

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

### 1. What is the Cuttagee Bridge Renewal project?

The Cuttagee Bridge Renewal project aims to replace the deteriorating Cuttagee Bridge, which is nearing the end of its functional life and is subject to weight and speed restrictions due to its poor condition.

### 2. Where is Cuttagee Bridge located?

Cuttagee Bridge is located on the Tathra-Bermagui Road and crosses the Cuttagee Lake entrance area at the northern end of Cuttagee Beach. It is a crucial road link between Barragga and Bermagui, providing access to the Sapphire Coast. The road also provides an important sealed alternative access to the Princes Highway in this region, from Tilba (or Cobargo) in the north, to Tathra, Bega and further south to Merimbula and Pambula via Sapphire Coast Drive and Arthur Kaine Drive. It provides emergency services access to an increasing residential rural population.

### 3. Why is the Cuttagee Bridge being renewed?

The bridge is in danger of a potentially serious structural failure unless remedial action is taken. The renewal is necessary to ensure the bridge remains safe, secure, and fit for purpose for decades to come. Currently, ongoing maintenance of the existing bridge is required to ensure it remains safe for public use. This maintenance is costly for Council to undertake and can require road closures that affect the local community. This maintenance burden will only get worse in the future unless renewal is undertaken.

### 4. Why doesn't Council just repair the existing bridge?

The existing bridge is past the end of its design life having been modified and repaired many times, and is no longer a good example of its type. It is not economically feasible to keep repairing as components progressively deteriorate. The best option is for a full asset renewal meeting modern standards with a 100 year design life.

The timber girders have been severely impacted by the harsh marine environment. Loss of section, and deterioration of wood including longitudinal cracks significantly impact the flexural capacity. The wooden supports are severely damaged, and all have undergone strengthening works. The steel girders have also been severely affected by the saline environment with severe localised corrosion. The concrete substructure also has severe defects including cracking of structure exposing reinforcement and corrosion.

Council is focussed on providing assets that are resilient to natural disasters, such as bushfires and flooding, to ensure the ongoing safety of the community and the functionality of the transport network— the existing bridge does not align with this key objective.

## 5. What are the design options for the new Cuttagee Bridge?

There are three concept design options being considered:

- A single-lane hybrid structure with decorative timber, attached shared pathway, and handrails.
- A two-lane hybrid structure with decorative timber, attached shared pathway, and handrails.
- A two-lane concrete structure with attached shared pathway and handrails.

There will be careful consideration and balancing of short- and long-term issues such as risk, safety, durability, economics, heritage, tourism, and the environment. Council is committed to ensuring the safety and functionality of this vital infrastructure and is seeking community input to help guide the decision-making process.

## 6. Who is responsible for the project?

Bega Valley Shire Council has engaged the services of GHD, a leading engineering and consulting firm, to partner with Council in delivering the Cuttagee Bridge Renewal project.

## 7. How is the project funded?

The project is funded by a \$15 million grant from the NSW Government under the Regional Roads Program administered by Transport for NSW.

## 8. What is the timeline for the project?

Key milestones include:

### **March 2023**

NSW Government election commitment announcement of \$15M for the Cuttagee Bridge Project.

### **31 January 2024**

Council resolved to accept offer of funding from Transport for NSW and deliver on the scope and objectives of the Agreement with amendment to only progress designs for a two-lane concrete bridge with pathway.

### **February 2024**

Council negotiated with TfNSW re-considering three concept options for the bridge replacement including single and dual lane concrete-timber hybrid options.

Funding agreement with Transport for NSW executed.

### **March - July 2024**

Tender for Project Management and Contract Administration Services.

## **October 2024**

Engineering consultancy firm, GHD Pty Ltd, engaged to undertake project management and contract administration to deliver the project as described in the funding agreement.

## **March - April 2025**

Report to Council of preferred tenderer to deliver the design on the three concept designs.

Community consultation via online Have Your Say survey. This feedback will help Council and the project team understand the community's needs and concerns, ensuring that the new bridge meets the needs and expectations of the residents and users.

## **June 2025**

Community consultation and engagement on three concept design options.

## **August 2025**

Council to determine preferred concept design option based on evaluation criteria which will include safety, asset resilience, functionality, cost, maintenance and community needs and engagement.

## **June 2026**

Anticipated completion of detailed design of preferred option based on completed site investigations, planning approvals, cost estimates and technical reviews. Invite and close tenders for construction.

## **June 2027**

Anticipated completion of construction works for the new Cuttagee Bridge.

## **9. How can the community get involved?**

Community engagement is a key element of the project. Members of the public can participate in the 'Have Your Say' survey to provide feedback on various aspects of the bridge replacement project, including design, construction, and road closures.

The initial 'Have Your Say' survey opened 18 March and closes 30 April 2025. It takes about 10 minutes to complete and covers topics such as bridge usage, road closures, community events, bridge design, and historical and aesthetic characteristics.

## **10. What are the future opportunities for community feedback?**

Once the concept design options are developed, they will be presented to the community and put on public exhibition for further consultation. This public exhibition will help Council select the preferred option to progress to the detailed design phase.

## 11. How will the community's feedback be used?

The feedback gathered from the community will help Council and the project team understand the community's needs and concerns, ensuring that the new bridge meets the needs and expectations of the residents and users. Insights from the survey will also be used to inform the construction staging methodology and how to limit disruption to the community during the construction phase.

## 12. What is the environmental impact of the project?

The Cuttagee Bridge Renewal project will consider environmental factors to minimise its impact. Temporary impacts on wildlife, water quality, and vegetation may occur during construction. The project team will work to mitigate these impacts through careful planning and adherence to environmental regulations. Additionally, the new bridge design will aim to be resilient to climate change and a changing landscape, ensuring long-term sustainability.

## 13. What is the budget for the project?

The project has a budget of \$15 million, which was committed by the NSW Government during the 2023 election. This funding is administered through Transport for NSW. While a significant contribution and step forward, this amount may not be sufficient to cover the full cost of the renewal of the bridge. If there is a funding shortfall, Council will review its options to seek additional funding.

## 14. Who can I contact for more information?

For more information you can contact:

Cuttagee Bridge renewal project team [cuttageebridge@begavalley.nsw.gov.au](mailto:cuttageebridge@begavalley.nsw.gov.au)