li> <li>Foot races or bike races</li> <li>Once a year celebration of the original opening</li> <li>Mini festivals, exhibitions</li> <li>Community lantern parade</li> <li>Outdoor movies</li> <li>Exercise classes such as yoga, meditation or roller skating</li> </ul>	<p>Events will be considered in consultation with Shoalhaven City Council but would be considered on a case-by-case basis.</p> <p>Usage for certain activities may need to be restricted due to loading restrictions once repurposed.</p>

## Tourism

Theme	Suggestions	TfNSW comments
Local landmark	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make an icon out of the bridge</li> <li>Use the bridge to attract people from all areas to come and see the bridge, placing signs and posts about the bridge.</li> <li>Make a feature out of it that draws tourists to stop in Nowra, not just drive past</li> </ul>	<p>Enhancing the bridge and promoting it as a tourist attraction is a key consideration for the repurposing, and features that enable this will be considered.</p> <p>Elements of informative signage may be installed to increase awareness of the heritage values of the bridge, river and region.</p>
Ideas to make it an attraction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hold bridge climbs</li> <li>Viewing platform</li> <li>New tourist information centre</li> <li>Lookout area features at the centre of a span</li> <li>Water slide on one of the banks</li> <li>Self guided tourist walking path with QR codes</li> <li>Zip line across the river</li> <li>Activity and adventure facility</li> </ul>	<p>Options for use will be considered against it's primary use as a pedestrian and cyclist path, as well as safety, maintenance and heritage. These options would be considered in consultation with Shoalhaven City Council.</p>

Theme	Suggestions	TfNSW comments
Consider international examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New York Highline</li> <li>Ponta Vecchio</li> <li>Bridge of Flowers</li> <li>Old Lidingo Bridge</li> <li>Tanghe River Park</li> <li>Kylde Warren Park</li> <li>Vauxhall Missing Link Park Raised Gardens of Sants</li> </ul>	<p>These examples will be considered as part of the repurposing proposal.</p>

## Aboriginal Cultural Heritage

Theme	Suggestions	TfNSW comments
Aboriginal history and culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Respect the Aboriginal owners of the land and river. Opportunity to learn about Aboriginal connection to the River</li> <li>Use the bridge as a way of showing Nowra's history and to acknowledge aboriginal culture/ aboriginal artworks</li> <li>Close off one side and paint a serpent</li> <li>Informative displays about traditional uses of the river</li> <li>Acknowledgement of the first nations people and true account of the history of the area</li> <li>Incorporating Aboriginal artwork</li> </ul>	<p>Features acknowledging history and culture will be considered for the repurposing and we will engage with local Aboriginal community.</p>

## History of the bridge

Theme	Suggestions	TfNSW comments
Bridge heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Signage that goes into detail about the engineering of Whipple truss bridges</li> </ul>	<p>Elements of informative signage may be installed to increase awareness of the heritage values of the bridge, river and region.</p>
Information and signage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plaques with historic information – events, people and places</li> <li>Historic information and educating future generations</li> </ul>	<p>Elements of informative signage may be installed to increase awareness of the heritage values of the bridge, river and region.</p>
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Embrace history through historical costumes for the opening, attracting vintage and costume enthusiasts for photo shoots</li> <li>Dawn Services</li> <li>Restore to original state and have horse and carriage rides and early motor cars</li> </ul>	<p>These suggestions will be considered in consultation with Shoalhaven City Council once the repurposed bridge is complete.</p>

## Elements to be incorporated

Theme	Suggestions	TfNSW comments
Planting/ greenery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Turn the bridge into a green space such as the New York High Line</li> <li>Provide planter boxes</li> <li>Connecting the two shorelines with a green corridor</li> <li>Garden display</li> <li>Using native plants</li> <li>Turn it into a green tunnel</li> <li>Community gardens</li> <li>Artificial garden walk</li> <li>Enclose to make a greenhouse</li> </ul>	Planting and greenery on the bridge will be considered in consultation with Shoalhaven City Council who would maintain planter boxes.
Art	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rotating art installation or display</li> <li>Children's art or school art on display</li> <li>Sculpture walk</li> </ul>	These suggestions will be considered in consultation with Shoalhaven City Council once the repurposed bridge is complete.
Shared spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Available to the public to sit as well as walk and cycle</li> <li>Providing benches for people to meet and linger</li> <li>Fishing platforms or designated fishing areas</li> <li>Space for kids with a playground</li> <li>Stage area for live music</li> <li>Used by community clubs to hold fundraising</li> <li>Licensed buskers and performing artists</li> <li>Rotunda or podium for performances</li> <li>Benches, picnic tables</li> <li>Local artists set up</li> <li>Day trips for aged care facilities</li> </ul>	Options for use will be considered against its primary use as a pedestrian and cyclist path, as well as safety, maintenance, heritage. These options would be considered in consultation with Shoalhaven City Council.
Flags	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Commonwealth, state, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and local government flags flying on the bridge</li> </ul>	These suggestions will be considered in the design phase of the repurposing.
Community information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information on what is happening at the art gallery, library, Nowra players, entertainment centre</li> <li>Information on historic figures, events, environmental messages.</li> </ul>	These suggestions will be considered in consultation with Shoalhaven City Council once the repurposed bridge is complete.

