



Artist's impression of the new Grafton bridge

Grafton Bridge project update

April 2017

The NSW Government is funding the \$240 million new Grafton bridge. This update outlines recent progress on the project and upcoming work.

Most of the work done so far has been to prepare the relevant areas for bridge construction. Key construction activities which have happened since the last update include:

- completing the removal of properties and structures
- continuing with flood mitigation work in South Grafton and Grafton
- starting utility relocation
- starting to build a new car park at the corner of Pound and Clarence streets
- establishment of ancillary facilities in South Grafton and Grafton
- permanent closure of a section of Pound Street and temporary closure of Greaves Street.

After consultation with an independent hydrological expert, the Office of Environment and Heritage, Clarence Valley Council and State Emergency Service, it was found that work in the Clarence River could start while the levee was still being built as it would reduce the current flood risk both upstream and downstream of the new bridge.

Consequently, the NSW Department of Planning and Environment has given permission for Fulton Hogan to start building a temporary jetty and bridge piles in the river in April. Further information can be found at the project website www.rms.nsw.gov.au/grafonbridge.

Urban Design and Landscape Plan Feedback

The Urban Design and Landscape Plan was released for public comment in November 2016. A three week consultation period was held, with the community invited to provide feedback on the design from 28 November – 16 December 2016. Five drop in sessions were held, including two at the Community Display Centre and Grafton Shopping World and one at the Clarence Valley Information Centre.

A total of 12 formal submissions were received and considered as part of the consultation. Issues raised included traffic flows and parking, visual, flooding and noise impacts of the new bridge and replacing vegetation lost due to the project.

Changes made to the plan as a result of community feedback include:

- providing circular columns for the Pound Street rail bridge
- improved architectural mesh fencing to the shared path on the bridge to improve the visual appearance
- removal of additional vegetation at Greaves Street to address community safety concerns.

The project team appreciates the feedback and thanks the community for their input.

Environmental

Wildlife rescues

The project's ecologists and environmental team have been working hard to reduce the environmental impact of the project and two recent wildlife rescues show their hard work is paying off.

Together with Grafton Wildlife Rescue (WIRES) volunteer Joan O'Shea, the project has successfully saved an eastern water dragon egg and a silver eye chick which were found in the project area.

The silver eye chick was found in a nest in a Kent Street backyard during vegetation clearing and was kept in a humidicrib and hand fed by Mrs O'Shea until it was strong enough to be released into an aviary to learn to fly ahead of being releasing back into the wild.

Mrs O'Shea was also able to incubate and hatch an eastern water dragon egg which was found on the bank of the Clarence River, which has since been released onto a local property.

"It's heartening to see wildlife nursed and nurtured back to life," Mrs O'Shea said.



Mrs O'Shea with the silver eye chick found by the project team during vegetation clearing

Recycling material

The project team aim to recycle and/or reuse as many materials as possible to reduce the impact on the environment. This has included reusing materials salvaged during property and vegetation removal and includes:

- twenty six tonnes of scrap steel
- one hundred and ten tonnes of concrete and brick reused for road base
- over 20 tonnes of floor joists and timber beams;
- salvaged doors and windows
- several steel garages and carports have been dismantled and reused
- timber from tree clearing including avocados and mangoes has been donated to community organisation the Men's Shed.



Men's Shed volunteers (from left) Bruce Carle, David Abrahams and Kevin Watkins with timber from jacaranda and eucalypts trees removed for work on the levee bank in South Grafton as part of the Grafton bridge project.

Men's Shed donation

Trees removed to allow construction of the second Grafton bridge approaches and levee system upgrade will live on in the form of furniture hand-crafted by members of the Grafton Men's Shed.

The project team donated jacaranda, avocado and macadamia trees removed in Grafton and along the city's levee banks to the Men's Shed to recycle the timber into something practical.

While the Men's Shed volunteers are keen to get their hands on the donated timber, they will have to wait until the milled timber is seasoned and dried, which will take about two years. Men's Shed volunteer David Abrahams said Men's Shed members hoped to use the timber to make a gift for the 2019 Jacaranda Queen and a sculpture to donate to the city of Grafton to commemorate the opening of the new bridge in 2019.

Traffic changes and road closures

Work in Pound and Greaves streets has seen a change to traffic conditions in those areas, including permanently closing Pound Street to through traffic between Clarence Street and Kent Street and temporarily closing Greaves Street.

The permanent closure of this section of Pound Street is essential so that utility relocation, environmental controls, earthworks and detention basin work can begin ahead of bridge embankment work starting.

The closure of Pound Street is permanent as Pound Street will become the approach road to the new bridge. Greaves Street has been temporarily closed to through traffic to allow for utilities to be relocated and earthworks to start. This work is expected to take about six months (weather permitting).

Work in South Grafton

Service relocation work started in South Grafton in February. This work includes relocating underground a proportion of high voltage power lines next to the Pacific Highway behind Bunnings warehouse. Work on the embankment which forms the southern approach to the new bridge between Through Street and the Clarence River has also commenced. An ancillary facility at 21 Through Street, South Grafton will also be established in the near future.

Levee work

Work to improve sections of the levee system is progressing well, with the work about 65 per cent complete. The levee improvements include adding earthworks and/or concrete to increase sections of the levee to offset the three centimetre rise in flood levels caused by the new bridge. This work will ensure Grafton and South Grafton will maintain the same level of flood protection. Levee work is expected to be completed by June this year, weather permitting.

Temporary jetty

Construction of a temporary jetty is due to commence in April. The jetty is made of tubular steel piles, with steel beams and a reinforced deck. It will be used to load materials (including concrete, steel and pre-cast segments) onto a river barge. In the future the precast segments will be lifted from the barge into place to form the bridge deck.

The jetty will be sufficiently long and wide and capable of supporting a large crane that will be used to erect bridge segments.

Precast facility

From early April, building will start on a precast concrete facility in the industrial area at 21 Through Street, South Grafton. This facility will make concrete segments which will be used to construct the new bridge. The facility will include two beam segment moulds, cranes, storage areas, light towers, staff amenities and light vehicle parking. It is expected to be required for about 18 months and will be decommissioned when casting work is completed.



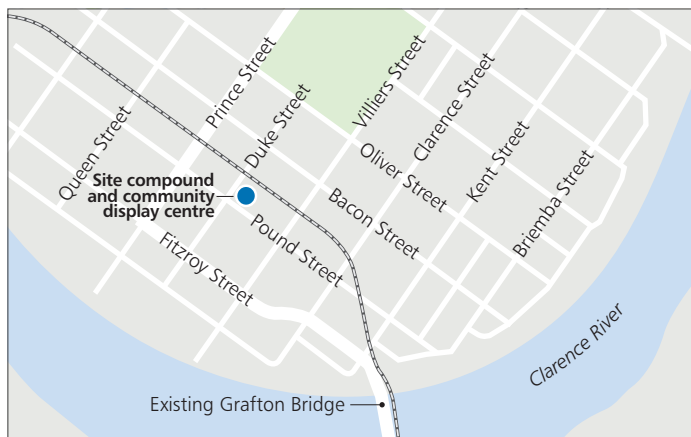
Location of temporary jetty and precast facility



Artist's impression of the new Grafton bridge alongside the existing bridge

Community display centre

The community information display centre at the main site compound (corner of Duke and Pound streets, Grafton) is open between 9am and 5pm Monday to Friday for the public to view information about the project or speak to the project team. You can access the display centre from Pound Street, following the signs to the visitor parking.



For more information

For more information about the project, please contact us:

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April 2017
RMS 17.162



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