

Additional crossing of the Clarence River at Grafton – Recommended preferred option display

Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) has identified option C as the recommended preferred option for an additional crossing of the Clarence River at Grafton.

Your feedback is invited by **18 February 2013**.

This update shows the recommended preferred option, outlines the reasons why RMS prefers it and describes the next steps for the project.

The *Recommended Preferred Option Report* (December 2012) is available on the project website or by contacting the project team.

The report includes the process undertaken to select the recommended preferred route option, including the report on the value management workshop and community feedback received during the display of the Route Option Development Report in September and October 2012.

We are contacting property owners potentially directly affected by the recommended preferred option. If you have any questions or concerns please contact us. Contact details are on the back page.

– *Chris Clark, Project Manager*

Process to identify the recommended preferred option

RMS is working with the community to identify a preferred location for an additional crossing of the Clarence River at Grafton.

In January 2012, six route options were announced for further investigation.

In September 2012, the *Route Options Development Report* was displayed for public comment. Following close of comments on 12 October, a value management workshop was held on Tuesday 22 and Wednesday 23 October with participants from key stakeholders, the community, government agencies and the project team.

The purpose of the workshop was to consider the six options from a wide range of perspectives and evaluate the options against agreed and weighted criteria.

The workshop participants agreed that options E and C should go forward for further consideration as they provide the best balance across social, environmental and functional issues. These two options provide the greatest improvements to the efficiency of the road network including during the AM and PM peak periods for similar cost and the same value for money.

The workshop participants also found that:

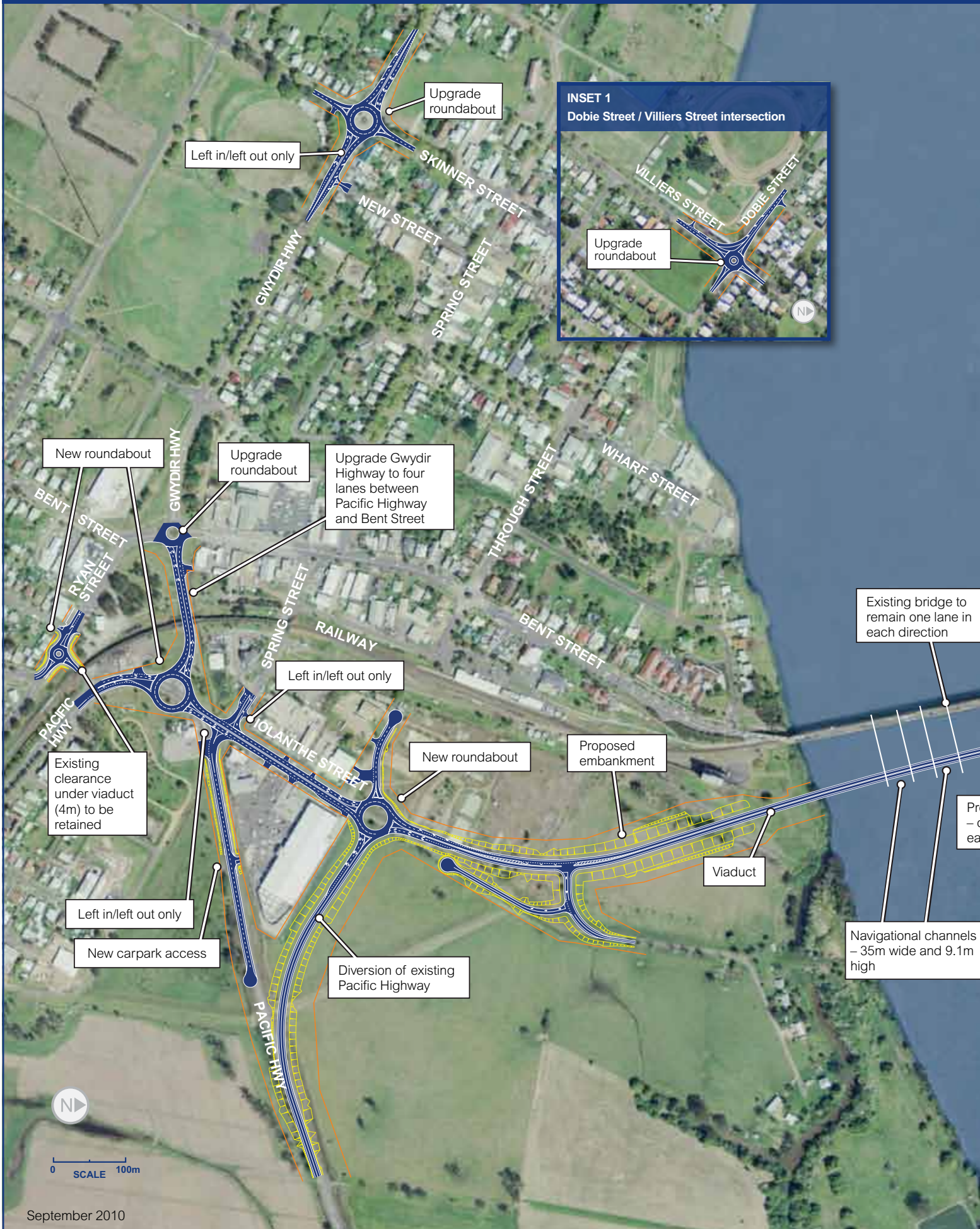
- Options 14 and 15 provided the least improvements to the efficiency of the road network including during the AM and PM peak periods. Options 14 and 15 were also among the poorest performing options when assessed against functional, socio-economic and environmental criteria, were the two most expensive options and provided the least value for money.
- Although Option 11 was the lowest cost option and provided the best value for money it was, on balance, a poorer performing option than Options E and C when assessed against functional, socio-economic and environmental criteria. In particular, Option 11 has substantial amenity impacts on a quiet residential area.
- Option A was, on balance, a poorer performing option than options E and C when assessed against functional, socio-economic and environmental criteria. It was higher cost than Option E and provided poorer value for money than both options E and C. Its disadvantages include impacts on businesses, especially along Bent Street, South Grafton.

