

Consultation Outcomes Report

Bridge renewal at Old Bangalow Road, Byron Bay

July 2025



UGL Regional Linx and Transport for NSW invited the Bangalow community to take part in a survey to help identify any issues or impacts that the bridge renewal at Old Bangalow Road, Byron Bay, might have on the community.

Executive Summary

Overview

This Consultation Outcomes Report (report) relates to the community and stakeholder consultation undertaken for the delivery of major works at the Old Bangalow Road bridge renewal project.

The purpose of the consultation was to understand:

- how the work may impact the community
- how the bridge is currently used
- ways to mitigate any risks to the community and local surroundings during the bridge closure.

The report provides an overview of how stakeholders were involved, what was learned, and how feedback was considered.

The project is located on Old Bangalow Road, Byron Bay.

Project background

Old Bangalow Road overbridge (bridge) is approximately 19.2 metres long and spans the non-operational Casino to Murwillumbah rail line. Currently restricted to a 5 tonne load limit, the existing three-span timber bridge will be demolished and replaced with a steel arch bridge. The road over the bridge will be widened to allow two vehicles to pass, improving the structure's performance and reinstating a general access load limit of 42.5 tonne.

Key project elements include:

- Demolition of the existing superstructure.
- Construction of a multi-plate arch bridge beneath the current road alignment, involving approximately one metre of excavation.
- Erection of a retaining wall adjacent to the steel arch bridge.
- Upgrading the bridge to current standards.
- Relocation of services as necessary.

