



Australian Government

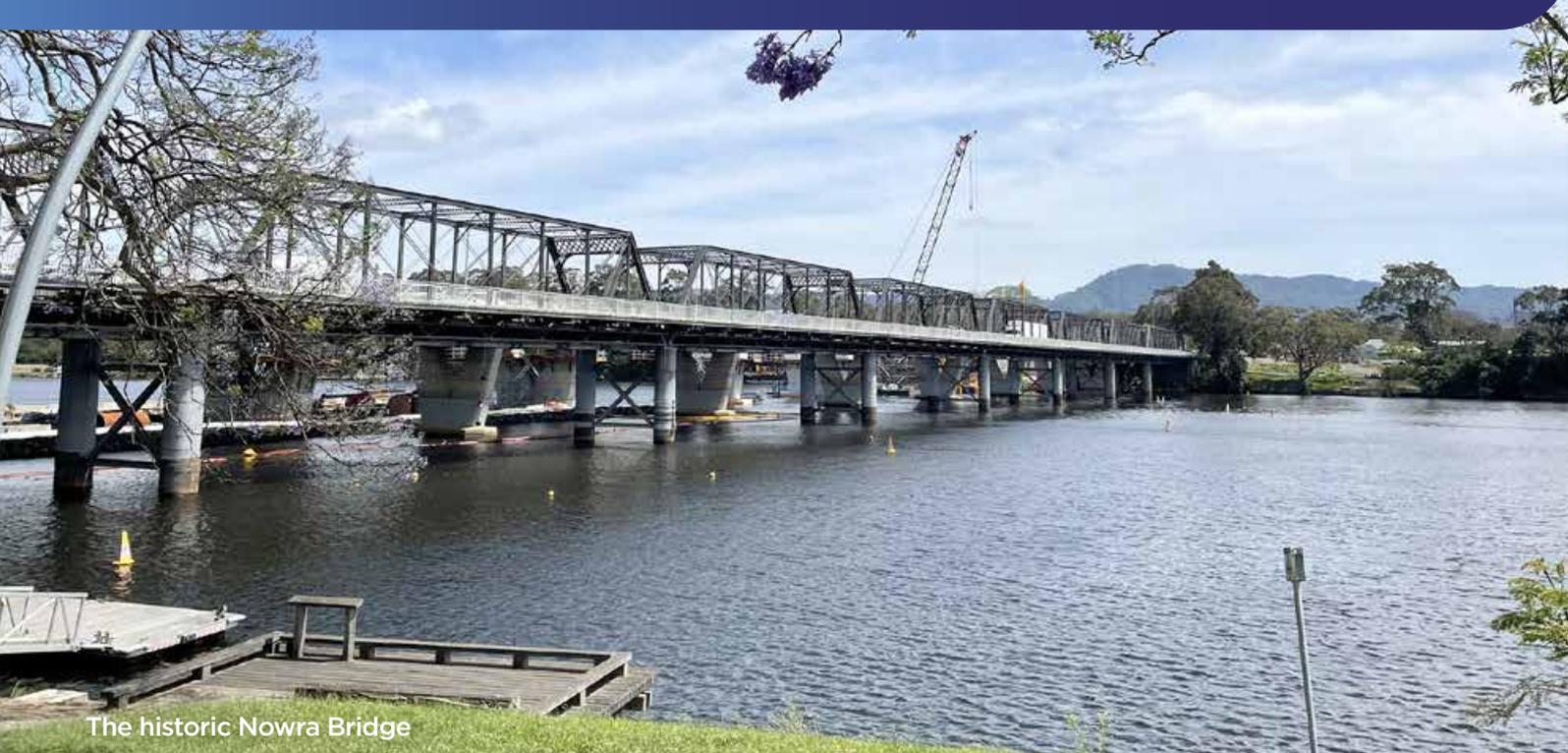
BUILDING OUR FUTURE



Transport for NSW

Historic Nowra Bridge

Have your say | December 2021



The historic Nowra Bridge

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 or via the **QR code** on the back page. You can also email or write to us.