A report on the value management workshop is available on the project website:
www.rms.nsw.gov.au/graftonbridge

Since the value management workshop, RMS has further reviewed the options, considering:

- Wider community comments received during the display of the route options.
- Outcomes from the value management workshop.
- Outcomes of the technical investigations.

OPTION C – THE RECOMMENDED PREFERRED OPTION

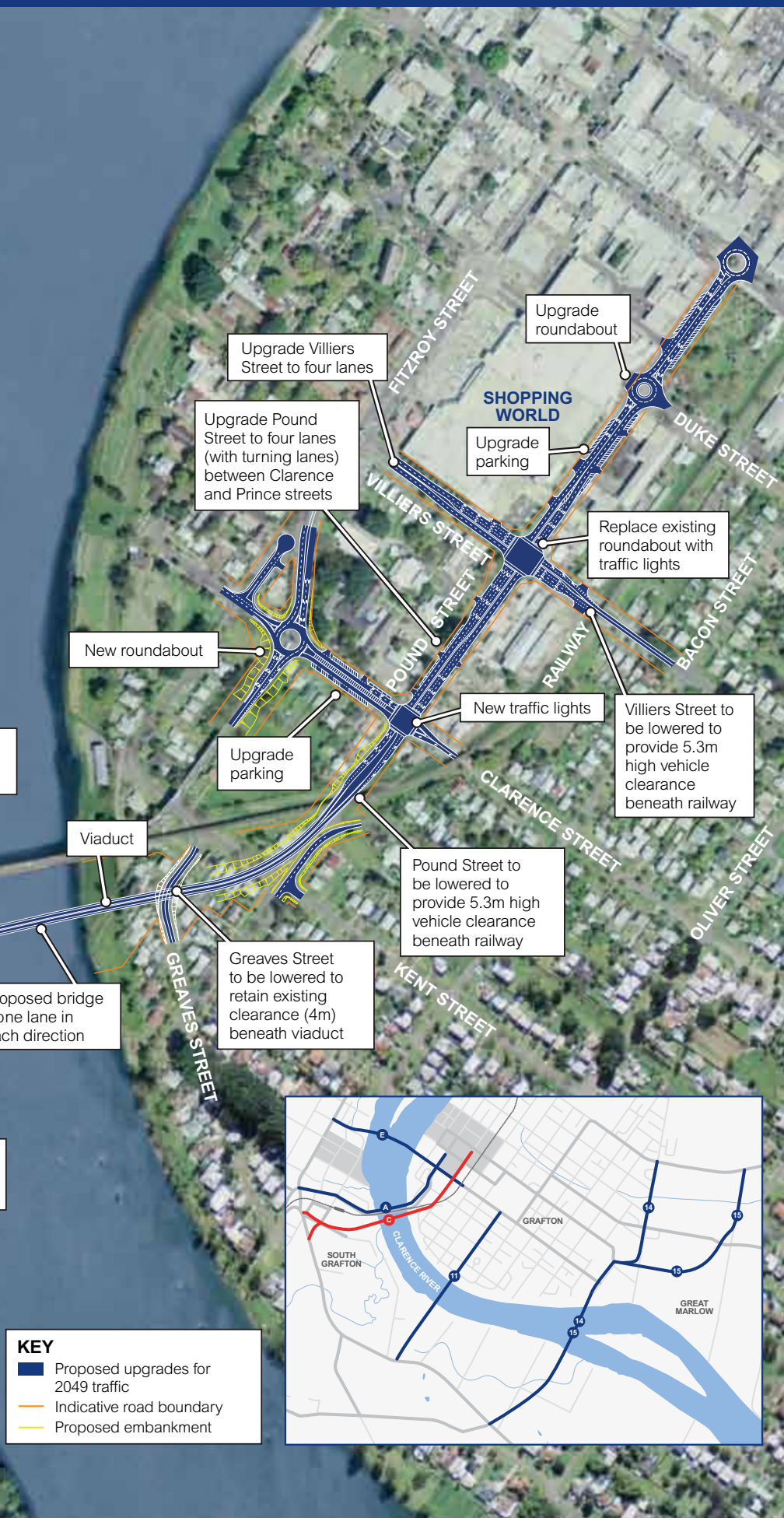


The review undertaken by RMS concurred with the outcome of the value management workshop that options E and C should go forward for further consideration.

Following further assessment of options E and C, Option C has been preferred over Option E as the recommended preferred option because:

- On balance, it presents greater overall value to the community than Option E, in particular addressing long term connectivity, providing for economic growth and supporting Grafton as a regional centre.
- It provides better transport efficiency improvements over the whole of the road network for both the short and long term than Option E, including for road freight movements as it:
 - Better supports the distribution of traffic between the eastern and western sides of South Grafton, especially traffic travelling to and from the south-east.
 - Provides a better connection between the road networks in Grafton and South Grafton by providing a parallel crossing of the river.
 - Avoids channelling traffic from both crossings into the junction of Fitzroy and Villiers streets.
 - Provides a better opportunity for traffic to travel around the edge of the Grafton CBD.
- It performs well in the other areas of the functional assessment criteria.
- It provides better outcomes in the socio economic area than Option E. Including its ability to better support Grafton as a regional centre as it has less impacts to businesses and fewer noise impacts.
