



The Hon Mark Bailey
Minister for Transport and Main Roads
1 William St Brisbane
transportandmainroads@ministerial.qld.gov.au;
ccatb@tmr.qld.gov.au

Dear Minister,

Re: Australian Institute of Architects review of the Currumbin Creek Active Transport Bridge

On behalf of the Australian Institute of Architects Queensland Chapter, I am pleased to provide comment on the proposed and preferred TMR Option2 for the Active Transport Bridge across the Currumbin Estuary on the Gold Coast.

The Australian Institute of Architects (The Institute) promotes high quality design in its local context, and infrastructure projects offer significant opportunities to impact the identity and enhance the value of any place. In this case, the Institute applauds the Queensland Government's intent to provide a safe access for active travel across the estuary.

Further to supporting the principle of this valuable pedestrian connection, the Institute would also like to table these insights and considerations regarding the preferred option:

1. Meeting the Institute's goals of achieving net zero operational carbon emissions by 2030 for all new buildings or structures might be challenging with the selected option we would like to see any data that supports the preferred option achieving the above target.
2. It does not include any bridge in the shade beneath the tall Gold Coast Highway bridge.
3. We'd like to see more clearly how the scenic amenity of the area has been prioritised and protected.
4. We feel that lighter options could be further investigated to minimise both cost and visual impacts.
5. The public has the right to be able to see and consider how the Light Rail estuary crossing will fit into the context of this proposed bridge and the existing vehicle bridge prior to being asked to endorse a preferred outcome.
6. The existing elegant bridge structure deserves its own presence, and both new bridge structures need to be considered as a whole, with all three working together to form a well-designed composition.
7. The Institute questions the scale and length of the bridge and suggests that the alignment appears to concentrate significant numbers of users to two main places (i.e., Pirate Park bus stop and on Duringan Street opposite the eastern ramp to the bridge), potentially creating congestion.
8. The new ramp may compromise movement along the southern bank.
9. As an integral part of the Oceanway (the predominant active transport route on the Gold Coast beachfront), the public movement along the creek bank and the pleasure of engagement across water should be a prime criterion in the design.
10. A bridge at a lower level could connect to more pedestrian cycle routes of choice, particularly for those needing to access the high school. It is undesirable to require users destined for the school to cross the Gold Coast highway at Pirate Park.
11. The Light Rail corridor planned west of the Gold Coast Highway could be a further impediment to pedestrian and cycle connection to the school environs, and it would be ideal if the current pathway and boardwalk located to the west of the Light Rail corridor could link seamlessly with the new bridge and dissipate users.



12. A bank-to-bank pedestrian bridge option might enable users to connect along the eastern side of the highway via a gentle pathway to the oceanway rather than on a structure with balustrades that corrals users and impacts views.
13. The bridge gradient, though designed to meet disability standards and give generous height above water level, appears to still need to climb to the existing bus stop on the southern end of the bridge, potentially necessitating significant vegetation loss in the process of construction of the curved southern ramp.
14. Any new bridge structure should be welcoming, protected, shaded and quiet and – though shade can be added to bridge structures – a new bridge being shaded by the existing bridge is worthy of investigation.
15. The Council of the City of Gold Coast, Gold Coast Waterways Authority and the State Government all have significant interest in the estuary through projects planned and studies and strategies completed or being undertaken including the GC Waterways Place Strategy, necessitating a business case that strongly embraces promotes a collaborative approach to deliver an integrated outcome.

Opportunities:

- The Institute considers that the business case for all major infrastructure investments needs to embrace a design-led approach to ensure an outcome that will offer long-term value as a city asset.
- The estuary is used by many for recreation (both active and passive) boating, sightseeing, and environmental stewardship by the community as well as government entities, and the pedestrian bridge represents the opportunity of delivering a city asset of quality design that will accommodate the variety of uses and enable greater engagement with the water.
- The Institute could work with Council to organise a competition for the design of a cross estuary link within a comprehensive business case context.
- Conducting an estuary masterplan at the earliest opportunity could draw together the many and sometimes competing interests to guide this and other future projects in this precinct, providing stewardship of this iconic estuary.

In closing, the Queensland Chapter of the Australian Institute of Architects thanks the department of Transport and Main Roads for the opportunity to comment on this significant project, and herewith offers its advice and expertise around design-led processes. As the Chapter President, I would happily assist the Minister to promote competitions for infrastructure projects of this significance with the goal of enhancing the framework of our cities with high quality design and a process that best protects the positive outcomes available within the parameters of the investment.

We now look forward to further involvement in this project as it advances through its stages of development and ultimate legacy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Amy Degenhart', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Ms Amy Degenhart
Queensland Chapter President
Australian Institute of Architects