

DIRECTOR ENGINEERING REPORT

11th May 2004

DE7 REGIONAL ROAD TIMBER BRIDGE PROGRAM
FILE: B6-2 NJT

SUMMARY:

Reporting on the Regional Roads Timber Bridge Program.



At the Council meeting on 9th March 2004, Council considered a report on the Regional Road Timber Bridge Program and a copy of the report is attached as [\(Appendix C\)](#). Council resolved:

“That the Director report back to Council with traffic data for each bridge, alternate routes available and social and economic impacts of not replacing.”

At the Council meeting on 13th April 2004, Council considered a further report on the Regional Road Timber Bridge Program and resolved:

“That this item be deferred until the May 2004 meeting.”

Following the NSW Government April 2004 Mini-Budget, the Minister for Roads announced that the 7 year program to help regional councils replace their timber road bridges on Regional roads will start in July 2006, 2 years later than planned.

Although this announcement has delayed the commencement of the program it is considered that Council should endorse the submission and provide funds in future budgets including the 5 year Financial Plan.

As reported previously it is estimated that the cost of replacement of the 5 timber bridges on Regional Roads in Kempsey Shire, including approach roadworks, is \$4.17M. With the RTA contribution of 50% of the total cost of the replacement of the bridges, Council will need to find its share, i.e. \$2.085M, over the 7 years of the program. The estimates shown are indicative only for planning purposes. Exact costs will be subject to final design, and negotiations regarding apportionment between Council staff and the RTA.

No provision has been made in the forward estimates for such funding and Council's funding sources are limited. It would seem unwise to utilise more than, say, \$120,000 per annum from the Regional Road Block Grant Program for this program, due to the consequent reductions on the roadworks program.

Council is providing a reserve fund for Bridge Construction but this is currently earmarked for Council's Bridge Construction program for bridges on

Local Roads, and any diversion of funds will delay works on Council owned bridges.

Approximately \$155,000 to \$202,500 per year would need to be sourced from either Loan Funds, Revenue or Working Funds. Loans funds would seem most affordable.

The RTA has sought a funding profile under the program, and Council has not committed any funds at this stage. Table 1 outlines the likely funding profile over the 7-year life of the program:

TABLE 1

Bridge	Estimate	Year	Funding Proposed			Total
			RTA	Regional Road Block Grant	Loan Funds	
Woolshed Gully (\$160,000)	\$160,000	2006/07	\$80,000	\$80,000		\$160,000
Nulla Nulla Ck (\$915,000)	\$390,000	2006/07	\$195,000	\$40,000	\$155,000	\$390,000
Nulla Nulla Ck	\$525,000	2007/08	\$262,500	\$100,000	\$162,500	\$525,000
Perrets Bridge (\$1,000,000)	\$40,000	2007/08	\$20,000	\$20,000		\$40,000
Perrets Bridge	\$580,000	2008/09	\$290,000	\$120,000	\$170,000	\$580,000
Perrets Bridge	\$380,000	2009/10	\$190,000	\$60,000	\$130,000	\$380,000
Mungay Ck (\$815,000)	\$215,000	2009/10	\$107,500	\$60,000	\$47,500	\$215,000
Mungay Ck	\$600,000	2010/11	\$300,000	\$115,000	\$185,000	\$600,000
Devils Nook Ck (\$1,280,000)	\$10,000	2010/11	\$5,000	\$5,000		\$10,000
Devils Nook Ck	\$625,000	2011/12	\$312,500	\$120,000	\$192,500	\$625,000
Devils Nook Ck	\$645,000	2012/13	\$322,500	\$120,000	\$202,500	\$645,000
TOTAL	\$4,170,000		\$2,085,000	\$840,000	\$1,245,000	\$4,170,000

TABLE 2

Bridge	Road	Location	Chainage (km) from Kempsey	Length (m)	No of Spans	Erected	Traffic (Average Daily Traffic Count)
Perrets Bridge	South West Rocks Rd	Jerseyville	30.73	38.5	3	1935	1500
Woolshed Gully	Armidale Rd	Temagog	23.83	8.3	1	1936	892
Mungay Ck	Armidale Rd	Willawarrin	25.36	36	4	1938	795
Devils Nook Ck	Armidale Rd	Bellbrook	43.46	36.4	4	1939	240
Nulla Nulla Ck	Armidale Rd	Bellbrook	50.74	48	4	1936	276

This program has been forwarded to the RTA.

