



# BLAKENEY BRIDGE REPORT #PW-31-2022

Public Works Committee  
December 14, 2022

Sean Derouin, Public Works Manager

# BACKGROUND

- Report PW-12-2022 was presented to the PW Committee in April to renew the dialogue regarding the future of the Blakeney Bridge with options.
- The following motion **PW-2022-30** was passed:  
*That Council authorize the enhanced inspection and load posting review in 2022 of the Blakeney Bridge; and*  
  
*That the County proceed with an RFP to complete an Environmental Assessment, with the project date to take place in 2023.*

# BACKGROUND

- The results of the enhanced inspection were presented to the PW Committee in October with recommendations to reduce the load posting to 5 tonnes, and for Public Works staff to proceed with a design RFP to replace the bridge in 2023. The following motions were passed:

**MOTION #PW-2022-68**

*THAT, Council authorizes the necessary amendment to Bylaw 2022-34, A Bylaw to consolidate the bylaws that regulate traffic on roads under the jurisdiction of the County of Lanark, to further reduce the load posting from 12 tonnes to 5 tonnes; and*

*AND THAT Council direct staff to hold a Public Information Centre with residents prior to the issuance of a design RFP for the Blakeney Bridge; and*

*AND THAT Council direct staff to proceed with remedial work in effort to reinstate current load restrictions in the interim.*

- Approval to proceed with the repairs was passed at the November 9 Council Meeting:

**MOTION #CC-2022-196**

*That County Council approve the expenditure of \$41,211 for the immediate repairs to the Blakeney Bridge.*



# DISCUSSION

## Remedial Repairs

- The bridge was closed on Monday November 14 following the approval from Council the week prior.
- The repairs were completed ahead of schedule, with the bridge re-opening on November 22.
- The load restriction was reinstated back to 12-tonnes.
- 9 steel plates were welded to the girders / floor beams and concrete repairs were complete on the deck top.





# DISCUSSION

## Recommended Replacement Bridge: Modular Panel Bridge

- A Modular Bridge is fabricated in modules that can be installed quickly in the field.
- Components are prefabricated, delivered to site, assembled on site, and then installed on prepared abutments.
- These bridges can use a variety of superstructure types such as trusses, plate girders or rolled girders.



Bolingbroke Bridge- Tay Valley Township



French Line Road Bridge- Lanark Highlands

# DISCUSSION

## Benefits of a Modular Panel Bridge

- 1. Accelerated Construction:**
  - Shortened bridge project delivery time resulting in a comparatively short disruption in service. This saves time and money throughout the process by completing the project as quickly as possible.
  - Components easily transported, even to remote or challenging locations.
- 2. Reduced Construction Impact on Traffic:**
  - Reduced delays to everyday drivers, emergency vehicles, local businesses, bussing, waste collection etc.
- 3. Increased Work-Zone Safety:**
  - With prefabricated parts and a plan to easily construct the bridge, there is less time spent with changes in traffic patterns. Additionally, it's beneficial for workers on site.
- 4. Quality:**
  - Prefabricated bridge components are engineered and manufactured specifically for the specified bridge. Thus, these parts are fabricated in a controlled environment and go through a thorough quality control process to ensure they are ready for on-site construction minimizing the risk of unforeseen circumstances causing delays.
  - Use of bolted connections offers improved fatigue performance, allowing for lighter weight members.
- 5. Lower Environmental Impact:**
  - Another plus to shorter construction time is the significantly reduced impact on the environment. With less time with heavy equipment on-site and limited construction taking place in or around water, the impact to the surrounding environment is significantly reduced. As a result, building accelerated bridge construction lends itself to environmentally-sensitive areas.
  - Manufactured with 100% recyclable high-quality steel.
- 6. Cost:**
  - Lower construction cost compared to traditional concrete bridge of similar size.
  - Pre-Engineered solutions reducing design fees.

# DISCUSSION

## Public Information Centre (PIC)

- A PIC was held on December 2, from 6pm to 8pm at the Almonte & District Community Hall.
- The PIC event was advertised on Lanark County's website and social media pages, as well as in the local news papers in Perth, Almonte, and Carleton Place for 2 consecutive weeks. Letters were also hand delivered to all residents of Blakeney.
- Approximately 40 people attended, which included 2 distinguishable groups: residents of Blakeney; and representatives of the local agriculture community.
- Public Works Chair Steve Fournier, and Mississippi Mills County Councillors Christa Lowry and Rickey Minnille were present for the PIC.

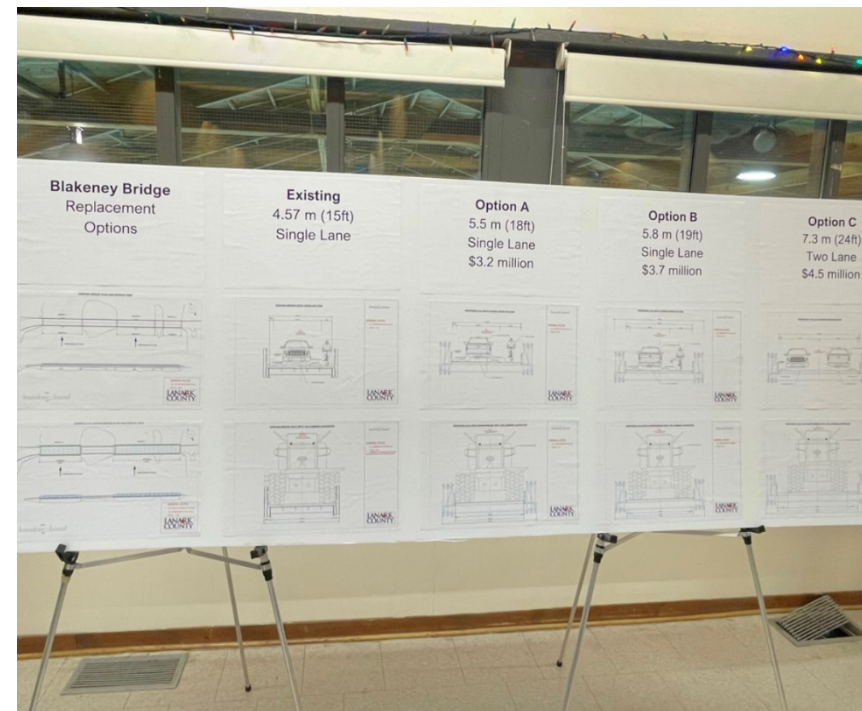




# DISCUSSION

## Public Information Centre (PIC)

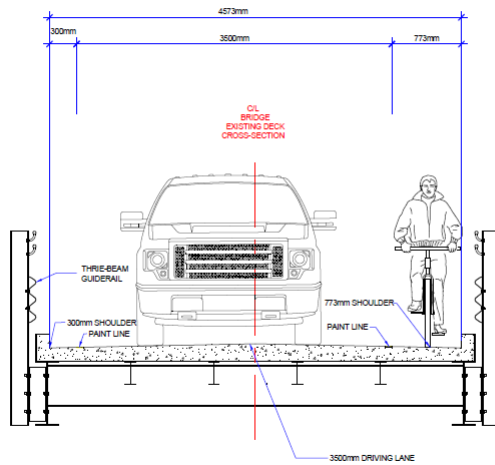
- Three options were presented to the public at the PIC (Appendix A), which included the standard bridge widths provided by bridge supplier ACROW:
- Existing Bridge: Single Lane, 4.57m (15 ft.) roadway width.
- **Option A:**
  - Single Lane with Traffic Signals
  - 5.5m (18 ft.) Roadway Width
  - Estimated Cost= \$3.2M
- **Option B:**
  - Single Lane with Traffic Signals
  - 5.8m (19 ft.) Roadway Width
  - Estimated Cost= \$3.7M
- **Option C:**
  - Two-Lane with-out Traffic Signals
  - 7.3m (24 ft.) Roadway Width
  - Estimated Cost= \$4.5M



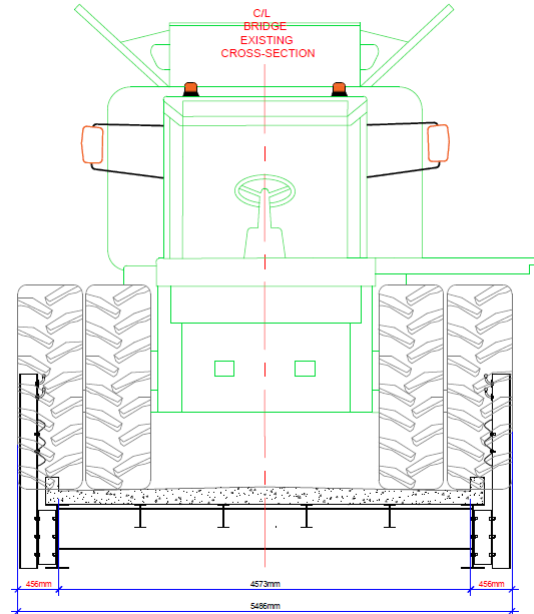
# DISCUSSION

## EXISTING BRIDGE- SINGLE LANE, 4.57M (15 FT) ROADWAY

EXISTING BRIDGE DECK CROSS-SECTION



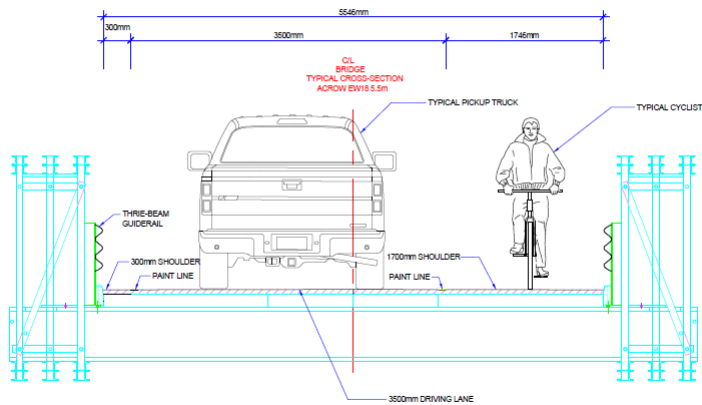
EXISTING BRIDGE DECK WITH 18ft COMBINE HARVESTER



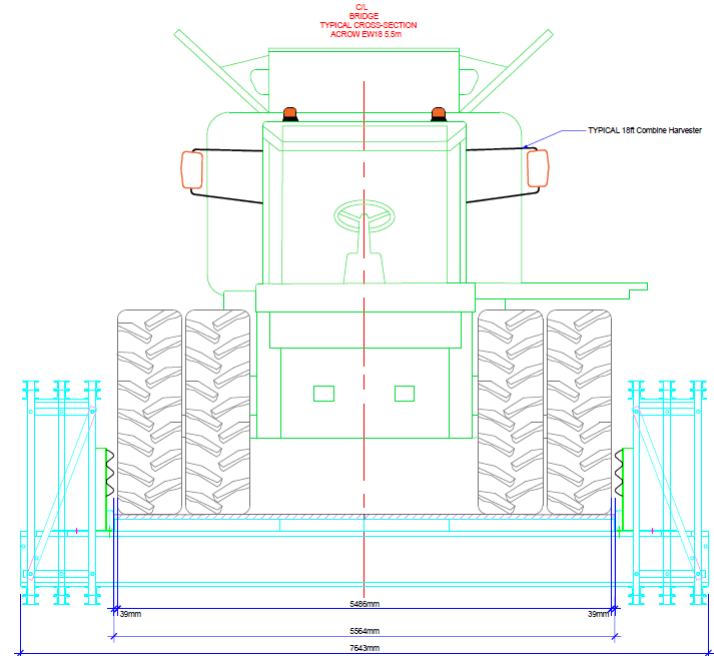
# DISCUSSION

## OPTION A- SINGLE LANE, 5.5M (18 FT) ROADWAY, \$3.2M

**PROPOSED 5.5m EW18 ACROW CROSS-SECTION**



**PROPOSED 5.5m EW18 ACROW BRIDGE WITH 18ft COMBINE HARVESTER**

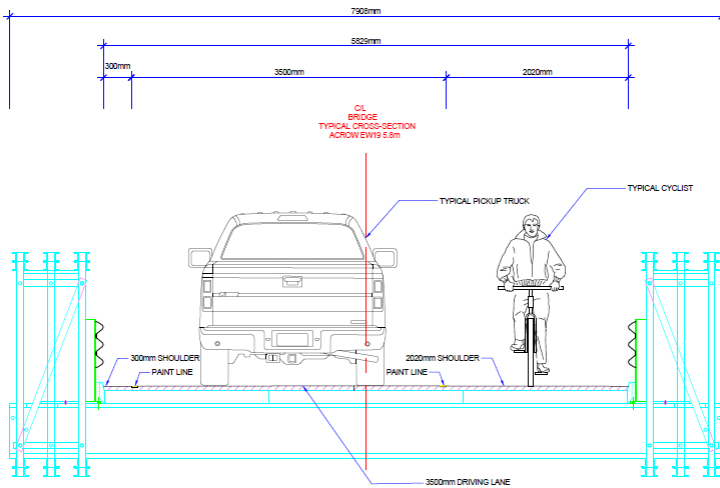




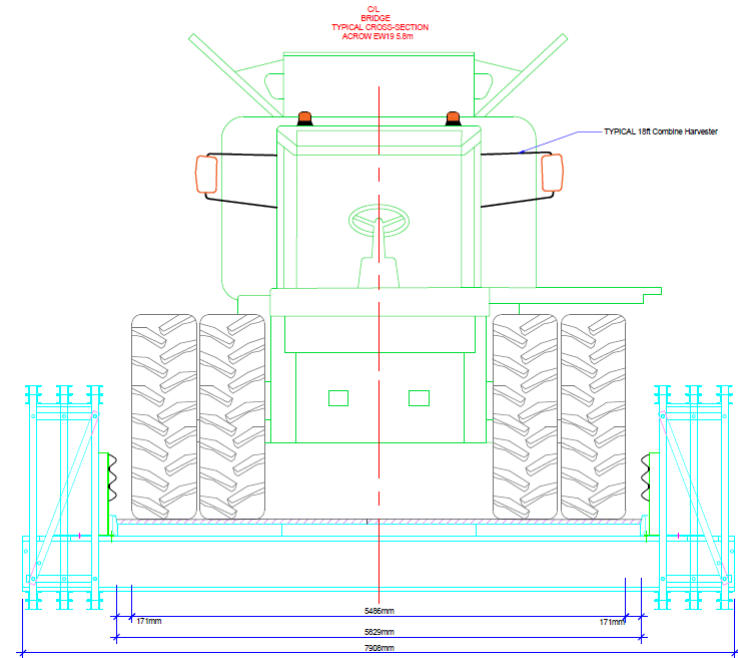
# DISCUSSION

## OPTION B- SINGLE LANE, 5.8M (19 FT) ROADWAY, \$3.7M

**PROPOSED 5.8m EW19 ACROW CROSS-SECTION**



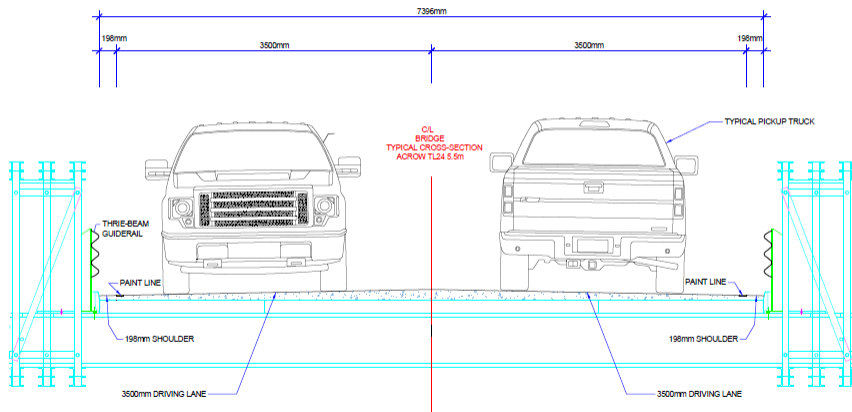
**PROPOSED 5.8m EW19 ACROW BRIDGE WITH 18ft COMBINE HARVESTER**



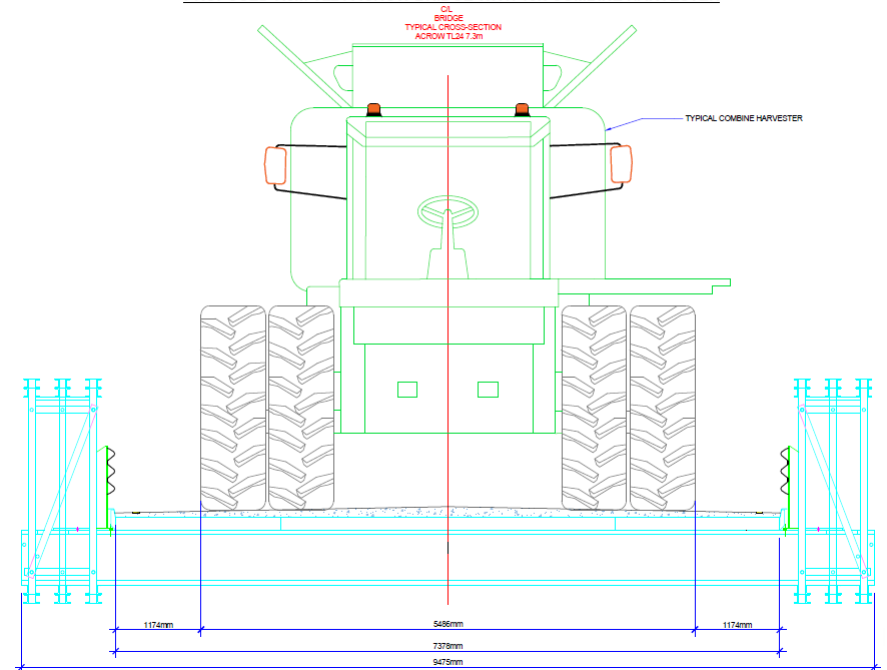
# DISCUSSION

## OPTION C- TWO-LANE, 7.3M (24 FT) ROADWAY, \$4.5M

**PROPOSED 7.3m TL24 ACROW CROSS-SECTION**



**PROPOSED 7.3m TL24 ACROW BRIDGE WITH 18ft COMBINE HARVESTER**



## Results of PIC

# DISCUSSION

- Residents of Blakeney prefer the single lane option as a traffic calming measure and to accommodate pedestrians / cyclists.
- Agriculture community prefers two-lane option to accommodate wide farm equipment.
- All comments received have been included as part of Appendix B.

