

The Hon. Melissa Horne
Minister for Roads and Road Safety
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WILLIAMSTOWN VIC 3016

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Dear Minister Horne

Extra funding sought for a Break O'Day Bridge Replacement, Glenburn

Murrindindi Shire Council has received partial funding from the Federal Government's Bridges Renewal Program to replace Break O'Day Bridge in Glenburn. Council will install a new bridge that is compliant to current standards, replacing the current single-lane 1950s era bridge with a two-lane structure. The new bridge will be capable of supporting an unrestricted load rating, including B-double trucks and carrier vehicles.

This new bridge will provide safer access to those who use Break O'Day Road and mitigate against future damage from flood events. This is an important link road for the community of Glenburn as well as the broader businesses and commuters that use this road. Council's intention was to construct the new bridge whilst retaining access for the community, by installing a temporary Bailey bridge. However, subsequent testing and analysis showed that due to soil conditions and environmental impacts, the Bailey bridge option to retain open access added unacceptable cost and risk to the project.

Council has a contract in place for the Construction of the new bridge. The October 2022 flood event delayed and further complicated the engineering for the project. The delay was then exacerbated by the requirement to maintain emergency access during the fire danger period.

Council was requested by the community to explore an option that does not require the temporary road closure. The two current options are:

- **Option 1:** Close Break O'Day Road for up to 6-weeks to rapidly install the prefabricated bridge and construct the bridge surface and banks. This option has a total project cost of \$1.94m which is within budget but will halt through traffic during the construction period. This is the local community's least preferred option.
- **Option 2:** Build a new bridge parallel to the existing bridge to maintain community access during construction. Project timelines are estimated at 16 weeks. The cost is \$2.39m, with a funding shortfall of \$450,000. This option is the local community's preferred option.

Option 1 results in traffic being redirected through Flowerdale or Yea, with delays of up to 40 minutes. Residents of Break O'Day Road have raised concerns about the closure of the road, citing the following safety concerns:

- having to travel longer distances in the winter fog, at dawn to reach work
- heightened risk of hitting wildlife
- general inconvenience associated with the significant travel delays
- concerns about emergency service access, and
- lost revenue.

Residents have also raised their concerns with their local MLA, the Hon Member Cindy McLeish who made a request for funding in Parliament on Wednesday 22 March 2023

Council's budget is significantly restrained, particularly because of rate capping, increased costs to road renewal and general CPI impacts on the cost of delivering services to the community. Council does not have the additional \$450,000 to fund Option 2 to keep the bridge open. Further, Council's funding agreement with the Commonwealth Government is increasingly at risk, should there be further delays.

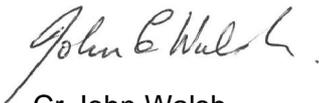
Council is seeking \$450,000 assistance from the State Government to ensure bridge access across the river on Break O'Day Road remains open during the installation and construction of the Bridge.

For Council to comply with federal government funding agreement timelines, the contract adjustments must be finalised by early May 2023. We seek a response to our request, by 26 April 2023, so we can promptly proceed with the works.

Council will be meeting with the Break O'Day residents, and the wider Glenburn community on Wednesday 5 April 2023 at 7.00 pm at the Glenburn Community Hall, 3876 Melba Highway, Glenburn. Council would welcome the attendance by the Minister at this meeting should you so desire.

Thank you for your consideration.

Yours sincerely



Cr John Walsh
Mayor

CC: Steve Bowmaker, Director Hume Region, Regional Roads Victoria