## Design elements

Theme	Suggestions	TfNSW comments
Paint	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Paint it multi- coloured</li> <li>Paint it a lively colour in harmony with river and environment</li> <li>Paint it rainbow coloured</li> <li>Paint it a bright colour</li> <li>Paint it in an Aboriginal design or in First Nations colours</li> <li>Paint it red or orange</li> <li>Put murals up</li> </ul>	<p>Major changes to the appearance of the Whipple Truss bridge structure would not align with heritage requirements.</p> <p>The paint system acts as a protective coating for the bridge and is an important aspect of the lifespan of the bridge.</p>
Aesthetics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Install a barrier on western side for sound and fumes</li> <li>Reduce road noise with sound barrier</li> <li>Clear or semi clear material decorated with local art or timeline</li> <li>Slatted light screen on the western side to minimise noise, light and distractions</li> </ul>	<p>Suggestions will be considered in the design phase of the repurposing with consideration given to path users and motorists on the adjacent Princes highway.</p> <p>Ongoing maintenance, cost, safety and heritage, which may preclude major changes to the bridge structure will also be considered.</p>

## Traffic or rail use

Theme	Suggestions	TfNSW comments
Traffic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allow overflow traffic to be directed onto to the bridge to ease congestion</li> <li>Back up for breakdowns or accidents on the other bridges</li> <li>Keep one lane open</li> <li>Keep it open as a bus lane</li> </ul>	The bridge is operationally unsuitable to cater for future traffic demand and will be closed to vehicles once the new bridge is open. Access onto and off the bridge will also not be possible.
Emergency services use or maintenance usage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use for emergency services to use to avoid traffic in case of an emergency</li> </ul>	The bridge is operationally unsuitable to cater for future traffic demand and will be closed to vehicles once the new bridge is open. Access onto and off the bridge will also not be possible.
Rail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Extend rail line to Nowra</li> <li>Light rail or electric shuttle bus lane</li> <li>Electrified rail or tramway</li> <li>Move downstream to align with Bomaderry station and extend the rail into Nowra</li> </ul>	The heritage listed bridge has reached the end of its serviceable life and would not be able to withstand the weight and motion impacts of a modern passenger or freight train.

## Lighting and cover

Theme	Suggestions	TfNSW comments
Lighting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sufficient lighting for safety and to ensure visibility for path users</li> <li>Lighting is required to minimise vandalism and crime</li> <li>Use solar LED lighting</li> </ul>	The repurposed bridge will be well lit to ensure safety for path users.
Feature lighting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Showcase the bridge with different coloured lighting for events, making it a drawcard for the area</li> <li>Permanent festival or fairy lighting or lanterns</li> <li>Christmas lighting at Christmas time</li> <li>Correct lighting important to ensure it is a safe space but not dazzling for drivers or residents</li> </ul>	Suggestions will be considered in the design phase of the repurposing.
Shade or cover	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shaded areas on the bridge using the superstructure</li> <li>Covering sections of the deck to utilise the bridge in poor weather</li> <li>Enclose the bridge to make it usable for events in all weather conditions</li> <li>Top should have a strong clear glass flat roof</li> <li>Cover parts of the bridge with windows/louvres to enjoy the view and utilise in all weather conditions year round</li> </ul>	Suggestions will be considered in the design phase of the repurposing.

## Parking, accessibility and amenities

Theme	Suggestions	TfNSW comments
Parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concerns about parking spaces if events are held on the bridge</li> <li>Good car parking, and including buses parking, on the foreshores</li> <li>Replacing and increasing car park spaces to provide better access to the bridge</li> <li>There needs to be parking in close proximity to the bridge</li> </ul>	The provision of parking and facilities is the responsibility of Shoalhaven City Council.
Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Incorporate a park in a portion of the bridge</li> <li>Include public toilets</li> <li>Include bins</li> </ul>	The provision of public toilets and bins, as well as servicing, is the responsibility of Shoalhaven City Council.
Accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Must be disability friendly</li> </ul>	The repurposed bridge will provide access for all abilities including disability access and motorised scooters.
Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Install 24 hour CCTV to deter vandalism</li> <li>Drug and alcohol free area</li> <li>Safety barriers to prevent unauthorised climbing of the bridge</li> </ul>	The bridge will be made safe for path users and bridge parapets will be installed at the required height for pedestrians and cyclists.
Fees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No toll or fee to cross the bridge or attend events</li> </ul>	There will be no tolls or fees to use the bridge.

## Connection to the foreshores

Theme	Suggestions	TfNSW comments
Comments on the foreshores	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>River area is under-utilised and unattractive and does not encourage activity or patronage.</li> <li>The bridge should connect to community open spaces each side of the river</li> <li>The bridge should connect with walking paths and cafés similar to SouthBank in Brisbane</li> <li>Use the space where the fish co-op was developed as public open space</li> <li>The repurposing should complement proposed developments on the southern foreshore and improve the surrounding space</li> <li>The project should be accompanied by updated foreshore on both sides so the bridge can be a practical feature surrounded by cafés and parks</li> </ul>	These suggestions will be considered in consultation with Shoalhaven City Council.