Option	PIC Votes	Email Votes	%
Option A	2		
Option B	13	9	81%
Option A or B	1		
Option C	4		19%
Option B or C	2		
Total Votes	22	9	





# DISCUSSION

## Timelines

- To meet the accelerated schedule required for the replacement of the bridge to proceed in 2023, the following milestone dates are proposed:

Issue Date of RFP for Detailed Design	December 15, 2022
RFP Submission Deadline	January 5, 2023
RFP Award	January 9, 2023
90% Detailed Design Review	February 15, 2023
Final Contract package submission for tendering	March 3, 2023
Tender Opening	March 7, 2023
Tender Closing / PW Committee Meeting	March 22, 2023
Contract Award by County Council	April 5, 2023
Construction Start	May 1, 2023

# DISCUSSION

## Pre-Purchasing the Bridge

- There are only 2 bridge manufactures in Ontario that supply modular panel bridges: ACROW and Algonquin Bridge.
- Pre-purchasing the bridge would allow the supplier to begin the engineering design of the bridge so the bridge design can be included in the tender package and would allow for an early fabrication and delivery to site.
- The cost savings associated with pre-purchasing the bridge include:
  - Averting contractor mark-up.
  - Securing steel pricing in a rising unstable market.
  - Obtaining discounts from the supplier by providing guaranteed and secure payment delivery.
- PW will put out a tender for the purchase of the bridge and will bring to Council for approval in January.

# ANALYSIS & OPTIONS

- Option A:
  - Single 5.5m Lane with Traffic Signals
- Option B:
  - Single 5.8m Lane with Traffic Signals
- Option C:
  - Two-Lane 7.3m with-out Traffic Signals



# FINANCIAL IMPACT

Option A: Estimated Cost= \$3.2M

Option B: Estimated Cost= \$3.7M

Option C: Estimated Cost= \$4.5M

- Proposed Bridge Capital Budget for 2023= \$1M
- Budget deficiency would be allocated from reserves:
  - Current PW reserve balance= \$6.7M
  - Primary contributions to reserves consist of annual surplus allocations.
- *High level estimated costs include budgetary numbers from the bridge supplier ACROW for the supply of the bridge + estimated associated works such as: installation, removal of existing bridge, new foundations, roadway works, traffic signals, site control, and a 15% contingency allowance.*
- *Estimates have been reviewed by a contractor bridge engineer.*

# LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

## **Mississippi Mills Public Works Comments:** *(included in Appendix B)*

- MM PW supports the installation of a two-lane structure.
  - A two-lane structure would support additional traffic expected by the growth of our municipality.
  - It would also support our agricultural community.
  - Traffic lights at either end of the structure would still be recommended to provide traffic calming measures and aid in pedestrian safety.
- Should a two-lane replacement not be approved by County Council due to the County's financial constraints, in the interest of public safety, Option B as presented at the Public Open House would be a reasonable consideration provided that considerations for agricultural and pedestrian safety are maintained, including the traffic signals.

# ATTACHMENTS

- Appendix A - Blakeney Bridge Replacement Options
- Appendix B – Public Information Centre Attendance and Comments

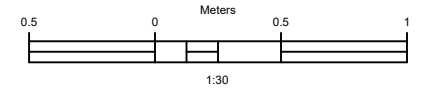
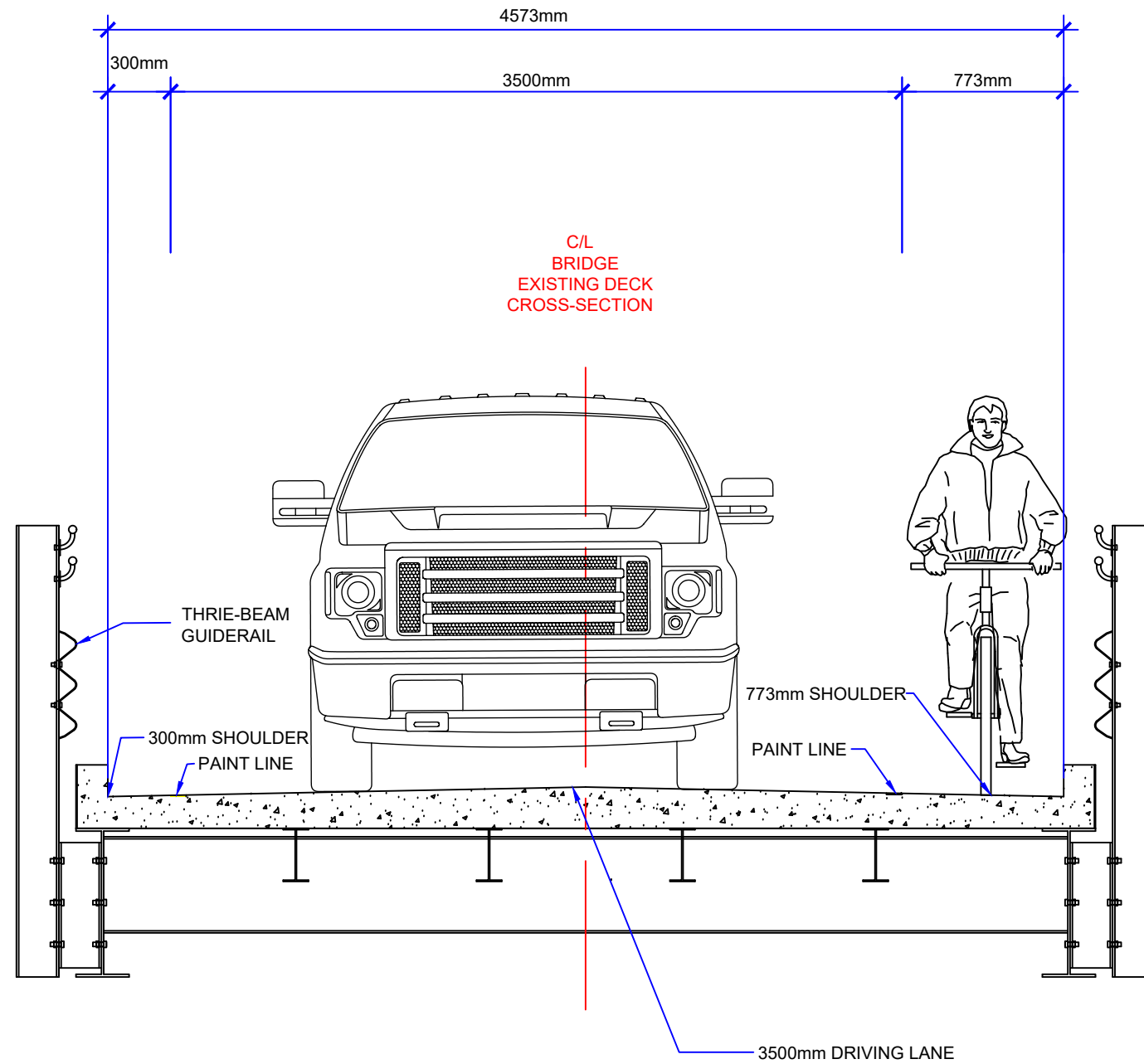
# STAFF RECOMMENDATION

*That Council direct staff to proceed with replacing Blakeney Bridge in 2023 with a modular panel bridge,*

*And that, the replacement bridge be a \_\_\_\_\_lane bridge, with a roadway width of \_\_\_\_\_m with(or without) traffic signals,*

*And That; Council direct staff to proceed with an RFP to complete the detailed design of the replacement bridge.*

### EXISTING BRIDGE DECK CROSS-SECTION



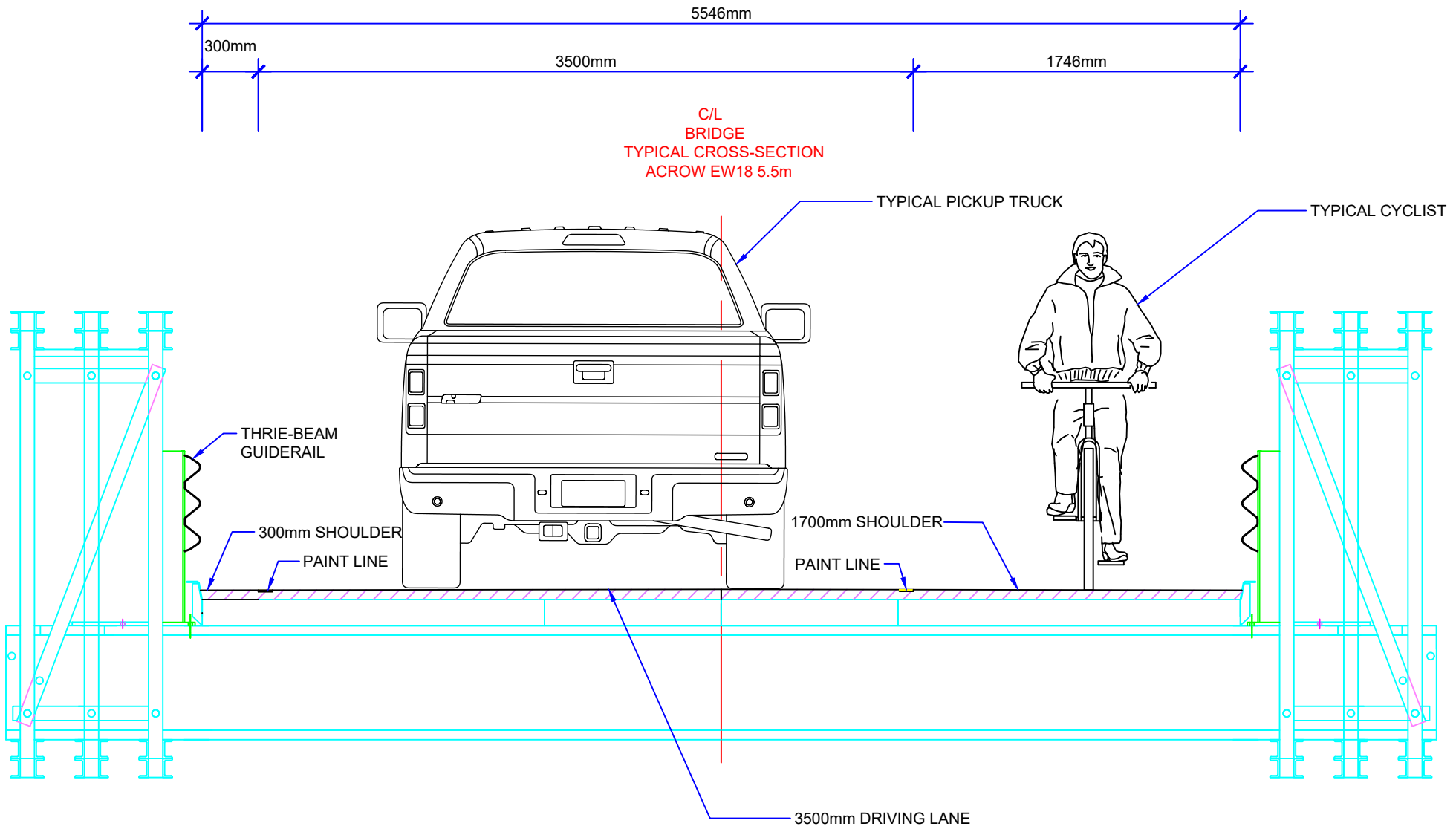
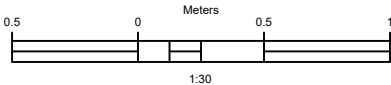
### GENERAL NOTES

- \* ALL DIMENSIONS ARE IN mm
- \* SCALE: 1:30





### PROPOSED 5.5m EW18 ACROW CROSS-SECTION

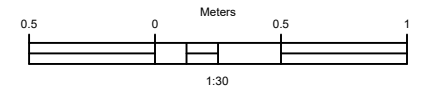
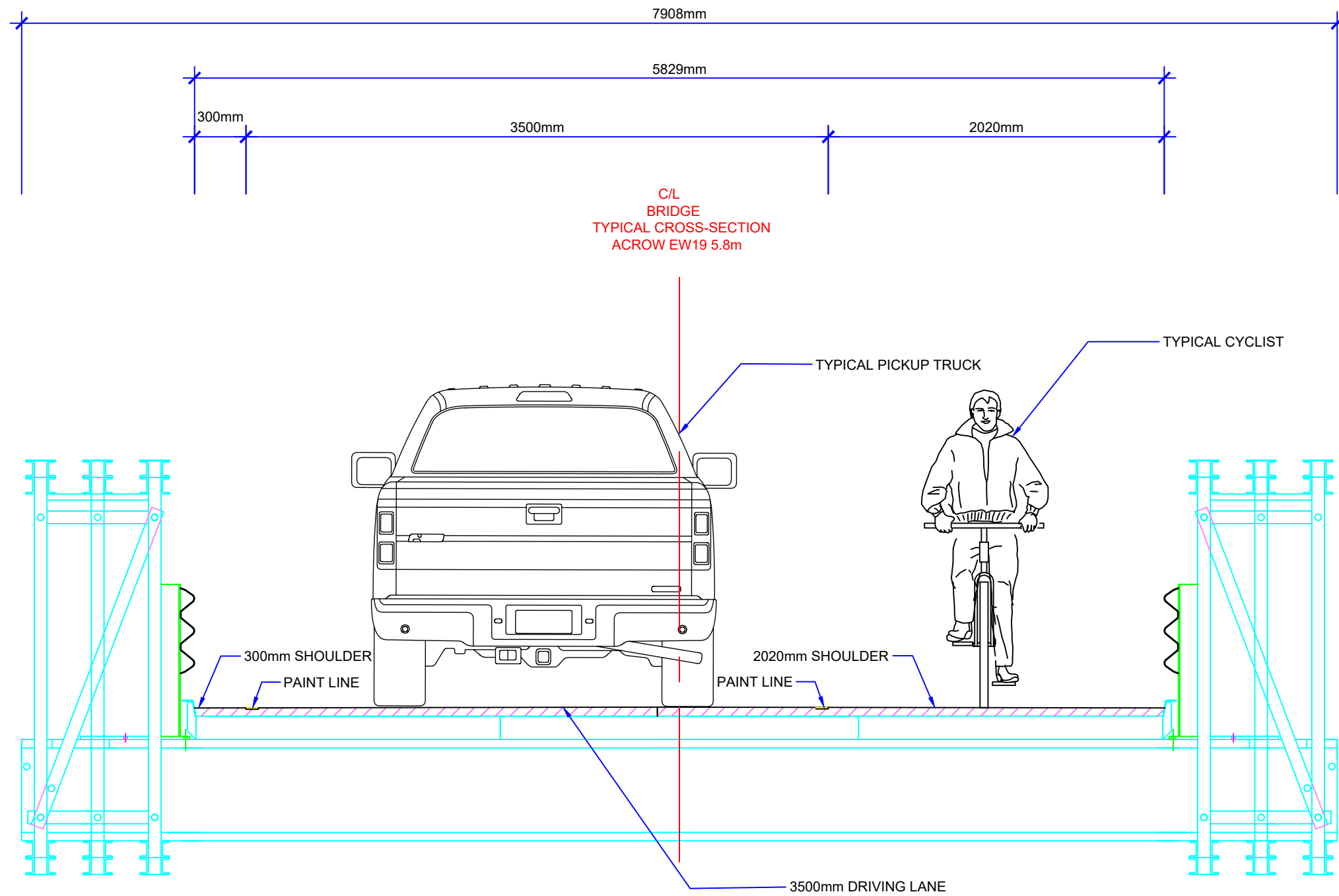


### GENERAL NOTES

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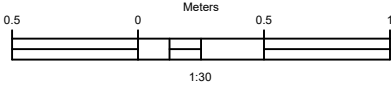