Feedback closes **Friday 4 February 2022**.

**Have
your
say**

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 720 submissions were received with 540 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 tourism 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.

Consultation and next steps

We want to hear your suggestions on how these themes can be incorporated into the repurposing, while also considering safety, the environment and ongoing maintenance activities.

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 in late 2022..



Construction of the historic bridge, around 1880

Process and timing of the repurposing

Nowra Bridge project

Nowra Bridge project construction

We are here



Historic Nowra Bridge repurposing

Inspection and investigations on the old Nowra Bridge

We are here

Have your say on the old Nowra Bridge

We are here

Identify scope for repurposing

Old Nowra Bridge review of environmental factors (REF)

Display REF and repurposing proposal

New bridge complete

Move traffic onto new bridge and complete highway upgrade

Further investigation of old 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 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. Some ideas could be:

- signage with history of the bridge and Shoalhaven River
- themed history stations
- reinstatement of the timber deck
- removal of the attached outside pathway added in 1980.

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
- interpretative 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 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. Some ideas could be:

- mapped walking path
- children's stations (with binoculars, port holes to the side and through the deck)
- viewing stations
- seating
- rotating art installation
- safety lighting for night use.



Cyclists enjoying a break on the southern foreshore

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.



Existing history signage on the southern foreshore

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 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.

Work required for repurposing

Before the heritage-listed bridge moves into its next phase of life, a number of critical actions are required. The full extent of work required will be assessed in the review of environmental factors later next year.

Investigations

Inspections are now starting to be carried out on the bridge which will inform the repair and maintenance works required. These investigations include above and below water inspections as well as structural analysis.

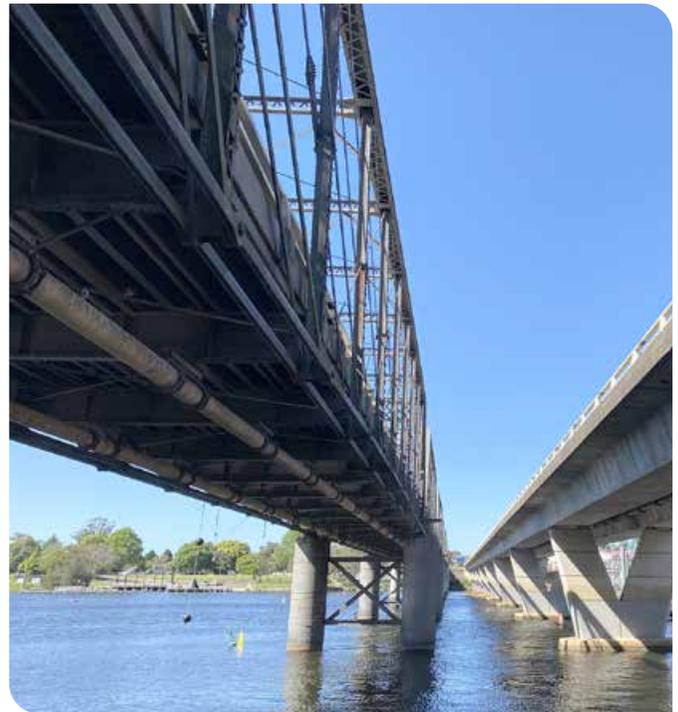
Maintenance

There are a number of maintenance considerations associated with repurposing. Work to prepare the bridge and repaint it would take 18 months to two years from when work starts and there would be no access available during this time.

Lead paint removal and repainting

The bridge has around 13,800 square metres of iron (the same area as about two football fields) that would need to be prepared and repainted prior to repurposing. This is essential to protect the iron trusses from rust, which is one of the most important factors in conserving the bridge and preserving its look and structure. Repainting will address existing corrosion on the bridge and reduce future corrosion.