## Community suggestions

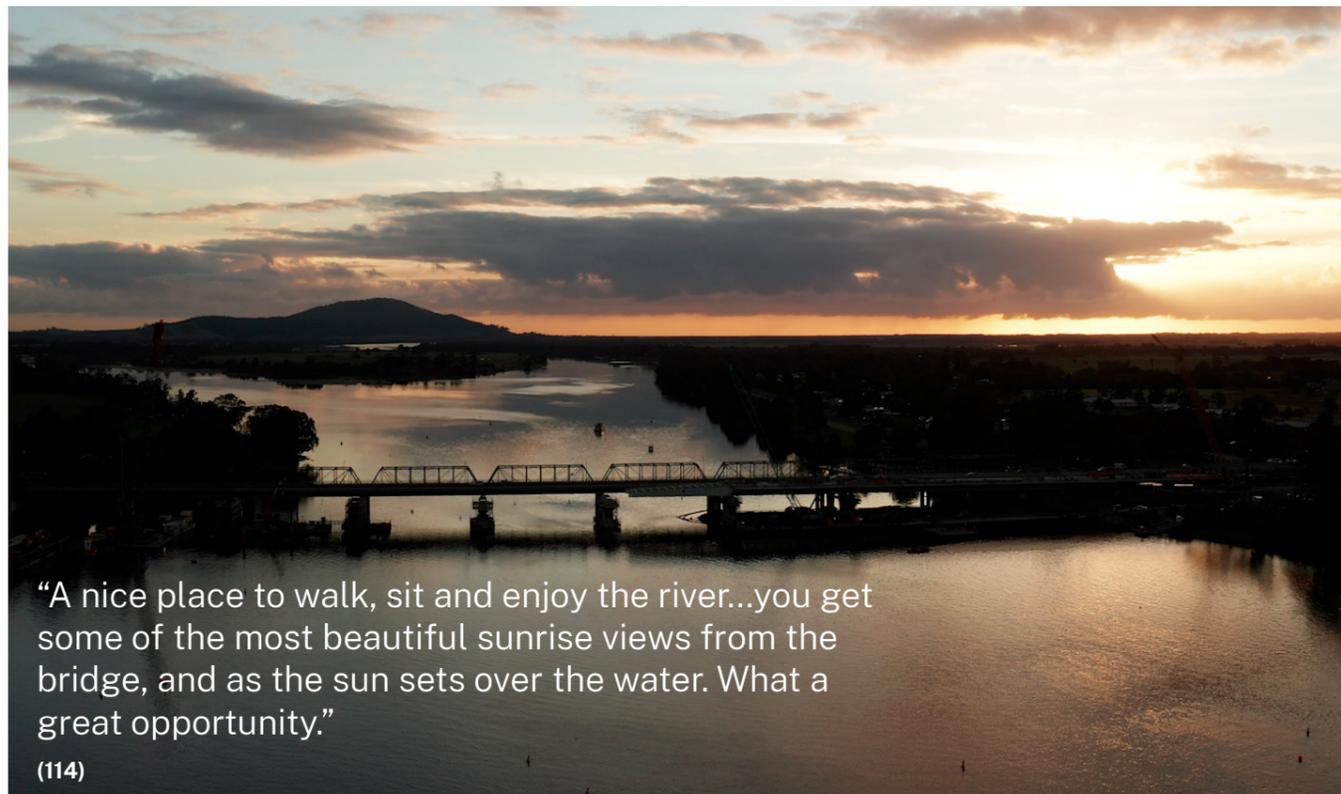
### Participants were also asked to provide comments on what should not be included in the repurposing in an open question.

Comments from this part of the survey were similar to the suggestions which were voted as 'not appropriate' earlier in the survey. A wide range of responses were received with the recurring ideas and suggestions summarised in the following tables.

A reoccurring theme included ensuring the bridge's heritage is respected and that any new features should complement its historic nature.

Other key themes on what should not be included were:

- Any activities or uses that would limit access and safety, particularly disability access
- Any activities that may cause congestion on the bridge
- Any activities or uses that would create distractions for drivers on the adjacent bridges
- There should be little to no commercialisation of the bridge, including retail, advertising, signage or events or activities that would require tolls or fees.



“A nice place to walk, sit and enjoy the river...you get some of the most beautiful sunrise views from the bridge, and as the sun sets over the water. What a great opportunity.”

(114)

## Summary of themes

Theme	Suggestions
Markets/retail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not hold markets, retails stalls or pop-up stalls on the bridge as it will cause congestion on the bridge.</li> <li>• It should be an open space available to everyone.</li> <li>• No full time leases on markets or retail</li> <li>• Markets would take up too much space and cost too much money to maintain or hold</li> <li>• There is not parking or vehicle access so markets are not feasible</li> <li>• There would be too much pollution in the Shoalhaven River</li> <li>• The bridge is not wide enough for markets or retail spaces</li> <li>• Recent weather has shown the bridge is not a suitable space for markets or other events.</li> <li>• Not suitable for static functions such as markets, eateries, weddings, etc due to weather, lack of shade and public facilities and noise from highway traffic.</li> </ul>
Cafés, restaurants, bars	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not allow private businesses to open cafés and restaurants. It should be an open space available to everyone.</li> <li>• One pop up café only</li> <li>• No alcohol or alcohol sales</li> <li>• No fast food shops</li> </ul>
Planting/greenery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not turn the bridge into a green space as gardens are not appropriate on the bridge and a distraction from its original purpose</li> <li>• Planting may cause congestion on the bridge and be a safety issue for pedestrians or cyclists</li> </ul>
Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No events should be held on the bridge as it impacts on heritage value and there are safety issues</li> <li>• No events which would attract big crowds</li> <li>• No concerts, music events or fireworks</li> <li>• It should be an open space available to everyone</li> <li>• If events are held, they should be limited and well selected</li> </ul>
Paint	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not paint the bridge in other colours as this would impact on its heritage value</li> </ul>
Art	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No sculptures or memorial statues</li> </ul>
Aboriginal Cultural Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aboriginal heritage should not be applicable to this project</li> </ul>
History of the bridge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not use the bridge as a way of showing history</li> <li>• Do not make it into a history/heritage education spot</li> </ul>
Traffic and rail use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not allow overflow traffic to be directed onto to the bridge to ease congestion</li> <li>• Do not extend rail line to Nowra</li> </ul>

Theme	Suggestions
Pedestrian and cyclist use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do not use it for cyclists or for fast cyclists</li> <li>Do not use it for pedestrians as there are other paths that can accommodate this</li> </ul>
Shared space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No bridge climbs</li> <li>No fishing</li> <li>No skateboarding</li> <li>Not a casual community hang out area</li> <li>Should not be congested</li> </ul>
Aesthetics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Should not destroy the distinct silhouette of the bridge</li> <li>Don't modernise the look of it</li> <li>No additional permanent structures to provide for future flexibility of use</li> </ul>
Signage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No commercial signage, advertising or billboards</li> <li>No excessive community or historical information</li> </ul>
Fees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No tolls, events or activities that require money for entry or use</li> </ul>
Music	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No speakers playing music</li> </ul>
Lighting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No bright coloured lights as it would not align with the historical nature of the bridge</li> <li>No permanent laser light shows</li> </ul>
Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Safety needs to be a consideration and anything dangerous such as jumping off the bridge should be excluded</li> </ul>

Transport for NSW is committed to respecting the bridge's heritage and historic value, and will ensure the bridge's future meets community needs and expectations. Any items or activities planned for the repurposing of the bridge will be thoroughly considered, and done in consultation with Shoalhaven City Council.