#### GENERAL NOTES

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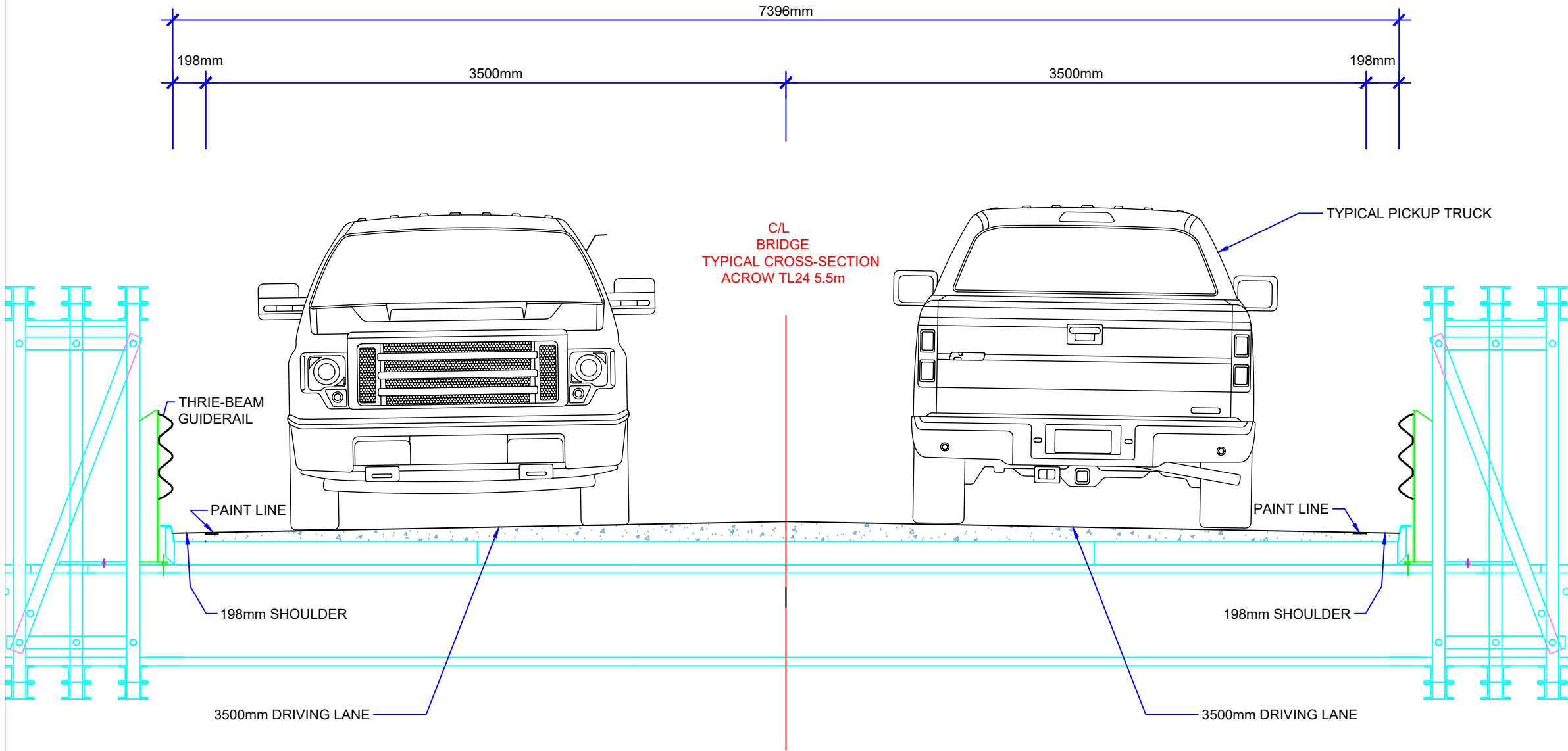


### PROPOSED 7.3m TL24 ACROW CROSS-SECTION

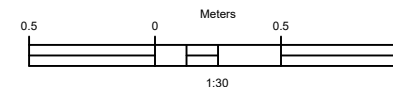
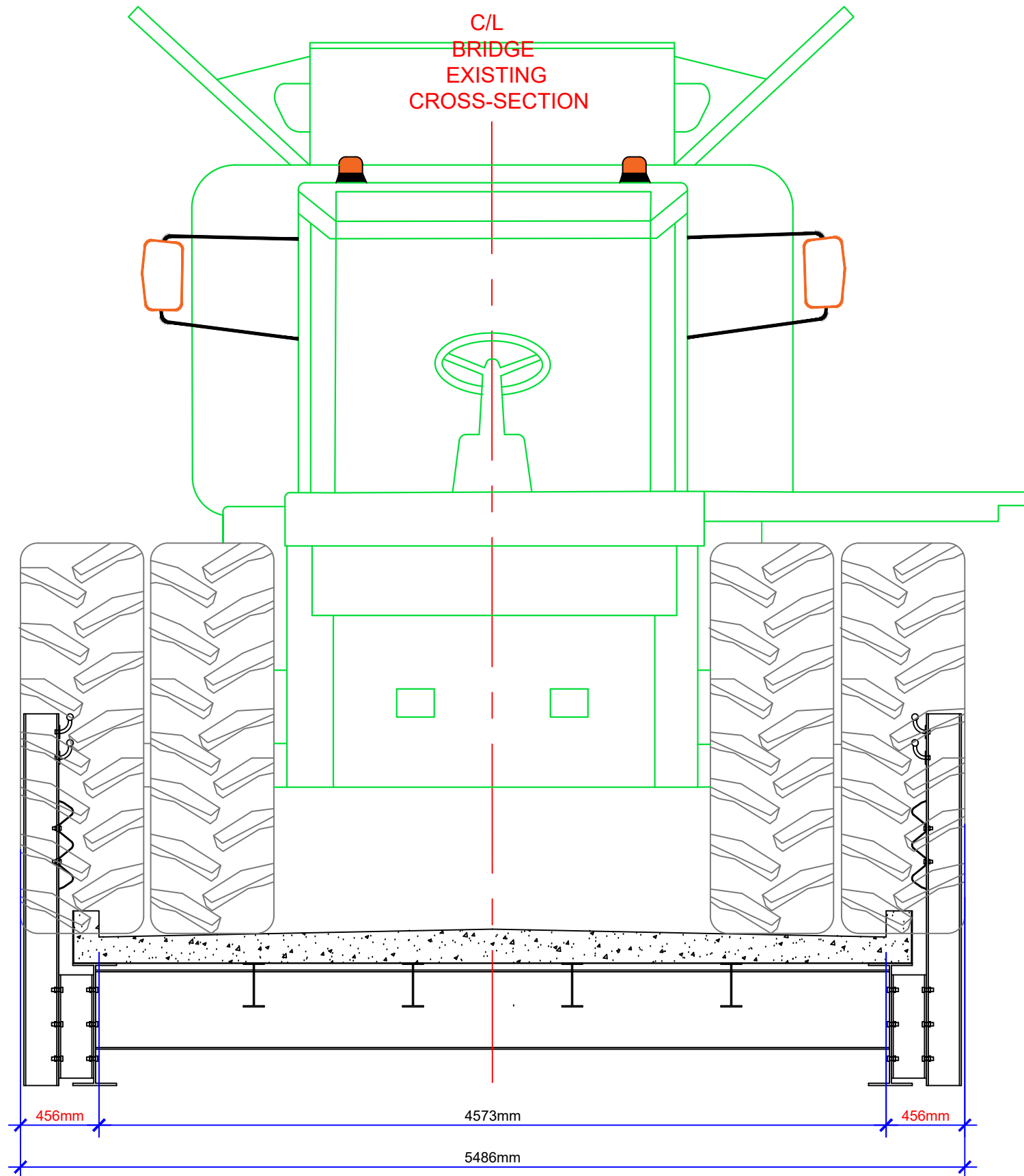


#### GENERAL NOTES

- \* ALL DIMENSIONS ARE IN mm
- \* SCALE: 1:30



### EXISTING BRIDGE DECK WITH 18ft COMBINE HARVESTER

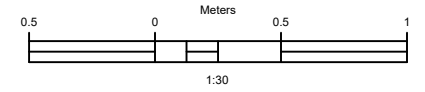
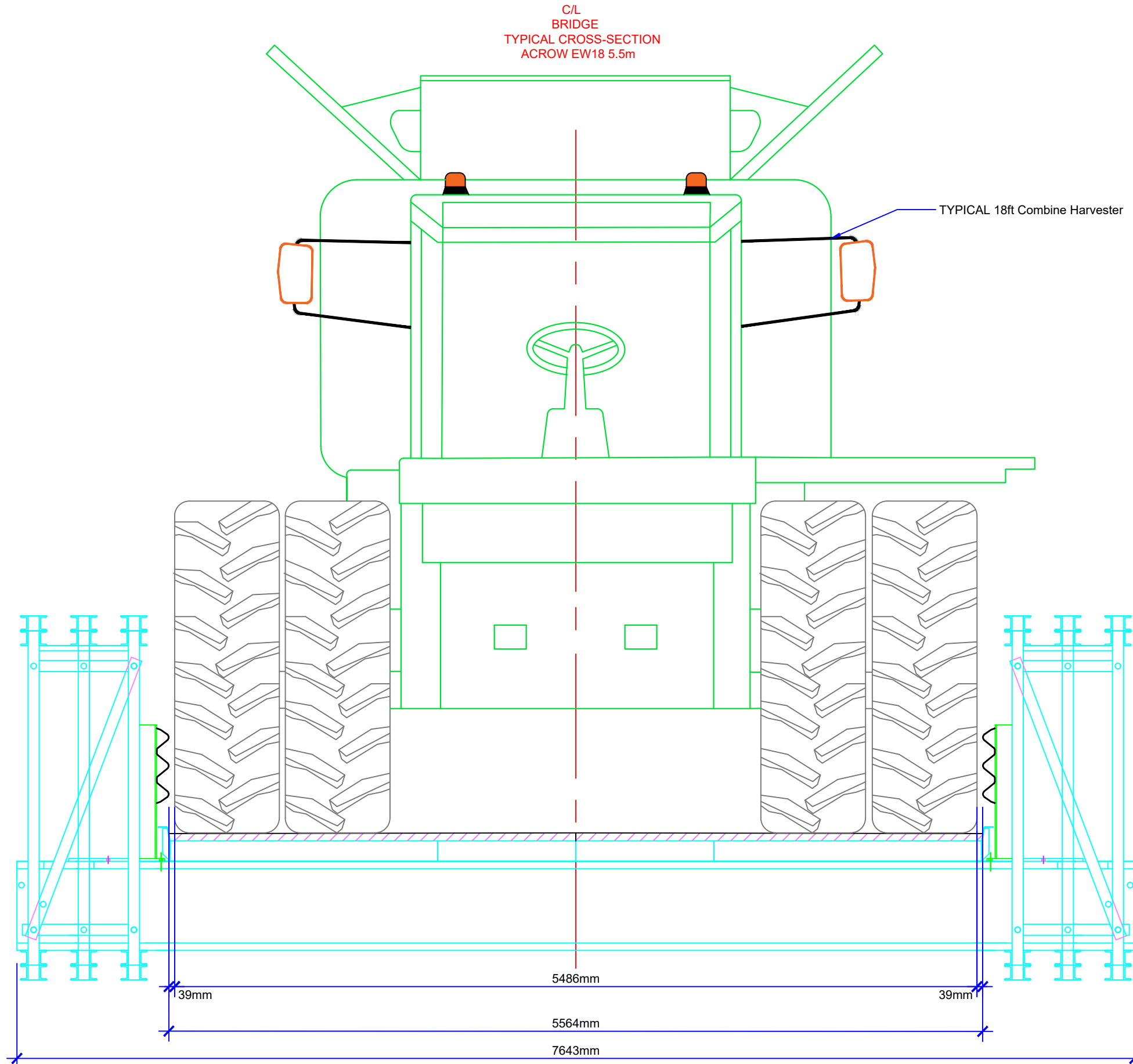


#### GENERAL NOTES

- \* ALL DIMENSIONS ARE IN mm
- \* SCALE: 1:30
- \* COMBINE HARVESTER EXCEEDS MAXIMUM WIDTH OF BRIDGE DECK



# PROPOSED 5.5m EW18 ACROW BRIDGE WITH 18ft COMBINE HARVESTER



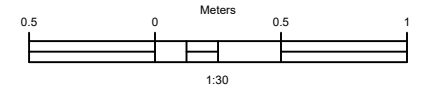
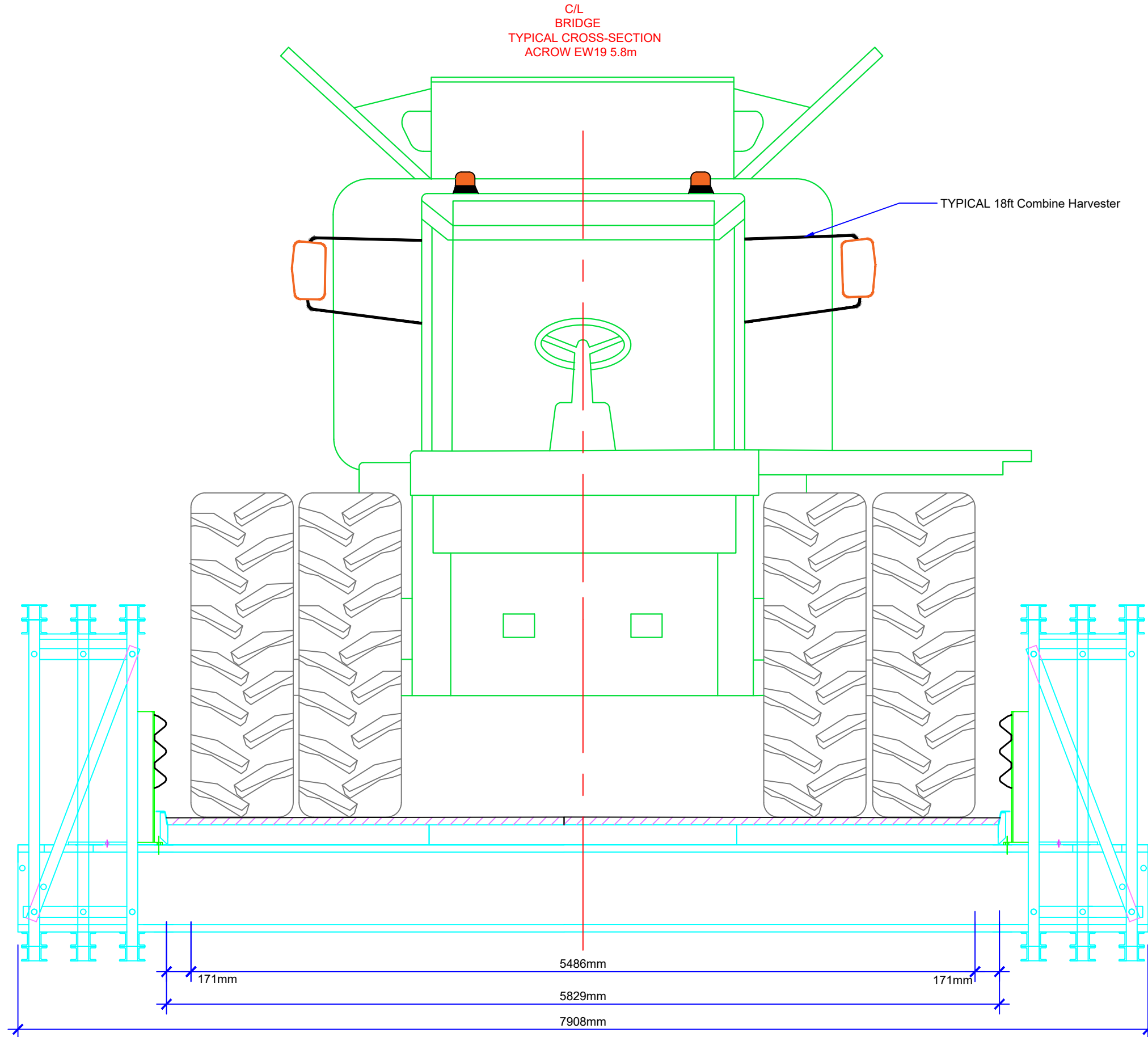
## GENERAL NOTES