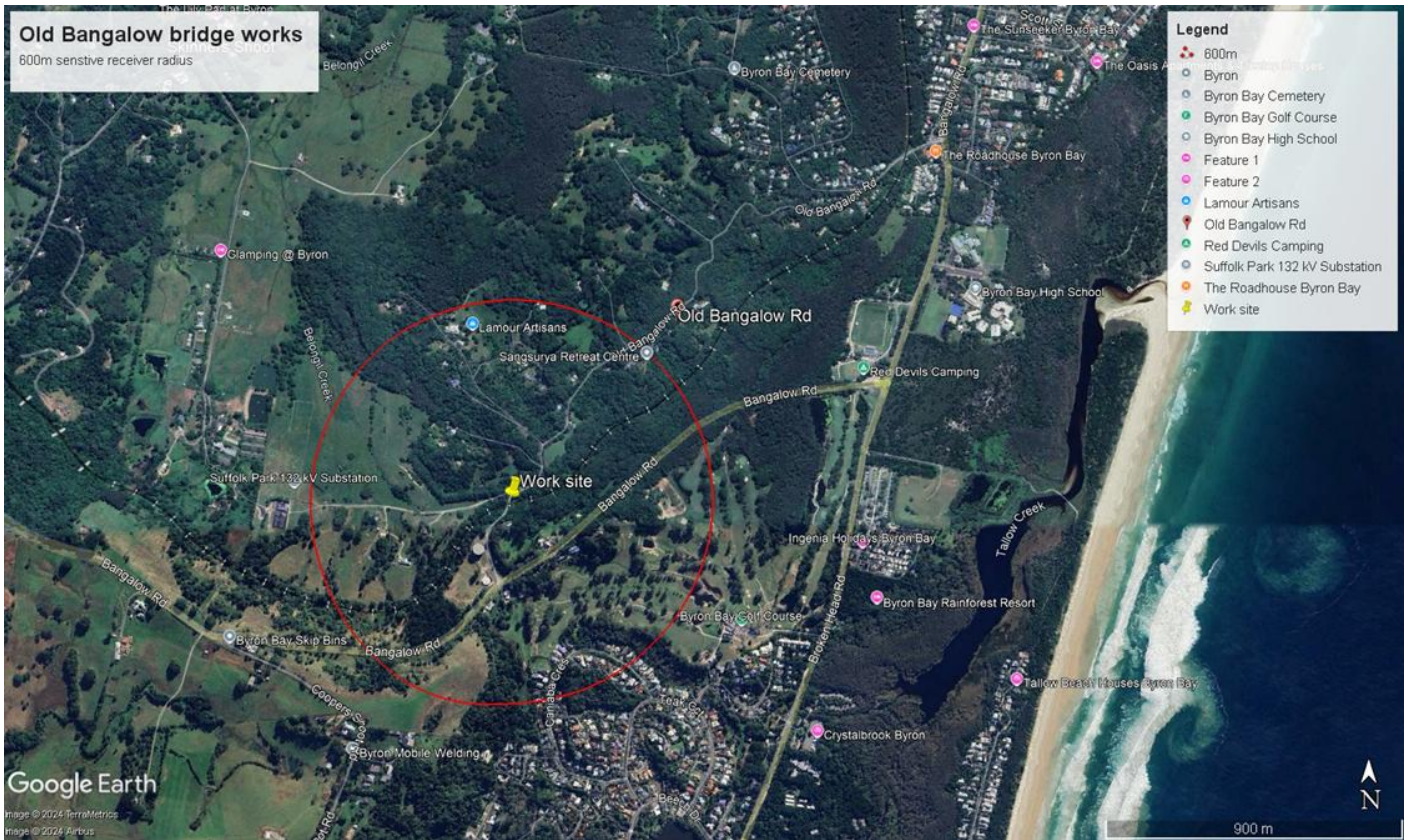


Figure 1: Map of location of the bridge location, identified by a yellow pin, and the surrounding area.

Consultation objectives

We engaged with the community and stakeholders to:

- inform stakeholders about the project
- listen to key stakeholders and community
- understand local concerns and expectations
- build strong relationships through open communication.

Snapshot of consultation

The consultation reached and engaged a wide range of stakeholders, including the community, through various consultation activities.

A snapshot of the consultation is presented below.



Figure 2: Snapshot of consultation.

Consultation Outcome

Community feedback indicated strong overall support for the proposed bridge renewal, with many residents recognising the long-term benefits the project would bring to the area. However, concerns were raised about the temporary inconvenience caused by detours during the construction phase, which were identified as the most significant impact.

Given the bridge’s location and the low population density of the surrounding area, direct face-to-face engagement with affected residents proved to be the most effective method of consultation. This approach helped build trust, provided clarity around the project’s scope and timeline, and enabled the community to better understand the necessity and benefits of the renewal works.

Key themes identified in the feedback include:

- Road safety: There is strong concern about the narrowness of Old Bangalow Road, lack of footpaths, and road safety speeds for vehicles. Residents frequently mentioned the danger to pedestrians and cyclists.
- Bridge usage: While some use the bridge daily, others only occasionally. Many noted that alternative routes exist, reducing dependency on the bridge, and there was overall agreement from the community that the bridge renewal would provide long term benefits.
- Emergency services: Multiple responses highlighted the importance of maintaining access for emergency services like SES, ambulance, and fire brigade. UGLRL are working closely with emergency services to ensure access remains available.

We thank the community for their contributions and have carefully considered the feedback received. Given the overall community support for the project’s benefits, **UGLRL will commence construction and renew the bridge at Old Bangalow Road, Byron Bay, from 18 August 2025 to mid-February 2026.**

Consultation Methodology

How the consultation was done

To ensure broad participation, we used multiple ways to connect with the community and key stakeholders. These include:

- **Online survey:** Community consultation was conducted through an online survey available on the NSW Government Have Your Say website. Community consultation was open from **2 May 2025** to **31 May 2025**.
- **Community hub:** UGL Regional Linx and Transport for NSW hosted a Community Hub at the Bangalow Bowlo on 28 May 2025, where the team spoke to 21 community members.
- **Emails and phone calls:** A combination of emails and phone calls were made to Byron Shire Council, Tamara Smith MP, NSW Police, NSW Ambulance, Far North Coast Rural Fire Service, Northern Rivers State Emergency Service, Forestry Corporation, local bus services, and waste services.
- **Website:** Information on the project was posted on the Transport for NSW website, the UGL Regional Linx website and on the NSW Government Have Your Say website.
- **Social media:** Three geo-targeted Facebook campaigns ran between 2 May 2025 to 31 May 2025.
- **Radio:** Three radio advertisements were placed from 23 May 2025 to 28 May 2025 to promote the Community Hub.
- **Notification:** Community notifications were mailed to 207 residents.
- **Phone calls:** The project team contacted members of the community who had provided feedback at the community hub on 28 May 2025.

Who we spoke to

- Local residents and families
- Byron Shire Council
- Tamara Smith, MP
- Emergency services
- Forestry corporation
- Bus and waste service providers.

Consultation Process

The consultation process consisted of the following stages:

Who	Transport Stakeholders	Local Council	Community Consultation
When	Feb – March 2025	March – May 2025	May 2025
How	Emails, phone calls and meetings.	Emails, phone calls and meetings.	Emails, phone calls, community notifications and community hub event.
Why	Determine consultation approach and methodology.	Gather insights into project impacts and outcomes for community.	Gather insights into project impacts and outcomes for locals and community.