## Community suggestions

A number of respondents to the survey indicated that the bridge should not be retained and should be removed either completely or in part.

Key reasons for removal included:

- It's an eyesore
- Safety
- Cost to retain and repurpose
- Ongoing cost to maintain

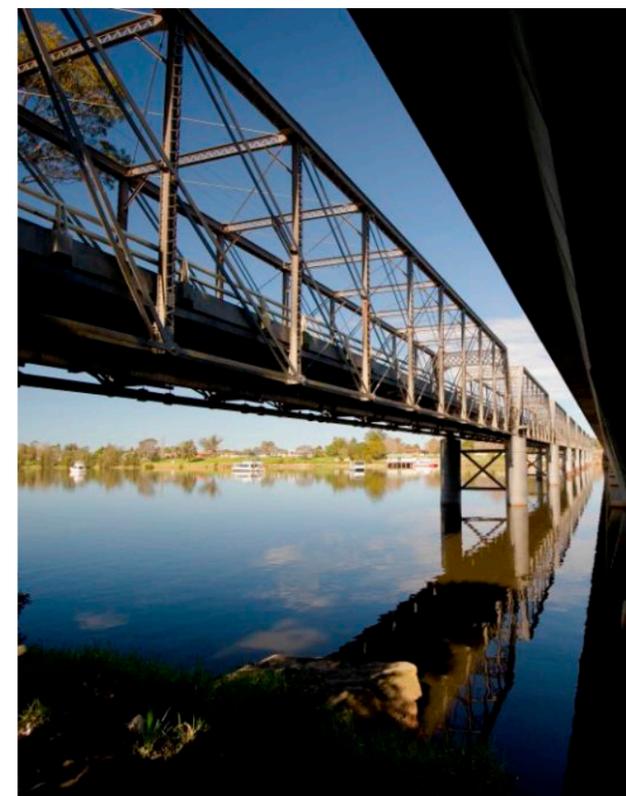
Suggestions for its removal in full included:

- Knock it down and recycle the iron for funding
- Move the bridge to another area as a bridge crossing
- Remove it but relocate a section for public viewing
- Repurpose some of the metal on walking bridges around the Shoalhaven
- Remove and incorporate as part of future Nowra bypass

Suggestions for its removal in part included:

- Leave both end sections in place for Nowra tourism and remove the other six sections and float them on barges
- Move a segment to a nearby park as a monument
- Use some of the metal to create a memorial artwork piece in its memory
- Use the framework for a new local museum or community building
- Leave part intact as a viewing platform
- Remove a segment and set it up as a historical location on the side of the river
- Keep sections for the museum
- Sell parts of it to the general public
- Only keep half the bridge to minimise cost of maintenance

Transport for NSW has committed to retaining the old bridge after considering community feedback and the bridge's heritage value.



## Agency and interest group submissions

Agency and interest group submissions were received from Shoalhaven City Council and the Shoalhaven River Festival.

Both submissions suggested transforming the old bridge into an event space with key suggestions summarised on the following pages.

### Shoalhaven City Council

In summary, Council suggested there are opportunities to transform the bridge into much more than a pedestrian walkway and cycleway. It should become a place offering unique experiences, where people gather and spend time instead of simply passing through.

Council wishes to see the bridge used creatively and be an ongoing community asset that is well used into the future.

Theme	Suggestions
Event space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A place to hold events and leverage off the area's growing food, events and creative arts economy</li> <li>An elevated platform to enable to the safe installation and operation of fireworks from the bridge</li> <li>Opportunities to create structured pop up experiences that would be installed for a longer period than market days. Similar to Cockatoo Island, this opportunity could create a space for short to medium term pop ups for food, beverage, art and performances.</li> </ul>
Cafés, restaurants, bars	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilities at either end of the bridge to be used as a kiosk, café, bar, museum or art gallery – either a permanent facility or infrastructure to support a pop up facility</li> </ul>
Aboriginal Cultural Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A place that celebrates Aboriginal heritage through art and story telling</li> </ul>
Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A place that celebrates the heritage value of the bridge</li> <li>Installing signage to celebrate the history of the area and the bridge</li> <li>Drawing inspiration from the heritage of the bridge and the surrounding natural environment and incorporating materials and design elements that align with this.</li> <li>Examples provided in the Goods Line (Ultimo), the High Line (New York City) and Barangaroo Reserve.</li> </ul>

Theme	Suggestions
Planting/greening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Connecting the bridge to the surrounding environment and the river. Greening the bridge will support environmental and community benefits and create a recreation space.</li> <li>Extend the landscape of the river bank up onto the bridge, primarily using native plants. For example, small trees to provide some sections with shade, garden beds, native edible beds, and green walls.</li> <li>A landscaped walkway and cycleway that forms an extension of the landscape and existing paths on either side of the bridge.</li> </ul>
Pedestrian and cycleway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Providing a pedestrian path and cycleway along the old bridge</li> <li>Improving lighting for pedestrians and cyclists at night</li> <li>Providing bicycle and scooter racks so people can stop to engage in the spaces</li> </ul>
Interactive and innovative repurposing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Making a section of the bridge deck glass to allow people to see the river below them</li> <li>A scenic walk along the top of the trusses (a bridge climb)</li> <li>An elevated platform to enable to the safe installation and operation of fireworks from the bridge</li> <li>Installing power facilities to enable future opportunities for creative light activations and decorations throughout the year.</li> </ul>
Community space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A space for locals to enjoy</li> <li>Provide opportunities for community to use the bridge as a place to meet and socialize. Suggestions include various viewing and seating areas, picnic areas, including an outdoor gym for those who will cross the bridge while exercising.</li> </ul>
Accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creating disabled access ramps, suitable viewing platforms and seating</li> </ul>
Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The bridge has potential to evolve into a widely recognised landmark for the south coast region and a significant asset for the community.</li> </ul>
Way finding signage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Installing way finding signage at either end of the bridge directing people to nearby attractions, for example, Nowra CBD, Bomaderry, museums, nature reserves, etc.</li> </ul>

Transport for NSW will own and maintain the bridge structure, and ensure it is a safe pedestrian and cyclist pathway. Additional uses and activities will be determined in consultation with Shoalhaven City Council. Transport for NSW will work with Shoalhaven City Council on other potential shared space and community information ideas.