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- \* SCALE: 1:30





# PROPOSED 5.8m EW19 ACROW BRIDGE WITH 18ft COMBINE HARVESTER



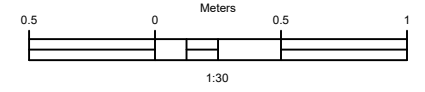
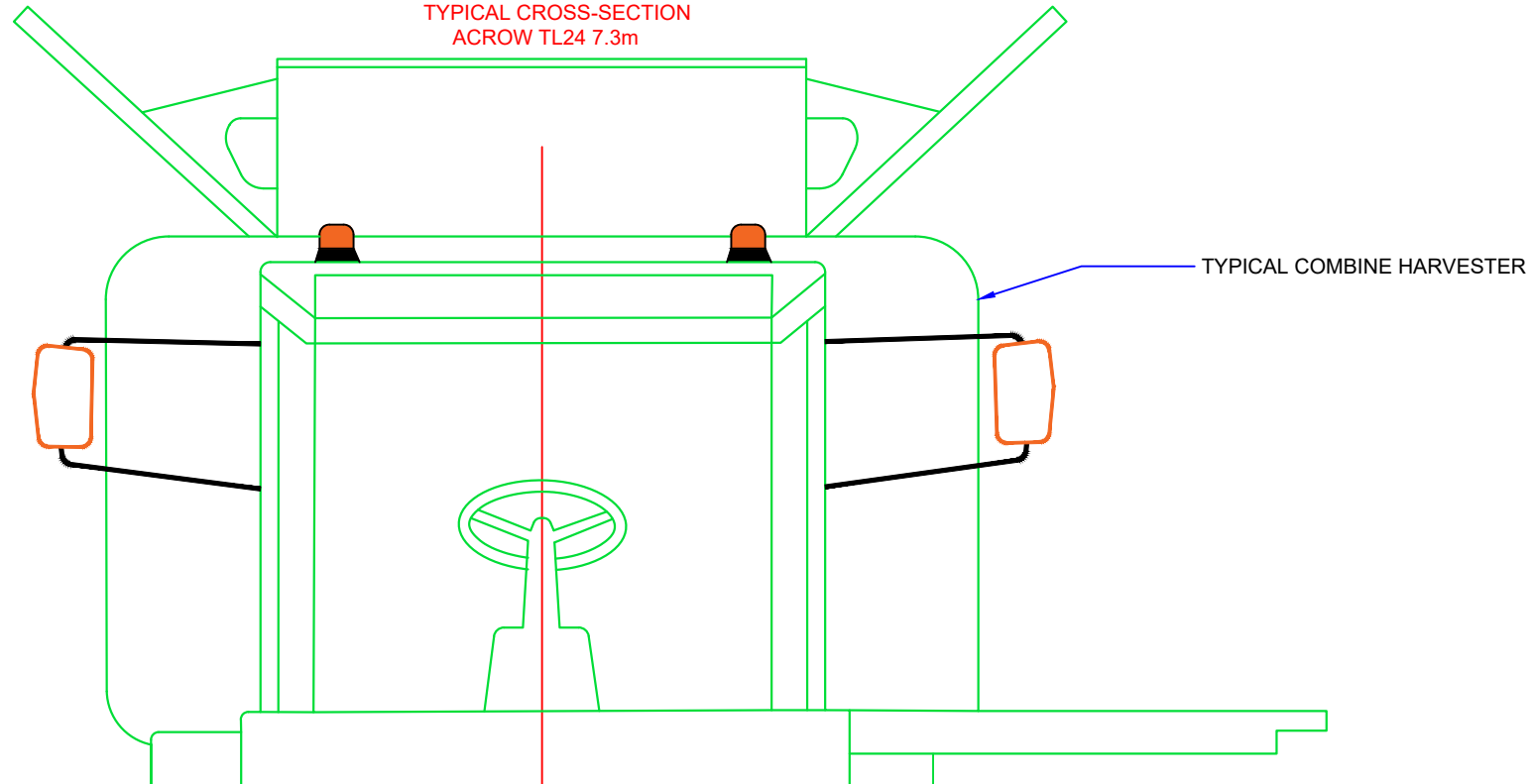
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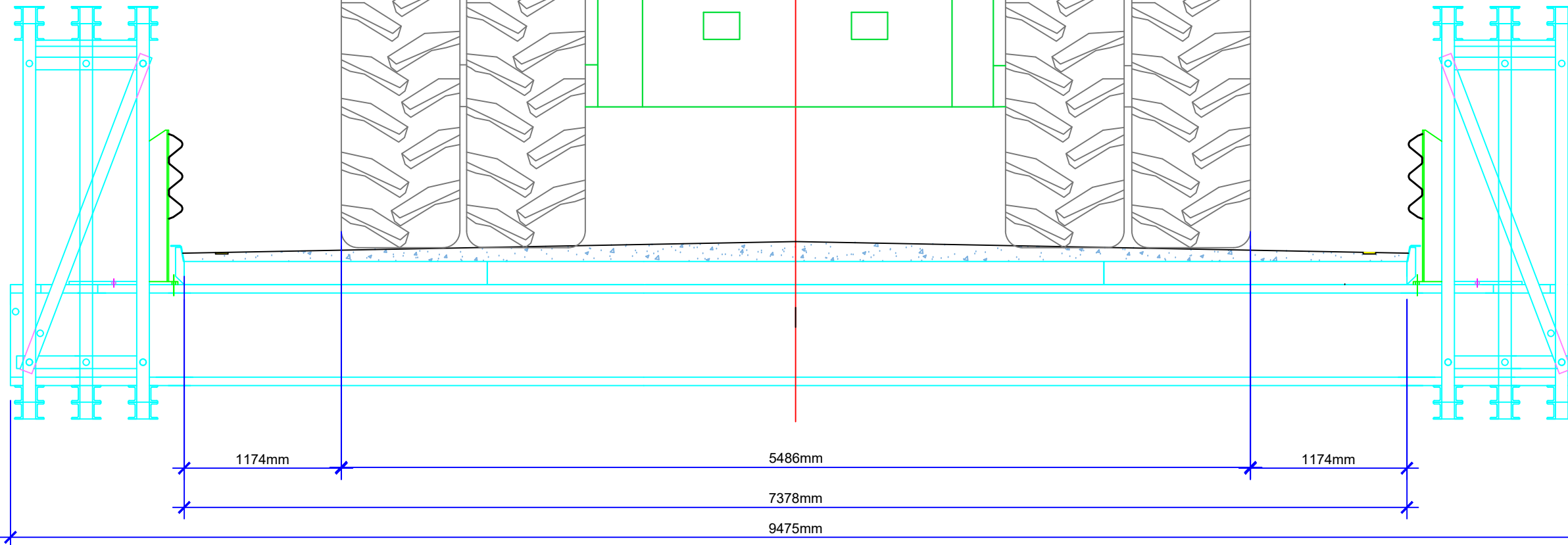
# PROPOSED 7.3m TL24 ACROW BRIDGE WITH 18ft COMBINE HARVESTER

C/L  
BRIDGE  
TYPICAL CROSS-SECTION  
ACROW TL24 7.3m

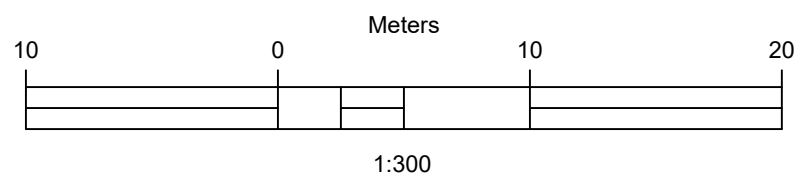
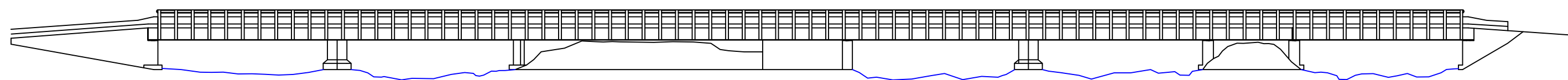
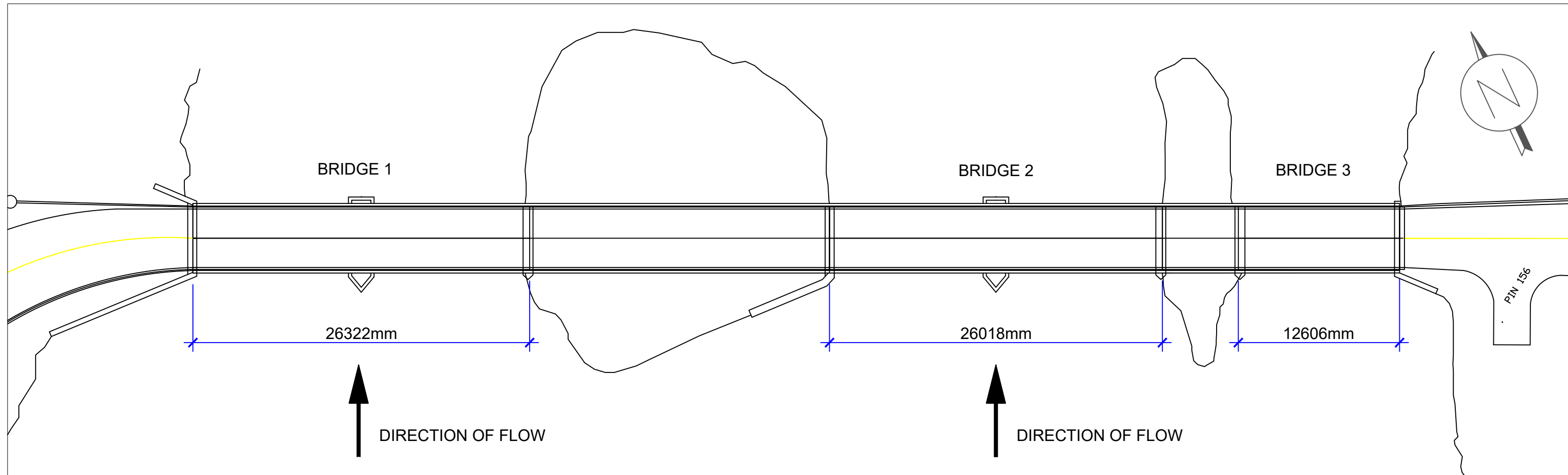


## GENERAL NOTES

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# EXISTING BRIDGE PLAN AND PROFILE VIEW

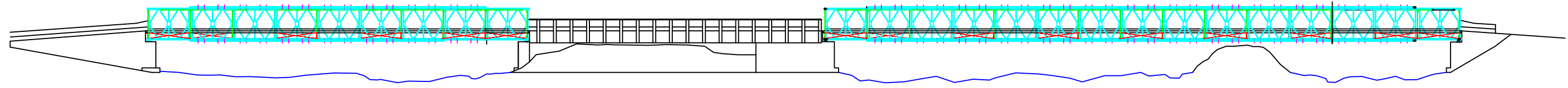
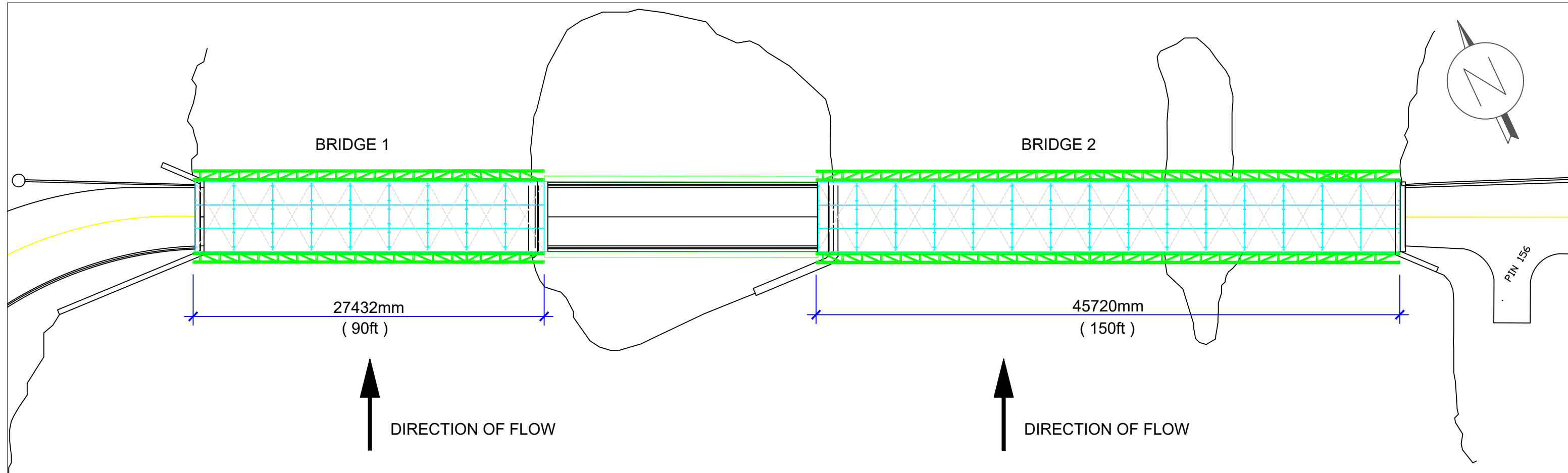


## GENERAL NOTES

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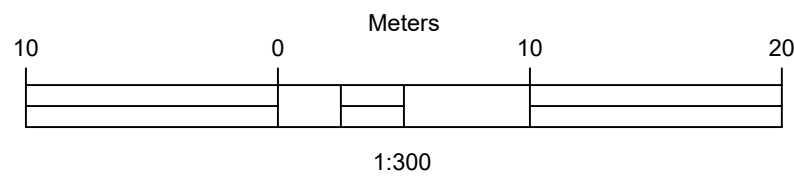


EXAMPLE 5.5m ACROW BRIDGE PLAN AND PROFILE VIEW



**GENERAL NOTES**

- \* 5.5m ACROW BRIDGE SHOWN
- \* ALL DIMENSIONS ARE IN mm
- \* SCALE: 1:300





**COMMENT SHEET**

**Blakeney Bridge Rehabilitation  
Public Information Centre  
Almonte & District Community Centre, 182 Bridge St, Almonte  
Thursday December 1/6:00 – 8:00 PM**

**PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY**

**Please indicate if you plan to provide comment via email**

Please check the box of your preferred replacement alternative:

- Single lane bridge: 5.5M
- Single lane bridge: 5.8M
- Two-lane bridge: 7.3M

*Prefer to have 2 Lane Bridge*

Note: All personal information collected on this Form will only be used for this Project and in accordance with the *Freedom of Information Act*. Personal information will not be included in the Report Documentation.

**Please deposit comments, in the box provided, or e-mail or fax it to the following, no later than Wednesday, December 7, 2022:**

**Sean Derouin, P.Eng., C.E.T.  
Public Works Manager, Lanark County  
613-267-1353  
Fax 613-267-2793  
E-mail: [blakeneybridge@lanarkcounty.ca](mailto:blakeneybridge@lanarkcounty.ca)  
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*comments to be provided via email*

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TWO LANE BRIDGE IS THE BEST OPTION  
 HOWEVER I REALIZE COST IS A MAJOR FACTOR  
 OPTION C IS GOOD AS WELL, LOOKING FOR AN  
 ACCESSABLE LANE FOR PEDESTRIANS + SNOWMOBILES  
 WOULD BE AWESOME,  
 APPROACHES TO PARK ENTRANCE A CONCERN  
 AS WELL.

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2022 No TIL planters 18 1/2 ft folded width  
 with out spike closing wheels and drag chains.  
 Combines with Duals all round with Space  
 plate 19 ft.  
 When will anything smaller than 2 lanes become  
 obsolete.

[Redacted signature area]

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*[Handwritten initials]*



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Single Lane @ 5.8M for replz  
enough room for pedestrians & large  
equipment yet keeps speed down.

[Redacted]

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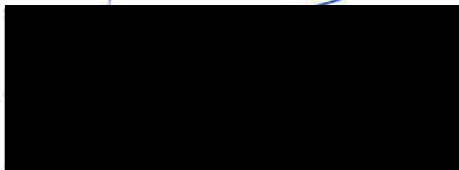
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- Single lane bridge: 5.8M
- Two-lane bridge: 7.3M

By increasing the bridge size greater than 5.8m will be too disruptive to the Blakeney community. The increase in traffic will be dangerous to the residence due to the size & volume & speed of the traffic through the village.



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Almonte & District Community Centre, 182 Bridge St, Almonte  
Thursday December 1/6:00 – 8:00 PM**

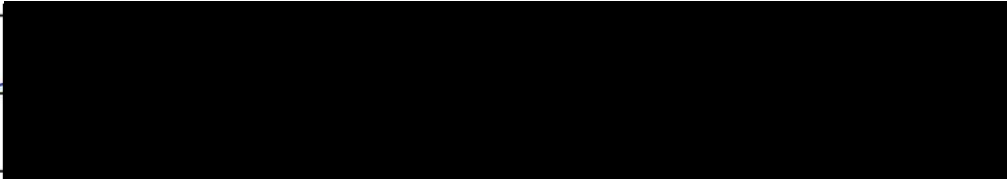
**PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY**

**Please indicate if you plan to provide comment via email**

Please check the box of your preferred replacement alternative:

- Single lane bridge: 5.5M
- Single lane bridge: 5.8M
- Two-lane bridge: 7.3M

Single lane incl. space for  
pedestrians will keep our  
village a village.



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Any single lane, whatever the farmers need.

Don't want to encourage additional traffic through Blakeney. It should not be thoroughfare. Like the charm + slow pace of life that the single lane provides.

Often walkers + (fisher) people fishing from bridge. Space to accomodate tractors would also accomodate people.



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I BELIEVE THAT THE 5.8M BRIDGE MEETS THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE VILLAGE TRAFFIC. WE NEED TO KEEP A SINGLE LANE BRIDGE IN ORDER TO CONTROL SPEED.



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- Two-lane bridge: 7.3M

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*safety issue — avoid 2 lanes*

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*traffic management*

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- Two-lane bridge: 7.3M

I LIKE THE EXTRA WIDTH OF OPTION B, BOTH FOR PEDESTRIAN TRAFFIC & THE PASSAGE OF LARGE FARM EQUIPMENT.

THE MAIN CONCERN IS THE CONTROL OF CAR TRAFFIC SPEED THROUGH THE HAMLET OF BLAKENEY - A SINGLE LANE BRIDGE WOULD SLOW THE TRAFFIC DOWN SOMEWHAT.

MORE EDUCATION IS NEEDED TO CONVINCE PEOPLE OF THE DANGERS OF SPEEDING IN A RESIDENTIAL ZONE. LOTS OF WALKERS HERE - KIDS & DOGS!

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Bridge needs to accommodate farm machinery with clear sight lines. Construction / large trucks should be barred from use of bridge.

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I AM CERTAINLY SYMPATHETIC TO THE NEED FOR LOCAL FARMERS TO BE ABLE TO GET EQUIPMENT ACROSS THE BRIDGE. HOWEVER, THE TRAFFIC PROBLEMS WITH SPEED IN THE VILLAGE WOULD BE INCREASED EXPONENTIALLY WITH A TWO-LANE BRIDGE.

I DO NOT BELIEVE TWO LANES ARE NEEDED FOR THE LARGE PERCENTAGE OF TRAFFIC THROUGH THE VILLAGE

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I think the bridge should be wider to accommodate large farm machinery and a lane for walkers but not 2 lane.

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*historical*  
 Implement cultural heritage in  
 bridge design, using local  
 artists.

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- Single lane bridge: 5.5M
- Single lane bridge: 5.8M ← option B
- Two-lane bridge: 7.3M

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see Mr. Ayling's  
comments  
fax

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This width should accommodate agricultural equipment, while maintaining the heritage look/value of the bridge. A two-lane bridge will impact Pennine Rd which is already in need of significant repairs.

thanks

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I AM A BLAKENEY RESIDENT AND FIND  
THE CURRENT TRAFFIC TO BE QUITE  
ANNOYING. TOO MANY VEHICLES INCLUDING  
4 WHEELERS, SKI-DOO'S, TRUCKS AND  
RACING CARS WITH LOUD EXHAUST  
REALLY RUIN OUR ENJOYMENT OF OUR  
ONCE QUIET AND PEACEFUL COMMUNITY.  
I WOULD RESPECTFULLY REQUEST SPEED  
BUMPS AND/OR A RADAR SIGN TO  
CALM TRAFFIC AS MANY SPEED THROUGH DAILY.