Lead paint remains on some parts of the old bridge which were not able to be accessed during previous repaints. The extent of this work will be investigated, however it will require full containment and encapsulation of the bridge as per the diagram below.



View of the existing southbound and northbound bridges from the northern foreshore



The historic Nowra Bridge at road level



The process of removing old paint and repainting



Connecting communities



Preserving heritage



Promoting active transport

Foundation and pier stabilisation work

Some of the existing piles and piers have been strengthened with temporary supports. No further pier strengthening is required at this stage but they may need to be upgraded or replaced in the future to enable ongoing use.

Bridge deck

Once traffic is moved off the bridge the concrete deck will need to be repaired or replaced. Waterproofing will also be required to protect the steel elements from corrosion. Originally this bridge had a timber deck and we are interested to hear your ideas for the bridge deck – whether it should be timber, concrete, or other material, and if design elements could be incorporated into it.

Bridge railings

The bridge parapets will need to be upgraded to new pedestrian handrails to ensure safety. Consideration must also be given to whether the bridge should be enclosed with mesh or potential fencing to prevent people from climbing the trusses.

Pedestrian pathway

There is a pathway attached to the bridge which was installed in 1980. The bridge itself will be repurposed for pedestrians and cyclists and we are interested to know whether the attached path should be removed or whether there are other opportunities for it.