## Shoalhaven River Festival

In summary, the Shoalhaven River Festival is run annually with approximately 10,000 attendees during the day and night event. The event takes place along the Shoalhaven River and celebrates Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal connections to the river.

The historic bridge could be fitted with appropriate infrastructure to support its activation during celebrations like the River Festival.

Theme	Suggestions
Event space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Associated infrastructure to support various events and activities on the bridge such as performances, parades, festivals and markets. For example, power supply to various locations on the bridge deck would be required.</li> </ul>
Lighting installations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Activate the historic bridge with light and water installations – permanent fixtures that can be turned on and used for special events, celebrations, commemorations.</li> <li>To highlight the architectural features, as well as facilities for permanent lighting and supplementary lighting during special events.</li> </ul>
Other site activation infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Water features to create a “spectacle”, a water curtain from the deck to the river or water jets from the deck</li> <li>Sound system - to stand alone or accompany light and water displays, to create a powerful experience</li> <li>Painting the bridge a lighter colour will optimise the effect of creative lighting solutions (for example, Tom Ugly’s Bridge)</li> <li>Infrastructure to support the display of flags, banners, bunting, string lights, etc. Can be short or long term, similar to street flags on poles managed by the local council</li> </ul>
Financial sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The bridge has the opportunity to generate solar, wind and hydro power. This could be used to supplement power usage by activities on the bridge, cafés, etc. Or be stored to power pedestrian and cycleway path lighting after dark.</li> </ul>
Connecting the bridge with the surrounding environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rejuvenating the waterfront areas at either end of the old bridge would create new opportunities for the community to interact with the river and the bridge, e.g. ferry and boat docking, installing recreational watercraft infrastructure.</li> </ul>
Pedestrian and cycleway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Celebrating the physical and symbolic link between Bomaderry and Nowra is also important and considerations into pedestrian and commuter/tourists transport services should be made.</li> </ul>

The Shoalhaven River Festival is an important community event and Transport for NSW recognises the historic Nowra Bridge could become a feature of this event. These suggestions will be considered in consultation with Shoalhaven City Council.

## Individual submissions

Seven individual submissions were received during the consultation period. Three were letters and four were emails.

Six of the seven submissions were in favour of keeping the old bridge.

Themes raised in these submissions included using the old bridge as an event space, planting, café, museum, creating sheltered seating and viewing areas, and extending the rail line over the old bridge.

Two of the individual submissions also considered the financial cost of repurposing the bridge and the ongoing associated maintenance costs.

These suggestions have been addressed in earlier sections on ‘Community Suggestions’.

“Thank you for reaching out to ask for opinions, I am so very proud of my history and connection to the Shoalhaven as is my wider family many still there, many still milking cows at Terrara.”

(831)



# Next steps



## What happens next?

Community consultation is an important part of project development and this feedback will assist with developing a proposal for the historic Nowra Bridge.

Before the heritage-listed bridge moves into its next phase of life, essential maintenance work, including lead paint removal and repainting, is required. Transport for NSW is carrying out investigations and will prepare a plan for the repair and rehabilitation of the bridge.

A Review of Environmental Factors will be published for viewing together with the repurposing proposal in 2023.

To find out more about the project visit:  
[nswroads.work/OldNowraBridge](https://nswroads.work/OldNowraBridge)



To keep up to date with the project, scan the QR code to sign up for updates or email:  
[NowraBridgeProject@transport.nsw.gov.au](mailto:NowraBridgeProject@transport.nsw.gov.au)

# Appendix

A sample of the collateral developed to promote community consultation is included over the following pages.

## Six page project update

Transport for NSW is seeking feedback on the historic Nowra Bridge which will be repurposed following completion of the Nowra Bridge project.

**Historic Nowra Bridge**

The 1881 heritage listed whippie truss bridge across the Shoalhaven River at Nowra is an unofficial gateway to the South Coast and one of its heritage icons.

The historic bridge has carried traffic for 140 years and will begin a new phase in its life to carry pedestrians and cyclists when the new bridge now being built is opened.

As part of this change we want your feedback on what opportunities, the chances, and what else we could do to create a sustainable, flexible and exciting future for the historic bridge.

Feedback closes Friday 4 February 2022.

December 2021

**Community consultation**

Previous consultation

In late 2014 during the early planning stages of the Nowra Bridge project, we asked for feedback on the historic bridge to inform a decision on whether it would be retained, relocated or removed.

During that time 220 submissions were received with 140 indicating the bridge should be retained. 470 gave suggestions on how the old Nowra Bridge could be used with a number of key themes emerging:

- a place that celebrates the heritage value of the bridge
- a place that celebrates the Aboriginal history and the Shoalhaven River
- an interactive space
- opportunities for planting
- a tourist drawcard.

Our goal is to help create a place where community and visitors can visit, explore, learn and interact, as well as a place that acknowledges the heritage of the bridge, promotes active transport and connects the Nowra foreshores.