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As a resident of Blakeney who lives very near the bridge, it is critical for us not to ~~lose~~<sup>lose</sup> anymore of our "quiet enjoyment" of our village. Currently the amount + speed of the traffic past our house, including snowmobiles and ATVs is very upsetting.

A 2 lane bridge would add more cars and allow them to go faster.

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*I ~~am not~~ <sup>don't</sup> believe ~~sure~~ councilors have sufficient information to make an informed decision. Not enough environmental and community assessments have been completed. I.E. One for the impacts of each option and <sup>related</sup> mitigation strategies. Council should not proceed with a firm choice until more information is available.*

*(over)*

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e.g. environmental  
hydrogeological  
social/community } impacts  
and  
benefits

All you have is conceptual drawings.



**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [Blakeney Bridge](#)  
**Cc:** [Bev Holmes](#); [Christa Lowry](#); [Vicki Lowe](#)  
**Subject:** Attention : Sean Derouin  
**Date:** December 6, 2022 5:52:36 PM

---

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Mr. Derouin , This letter is from 5 households directly affected by traffic on the bridge:

### **Comments regarding the rebuild of the Blakeney Bridge: from affected residents in Blakeney.**

Thanks for this opportunity to give feedback on the 3 proposed versions of the new bridge.

With regard to the most important issues for us: version #2 ( single car lane with a. wider RAISED pedestrian safety lane ) is the only viable option. ( #3 gives no safety zone for pedestrians and is not worth considering.)

Our main concern with all the factors related to the increased volume and speed of traffic through our hamlet is the safety of pedestrians. In the past few years it has become increasingly dangerous to try and walk in the village, especially crossing the bridge.

In conversation with the county engineers, and other officials at the public meeting it was clear that the volume of traffic will only increase as time goes on.

Therefore it is of utmost importance that the ability of the residents and visitors to Blakeney to walk in our village are seriously considered and plans are implemented now to deal with this critical issue.

Obviously, as we have been confronted with many frightening experiences related to speeding vehicles rushing through our quiet, winding, residential streets, we have considered the issue a lot. Our quality of life here has been seriously compromised by this and must be dealt with now.

We feel now is the time to put in sidewalks ( like Clayton ) . A clear break in the zone for walking and driving is required.

The following are effective, traffic calming methods that are already tested and used in other places and that we would like to see:

- signage currently in use before the 5 Span bridge in Pakenham is needed: large yellow signs with black chevrons saying: NARROW SINGLE LANE BRIDGE: SLOW DOWN
- Signage currently in use in vehicle-endangered residential areas all over the county, ( ie: Ferguson Falls, Glen Tay etc) that say: COMMUNITY SAFETY ZONE: INCREASED FINES , and solar-lighted "YOUR SPEED IS: " signs on both sides of the bridge AND THE APPROPRIATE SPEED POSTED: 30 KM.
- A raised asphalt pedestrian lane on the bridge with clear markings. ( this wouldn't restrict wide farm vehicles )
- Speed bumps like those currently in use on very busy roads all over the province ( one example to note is on Lyon St. in Ottawa going south toward highway #417: they are broad enough to allow big vehicles ( snowplows/ fire trucks/ construction vehicles ) to use the road, as well as thousands of cars a day HOWEVER the bumps slow down the traffic that traverses this densely populated residential neighbourhood. Such SPEED BUMPS ought to be placed in several areas throughout Blakeney. ( before the bridge/ after the bridge / along the "straightaway" at the top of the hill going toward Martin St. )
- STOP SIGN : needed at Norway St as a traffic calming device.

A big factor seemingly not taken into account are the large numbers of visitors to the park. Blakeney Park and the Rapids are a big tourist draw. Starting Summer of 2021 Trip Advisor showed Blakeney Raids Park as their #1 destination for a "best day trip in the Ottawa area"

Visitors to the park aren't alert to the dangerous issues with traffic as they cross the road to the canoe launch rock. Plus many, often families with children and dogs, enjoy the view from the bridge, often stopping to take photos, then coming to walk through the village.

There are now a new generation of children and grandchildren in Blakeney, plus seniors and dog walkers and cyclists and its very problematic that we can't go out into our own village without worrying about speeding vehicles.

Now that Blakeney has become a commuter route that will only get busier, and these drivers are focused on getting to their destination, and not so much on what is best for the residents,



it is incumbent on the county to make sure bridge is made to serve pedestrians as much as it is to serve vehicles. The roadway in Blakeney was obviously never designed for commuter traffic. The Bridge is a county issue and the road is a town issue so both jurisdictions must work together on a road/bridge renewal: this is critical to the villagers.

Thank you for your serious attention to this issue:

Michael Reynolds and Chandler Swain, [REDACTED]  
Kristen Mohr, [REDACTED]  
Diana Jackson, [REDACTED]  
Linda Berg and Cornelius Berg, [REDACTED]  
Jennifer Ryder Jones, [REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [Blakeney Bridge](#)  
**Subject:** Questions and comments on plans for construction of Blakeney Bridge  
**Date:** December 7, 2022 11:02:16 AM

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Hello,

Thank you for the opportunity to have input into the Blakeney Bridge rejuvenation project. I live at 156 Blakeney road immediately adjacent to the Bridge. I tried to keep this email brief and directed at just the design of the new bridge but it is so closely interlaced with other traffic and safety issues that I found I could not. So my apologies for this lengthy email, I have highlighted my primary thoughts in bold below.

Unfortunately, I was not able to attend the meeting on the 1st. But I look forward to the improvements and appreciate the possibility to share my thoughts and ideas with you through this email.

I was able to obtain the sketches of proposed bridges through my neighbours and read the details of the meeting online. I did have a few questions that I was not able to determine from the sketches or media...

1. As residents and primary stakeholders, how much input into the final decision do we have, and how is the final decision determined?
2. Are there renderings or photo images of what the railings as well as the 3beam guard rail would look like?
3. There is a note about pedestrian and cycle shoulders on the drawings but it doesn't show a raised area. Can you clarify if this is raised like a sidewalk? (sloped rather than curb might accommodate farm machinery)
4. What kind of traffic signals will be installed? What will they look like?

*I see the following as stakeholders. In contemplating which option for the bridge might be best these are my thoughts on what each stakeholder group might have as needs, wants or requirements.*

Residents: Safety / Peace / Aesthetics

Visitors to the park: Safety and enjoyment of park aesthetics

Farmers: Safe ability to cross the bridge

Snowmobilers ATV and dirtbikes: Safety, a way to cross the river to access the rail trail (although I don't believe snowmobiles should be on the road - another discussion)

Commuters: A route across the bridge and through the village to get from HWY 29 to HWY 417.

*Consideration of the design of the bridge for each stakeholder group ...*

Residents: Reduced speed limits, traffic control measures, sidewalks

Visitors: Reduced speed limits, traffic control measures, sidewalks, enhanced park infrastructure, and aesthetics for parking

Farmers: Keep the route through the village and ensure the bridge is wide enough to accommodate machinery.

Recreation vehicles: ATV and Dirtbikes, Keep the route through the village but incorporate speed-controlling measures for safety for all.

Snowmobiles, create an alternate route crossing the river further upstream as existed in years past.

Commuters: Keep the route through the village but incorporate speed-controlling measures for the safety of all.

Personally, I see the construction of the bridge as an opportunity. An opportunity to celebrate and embrace the historic nature of the site and the beauty of the Blakeney Rapids.

I feel there should be a dedicated pedestrian route across the bridge for safety and enjoyment for both residents and visitors to the park. And installing a single-lane bridge vs. two lanes would save both funds (which might be reallocated to Park improvements) and reduce traffic flow and speeding. I think all needs can be met with a single-lane bridge and sidewalks. A double lane will only encourage unnecessary traffic. A single-lane bridge and reducing speed with traffic control measures and lower speed limits through the village will discourage unnecessary traffic that can easily utilize the route through Almonte instead while still meeting all the needs of the stakeholders. **With these considerations in mind, I feel option 'B' seems the best choice for all stakeholders.**

Additionally, any saved funds by utilizing option 'B' might be used for improvements to the park and roads through the village. I would love to see sidewalks from the park through to Martin Street. Particularly on the blind corners. One, in particular, is a sharp curve, up a hill blind corner with a side street off of it. It is very uncomfortable for a pedestrian to walk around this corner even if a vehicle is not speeding. Adding a stroller or dog on a leash just adds to the stress.

**So to sum up...**

- **I would prefer option 'B' with a raised sidewalk for pedestrians and minimal traffic lights.**
- **I would like to see sidewalks installed along Blakeney road from the park to Martin Street.**
- **Reduced speed limits preferably with speed bumps, traffic control posts, or other traffic control measures.**
- **Personally, I'd like to request a hidden laneway sign be installed at the end of the bridge as visibility is poor exiting my lane.**
- **Is it possible to create some form of a working group or task force with the municipality to plan and implement safety and improvement ideas and concepts?**

Additionally, improvements to the park might include...

- Paved and delineated parking at the park for both visitors and to define Dave Bardams property (he often has to deal with parking overflow sometimes blocking his parking area).
- A defined kayak launch site as part of the park.

Funds for park improvements might come from saving money by choosing option 'B' or perhaps the municipality of Mississippi Mills could use funds from cash in lieu of parklands. Would the enhancement of the park infrastructure not be a perfect use of these funds?

Again, thank you for opening up channels to allow the residents of Blakeney to have a voice and input to the design of the new bridge.

Diana Jackson



**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [Blakeney Bridge](#)  
**Subject:** Submission re: Bridge Replacement  
**Date:** December 6, 2022 11:26:49 AM  
**Attachments:** [Blakeney Bridge Replacement-AylingPenneySubmission-12.6.2022.docx](#)

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**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good morning,

Please see below (and attached) our submission regarding the Blakeney Bridge replacement.

Warm regards,

Matthew Ayling, Laura Penney and Leo Ayling [REDACTED]

---

## Blakeney Bridge Replacement

Summary: I'm writing to express my support for the replacement of the current bridge with a single-lane replacement, in alignment with previous recommendations from Lanark County Public Works staff and in line with Option B, as presented at the Public Information Centre on December 1st. A single-lane replacement is appropriate for the current crossing, would minimize costs and the impact on public safety/local ecology, but should be paired with improvements to pedestrian safety infrastructure in the hamlet and particularly at the bridge crossing. Alternative crossings in anticipation of development and growth in the region should be considered as longer-term solutions, and it is recommended that a committee be struck to identify suitable locations. As noted in a presentation to the Lanark County Council ([link](#)), Blakeney residents have been voicing their concerns about the current state of pedestrian safety in the village for quite some time and call specifically for longer-term solutions given the increase in traffic volume and speed through the village. A two-lane bridge would be a setback, particularly without any accompanying pedestrian improvements. A compromise solution of a well-signaled, extra-wide single-lane bridge could provide interested parties with a best-of-both-worlds solution.

## Introduction

In its report, presented to the Lanark County Public Works Committee on October 26, 2022, the Lanark County Public Works department makes it clear that the current bridge must be replaced due to its present poor condition - including the condition of its substructure concrete, structural steel, and concrete decking. That report recommended a replacement with a "like-for-like" single lane modular bridge with new abutments at a cost of \$2.5M. The report notes that an impact assessment to determine any cultural heritage value - presumably of the bridge itself - is underway. A single-lane bridge is warranted, notes the

report, due to the low annual average daily traffic of ~400 vehicles (with a seasonal high of ~700).

Additional considerations are noted for a single lane bridge: a lowered speed limit (to 40km/h from 50), traffic signaling, and a limit of 4.9m in width to avoid the appearance of a two-lane bridge.

In discussion of the report at County Council ([October 26](#)), several councilors wondered whether a two-lane structure might be appropriate, given agricultural activity in the area. Mississippi Mills municipal staff have also suggested a two-lane bridge might enable easier transit across the river of large fleet vehicles.

Residents in Blakeney have been concerned about the condition of the bridge and the potential for its replacement for some time, and welcome the opportunity to provide input into the final selection of a new bridge. For several reasons, a single-lane replacement with enhanced pedestrian safety infrastructure is recommended. These include reasons related to costs, safety, ecological and tourism, and long-term planning. Reasons related to the liveability and peaceful enjoyment of the community are implied but not enumerated.

## Agricultural Use

Residents in Blakeney had a chance to discuss the width of the bridge with agricultural users, who suggested that a two-lane bridge would be more suitable to allow for ever-wider combines and other heavy farm equipment. While there is great economic and cultural heritage value in the local agricultural industry, the narrow benefit of a wider bridge accrues only to a small number of farmers who use the bridge for heavy traffic during harvest season. Further, at a certain point in size, farm equipment becomes too large to navigate the blind hills and tight curves in the hamlet itself, making the argument for a two-lane bridge largely moot. A wider single-lane bridge that can accommodate the current and near-future size of farm equipment balances the need for continued traffic calming from a single-lane against the need to allow large equipment across during harvests. It is unclear whether or how many combines are in use in the area that would not fit across a 19ft (5.8m) width bridge, and currently many farm equipment operators are able to cross the bridge without issue.

It should also be noted that the Highway Traffic Act's [Over-Dimensional Farm Vehicles regulations](#) impose conditions on the width of farm vehicles above 3.6m including lights and escort vehicles. If the bridge is widened to allow for vehicles in excess of 5.8m in width, these vehicles would be subject to the regulations therein. To avoid these conditions, farm equipment must be 2.6m or narrower. Further, all farm equipment, including those capable of road speeds over 40 km/h must obey a 40 km/h speed limit and use an SMV sign.

A [2016 study](#) published in Injury Epidemiology of roadway characteristics on farm equipment crashes found that higher traffic volume, higher posted speed limits, road type, and smaller road widths were associated with the occurrence of farm equipment crashes. As farm equipment width increases, particularly on narrow roads, crashes also increase. The narrow roads of Blakeney combined with wider allowed equipment would pose a hazard to road safety for agricultural road users, as well as road users and pedestrians (more on this in the section on safety).

Weighing the tangible, appreciable concerns of residents - long voiced - of the hamlet with the hypothetical scenario of larger farm equipment (that would find it difficult, dangerous, or additionally costly to navigate the hamlet, in any event) is not a rational approach to determining a proper bridge replacement. A potential compromise solution does exist, however, to allow for next-generation sizes (with the assumption that they are larger than the current ultra-wide 18.5' models), could maintain a single-lane bridge at 20 or 21ft,



provided sufficient signaling and traffic lighting is included to make it clear that the bridge remains a single-lane. Paint or flex posts to demarcate a pedestrian lane would also be welcome.

## Costs and Negative Externalities

The report from Lanark County Public Works estimated that a single-lane replacement bridge would cost between \$3 and 3.5M. At Council, Public Works staff noted that the County's current bridge budget is below this figure, and additional funds (potentially from grants from other levels of government) would be necessary. A two-lane bridge, by contrast, could cost roughly \$4.5M.

At Council on October 26, several councilors wondered whether the bridge and the responsibility for its replacement should properly be that of Mississippi Mills. A review of the budgets and financial plans for Mississippi Mills and Lanark ([link](#) and [link](#), respectively) makes it clear that neither entity has the fiscal space for a bridge replacement that might cost as much as \$4.5M. The one-time cost, should no other source(s) of funds become available, might require a levy on taxpayers in the County or Mississippi Mills and would therefore need to meet a very high bar to be justified. It should be noted that the main argument in favour of a two-lane replacement - to allow large farm vehicles to cross more easily - will provide a very narrow benefit to a small group of residents (many of whom do not live within the hamlet of Blakeney) while imposing costs on a larger swath of the non-farming public who do use the hamlet's roads daily.

Additionally, it does not appear from public documents that additional costs of a two-lane bridge have been adequately considered. The hamlet's topography - its hills and curves - are steep and tight, a two-lane bridge would likely require terraforming to clear its sightlines to avoid collisions and to allow for large vehicles to navigate the narrow roads of the hamlet. Increased traffic from a two-lane bridge would also have knock-on effects on road maintenance in the area that have not been captured. The condition of the municipally-owned road from Highway 29 to Blakeney bridge is already poor; additional traffic, and in particular traffic from heavy vehicles, would require more maintenance and much sooner than currently projected. The curves in Blakeney itself, and on the approach to the rapids from Highway 29, are quite tight and would require additional signage and potentially terraforming to reduce collision or single-vehicle accident incidence.

The hamlet itself, as noted, has quite narrow roads with absent or narrow shoulders. These would need to be widened, requiring (in places) significant landscaping and terraforming. The main curve/hill in the hamlet, that of Blakeney Road turning right as it runs toward the bridge, would need new and/or enhanced signage, stronger guardrails, and shoring to protect the hill from erosion. Large vehicles have been observed becoming stuck and unable to make the climb and to navigate the current narrow curves - if the bridge is widened to allow for larger vehicles, there will be more frequent incidents of vehicles needing assistance or extrication, and this may require a complete reconstruction or redevelopment of the main Blakeney road. This is, again, in the case of heavier traffic and traffic consisting of heavier vehicles.

The costs of signage to warn heavy vehicles of the hill grade, tight turns, and bridge weight limit, including tractor-trailers, would also need to be considered, along with their placement in the hamlet in order to ensure their effectiveness.

The benefit of a two-lane bridge (as noted, to allow large farm vehicles to cross) is a narrow one and should be weighed against the significant additional costs noted above. For local residents who will be asked to contribute via their property taxes (or perhaps even through a levy), this benefit does not outweigh these costs and cannot be adequately justified.

Additionally, alternative crossings at Pakenham and Almonte are available and do not incur significant additional costs to agricultural operators to use, as they currently do when it is necessary for ultra-wide equipment.