Figure 3: Consultation process

Communication collateral, media and community and stakeholder consultation activities included:

Community consultation	17 responses to the online survey 464 visits to the Have Your Say consultation webpage 207 residents received 1 community notification 362 views on Transport project webpage and UGLRL website 3 targeted Facebook posts received reached 64,625 people 1 community hub event
Stakeholder consultation	26 stakeholders targeted via email, such as local Council, Rural Fire Service and local MP.
Media	3 radio advertisements reaching approximately 3000 people

Figure 4: Communications collateral, media and activities.

Summary of feedback

See below a summary of feedback received from consultation and UGLRL's response.

Feedback raised	UGLRL's response
Concerns raised about the project's impact on increasing traffic volume and speed. The bridge is currently not used very often and the bridge renewal may encourage this.	The bridge has reached the end of its lifespan and needs to be replaced to meet current engineering and safety standards. The new bridge will improve load capacity and restore safe two-way access, with one traffic lane in each direction. While improved usability may lead to a minor increase in traffic volume over time, no significant congestion impacts are anticipated. The design aims to support reliable and efficient travel for the local community. This bridge has been designed with both short-term and long-term needs in mind, with a 100 year lifespan to accommodate the future population growth of the area.
Concerns around road safety.	<p>Safety is a critical component of the project. The new bridge design complies with relevant standards and specifications and includes appropriate guardrail barriers, erosion control measures, and engineered pavement. Traffic management will be in place throughout construction to ensure the safety of all road users.</p> <p>Many residents also raised concerns about road safety unrelated to the bridge renewal project. Residents were provided with feedback and contact details to reach out to the road maintainer (Byron Shire Council) to discuss the options.</p> <p>Transport for NSW will also consider the possibility of conducting a speed zone review for Old Bangalow Road. The speed limit is currently 60 km/h.</p>

Concerns around impact to wildlife and the environment.

UGLRL acknowledges the community's concerns around impact to the environment. Environmental protections will be in place, including site-specific Environmental Management Plans, erosion and sediment control measures, and assessments under the Review of Environmental Factors (REF). Disturbed areas will be stabilised post-construction using methods such as jute mesh and revegetation.

Indirect impacts of construction may include alteration to wildlife connectivity and habitat fragmentation, edge effects on adjacent native vegetation and habitat, invasion and spread of weeds, invasion of pests, invasion and spread of pathogens and disease, and noise, light and vibration impacts. These can be reduced by implementing the provided mitigation and management measures:

- Stop-work procedure on the chance encounter of any dispersing wildlife during works should be implemented to avoid death or injury;
- Ensure that a suitable qualified ecologist is present during the disturbance and/or removal of flora/fauna habitat to act as a spotter/catcher.
- Ensure that all captured animals are relocated into the nearest suitable native vegetation, including the microbat finds protocol.
- Ensure that all injured animals are taken to a local wildlife carer for treatment
- Fenced off and labelled No-Go zones for any spotted threatened flora species, and appropriate records made of location and species.

Concerns around detour but overall support for long term benefits.

Some residents raised concerns about the inconvenience of the detours, but were generally supportive that the works will provide long-term benefit.

Consider implementing footpaths and cycleways for pedestrian access

UGLRL understands the interest in providing pedestrian and cyclist access. However, a footpath is not included in the current scope of works. The project has been scoped and approved based on specific requirements, and pedestrian infrastructure was not identified as part of those requirements.

Some residents also raised concerns over pedestrian and cyclist access during construction. Unfortunately, due to the nature of the work, temporary access will not be available.

Requests for the old timber bridge to be recycled for private or community use.	Some structurally adequate timber bearers may be salvaged and stored in the maintenance yard for potential reuse in the repair of other timber bridges within the Country Regional Network. Other timber elements will be assessed based on condition, heritage, and environmental considerations before disposal or reuse.
Access for emergency services	UGLRL are working closely with emergency services to ensure that any detours or closures do not impact emergency services.

Next steps

The next steps for the project include:

- Inform community and residents of construction dates
- Site establishment
- Construction
- Keep the community informed as the project progresses.

Transport for NSW and UGLRL will continue working closely with Byron Shire Council on the road safety review and will keep the community informed.

Stay involved

To stay up to date on project progress or to register to receive updates, please visit the project website at: <https://www.transport.nsw.gov.au/projects/current-projects/old-bangalow-road-byron-bay>

If you have questions or ideas, you can contact us at:

- Email: enquiry@uglregionallinx.com.au
- Phone: 1300 661 390.