Construction of the historic bridge around 1880

**Process and timing of the repurposing**

**Historic Nowra Bridge Repurposing**

- Review bridge project completion (10-12 weeks)
- Prepare and implement an Environmental Factors (REF) (10-12 weeks)
- New your say on the old Nowra Bridge (10-12 weeks)
- Develop scope for repurposing
- Old Nowra Bridge made an Environmental Factors (REF) (10-12 weeks)
- Prepare REF and repurposing proposal

**Historic Nowra Bridge Repurposing**

- Further investigation of bridge
- Work to repair and repurpose bridge (18 months to two years)
- Open repurposed bridge

The repurposed bridge will incorporate a pedestrian and cyclist pathway

**Key considerations for repurposing**

**Heritage**

The original Nowra Bridge is a rare example of a painted whippie truss bridge and it is listed on a number of heritage registers as having local and state significance.

The historical and structural significance of the old bridge was a key factor in the decision to retain it. It also limits our repurposing options and any proposal will need to be sympathetic to the bridge's existing heritage value and appearance. Some ideas could be:

- signage with history of the bridge and Shoalhaven River
- named history stations
- installation of the tin bar deck
- removal of the attached outside pathway added in 1960.

**Aboriginal history**

The Shoalhaven River has strong significance to Aboriginal people who have an ongoing connection to the river and surrounding land. Some ideas could be:

- Aboriginal art and storytelling
- interpretive signage
- history of Aboriginal people in the area and the significance of the Shoalhaven River

**Interactive**

The historic bridge is about six metres wide and 5.42 metres long. It would be a safe and accessible active transport path and a place where community and visitors could interact with each other and the area. Some ideas could be:

- recessed walking path
- children's stations (with benches, port holes to the side and through the deck)
- seating
- interpretive installation
- safety lighting for night use.

**Tourism**

The historic Nowra Bridge is an unofficial gateway to the South Coast for holiday makers. It has an attractive outlook over the Shoalhaven River and could have potential as a tourist drawcard. We are interested to know how it could appeal to visitors such as:

- an interactive and engaging space
- a place of historical and cultural significance
- an attractive and artistic space
- leasing sections for use by businesses such as coffee carts

**Green space**

Feedback from 2014 included suggestions for planting and vegetation to beautify the space or as a source of shade. Some ideas could be:

- opportunities for planting such as planter boxes
- garden installations
- native plants featured along sections of the bridge

**What isn't feasible?**

A number of suggestions received during previous consultation are not achievable:

- The bridge is operationally unsuitable to cater for future traffic demands or sit usage, and will be closed to vehicles once the new bridge is open.
- Options that restrict ongoing maintenance or pose safety concerns
- Heavy loads present significant safety impacts given the narrow width of the bridge and environmental concerns with runoff or pollution into the river.
- Major changes to the appearance of the steel truss structure would not align with heritage requirements.

Cyclists enjoying a break on the southern foreshore

## Dedicated webpage

Service NSW | Use Traffic | Transport Info | Transport for NSW | Service Centre

Transport for NSW

Roads | Maritime | Business & Industry | Projects | Safety | About us | Contact us

### Historic Nowra Bridge repurposing

The 1881 heritage listed whippie truss bridge across the Shoalhaven River will be repurposed when traffic moves onto the new river crossing.

#### Consultation concludes on the future of iconic bridge

Public consultation has concluded on the repurposing of the historic Nowra Bridge. Thank you to everyone who provided their feedback. More information on the repurposing is expected to be available by mid 2022.

#### Latest news

**FEB 2022** Consultation on historic Nowra Bridge a success  
More than 1000 people made submissions as part of a public consultation on the future of the historic Nowra Bridge.  
[More information](#)

**DEC 2021** View the project update on the Historic Nowra Bridge  
To find out more about the repurposing of the historic Nowra Bridge and where we are up to view the December 2021 project update (PDF, 4.0MB).  
The 1881 heritage listed whippie truss bridge across the Shoalhaven River at Nowra is an unofficial gateway to the South Coast and one of its heritage icons.  
[More information](#)

#### Video - A new life for the old Nowra Bridge

[Watch on YouTube](#)

#### Subscribe for updates

Enter your details to receive updates on the project.

First name:

Last name:

Email:

Mobile no.:

#### Project information

##### Background

The future of the 1881 heritage listed whippie truss bridge across the Shoalhaven River has been the subject of extensive investigations.

In 2013 it was recommended the bridge be retained for adaptive reuse when it is retired and road traffic moves onto the new river crossing which is currently being built.

The decision was based on the historical significance and heritage value of the bridge, while also taking into consideration the expected benefits, cost and feedback received during planning of the Nowra Bridge project. In late 2014 during the early planning stages of the Nowra Bridge project, we asked for feedback on the historic bridge, currently used by southbound traffic, to inform a decision on whether it would be retained, relocated or removed. During that time the majority of the submissions received indicated the bridge should be retained. The submission report from this consultation can be viewed in project documents.

A more recent consultation invited the community to make suggestions on how the bridge could be repurposed. Over 1000 submissions were received prior to the consultation closing on 4 February 2022.

##### Next steps

#### Old Nowra Bridge frequently asked questions

- What will happen to the historic Nowra Bridge?
- What happens next?
- Why is the bridge being repurposed instead of removed or used for more lanes of road built?
- What maintenance work is required to repurpose the bridge?
- How big is the steel truss bridge?
- What is the heritage value of the bridge?

## Email to subscribers

No images? [Click here](#)

Australian Government  
BUILDING OUR FUTURE

NSW GOVERNMENT

### HISTORIC NOWRA BRIDGE

#### A NEW LIFE FOR THE OLD NOWRA BRIDGE

The 1881 heritage-listed whippie truss bridge across the Shoalhaven River at Nowra is an unofficial gateway to the South Coast and one of its heritage icons.

The historic bridge has carried traffic for 140 years but will begin a new phase in its life to carry pedestrians and cyclists when the new bridge now being built is open.

Watch the video below to find out what is involved in repurposing, what constraints there are and what opportunities it could create.