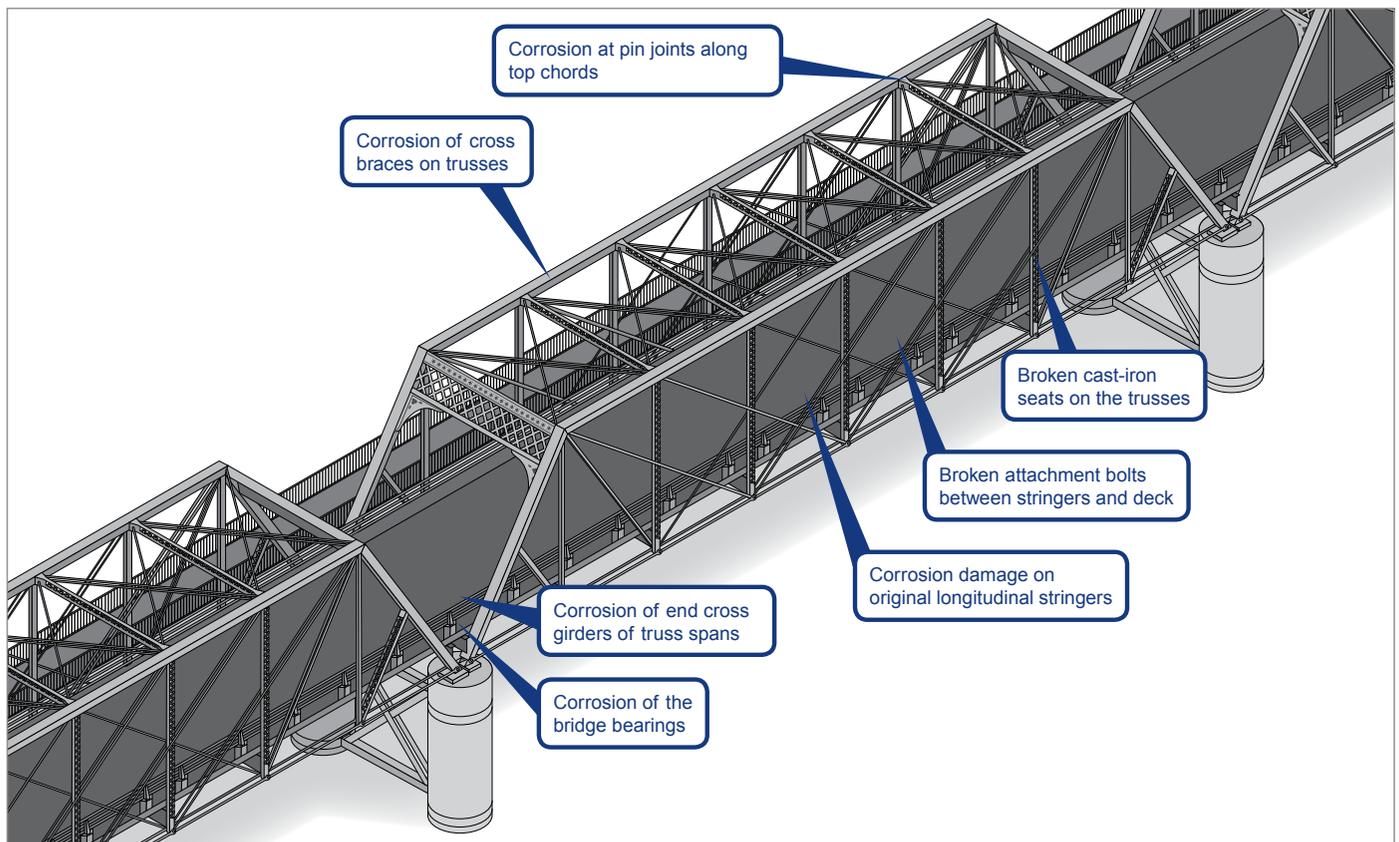
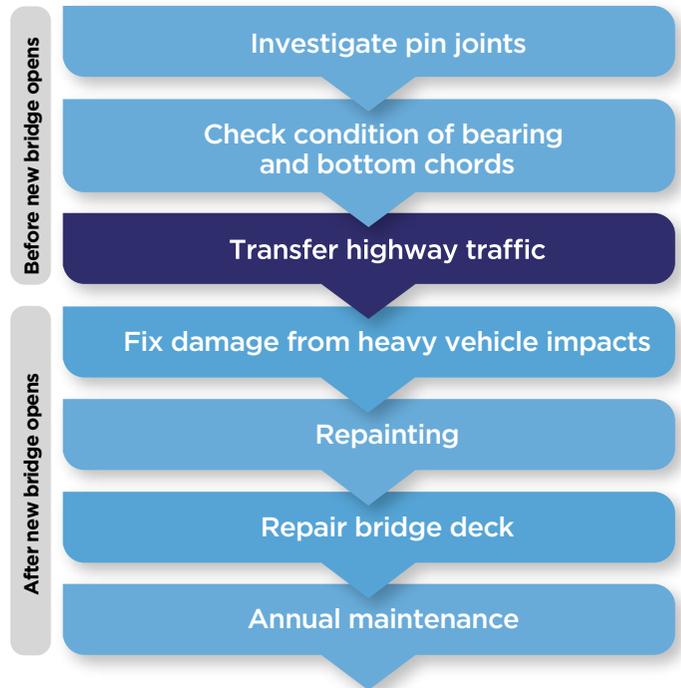


Ongoing maintenance

Once repaired and repurposed, the bridge would need to be continually maintained.

The bridge will remain a Transport for NSW asset and will be managed and maintained by Transport.

Process and timing of repair work



Key areas of maintenance required on the bridge



Shoalhaven River at sunrise, looking east



Connections to the bridge

This consultation focuses on opportunities for how the bridge itself can be repurposed. Landscaping on the foreshore, transitions on and off the bridge and how it connects to other paths is detailed in the Urban Design and Landscape Plan. This is available on the Nowra Bridge project webpage.



Artist impression of the three bridges across the Shoalhaven River

Contact us:

If you have any questions or would like to know more about the repurposing of the bridge please contact the project team or visit the project webpage.

@ NowraBridgeProject@transport.nsw.gov.au

nswroads.work/OldNowraBridge

Nowra Bridge team, PO Box 477
Wollongong NSW 2500

You can also visit the community display centre for the Nowra Bridge project:

14 Moss Street, Nowra NSW 2541

Complete the survey. Scan the QR code to visit the project webpage.



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