In sum, there are several significant additional costs to a two-lane bridge that are not captured in the figure for the bridge replacement alone that should be considered. Many of these costs will be borne by Mississippi Mills, rather than the County. Given these, the financial situation of both the municipality of Mississippi Mills and the County, and a lack of significant benefits to a two-lane bridge, a replacement with a single-lane bridge is recommended.

## Public and Pedestrian Safety

In determining whether a two-lane or single-lane bridge is appropriate as a replacement for the Blakeney bridge, there are a number of public and pedestrian safety considerations that should be appreciated.

One of the main arguments in favour of a two-lane bridge is to allow for larger vehicles, in particular farming vehicles, to make the crossing more easily. As noted, there are significant issues with sight-lines in the hamlet, owing to the tight curves and steep hills in the village. The main curve coming from Highway 29 turning left toward the rapids is a blind curve, as is the first curve and intersection coming up into the hamlet from the bridge. Allowing larger and heavier vehicles to make the crossing would exacerbate existing concerns with pedestrian and public safety. It should be noted that farm vehicles would not be the only large vehicles to use the crossing, should a two-lane bridge be chosen. Tractor trailers from domestic and international transportation firms often attempt to use the bridge and have become stuck or have made the crossing in violation of the current/former tonnage limit. A two-lane bridge with (presumably) a larger weight limit would increase the frequency of these crossings, and with the limited sightlines in the village would without question increase the frequency collisions, and of stuck or disabled large vehicles due to hill grade or tight corners.

The two-lane bridge option (Option C) presented at the information centre on December 1 included no pedestrian facilities in its design. This would be a substantial step backward from even the current bridge, which is at least wide enough that pedestrians can walk single-file along the shoulder. Two lanes taken up entirely by larger vehicles would pose significant pedestrian safety concerns, and would cut access to the park off from residents and tourists from the rest of the village.

The current absence in the village of any pedestrian infrastructure is also of significant concern. This is the case with or without a two-lane replacement, but would become particularly acute if a two-lane replacement is chosen. Higher vehicle traffic volume, speed, and size would make Blakeney road significantly more dangerous for pedestrians. As noted in a presentation to the Lanark County Council ([link](#)), Blakeney residents have been voicing their concerns about the current state of pedestrian safety in the village for quite some time and have called specifically for longer-term solutions given the increase in traffic and vehicular speed through the village as result of the pandemic and population increases. A two-lane bridge would be a setback, particularly without any accompanying pedestrian improvements.

A single-lane replacement would therefore be recommended, but at this point it is also prudent that significant thought be given to improving pedestrian safety on the bridge itself and inside the hamlet. Residents would welcome a speed reduction to 40km/h and additionally traffic signaling but, given the tourism attendant to the Blakeney Rapids park, the age of residents in the village (many seniors and young families) and poor sightlines

and narrow shoulders in the village, would suggest that while improvements to the bridge via replacement are being undertaken, a study of potential pedestrian-focused improvements also be contemplated. Some low-cost, high-yield improvements include further reduced speed limit in line with [Vision Zero](#) standards (30 km/h), pedestrian crossing or stop signs in the village, and pedestrian-aware signage for vehicles (see presentation [here](#)).

## Ecological and Tourism Impact

The Mississippi river is an important ecological resource for residents, and deserves protection from the impacts of increased car and truck traffic. Tourism is similarly an important economic driver in the area, with Blakeney Rapids Park seeing an increase in car (and foot and bicycle) visitors since the onset of the Covid 19 pandemic.

Car tires are among the most common plastic polluters on earth, according to work published in National Geographic and the *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* ([link](#)) Particulates from brake pads are similarly ubiquitous and toxic ([link](#)), and fumes from diesel are notorious public health and environmental irritants. Not only is increased passenger traffic likely to increase these pollutants in the area, a two lane bridge would bring heavier truck traffic with even greater attendant tire, diesel, and brake pad externalities.

Current levels of tourism, mainly visitors to the Blakeney Park Rapids, are adequately served by a single-lane bridge. Indeed, the natural calming effect of the single-lane bridge makes the Park and its environs more peaceful and protects tourists from a degree of speeding as they make their way to and around the rapids, from the Park itself to the boat launch further up the street or into Blakeney hamlet itself. There would be significant negative effects on safe and enjoyable tourism if a two-lane bridge brought increased through-traffic, particularly from large commercial vehicles. Increased large-vehicle traffic would also increase the incidence of conflict with small personal recreational vehicles (e.g. ATVs and snowmobiles).

## Alternatives and Dealing with Development

The municipality of Mississippi Mills has and is experiencing significant growth that, even in the context of higher interest rates and economic downturn, is unlikely to slow. The recently-passed Provincial Bill 23 would suggest that the ability of municipalities to direct their own development may also be somewhat curtailed in the near future. The knock-on effects of growth should be considered and planned for ahead of time rather than dealt with in a reactionary, ad hoc, manner.

Other crossing sites for a future bridge would be more suitable for the construction of a two-lane bridge that allows for larger vehicles to cross without significantly impacting public safety or incurring unnecessary costs. These sites would be those where existing roads or laneways meet the river at right angles, where the bridge and run-up roads themselves would not require major terraforming, and where crossings are minimally impairing on local residents. A purpose-built two-lane bridge that allows for higher-speed and -volume crossing would minimize impacts on the community while acting as an engine for growth and stability in the medium and longer term. This author suggests that a committee be struck to conduct a search for a suitable crossing and make recommendations to this term of County and municipal Councils.

It should be noted that public notice and consultation on a bridge replacement, given its significant effects on the community of Blakeney and its residents, has been less than ideal.

The notice that a bridge replacement was necessary was delivered at the next-to-last meeting of County Council, and municipal councilors were given very little time in the beginning of their terms to come up to speed on the context and issues before being asked to weigh in on the request for proposal. This is despite the bridge itself being slated for replacement in the 1 to 5 year term at least as long ago as 2015. Advance notice should have been served, and more consideration of a wide range of viewpoints undertaken. Residents of Blakeney have been asking for more attention to be paid to the traffic situation in their village for a number of years, and it is not sufficient that a major change to infrastructure with such substantial effect on that situation have so little time for public feedback.

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [Matthew Ayling](#); [Blakeney Bridge](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Submission re: Bridge Replacement  
**Date:** December 6, 2022 2:31:27 PM

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**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Thank you Matt for representing me, as well as the others, that have the same view as stated in your submission of Blakeney Bridge Replacement.

Tove Hunding.

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** December 6, 2022 11:26 AM  
**To:** [blakeneybridge@lanarkcounty.ca](mailto:blakeneybridge@lanarkcounty.ca)  
**Subject:** Submission re: Bridge Replacement  
Good morning,

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---

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The two-lane bridge option (Option C) presented at the information centre on December 1 included no pedestrian facilities in its design. This would be a substantial step backward from even the current bridge, which is at least wide enough that pedestrians can walk single-file along the shoulder. Two lanes taken up entirely by larger vehicles would pose significant pedestrian safety concerns, and would cut access to the park off from residents and tourists from the rest of the village.

The current absence in the village of any pedestrian infrastructure is also of significant concern. This is the case with or without a two-lane replacement, but would become particularly acute if a two-lane replacement is chosen. Higher vehicle traffic volume, speed, and size would make Blakeney road significantly more dangerous for pedestrians. As noted in a presentation to the Lanark County Council ([link](#)), Blakeney residents have been voicing

their concerns about the current state of pedestrian safety in the village for quite some time and have called specifically for longer-term solutions given the increase in traffic and vehicular speed through the village as result of the pandemic and population increases. A two-lane bridge would be a setback, particularly without any accompanying pedestrian improvements.

A single-lane replacement would therefore be recommended, but at this point it is also prudent that significant thought be given to improving pedestrian safety on the bridge itself and inside the hamlet. Residents would welcome a speed reduction to 40km/h and additionally traffic signaling but, given the tourism attendant to the Blakeney Rapids park, the age of residents in the village (many seniors and young families) and poor sightlines and narrow shoulders in the village, would suggest that while improvements to the bridge via replacement are being undertaken, a study of potential pedestrian-focused improvements also be contemplated. Some low-cost, high-yield improvements include further reduced speed limit in line with [Vision Zero](#) standards (30 km/h), pedestrian crossing or stop signs in the village, and pedestrian-aware signage for vehicles (see presentation [here](#)).

## Ecological and Tourism Impact

The Mississippi river is an important ecological resource for residents, and deserves protection from the impacts of increased car and truck traffic. Tourism is similarly an important economic driver in the area, with Blakeney Rapids Park seeing an increase in car (and foot and bicycle) visitors since the onset of the Covid 19 pandemic.

Car tires are among the most common plastic polluters on earth, according to work published in National Geographic and the *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* ([link](#)) Particulates from brake pads are similarly ubiquitous and toxic ([link](#)), and fumes from diesel are notorious public health and environmental irritants. Not only is increased passenger traffic likely to increase these pollutants in the area, a two lane bridge would bring heavier truck traffic with even greater attendant tire, diesel, and brake pad externalities.

Current levels of tourism, mainly visitors to the Blakeney Park Rapids, are adequately served by a single-lane bridge. Indeed, the natural calming effect of the single-lane bridge makes the Park and its environs more peaceful and protects tourists from a degree of speeding as they make their way to and around the rapids, from the Park itself to the boat launch further up the street or into Blakeney hamlet itself. There would be significant negative effects on safe and enjoyable tourism if a two-lane bridge brought increased through-traffic, particularly from large commercial vehicles. Increased large-vehicle traffic would also increase the incidence of conflict with small personal recreational vehicles (e.g. ATVs and snowmobiles).

## Alternatives and Dealing with Development

The municipality of Mississippi Mills has and is experiencing significant growth that, even in the context of higher interest rates and economic downturn, is unlikely to slow. The recently-passed Provincial Bill 23 would suggest that the ability of municipalities to direct their own development may also be somewhat curtailed in the near future. The knock-on effects of growth should be considered and planned for ahead of time rather than dealt with in a reactionary, ad hoc, manner.

Other crossing sites for a future bridge would be more suitable for the construction of a two-lane bridge that allows for larger vehicles to cross without significantly impacting public safety or incurring unnecessary costs. These sites would be those where existing roads or

laneways meet the river at right angles, where the bridge and run-up roads themselves would not require major terraforming, and where crossings are minimally impairing on local residents. A purpose-built two-lane bridge that allows for higher-speed and -volume crossing would minimize impacts on the community while acting as an engine for growth and stability in the medium and longer term. This author suggests that a committee be struck to conduct a search for a suitable crossing and make recommendations to this term of County and municipal Councils.

It should be noted that public notice and consultation on a bridge replacement, given its significant effects on the community of Blakeney and its residents, has been less than ideal. The notice that a bridge replacement was necessary was delivered at the next-to-last meeting of County Council, and municipal councilors were given very little time in the beginning of their terms to come up to speed on the context and issues before being asked to weigh in on the request for proposal. This is despite the bridge itself being slated for replacement in the 1 to 5 year term at least as long ago as 2015. Advance notice should have been served, and more consideration of a wide range of viewpoints undertaken. Residents of Blakeney have been asking for more attention to be paid to the traffic situation in their village for a number of years, and it is not sufficient that a major change to infrastructure with such substantial effect on that situation have so little time for public feedback.

**From:** [Sean Derouin](#)  
**To:** [Blakeney Bridge](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Blakeney Bridge  
**Date:** December 8, 2022 9:24:36 AM

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**From:** Cory Smith <csmith@mississippimills.ca>

**Sent:** December 6, 2022 7:01 PM

**To:** Sean Derouin <SDerouin@lanarkcounty.ca>; Luke Harrington <lharrington@mississippimills.ca>

**Cc:** Terry McCann <TMcCann@lanarkcounty.ca>; Ken Kelly <kkelly@mississippimills.ca>

**Subject:** RE: Blakeney Bridge

Sean,

At the Public Information Centre for the Blakeney Bridge it was identified that the EA process was reviewed and a two lane structure is no longer delayed by the EA process and could be completed in 2023. As such, Mississippi Mills Public Works supports the installation of a two lane structure. A two lane structure would support additional traffic expected by the growth of our municipality. It would also support our agricultural community. Traffic lights at either end of the structure would still be recommended to provide traffic calming measures and aid in pedestrian safety.

Should a two lane replacement not be approved by County Council due to the County's financial constraints, in the interest of public safety, Option B as presented at the Public Open House would be a reasonable consideration provided that considerations for agricultural and pedestrian safety are maintained, including the traffic signals.

In any respect due to the geometry of the approaches, either single or two lane structure, strong consideration should be given to including traffic signals. The traffic signals should include advanced warning signals due to the blind corners and hills.

Regards,

**Cory Smith, C.Tech.**

Director of Roads and Public Works

Municipality of Mississippi Mills

3131 Old Perth Rd.

P.O. Box 400

Almonte, ON

K0A 1A0

[csmith@mississippimills.ca](mailto:csmith@mississippimills.ca)

(613)256-2064 x401



**MINUTES  
ELEVENTH MEETING OF 2022  
PUBLIC WORKS  
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

The Public Works Committee of the Whole met in regular session on Wednesday, December 14, 2022 immediately following County Council.

**Members Present:** Chair S. Fournier, Warden P. McLaren and Councillors B. King, C. Lowry, R. Minnille, K. Jennings, J. Carroll, J. Brown, E. McPherson, F. Dobbie, R. Rainer, R. Kidd, B. Dowdall, T. Randell, A. Tennant, and J. Matheson.

**Staff/Others Present:** K. Greaves, CAO  
J. Ralph, County Clerk  
M. Beson, Deputy Clerk  
T. McCann, Director of Public Works  
M. Vala, Climate and Environmental Coordinator

**Regrets:**

**PUBLIC WORKS**

**Chair:** Councillor S. Fournier

**1. CALL TO ORDER (Reminder please silence all electronic devices)**

The meeting was called to order at 5:19 p.m.  
A quorum was present.

**2. DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTEREST**

None at this time.

**3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

November 23, 2022



**MOTION #PW-2022-75**

**MOVED BY:** E. McPherson      **SECONDED BY:** K. Jennings

*THAT, the minutes of the Public Works Committee meeting held on November 23, 2022 be approved as circulated.*

**ADOPTED**

**4. ADDITIONS AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

December 14, 2022

**MOTION #PW-2022-76**

**MOVED BY:** R. Minnille      **SECONDED BY:** B. King

*THAT, the agenda be approved as presented.*

**ADOPTED**

**5. DELEGATIONS (10 MINUTES)**

- i) Ontario Federation of Agriculture: Infrastructure and Planning for Blakeney Bridge  
**Ian Nokes, Transportation Policy Analyst, OFA**
  
- ii) Blakeney Bridge Replacement Delegation  
**Matthew Ayling, Blakeney Resident**

Councillor Rainer discussed receiving information regarding the number of farming practices in the area.

**6. QUESTIONS OF THE DELEGATION FROM COUNCIL**

**7. PRESENTATIONS**

**8. COMMUNICATIONS**

**9. CONSENT REPORTS**

**10. DISCUSSION REPORTS**

- i) PW-29-2022 Integrated Vegetation Management Plan Update  
**Michelle Rabbetts, Climate Environmental Coordinator**

**MOTION #PW-2022-77**

**MOVED BY:** K. Jennings      **SECONDED BY:** P. McLaren

***THAT,** the Clerk be authorized to prepare the necessary by-law to adopt the updated County of Lanark Integrated Pest Management Vegetation Management Plan at the January 11th meeting of County Council.*

**ADOPTED**

- ii) PW-30-3033 Climate Lens  
**Michelle Rabbetts, Climate Environmental Coordinator**

Council discussed having information related to the amount of staff time that would be implicated related to the climate lens project.

**MOTION #PW-2022-78**

**MOVED BY:** R. Rainer      **SECONDED BY:** F. Dobbie

***THAT,** Report #PW-30-2022 Climate Lens be received as information.*

**ADOPTED**

- iii) PW-31-2022 Blakeney Bridge Update  
**Sean Derouin, Public Works Manager**

S. Derouin provided additional details regarding the background of the Blakeney Bridge prior to starting his report. He detailed his presentation and the options available.

Council discussed the options presented.

Council discussed the 'boundary bridge' issue and the history behind it, along with particulars of the current relationship.

Clarity was requested information related to the expected lifespan of the modular bridge, it was noted that the bridge could last approximately 50 years.

Council discussed the overall budget for bridges and the information presented related to infrastructure conditions.

**MOTION #PW-2022-79**

**MOVED BY:** R. Minnille      **SECONDED BY:** R. Kidd

***THAT,** Council direct staff to proceed with replacing Blakeney Bridge in 2023 with a modular panel bridge,*

***AND THAT,** the replacement bridge be a 2 lane bridge, with a roadway width of 7.3 m with (or without) traffic signals,*

***AND THAT,** Council direct staff to proceed with an RFP to complete the detailed design of the replacement bridge; and*

***AND THAT,** the bridge replacement be forwarded to the 2023 budget.*

**ADOPTED**

**11. VERBAL REPORTS**

**12. DEFERRED REPORTS**

**13. CONFIDENTIAL REPORTS**

**14. NEW/OTHER BUSINESS**

- i) Ontario Federation of Agriculture: Infrastructure and Planning for Blakeney Bridge  
**Ian Nokes, Transportation Policy Analyst, OFA**

**MOTION #PW-2022-80**

**MOVED BY:** B. Dowdall      **SECONDED BY:** A. Tennant

***THAT,** the Ontario Federation of Agriculture Infrastructure and Planning for Blakeney Bridge delegation be received as information.*

**ADOPTED**

- ii) Blakeney Bridge Replacement Delegation  
**Matthew Ayling, Blakeney Resident**

**MOTION #PW-2022-81**

**MOVED BY:** K. Jennings      **SECONDED BY:** B. King

***THAT,** the Blakeney Bridge Replacement delegation be received as information.*

**ADOPTED**

**15. ADJOURNMENT**

The Committee adjourned at 7:14 p.m. on motion by Councillors McPherson, Tennant.