[A NEW LIFE FOR THE OLD NOWRA BRIDGE](#)

#### HAVE YOUR SAY

We want feedback and ideas from the community, stakeholders, businesses, transport customers and visitors. In particular we want to know what the bridge could be used for and what else we can do to create a sustainable, flexible and exciting future for the historic bridge.

Your feedback will inform the review of environmental factors (REF) which will be carried out next year. We are planning to have a proposal and designs for repurposing on display with the REF late 2022.

Feedback is open from Thursday 9 December until Friday 4 February 2022.

[Complete the survey](#)

#### LEARN ABOUT THE PROJECT

Our goal is to create a place where community and visitors can visit, explore, learn and interact, as well as a place that acknowledges the bridge's heritage, promotes active transport options and connects the Nowra foreshores.

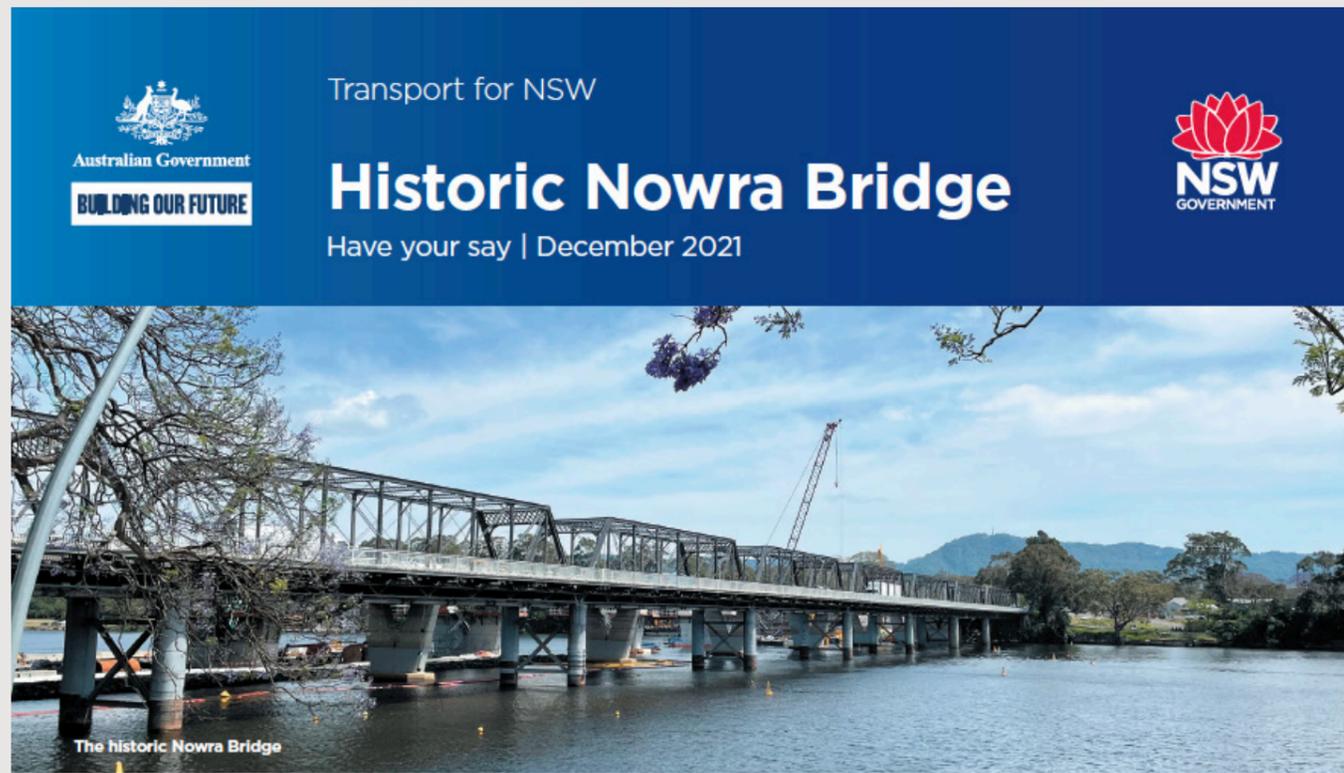
To find out more about the repurposing and where we are up to, view our project update. The update includes key considerations based on feedback received in 2014 as well as critical work required including maintenance, repainting and repairs.

[View the project update](#)

[Visit the Historic Nowra Bridge webpage](#)

This email has been sent to you because you opted in to receiving communications regarding Nowra Bridge project. If you no longer wish to receive this type of email communication from the project, unsubscribe below. View the [Privacy Policy](#).

Display poster



**Transport for NSW is seeking feedback on the historic Nowra Bridge which will be repurposed following completion of the Nowra Bridge project.**

**Historic Nowra Bridge**

The 1881 heritage-listed whipple truss bridge across the Shoalhaven River at Nowra is an unofficial gateway to the South Coast and one of its heritage icons. The historic bridge has carried traffic for 140 years and will begin a new phase in its life to carry pedestrians and cyclists when the new bridge, now being built, is opened. As part of this change we want your feedback on what opportunities this creates, and what else we could do to create a sustainable, flexible and exciting future for the historic bridge.

**Have your say**

We want feedback and ideas from the community, stakeholders, businesses, transport customers and visitors on what could be included as part of this repurposing project. Complete the survey at [nswroads.work/OldNowraBridge](https://nswroads.work/OldNowraBridge) or via the QR code. Feedback closes **Friday 4 February 2022**. You can also email or write to us via the details below.



**Our goal is to help create a place where community and visitors can visit, explore, learn and interact, as well as a place that acknowledges the heritage of the bridge, promotes active transport and connects the Nowra foreshores.**



The historic Nowra Bridge at road level

**Key considerations for repurposing**

- Heritage**  
The original Nowra Bridge is a rare example of a pin-jointed whipple truss bridge and it is listed on a number of heritage registers as having local and state significance. The historical and structural significance of the old bridge was a key factor in the decision to retain it. It also limits our repurposing options and any proposal will need to be sympathetic to the bridge's existing heritage value and appearance. We are interested to know how we can acknowledge and celebrate heritage in the repurposing.



