

Tourle Street now one bridge too far

EDITORIAL

By TULLY COLLISON and COCO TINDALL

THE building of the Tourle Street Bridge from Kooragang Island to Mayfield was one of the biggest mistakes that has been planned by a government for a long time.

Only a couple of years old now, the bridge is a complete bottleneck for traffic getting into and out of Newcastle. Not only is it a problem for people coming to work in Newcastle from the Port Stephens and Medowie areas, it is a big problem for people going to and from Newcastle Airport.

While the old bridge that was used for many years needed to be pulled down as it wasn't in very good condition, it was obvious before it was decommissioned that the new bridge needed to be at least four lanes and not the two lanes that has replaced the old bridge, therefore not increasing its size.

The federal government has said money is in the budget for the doubling of the bridge and a 2.5-kilometre stretch of road. However, this will still mean bottlenecks will occur, as the stretch of road from the Industrial Highway right through to the airport needs to be upgraded.

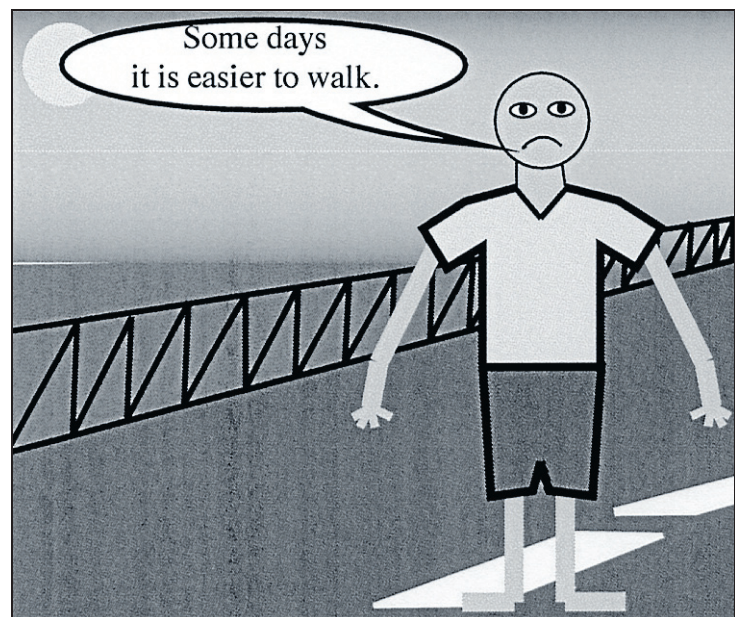
There are stretches of road through Fern Bay and then further up the road approaching Williamtown that are only two lanes – and they are not divided roads at that.

The road that leaves the Tourle Street bridge is only two lanes and when it is widened it will either mean the removal of native mangroves in the river or the filling in of the only beautification that has been successful on Kooragang Island – the small swamp that is used by black swans and migratory birds adjacent to the bridge.

It is also plain to see for anyone who travels on this road that planners have not looked very closely at any of the development that has taken place.

On the Mayfield side of the bridge, there are large pipes that will have to be moved for the road to be widened. And more than likely on the Kooragang side, large power lines that have been placed there will also have to be moved.

We are very lucky that planners in the past had the vision to build the Stockton bridge. It opened in 1971 and replaced the Stockton punt in Newcastle harbour. It is a shame that the planners and governments of today, or even a few years ago, didn't have the foresight of those back in 1971 in looking to the future instead of trying to replace something that was already out of date.



Cartoon: Jack Maroney



GO WEST: Teacher Mrs Liddle will be moving to Western Australia to teach on a cattle station.

Farewell to a great teacher

By JESSICA LEAYR

THE junior class will miss their teacher, Mrs Liddle, who will be leaving Fern Bay Public School soon.

Mrs Liddle will be moving to a school in Western Australia that is on a cattle station. It is about 500 kilometres inland from the coast.

This will be a big change for Mrs Liddle, as we are very close to the water and the coast. While she will miss the junior class, she will be teaching about the same number of children in her new class that she has now.

The school is on a cattle station where the parents of the children

live and work. She will be living on the cattle station in a house that is on the property.

While it is a long way from shops, there are some things that are better than in the cities. Their internet access is faster, as it is delivered via satellite. Due to its isolation, the school has better technology equipment than at Fern Bay.

Mrs Liddle's husband will be working away from her, as he will be working on Barrow Island. They will only get to see each other every two weeks.

Everyone at Fern Bay Public wishes Mrs Liddle well and thanks her for the effort she has put into the school while she has been here.

Stuck in Stockton with fuel running low

By GRACE QUICK and INDICA TINDALL

THE people of Stockton have been deprived of an essential service for more than two weeks.

The sale of the Rose Garage has meant that while it is being updated, the residents of the Stockton peninsula have no place to buy fuel.

The closest service stations are either at Williamtown or Mayfield.

The large supermarket chains and their service stations have forced many

fuel suppliers out of business in large suburbs and cities.

This is not the case in Stockton, however.

There is not that large a number of customers buying fuel in the area, as many who work in Newcastle or elsewhere can buy fuel while they are out of Stockton.

But for the residents who don't leave Stockton very often, the inconvenience this has caused has left them feeling as if they are trapped on the peninsula.



DRIED UP: The Rose Garage is closed for renovations, leaving residents without a local fuel source.

Step onto the greens from home

By DUNCAN TAYLOR

PACIFIC Dunes golf course is located at Championship Drive, Medowie.

It is a very good golf course, but apart from the 18 holes, there is now the opportunity to build or buy a house right on the golf course. So all the mad golfers out there only have to walk out their front door to step on to the golf course. This also enables golfers to play as often as they wish.

As well as the first-class golf course, there are plenty of other facilities: a swimming pool, tennis courts, parks and a walking track.

Many families are moving into the estate, and with the proximity of the course, this means there may be a new Greg Norman or Adam Scott playing there in the next few years.

The wildlife in the area and on the golf course includes kangaroos, wombats, bearded dragons and echidnas.

There are also many birds that inhabit the area and live in the trees that line the golf course. Residents and players must also keep an eye out for poisonous brown snakes that bask in the sun and enjoy the fairways, but there aren't too many of them and they are more scared of humans than we are of them.

A visit to Pacific Dunes may inspire you to join in this great adventure.

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