Jasmin Ralph, Clerk



Kurt Greaves, CAO

# LANARK COUNTY

## BLAKENEY BRIDGE REPLACEMENT PIC

### ATTENDANCE SHEET

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2022, 6:00 - 8:00 PM

Name: <b>PLEASE PRINT</b>	Address:	Phone #:	E-Mail Address:
LEWIS ROBERT	505 MOUNTAIN VIEW RD PAKENHAM	613 314 1049	LCRUBART@GMAIL.COM
RIK MINNILLK	MISSISSIPPI MILLS	613 256-1735	
PAUL W. FORCE	579 Pine Road in m	613-223-4449	pkforce@fsoem.ca
Tony Jones	235 OTTAWA ST Almonte	613 889 4961	tony-jones_4@hotmail.com
Paul Kelly	806 Golden Line Rd Almonte	613 277-0514	
Shelley McPhail	6443 Martin St. N. Almonte	613 978 4468	mbashelley@hotmail.com
PEN & KAT AYLING	267 Spring Almonte	613-824-4217	
Jonathan Merchand	131 Cedar Hill	613 371 8429	jonathanmerchand@hotmail.ca
Wesley Thom	1342 Ramsay Conc 8 Almonte	613 898 3276	rockyrapidsfarmers@gmail.com
STEWART YEAMAN	5907 MARTIN ST. N.	250-2761	yeaman@bell.net







**COMMENT SHEET**

**Blakeney Bridge Rehabilitation  
Public Information Centre  
Almonte & District Community Centre, 182 Bridge St, Almonte  
Thursday December 1/6:00 – 8:00 PM**

**PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY**

**Please indicate if you plan to provide comment via email**

Please check the box of your preferred replacement alternative:

- Single lane bridge: 5.5M
- Single lane bridge: 5.8M
- Two-lane bridge: 7.3M

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Brenda Cochran - will

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email comments

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Public Works Manager, Lanark County  
613-267-1353  
Fax 613-267-2793  
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*Prefer to have 2 Lane Bridge*

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comments to be provided via email

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TWO LANE BRIDGE IS THE BEST OPTION  
 HOWEVER I REALIZE COST IS A MAJOR FACTOR  
 OPTION C IS GOOD AS WELL, LOOKING FOR AN  
 ACCESSABLE LANE FOR PEDESTRIANS + SNOWMOBILES  
 WOULD BE AWESOME,  
 APPROACHES TO PARK ENTRANCE A CONCERN  
 AS WELL.

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2022 No TIL planters 18 1/2 ft folded width  
 with out spike closing wheels and drag chains.  
 Combines with Duals all round with Space  
 plate 19 ft.  
 When will anything smaller than 2 lanes become  
 obsolete.

Bill Duncan - Pakenham

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*[Handwritten initials]*



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Single Lane @ 5.8M for replz  
enough room for pedestrians & large  
equipment yet keeps speed down

Christian Ritter

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By increasing the bridge size greater than 5.8m will be too disruptive to the Blakeney community. The increase in traffic will be dangerous to the residence due to the size & volume & speed of the traffic through the village.

Kathleen Teahen  
Almonte Ont

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Single lane incl. space for  
pedestrians will keep our  
village a village.

Feather Atkinson  
Blakeney resident

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Any single lane, whatever the farmers need.

Don't want to encourage additional traffic through Blakeney. It should not be thoroughfare. Like the charm + slow pace of life that the single lane provides.

Often walkers + ~~fischer~~ people fishing from bridge. Space to accomodate tractors would also accomodate people. Robin Hall, robinkhall@gmail.com

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I BELIEVE THAT THE 5.8M BRIDGE  
 MEETS THE REQUIREMENTS FOR  
 THE VILLAGE TRAFFIC. WE NEED  
 TO KEEP A SINGLE LANE BRIDGE  
 IN ORDER TO CONTROL SPEED.

Linda Berg

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*safety issue — avoid 2 lanes*

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*traffic management*

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I LIKE THE EXTRA WIDTH OF OPTION B, BOTH FOR PEDESTRIAN TRAFFIC & THE PASSAGE OF LARGE FARM EQUIPMENT.

THE MAIN CONCERN IS THE CONTROL OF CAR TRAFFIC SPEED THROUGH THE HAMLET OF BLAKENEY - A SINGLE LANE BRIDGE WOULD SLOW THE TRAFFIC DOWN SOMEWHAT.

MORE EDUCATION IS NEEDED TO CONVINCE PEOPLE OF THE DANGERS OF SPEEDING IN A RESIDENTIAL ZONE. LOTS OF WALKERS HERE - KIDS & DOGS!

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Website : [www.lanarkcounty.ca/blakeneybridge](http://www.lanarkcounty.ca/blakeneybridge)**





**COMMENT SHEET**

**Blakeney Bridge Rehabilitation  
Public Information Centre  
Almonte & District Community Centre, 182 Bridge St, Almonte  
Thursday December 1/6:00 – 8:00 PM**

**PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY**

**Please indicate if you plan to provide comment via email**

Please check the box of your preferred replacement alternative:

- Single lane bridge: 5.5M
- Single lane bridge: 5.8M
- Two-lane bridge: 7.3M

Bridge needs to accommodate farm machinery with clear sight lines. Construction / large trucks should be barred from use of bridge.

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**Please deposit comments, in the box provided, or e-mail or fax it to the following, no later than Wednesday, December 7, 2022:**

**Sean Derouin, P.Eng., C.E.T.  
Public Works Manager, Lanark County  
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I AM CERTAINLY SYMPATHETIC TO THE NEED FOR LOCAL FARMERS TO BE ABLE TO GET EQUIPMENT ACROSS THE BRIDGE. HOWEVER, THE TRAFFIC PROBLEMS WITH SPEED IN THE VILLAGE WOULD BE INCREASED EXPONENTIALLY WITH A TWO-LANE BRIDGE.

I DO NOT BELIEVE TWO LANES ARE NEEDED FOR THE LARGE PERCENTAGE OF TRAFFIC THROUGH THE VILLAGE

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- Single lane bridge: 5.8M
- Two-lane bridge: 7.3M

I think the bridge should be wider to accommodate large farm machinery and a lane for walkers but not 2 lane.

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- Two-lane bridge: 7.3M

*historical,*  
 implement cultural heritage in  
 bridge design, using local  
 artists.

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- Single lane bridge: 5.8M
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Please check the box of your preferred replacement alternative:

- Single lane bridge: 5.5M
- Single lane bridge: 5.8M ← option B
- Two-lane bridge: 7.3M

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see Mr. Ayling's  
comments  
fax

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- Two-lane bridge: 7.3M

This width should accommodate agricultural equipment, while maintaining the heritage look/value of the bridge. A two-lane bridge will impact Pennine Rd which is already in need of significant repairs.

thanks

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- Single lane bridge: 5.8M
- Two-lane bridge: 7.3M

I AM A BLAKENEY RESIDENT AND FIND  
THE CURRENT TRAFFIC TO BE QUITE  
ANNOYING. TOO MANY VEHICLES INCLUDING  
4 WHEELERS, SKI-DOO'S, TRUCKS AND  
RACING CARS WITH LOUD EXHAUST  
REALLY RUIN OUR ENJOYMENT OF OUR  
ONCE QUIET AND PEACEFUL COMMUNITY.  
I WOULD RESPECTFULLY REQUEST SPEED  
BUMPS AND/OR A RADAR SIGN TO  
CALM TRAFFIC AS MANY SPEED THROUGH DAILY.

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As a resident of Blakeney who lives very near the bridge, it is critical for us not to ~~lose~~<sup>lose</sup> anymore of our "quiet enjoyment" of our village. Currently the amount + speed of the traffic past our house, including snowmobiles and ATVs is very upsetting.

A 2 lane bridge would add more cars and allow them to go faster.

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P. Lorian, Ph.D.

I ~~am not~~ <sup>don't</sup> believe ~~sure~~ councilors have sufficient information to make an informed decision. Not enough environmental and community assessments have been completed. I.E. One for the impacts of each option and <sup>related</sup> mitigation strategies. Council should not proceed with a firm choice until more information is available. (over)

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e.g. environmental  
hydrogeological  
social/community } impacts  
and  
benefits

All you have is conceptual drawings.



**From:** [Chandler Swain](#)  
**To:** [Blakeney Bridge](#)  
**Cc:** [Bev Holmes](#); [Christa Lowry](#); [Vicki Lowe](#)  
**Subject:** Attention : Sean Derouin  
**Date:** December 6, 2022 5:52:36 PM

---

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Mr. Derouin , This letter is from 5 households directly affected by traffic on the bridge:

### **Comments regarding the rebuild of the Blakeney Bridge: from affected residents in Blakeney.**

Thanks for this opportunity to give feedback on the 3 proposed versions of the new bridge.

With regard to the most important issues for us: version #2 ( single car lane with a. wider RAISED pedestrian safety lane ) is the only viable option. ( #3 gives no safety zone for pedestrians and is not worth considering.)

Our main concern with all the factors related to the increased volume and speed of traffic through our hamlet is the safety of pedestrians. In the past few years it has become increasingly dangerous to try and walk in the village, especially crossing the bridge.

In conversation with the county engineers, and other officials at the public meeting it was clear that the volume of traffic will only increase as time goes on.

Therefore it is of utmost importance that the ability of the residents and visitors to Blakeney to walk in our village are seriously considered and plans are implemented now to deal with this critical issue.

Obviously, as we have been confronted with many frightening experiences related to speeding vehicles rushing through our quiet, winding, residential streets, we have considered the issue a lot. Our quality of life here has been seriously compromised by this and must be dealt with now.

We feel now is the time to put in sidewalks ( like Clayton ) . A clear break in the zone for walking and driving is required.

The following are effective, traffic calming methods that are already tested and used in other places and that we would like to see:

- signage currently in use before the 5 Span bridge in Pakenham is needed: large yellow signs with black chevrons saying: NARROW SINGLE LANE BRIDGE: SLOW DOWN
- Signage currently in use in vehicle-endangered residential areas all over the county, ( ie: Ferguson Falls, Glen Tay etc) that say: COMMUNITY SAFETY ZONE: INCREASED FINES , and solar-lighted "YOUR SPEED IS: " signs on both sides of the bridge AND THE APPROPRIATE SPEED POSTED: 30 KM.
- A raised asphalt pedestrian lane on the bridge with clear markings. ( this wouldn't restrict wide farm vehicles )
- Speed bumps like those currently in use on very busy roads all over the province ( one example to note is on Lyon St. in Ottawa going south toward highway #417: they are broad enough to allow big vehicles ( snowplows/ fire trucks/ construction vehicles ) to use the road, as well as thousands of cars a day HOWEVER the bumps slow down the traffic that traverses this densely populated residential neighbourhood. Such SPEED BUMPS ought to be placed in several areas throughout Blakeney. ( before the bridge/ after the bridge / along the "straightaway" at the top of the hill going toward Martin St. )
- STOP SIGN : needed at Norway St as a traffic calming device.

A big factor seemingly not taken into account are the large numbers of visitors to the park. Blakeney Park and the Rapids are a big tourist draw. Starting Summer of 2021 Trip Advisor showed Blakeney Raids Park as their #1 destination for a "best day trip in the Ottawa area"

Visitors to the park aren't alert to the dangerous issues with traffic as they cross the road to the canoe launch rock. Plus many, often families with children and dogs, enjoy the view from the bridge, often stopping to take photos, then coming to walk through the village.

There are now a new generation of children and grandchildren in Blakeney, plus seniors and dog walkers and cyclists and its very problematic that we can't go out into our own village without worrying about speeding vehicles.

Now that Blakeney has become a commuter route that will only get busier, and these drivers are focused on getting to their destination, and not so much on what is best for the residents,

it is incumbent on the county to make sure bridge is made to serve pedestrians as much as it is to serve vehicles. The roadway in Blakeney was obviously never designed for commuter traffic. The Bridge is a county issue and the road is a town issue so both jurisdictions must work together on a road/bridge renewal: this is critical to the villagers.

Thank you for your serious attention to this issue:

Michael Reynolds and Chandler Swain , 178 Blakeney Rd.

Kristen Mohr , 176 Blakeney Rd.

Diana Jackson, 156 Blakeney Rd.

Linda Berg and Cornelius Berg, 194 Blakeney Rd.

Jennifer Ryder Jones, 236 Blakeney Rd.

**From:** [Diana Jackson](#)  
**To:** [Blakeney Bridge](#)  
**Subject:** Questions and comments on plans for construction of Blakeney Bridge  
**Date:** December 7, 2022 11:02:16 AM

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**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello,

Thank you for the opportunity to have input into the Blakeney Bridge rejuvenation project. I live at 156 Blakeney road immediately adjacent to the Bridge. I tried to keep this email brief and directed at just the design of the new bridge but it is so closely interlaced with other traffic and safety issues that I found I could not. So my apologies for this lengthy email, I have highlighted my primary thoughts in bold below.

Unfortunately, I was not able to attend the meeting on the 1st. But I look forward to the improvements and appreciate the possibility to share my thoughts and ideas with you through this email.

I was able to obtain the sketches of proposed bridges through my neighbours and read the details of the meeting online. I did have a few questions that I was not able to determine from the sketches or media...

1. As residents and primary stakeholders, how much input into the final decision do we have, and how is the final decision determined?
2. Are there renderings or photo images of what the railings as well as the 3beam guard rail would look like?
3. There is a note about pedestrian and cycle shoulders on the drawings but it doesn't show a raised area. Can you clarify if this is raised like a sidewalk? (sloped rather than curb might accommodate farm machinery)
4. What kind of traffic signals will be installed? What will they look like?

*I see the following as stakeholders. In contemplating which option for the bridge might be best these are my thoughts on what each stakeholder group might have as needs, wants or requirements.*

Residents: Safety / Peace / Aesthetics

Visitors to the park: Safety and enjoyment of park aesthetics

Farmers: Safe ability to cross the bridge

Snowmobilers ATV and dirtbikes: Safety, a way to cross the river to access the rail trail (although I don't believe snowmobiles should be on the road - another discussion)

Commuters: A route across the bridge and through the village to get from HWY 29 to HWY 417.

*Consideration of the design of the bridge for each stakeholder group ...*

Residents: Reduced speed limits, traffic control measures, sidewalks

Visitors: Reduced speed limits, traffic control measures, sidewalks, enhanced park infrastructure, and aesthetics for parking

Farmers: Keep the route through the village and ensure the bridge is wide enough to accommodate machinery.

Recreation vehicles: ATV and Dirtbikes, Keep the route through the village but incorporate speed-controlling measures for safety for all.

Snowmobiles, create an alternate route crossing the river further upstream as existed in years past.

Commuters: Keep the route through the village but incorporate speed-controlling measures for the safety of all.

Personally, I see the construction of the bridge as an opportunity. An opportunity to celebrate and embrace the historic nature of the site and the beauty of the Blakeney Rapids.

I feel there should be a dedicated pedestrian route across the bridge for safety and enjoyment for both residents and visitors to the park. And installing a single-lane bridge vs. two lanes would save both funds (which might be reallocated to Park improvements) and reduce traffic flow and speeding. I think all needs can be met with a single-lane bridge and sidewalks. A double lane will only encourage unnecessary traffic. A single-lane bridge and reducing speed with traffic control measures and lower speed limits through the village will discourage unnecessary traffic that can easily utilize the route through Almonte instead while still meeting all the needs of the stakeholders. **With these considerations in mind, I feel option 'B' seems the best choice for all stakeholders.**

Additionally, any saved funds by utilizing option 'B' might be used for improvements to the park and roads through the village. I would love to see sidewalks from the park through to Martin Street. Particularly on the blind corners. One, in particular, is a sharp curve, up a hill blind corner with a side street off of it. It is very uncomfortable for a pedestrian to walk around this corner even if a vehicle is not speeding. Adding a stroller or dog on a leash just adds to the stress.

**So to sum up...**

- **I would prefer option 'B' with a raised sidewalk for pedestrians and minimal traffic lights.**
- **I would like to see sidewalks installed along Blakeney road from the park to Martin Street.**
- **Reduced speed limits preferably with speed bumps, traffic control posts, or other traffic control measures.**
- **Personally, I'd like to request a hidden laneway sign be installed at the end of the bridge as visibility is poor exiting my lane.**
- **Is it possible to create some form of a working group or task force with the municipality to plan and implement safety and improvement ideas and concepts?**

Additionally, improvements to the park might include...

- Paved and delineated parking at the park for both visitors and to define Dave Bardams property (he often has to deal with parking overflow sometimes blocking his parking area).
- A defined kayak launch site as part of the park.

Funds for park improvements might come from saving money by choosing option 'B' or perhaps the municipality of Mississippi Mills could use funds from cash in lieu of parklands. Would the enhancement of the park infrastructure not be a perfect use of these funds?

Again, thank you for opening up channels to allow the residents of Blakeney to have a voice and input to the design of the new bridge.

Diana Jackson  
613-915-5474

**From:** [Matthew Ayling](#)  
**To:** [Blakeney Bridge](#)  
**Subject:** Submission re: Bridge Replacement  
**Date:** December 6, 2022 11:26:49 AM  
**Attachments:** [Blakeney Bridge Replacement-AylingPenneySubmission-12.6.2022.docx](#)

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Good morning,

Please see below (and attached) our submission regarding the Blakeney Bridge replacement.