Construction of the historic bridge, around 1880

**Aboriginal history**

The Shoalhaven River has strong significance to Aboriginal people who have an ongoing connection to the river and surrounding land. We are interested to hear how we can incorporate Aboriginal stories and history into the repurposed bridge.

**Interactive**

The historic bridge is about six metres wide and 342 metres long. It would be a safe and accessible active transport path and a place where community and visitors could interact with each other and the area. We are interested to know how you would use and interact with the bridge.

**Tourism**

The historic Nowra Bridge is an unofficial gateway to the South Coast for holiday makers. It has an attractive outlook over the Shoalhaven River, and could have potential as a tourist drawcard. We are interested to know how it could appeal to visitors.

**Green space**

Feedback from 2014 included suggestions for planting and vegetation to beautify the space or as a source of shade.

**What Isn't feasible**

- A number of suggestions received during previous consultation are not achievable:
- The bridge is operationally unsuitable to cater for future traffic demands or rail usage, and will be closed to vehicles once the new bridge is open
  - Options that restrict ongoing maintenance or pose safety concerns
  - Market stalls present significant safety impacts given the narrow width of the bridge and environment concerns with run-off or pollution into the river
  - Major changes to the appearance of the steel truss structure would not align with heritage requirements.



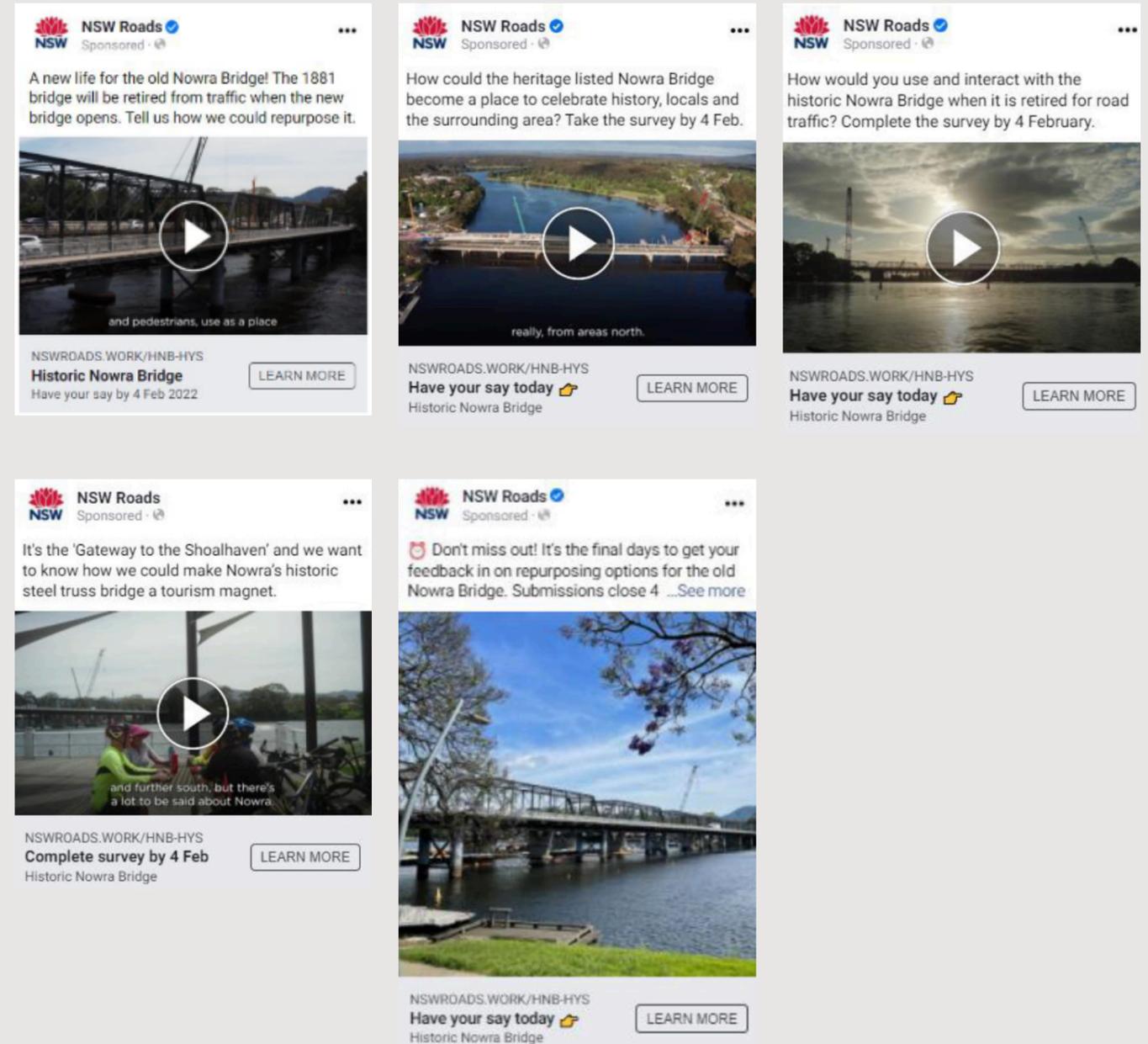
Shoalhaven River at sunrise, looking east



**Contact us:** If you have any questions or would like to know more about the repurposing project please contact our project team  
 @ [NowraBridgeProject@transport.nsw.gov.au](mailto:NowraBridgeProject@transport.nsw.gov.au) | **Nowra Bridge team, PO Box 477 Wollongong NSW 2500**  
 📄 [nswroads.work/OldNowraBridge](https://nswroads.work/OldNowraBridge) | 🏠 **Community Display Centre, 14 Moss Street, Nowra NSW 2541**

Pub No. 21.528

Social media advertising



Decal



Digital advertising