- It provides better outcomes than option E in terms of non-Aboriginal heritage by avoiding impacts on the important and intact heritage precinct around Victoria and Villiers streets. It also traverses through a smaller length of heritage conservation area.
- It performs comparatively to Option E in terms of capital cost and benefit cost ratio at this stage of project development.

The recommended preferred option is shown on the left.



Next steps to finalising a preferred route option

Community comments received on the recommended preferred option will be considered before a final decision is made in 2013.



Following a decision to proceed with the project an environmental assessment would be prepared.

Why are we announcing just before Christmas?

Many community members have told us they want greater certainty and RMS has committed to this announcement.

The display will continue through to mid February 2013 to allow time to comment on the preferred option outside of the school holiday period.

Upcoming community consultation activities

Staffed displays will be held on:

31 January 2013 from **9am to 4pm**
At **Grafton Shopping World**

7 February 2013 from **9am to 4pm**
At **Grafton Shopping World**

The project manager will also be available for appointments to talk one on one with property owners and how they may be affected.

Please send us your feedback by:

Phoning: 1800 633 332

Emailing: grafftonbridge@rms.nsw.gov.au

Writing to: Chris Clark, PO Box 546 Grafton 2460

For more information

Visit: www.rms.nsw.gov.au/grafftonbridge

The project website is regularly updated and contains copies of the reports undertaken on the project to date, community consultation, interactive maps and traffic modelling videos.

Visit the shop front at the Pacific Highway office, 21 Prince Street, Grafton.

Visit a display location. Display locations are listed on the project website.

Comments on the recommended preferred option are invited by **18 February 2013**.

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