



**KEMPSEY**  
Shire Council

## **DIRECTOR SHIRE SERVICES REPORT**

13<sup>th</sup> February 2007

<b>DSS3</b>	<b>TIMBER BRIDGE PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM</b>
	<b>FILE: 61 NJT {Folio No. *}</b>

### **SUMMARY:**

Reporting on the Timber Bridge Partnership Program.

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### **DESCRIPTION:**

Council has received advice from the Hon Eric Roozendaal, MLC, Minister for Roads, regarding the NSW Government's \$60 million Timber Bridge Partnership Program.

The Program will provide \$20 million per year for three years commencing in the current financial year. On 29<sup>th</sup> October 2006, the Premier announced the commencement of the program and advised of the projects that would be funded in this current year.

The program targets council managed timber bridges on Regional Roads. Funding will be provided on a dollar for dollar matching basis.

The RTA has recently provided a copy of the Program Guidelines and is seeking submissions from councils for projects in 2007 / 2008 and 2008 / 2009. All projects submitted will receive consideration on a priority basis in accordance with the assessment criteria.

Council has three remaining timber bridges on the Armidale Road requiring replacement and widening. The timber bridge over Woolshed Gully has recently been replaced this financial year. Because Council will need to contribute to the program on a dollar for dollar basis, and as the program is scheduled to run, at this time, only for a two year period and given the high cost of bridge replacement, it is proposed that Council only submit one project for consideration under the program. Council's highest priority is the replacement of the bridge over Nulla Nulla Creek on the eastern approach to Bellbrook, followed by the replacement of the bridge over Mungay Creek. This priority is reflected in Council's 10 year budget.

The program guidelines indicate that the RTA will determine priorities for funding in accordance with assessment criteria that include traffic volumes, heavy vehicle volumes and horizontal approach alignments. Given these criteria, the bridge near Mungay Creek would receive a higher priority for funding than the bridge over Nulla Nulla Creek.

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It is proposed, therefore, that Council submit an application for funding under the program for Mungay Creek Bridge. Should the application be successful, the replacement of Nulla Nulla Creek Bridge would be deferred for 1 - 2 years until after the construction of Mungay Creek Bridge. If the application was unsuccessful, Council would replace Nulla Nulla Creek Bridge first as currently proposed.

The preliminary revised estimate of cost to replace and upgrade the Mungay Creek Bridge to a two lane concrete bridge including approaches is \$1,100,000. This estimate has been revised in line with recent increases in costs as experienced with the bridge over Trial Bay Creek, Collombatti.

Council's ten year draft budget provides for the replacement of Nulla Nulla Creek bridge over two years (2007 / 08 and 2008 / 09) with funding being sourced from the Block Grant Program (\$120,000 per year for two years) and the balance funded from loans.

There is no guarantee of funding as projects will be selected on a bid process throughout NSW. If Council was successful in obtaining funding under the program, Council would be in a position to reduce its Loan Borrowing or alternatively to accelerate the proposed replacement of Nulla Nulla Creek bridge.

## **REPORT IMPLICATIONS:**

- *Environmental*

*Nil*

- *Social*

*Nil.*

- *Economic (Financial)*

*The financial implications from the following recommendation is that \$120,000pa be set aside from the Regional Road Block Grant over 2 years, and that provision of \$130,000 in 2007 / 08, and \$180,000 in 2008 / 09 be made from loan funds to fund the balance of Council's contribution.*

- *Policy or Statutory*

*Nil.*

- *Director's Review*

*The Mungay Creek Bridge replacement project would receive a higher priority for funding under the program guidelines and should therefore be submitted ahead of Nulla Nulla Creek Bridge.*

## **RECOMMENDATION:**

**That Council submit an application for funding under the Timber Bridge Partnership Program for the replacement and upgrading of the Mungay Creek Bridge on Armidale Road.**

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**A P Vermeulen**  
**DIRECTOR SHIRE SERVICES**