Warm regards,

Matthew Ayling, Laura Penney and Leo Ayling (111 Alexander St., Blakeney)

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## Blakeney Bridge Replacement

Summary: I'm writing to express my support for the replacement of the current bridge with a single-lane replacement, in alignment with previous recommendations from Lanark County Public Works staff and in line with Option B, as presented at the Public Information Centre on December 1st. A single-lane replacement is appropriate for the current crossing, would minimize costs and the impact on public safety/local ecology, but should be paired with improvements to pedestrian safety infrastructure in the hamlet and particularly at the bridge crossing. Alternative crossings in anticipation of development and growth in the region should be considered as longer-term solutions, and it is recommended that a committee be struck to identify suitable locations. As noted in a presentation to the Lanark County Council ([link](#)), Blakeney residents have been voicing their concerns about the current state of pedestrian safety in the village for quite some time and call specifically for longer-term solutions given the increase in traffic volume and speed through the village. A two-lane bridge would be a setback, particularly without any accompanying pedestrian improvements. A compromise solution of a well-signaled, extra-wide single-lane bridge could provide interested parties with a best-of-both-worlds solution.

## Introduction

In its report, presented to the Lanark County Public Works Committee on October 26, 2022, the Lanark County Public Works department makes it clear that the current bridge must be replaced due to its present poor condition - including the condition of its substructure concrete, structural steel, and concrete decking. That report recommended a replacement with a "like-for-like" single lane modular bridge with new abutments at a cost of \$2.5M. The report notes that an impact assessment to determine any cultural heritage value - presumably of the bridge itself - is underway. A single-lane bridge is warranted, notes the



report, due to the low annual average daily traffic of ~400 vehicles (with a seasonal high of ~700).

Additional considerations are noted for a single lane bridge: a lowered speed limit (to 40km/h from 50), traffic signaling, and a limit of 4.9m in width to avoid the appearance of a two-lane bridge.

In discussion of the report at County Council ([October 26](#)), several councilors wondered whether a two-lane structure might be appropriate, given agricultural activity in the area. Mississippi Mills municipal staff have also suggested a two-lane bridge might enable easier transit across the river of large fleet vehicles.

Residents in Blakeney have been concerned about the condition of the bridge and the potential for its replacement for some time, and welcome the opportunity to provide input into the final selection of a new bridge. For several reasons, a single-lane replacement with enhanced pedestrian safety infrastructure is recommended. These include reasons related to costs, safety, ecological and tourism, and long-term planning. Reasons related to the liveability and peaceful enjoyment of the community are implied but not enumerated.

## Agricultural Use

Residents in Blakeney had a chance to discuss the width of the bridge with agricultural users, who suggested that a two-lane bridge would be more suitable to allow for ever-wider combines and other heavy farm equipment. While there is great economic and cultural heritage value in the local agricultural industry, the narrow benefit of a wider bridge accrues only to a small number of farmers who use the bridge for heavy traffic during harvest season. Further, at a certain point in size, farm equipment becomes too large to navigate the blind hills and tight curves in the hamlet itself, making the argument for a two-lane bridge largely moot. A wider single-lane bridge that can accommodate the current and near-future size of farm equipment balances the need for continued traffic calming from a single-lane against the need to allow large equipment across during harvests. It is unclear whether or how many combines are in use in the area that would not fit across a 19ft (5.8m) width bridge, and currently many farm equipment operators are able to cross the bridge without issue.

It should also be noted that the Highway Traffic Act's [Over-Dimensional Farm Vehicles regulations](#) impose conditions on the width of farm vehicles above 3.6m including lights and escort vehicles. If the bridge is widened to allow for vehicles in excess of 5.8m in width, these vehicles would be subject to the regulations therein. To avoid these conditions, farm equipment must be 2.6m or narrower. Further, all farm equipment, including those capable of road speeds over 40 km/h must obey a 40 km/h speed limit and use an SMV sign.

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Weighing the tangible, appreciable concerns of residents - long voiced - of the hamlet with the hypothetical scenario of larger farm equipment (that would find it difficult, dangerous, or additionally costly to navigate the hamlet, in any event) is not a rational approach to determining a proper bridge replacement. A potential compromise solution does exist, however, to allow for next-generation sizes (with the assumption that they are larger than the current ultra-wide 18.5' models), could maintain a single-lane bridge at 20 or 21ft,

provided sufficient signaling and traffic lighting is included to make it clear that the bridge remains a single-lane. Paint or flex posts to demarcate a pedestrian lane would also be welcome.

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Additionally, it does not appear from public documents that additional costs of a two-lane bridge have been adequately considered. The hamlet's topography - its hills and curves - are steep and tight, a two-lane bridge would likely require terraforming to clear its sightlines to avoid collisions and to allow for large vehicles to navigate the narrow roads of the hamlet. Increased traffic from a two-lane bridge would also have knock-on effects on road maintenance in the area that have not been captured. The condition of the municipally-owned road from Highway 29 to Blakeney bridge is already poor; additional traffic, and in particular traffic from heavy vehicles, would require more maintenance and much sooner than currently projected. The curves in Blakeney itself, and on the approach to the rapids from Highway 29, are quite tight and would require additional signage and potentially terraforming to reduce collision or single-vehicle accident incidence.

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The costs of signage to warn heavy vehicles of the hill grade, tight turns, and bridge weight limit, including tractor-trailers, would also need to be considered, along with their placement in the hamlet in order to ensure their effectiveness.

The benefit of a two-lane bridge (as noted, to allow large farm vehicles to cross) is a narrow one and should be weighed against the significant additional costs noted above. For local residents who will be asked to contribute via their property taxes (or perhaps even through a levy), this benefit does not outweigh these costs and cannot be adequately justified.

Additionally, alternative crossings at Pakenham and Almonte are available and do not incur significant additional costs to agricultural operators to use, as they currently do when it is necessary for ultra-wide equipment.

In sum, there are several significant additional costs to a two-lane bridge that are not captured in the figure for the bridge replacement alone that should be considered. Many of these costs will be borne by Mississippi Mills, rather than the County. Given these, the financial situation of both the municipality of Mississippi Mills and the County, and a lack of significant benefits to a two-lane bridge, a replacement with a single-lane bridge is recommended.

## Public and Pedestrian Safety

In determining whether a two-lane or single-lane bridge is appropriate as a replacement for the Blakeney bridge, there are a number of public and pedestrian safety considerations that should be appreciated.

One of the main arguments in favour of a two-lane bridge is to allow for larger vehicles, in particular farming vehicles, to make the crossing more easily. As noted, there are significant issues with sight-lines in the hamlet, owing to the tight curves and steep hills in the village. The main curve coming from Highway 29 turning left toward the rapids is a blind curve, as is the first curve and intersection coming up into the hamlet from the bridge. Allowing larger and heavier vehicles to make the crossing would exacerbate existing concerns with pedestrian and public safety. It should be noted that farm vehicles would not be the only large vehicles to use the crossing, should a two-lane bridge be chosen. Tractor trailers from domestic and international transportation firms often attempt to use the bridge and have become stuck or have made the crossing in violation of the current/former tonnage limit. A two-lane bridge with (presumably) a larger weight limit would increase the frequency of these crossings, and with the limited sightlines in the village would without question increase the frequency collisions, and of stuck or disabled large vehicles due to hill grade or tight corners.

The two-lane bridge option (Option C) presented at the information centre on December 1 included no pedestrian facilities in its design. This would be a substantial step backward from even the current bridge, which is at least wide enough that pedestrians can walk single-file along the shoulder. Two lanes taken up entirely by larger vehicles would pose significant pedestrian safety concerns, and would cut access to the park off from residents and tourists from the rest of the village.

The current absence in the village of any pedestrian infrastructure is also of significant concern. This is the case with or without a two-lane replacement, but would become particularly acute if a two-lane replacement is chosen. Higher vehicle traffic volume, speed, and size would make Blakeney road significantly more dangerous for pedestrians. As noted in a presentation to the Lanark County Council ([link](#)), Blakeney residents have been voicing their concerns about the current state of pedestrian safety in the village for quite some time and have called specifically for longer-term solutions given the increase in traffic and vehicular speed through the village as result of the pandemic and population increases. A two-lane bridge would be a setback, particularly without any accompanying pedestrian improvements.

A single-lane replacement would therefore be recommended, but at this point it is also prudent that significant thought be given to improving pedestrian safety on the bridge itself and inside the hamlet. Residents would welcome a speed reduction to 40km/h and additionally traffic signaling but, given the tourism attendant to the Blakeney Rapids park, the age of residents in the village (many seniors and young families) and poor sightlines

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The Mississippi river is an important ecological resource for residents, and deserves protection from the impacts of increased car and truck traffic. Tourism is similarly an important economic driver in the area, with Blakeney Rapids Park seeing an increase in car (and foot and bicycle) visitors since the onset of the Covid 19 pandemic.

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Current levels of tourism, mainly visitors to the Blakeney Park Rapids, are adequately served by a single-lane bridge. Indeed, the natural calming effect of the single-lane bridge makes the Park and its environs more peaceful and protects tourists from a degree of speeding as they make their way to and around the rapids, from the Park itself to the boat launch further up the street or into Blakeney hamlet itself. There would be significant negative effects on safe and enjoyable tourism if a two-lane bridge brought increased through-traffic, particularly from large commercial vehicles. Increased large-vehicle traffic would also increase the incidence of conflict with small personal recreational vehicles (e.g. ATVs and snowmobiles).

## Alternatives and Dealing with Development

The municipality of Mississippi Mills has and is experiencing significant growth that, even in the context of higher interest rates and economic downturn, is unlikely to slow. The recently-passed Provincial Bill 23 would suggest that the ability of municipalities to direct their own development may also be somewhat curtailed in the near future. The knock-on effects of growth should be considered and planned for ahead of time rather than dealt with in a reactionary, ad hoc, manner.

Other crossing sites for a future bridge would be more suitable for the construction of a two-lane bridge that allows for larger vehicles to cross without significantly impacting public safety or incurring unnecessary costs. These sites would be those where existing roads or laneways meet the river at right angles, where the bridge and run-up roads themselves would not require major terraforming, and where crossings are minimally impairing on local residents. A purpose-built two-lane bridge that allows for higher-speed and -volume crossing would minimize impacts on the community while acting as an engine for growth and stability in the medium and longer term. This author suggests that a committee be struck to conduct a search for a suitable crossing and make recommendations to this term of County and municipal Councils.

It should be noted that public notice and consultation on a bridge replacement, given its significant effects on the community of Blakeney and its residents, has been less than ideal.

The notice that a bridge replacement was necessary was delivered at the next-to-last meeting of County Council, and municipal councilors were given very little time in the beginning of their terms to come up to speed on the context and issues before being asked to weigh in on the request for proposal. This is despite the bridge itself being slated for replacement in the 1 to 5 year term at least as long ago as 2015. Advance notice should have been served, and more consideration of a wide range of viewpoints undertaken. Residents of Blakeney have been asking for more attention to be paid to the traffic situation in their village for a number of years, and it is not sufficient that a major change to infrastructure with such substantial effect on that situation have so little time for public feedback.

**From:** [Tove Hunding](#)  
**To:** [Matthew Ayling](#); [Blakeney Bridge](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Submission re: Bridge Replacement  
**Date:** December 6, 2022 2:31:27 PM

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**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Thank you Matt for representing me, as well as the others, that have the same view as stated in your submission of Blakeney Bridge Replacement.

Tove Hunding.

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

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**From:** [Matthew Ayling](#)  
**Sent:** December 6, 2022 11:26 AM  
**To:** [blakeneybridge@lanarkcounty.ca](mailto:blakeneybridge@lanarkcounty.ca)  
**Subject:** Submission re: Bridge Replacement  
Good morning,

Please see below (and attached) our submission regarding the Blakeney Bridge replacement.

Warm regards,  
Matthew Ayling, Laura Penney and Leo Ayling (111 Alexander St., Blakeney)

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## Blakeney Bridge Replacement

**Summary:** I'm writing to express my support for the replacement of the current bridge with a single-lane replacement, in alignment with previous recommendations from Lanark County Public Works staff and in line with Option B, as presented at the Public Information Centre on December 1st. A single-lane replacement is appropriate for the current crossing, would minimize costs and the impact on public safety/local ecology, but should be paired with improvements to pedestrian safety infrastructure in the hamlet and particularly at the bridge crossing. Alternative crossings in anticipation of development and growth in the region should be considered as longer-term solutions, and it is recommended that a committee be struck to identify suitable locations. As noted in a presentation to the Lanark County Council ([link](#)), Blakeney residents have been voicing their concerns about the current state of pedestrian safety in the village for quite some time and call specifically for longer-term solutions given the increase in traffic volume and speed through the village. A two-lane bridge would be a setback, particularly without any accompanying pedestrian improvements. A compromise solution of a well-signaled, extra-wide single-lane bridge



could provide interested parties with a best-of-both-worlds solution.

## Introduction

In its report, presented to the Lanark County Public Works Committee on October 26, 2022, the Lanark County Public Works department makes it clear that the current bridge must be replaced due to its present poor condition - including the condition of its substructure concrete, structural steel, and concrete decking. That report recommended a replacement with a “like-for-like” single lane modular bridge with new abutments at a cost of \$2.5M. The report notes that an impact assessment to determine any cultural heritage value - presumably of the bridge itself - is underway. A single-lane bridge is warranted, notes the report, due to the low annual average daily traffic of ~400 vehicles (with a seasonal high of ~700).

Additional considerations are noted for a single lane bridge: a lowered speed limit (to 40km/h from 50), traffic signaling, and a limit of 4.9m in width to avoid the appearance of a two-lane bridge.

In discussion of the report at County Council ([October 26](#)), several councilors wondered whether a two-lane structure might be appropriate, given agricultural activity in the area. Mississippi Mills municipal staff have also suggested a two-lane bridge might enable easier transit across the river of large fleet vehicles.

Residents in Blakeney have been concerned about the condition of the bridge and the potential for its replacement for some time, and welcome the opportunity to provide input into the final selection of a new bridge. For several reasons, a single-lane replacement with enhanced pedestrian safety infrastructure is recommended. These include reasons related to costs, safety, ecological and tourism, and long-term planning. Reasons related to the liveability and peaceful enjoyment of the community are implied but not enumerated.

## Agricultural Use

Residents in Blakeney had a chance to discuss the width of the bridge with agricultural users, who suggested that a two-lane bridge would be more suitable to allow for ever-wider combines and other heavy farm equipment. While there is great economic and cultural heritage value in the local agricultural industry, the narrow benefit of a wider bridge accrues only to a small number of farmers who use the bridge for heavy traffic during harvest season. Further, at a certain point in size, farm equipment becomes too large to navigate the blind hills and tight curves in the hamlet itself, making the argument for a two-lane bridge largely moot. A wider single-lane bridge that can accommodate the current and near-future size of farm equipment balances the need for continued traffic calming from a single-lane against the need to allow large equipment across during harvests. It is unclear whether or how many combines are in use in the area that would not fit across a 19ft (5.8m) width bridge, and currently many farm equipment operators are able to cross the bridge without issue.

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Additionally, it does not appear from public documents that additional costs of a two-lane bridge have been adequately considered. The hamlet's topography - its hills and curves - are steep and tight, a two-lane bridge would likely require terraforming to clear its sightlines to avoid collisions and to allow for large vehicles to navigate the narrow roads of the hamlet. Increased traffic from a two-lane bridge would also have knock-on effects on road maintenance in the area that have not been captured. The condition of the municipally-owned road from Highway 29 to Blakeney bridge is already poor; additional traffic, and in particular traffic from heavy vehicles, would require more maintenance and much sooner than currently projected. The curves in Blakeney itself, and on the approach to the rapids from Highway 29, are quite tight and would require additional signage and potentially terraforming to reduce collision or single-vehicle accident incidence.

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Allowing larger and heavier vehicles to make the crossing would exacerbate existing concerns with pedestrian and public safety. It should be noted that farm vehicles would not be the only large vehicles to use the crossing, should a two-lane bridge be chosen. Tractor trailers from domestic and international transportation firms often attempt to use the bridge and have become stuck or have made the crossing in violation of the current/former tonnage limit. A two-lane bridge with (presumably) a larger weight limit would increase the frequency of these crossings, and with the limited sightlines in the village would without question increase the frequency collisions, and of stuck or disabled large vehicles due to hill grade or tight corners.

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**From:** [Sean Derouin](#)  
**To:** [Blakeney Bridge](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Blakeney Bridge  
**Date:** December 8, 2022 9:24:36 AM

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**From:** Cory Smith <csmith@mississippimills.ca>

**Sent:** December 6, 2022 7:01 PM

**To:** Sean Derouin <SDerouin@lanarkcounty.ca>; Luke Harrington <lharrington@mississippimills.ca>

**Cc:** Terry McCann <TMcCann@lanarkcounty.ca>; Ken Kelly <kkelly@mississippimills.ca>

**Subject:** RE: Blakeney Bridge

Sean,

At the Public Information Centre for the Blakeney Bridge it was identified that the EA process was reviewed and a two lane structure is no longer delayed by the EA process and could be completed in 2023. As such, Mississippi Mills Public Works supports the installation of a two lane structure. A two lane structure would support additional traffic expected by the growth of our municipality. It would also support our agricultural community. Traffic lights at either end of the structure would still be recommended to provide traffic calming measures and aid in pedestrian safety.

Should a two lane replacement not be approved by County Council due to the County's financial constraints, in the interest of public safety, Option B as presented at the Public Open House would be a reasonable consideration provided that considerations for agricultural and pedestrian safety are maintained, including the traffic signals.

In any respect due to the geometry of the approaches, either single or two lane structure, strong consideration should be given to including traffic signals. The traffic signals should include advanced warning signals due to the blind corners and hills.

Regards,

**Cory Smith, C.Tech.**

Director of Roads and Public Works

Municipality of Mississippi Mills

3131 Old Perth Rd.

P.O. Box 400

Almonte, ON

K0A 1A0

[csmith@mississippimills.ca](mailto:csmith@mississippimills.ca)

(613)256-2064 x401