



27 March 2022

CCATB Project Team  
Department of Transport and Main Roads  
South Coast Region  
Via Email: [ccatb@tmr.qld.gov.au](mailto:ccatb@tmr.qld.gov.au)

**RE: Currumbin Creek Active Transport Bridge**

The Queensland Chapter of the Australian Institute of Landscape Architects (AILA) appreciates the opportunity to review and comment on the proposed Currumbin Creek Active Transport Bridge, which would connect Palm Beach and Currumbin across Currumbin Creek.

The Australian Institute of Landscape Architecture (AILA) is the peak national body for Landscape Architecture. AILA champions quality design for public open spaces, stronger communities and greater environmental stewardship. With our members, we anticipate and develop a leading position on issues of concern in the industry.

AILA supports the Queensland Government and TMR's plans to build a new, separate active transport bridge in the Currumbin Creek Estuary. AILA applauds the vision's efforts to improve infrastructure through positive design for active travel. The provision of appropriate facilities for cycling, walking, and using public transportation is becoming increasingly important in moving Australian towns and cities towards greater sustainability and liveability. "The Oceanway is designed to make walking and bike riding more attractive as alternatives to driving" (*TMR, Have Your Say, Currumbin Creek Active Transport Bridge*), to do that, **Landscape and Urban Design imperatives, must be built in to all tender, detailed design and constructed requirements.** This needs to address shade, comfort and visual amenity, reinforcing a treed, green landscape.

The following are AILA's comments on the Currumbin Creek Active Transport Bridge proposal.

- Despite the benefits of a new active transportation bridge across the creek, we believe the artist impression shown fails to address the larger picture of the creek landscape, its values, user needs, and broader connectivity requirements. This is the pivotal moment whereby, better, more contextual design outcomes can be obtained with strong Landscape and Urban Design requirements being built into any future Oceanway active transport development.
- The Currumbin Estuary is a complex landscape that necessitates a comprehensive approach. AILA members believe the options presented lack rigour in their development (alignment, vertical geometry, construction technique, impact assessment, connectivity, modal impact, and so on).
- Building on the work completed for the Oceanway Active Transport Business case, we believe a more comprehensive master planning approach for the entire Currumbin Estuary, considering all stakeholders, a broader range of issues, and a more comprehensive resolution for one of the Gold Coast's most significant landscapes should be completed.
- We believe the proposed design appears to be an engineering solution, with limited regard for expert design analysis regarding visual amenity.
- The analysis of the estuary's broader issues does not seem to have been addressed.
- The overall impact of the light rail bridge also seems to have been overlooked.

**Alternative Proposals**

As previously stated, we support an improved active transportation link in this location; however, the existing scenarios do not provide a solution that is appropriate for the setting.

AILA members believe there are alternative opportunities to deliver infrastructure that not only provides the much-needed active transportation option, but also addresses the context of the site.

We need to ensure that as a community we are delivering world-class infrastructure that is designed appropriately for the context of the site, and not simply an engineered solution that does not address visual impact principles on our landscapes.

A suspended and interesting bridge, for example, could be built using the existing bridge structure as support. This would have a much lower impact on the creek while also creating a visually appealing piece of infrastructure that meets the specifications.

Other points we make are:

1. The visual impact of the bridge's built form in this highly attractive estuarine gateway is enormous. As design leaders, we should be setting and meeting higher standards for built form design that are also innovative, cost effective, and environmentally friendly.
2. Because of the proposed height of the new bridge, a long ramp back to ground level is required which seems excessive and will dominate the Southern side of the creek. A lower height bridge would require a flatter gradient to facilitate access for people of all abilities.
3. Pedestrians and active transport users are isolated from the waterway. It is critical to connect users to their surroundings through proximity particularly in an ecological setting.
4. Most craft can still navigate the waterway, while some masted sailing boats may be restricted, sail does not dominate the estuary.
5. Alternative solutions could still achieve a bridge profile with good clearances for boating. (Greater than 4.5m)
6. The structure of the existing bridge shades a large portion of the walkway and therefore provides an opportunity to achieve shade for pedestrians which is crucial in the QLD climate. Any pedestrian walkway option should provide shade as a priority.
7. Due to the highly sensitive location the ecological values are important. Tree planting opportunities and compensatory planting should be explored.
8. The southern water's edge bridge connection appears long and clearly disturbs the creek bank edge. Is there a more efficient solution for the separated bridge to simply connect to a widened roadside path which curves around towards the creek? The design efficiency will mean works adjacent a roadside batter, as opposed to a sensitive creek bank.

We recommend that TMR not pursue the options proposed but commit more considered and appropriate assessment through a consultant team capable of formulating a bespoke design solution. This will ensure significant improvements at the pedestrian scale, protection of the important context of this unique landscape, resulting in enhancing rather than detracting from visual amenity, and delivering a world-class active transport design solution.

We would welcome any further opportunities to discuss this project with the CCATB Project Team.

Please contact Melanie West, AILA Queensland Chapter Manager on 0417 666 622 or

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Yours sincerely,



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