The timber bridges are approximately 70 years old. The estimated life of a timber bridge is 50 years. Significant funds are currently being spent on these bridges (\$105,000 for Devils Nook Bridge in 02/03, \$40,000 for Mungay Creek Bridge in 00/01). All the bridges are single lane and, over the next few years, will require a significant injection of funds to maintain their serviceability.

Perrets Bridge

This bridge is a single lane bridge over Spencers Creek at Jerseyville on South West Rocks Road.

The existing bridge provides a link between Kempsey and the Lower Macleay area, and South West Rocks.

South West Rocks Road is a Regional Road under the care and control of Kempsey Shire Council. Council receives funds under the Regional Road Block Grant Program to maintain or improve this road.

It is considered that this funding for South West Rocks Road would be in jeopardy if Perrets Bridge was not replaced at some future stage.

There are alternative routes to South West Rocks via Summer Island Road from Smithtown and Plummers Lane from the Pacific Highway. These alternate routes would not be considered as satisfactory for the fast growing township of South West Rocks, the present tourist road status, school and community bus routes, emergency vehicles, freight deliveries, inconvenience, and people commuting to places of work.

Residents on the east side of Spencers Creek in Jerseyville itself, as well as, Kinchela and Hat Head residents will be unable to access South West Rocks, or the Pacific Highway to the north, unless they head south to Smithtown and then north again along Summer Island Road and then Plummers Lane

Bridges on the Armidale Road

The timber bridges on Armidale Road provide an important link for the residents of the Upper Macleay.

If Nulla Nulla Creek and Devils Nook Bridges were not replaced, no alternative access can be provided to the Bellbrook, Comara and other Upper Macleay Residents. The only alternative access is via the tablelands towards Armidale.

The only alternative access to Woolshed Gully and Mungay Creek Bridge would be a diversion to the western side of the Macleay River along Willi Willi Road and back over Toorooka Bridge. This is not considered a serious alternative.

The lack of bridges at these locations would deny access to Kempsey and the Pacific Highway, for commercial, schooling, commuting to places of employment, and emergency services.

It is considered that Council should accept this unprecedented opportunity to obtain 50% funding to replace and widen these bridges. As the bridges are nearly 70 years old, even without this funding, Council would be required to provide a significant injection of funds into the maintenance and upgrading/replacement of these bridges.

Director's comment:

Council needs to be aware of the requirement to set aside funding over 7 years from 2006-2013 as its contribution to this program and is urged to support the recommendation. The program will allow Council to replace existing old single lane timber bridges with 2 lane concrete bridges that comply with current traffic volumes and load requirements of Australian Standards.

Other Implications:

There are no policy or statutory implications from the following recommendation.

Financial Implications:

The financial implications from the following recommendation is that \$120,000pa be set aside from the Regional Road Block Grant over 7 years, and that provision of \$155,000 to \$202,500pa be made in future budgets to fund the balance of Council's contribution.

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1. That the Regional Road Timber Bridge Programme as submitted be endorsed.**
- 2. That \$120,000pa be set aside from future Regional Road Block Grant funding, and that provision of \$155,000 to \$202,500 per annum be made in future budgets from 2006-2013 to fund the balance of Council's contribution to the Regional Road Timber Bridge Program.**
- 3. That the draft budget be amended to reflect the program.**

K J Finnie
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