Rokeby Road - South Arm Road Upgrades: Acton Road Intersection

Public Works Committee Submission







State Roads
Department of State Growth

Tasmanian Government

Table of Contents

1. Introduction

This document is a submission to the Tasmanian Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works (PWC) for its hearing into the Rokeby Road - South Arm Road Upgrades: Acton Intersection Upgrade package of works scheduled for 16th of December 2025.

This submission has been developed by the works proponent, the Department of State Growth Tasmania.

The proposed works are located in the House of Assembly Division of Franklin, Legislative Council Division of Pembroke and Rumney, City of Clarence local government area, and includes the suburb of Lauderdale. The project location map is shown below.

Figure 1: Project Location

2. Need for works

Traffic growth on South Arm Road has been in the order of 3.2% per annum in recent years, which is high from a Tasmanian perspective and will continue strongly due to the extent of planned residential development for the Clarence Plains area.

South Arm Road provides a critical transport link which services adjacent suburbs, as well as those further east. Traffic modelling undertaken as part of the Rokeby Stage 3 Corridor Planning Study

(Planning Study) undertaken in 2020 suggests that without the upgrade works, travel times for the 5-kilometre section between Acton Road and Pass Road will increase by 4 minutes (65%), from 6 minutes (2019) to 10 minutes (by 2029). The works for the South Arm Highway Upgrade are predicted to constrain the travel time increase to 1.5 minutes.

The Acton Road intersection experiences relatively long delays during the morning peak hour due to its function as a local access road for both Lauderdale Primary School and residential properties. The delays experienced result in some drivers using short gaps in traffic to pull out creating the potential for crashes. There are also inadequate facilities to enable pedestrians to cross South Arm Road safely to access the westbound bus stop.

As South Arm Road bisects residential communities and is adjacent to Lauderdale Primary School, there is a need to improve connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists, as well as provide improved amenity and travel time reliability for public transport.

3. Related works

In addition to the proposed upgrade of Acton Road intersection, as part of the project funding, State Growth is developing a detailed design for the upgrade of South Arm Road between Pass Road and Oakdowns.

The upgrade of South Arm Road between Pass Road and Oakdowns Parade involves duplicating Rokeby Road between Pass Road and the Clarence Plains Rivulet and constructing a new four lane road from the Clarence Plains Rivulet, rejoining South Arm Road near Horsham Parade. This section was identified as a priority in the Planning Study, and will be subject of a separate submission to the Public Works Committee.

Additionally, the upgrade of South Arm Road between Oakdowns Parade and Acton Road was included in the Rokeby Corridor Plan in 2020 but was not considered necessary in the near term based on traffic volumes. However, feedback based on initial consultation with the community regarding the overall project, indicates strong demand for an upgrade to address safety and active transport concerns, prior to a duplication being required from a traffic growth perspective. A concept design has been developed and State Growth will continue to monitor growth in this and the surrounding areas, along with road performance to determine the timing of the next stages of the project.

The proponent is continuing to liaise with Clarence City Council (Council) with respect to the interface of the designs and regarding construction of a potential gravel footpath between Oakdowns Parade and Acton Road.

Clarence City Council has published the draft Clarence Plains Master Plan which includes a sporting precinct near Bayview Secondary College and upgraded streetscape in the Rokeby commercial area. Upgrade of South Arm Road will provide land for the sporting precinct through removal of a proclaimed corridor supporting the development of this key community infrastructure, and reduce traffic in Rokeby increasing amenity to develop a high street.

4. Proposed works

4.1 Capital works

The project involves upgrading the intersection of South Arm Road and Acton Road in Lauderdale. This includes:

- replacement of the existing give-way controlled junction with a new signalised intersection
- dedicated turn lanes for turning movements into and out of Acton Road
- two lanes in each direction on South Arm Road to facilitate connection with future upgrading of South Arm Road further to the west
- two sealed indented bus bays; one in front of Lauderdale Primary School for eastbound traffic and one to the west of the intersection for westbound traffic
- footpath connections to bus stops via signalised pedestrian crossings
- two new bus stops complying with DDA standards, one of which will include a shelter and seats for citybound passengers
- dedicated cycling lanes through the intersection
- new entrance to Lauderdale Primary School to improve access and service future bus models.

As part of the concept design development between Oakdowns and Acton Road, an Options Analysis Report was prepared that considered two alternate roundabout designs and traffic signals as potential treatments to improve the intersection.

One roundabout option focused on minimising acquisition of private property, however resulted in disruption of traffic flows and difficulties providing access to Lauderdale Primary School. The second roundabout option improved both issues but required greater acquisition of private property and created private property access challenges.

The preferred treatment for the intersection is the installation of traffic signals due to improved pedestrian safety, reduced acquisition of private property, improved queuing and access to Lauderdale Primary School, improved traffic flow in off peak periods on South Arm Road and future integration with other intersections as the South Arm Highway is upgraded; aligning with the earlier Planning Study in which intersection upgrade treatments were considered using a multi-criteria assessment process. In order of weighting (highest to lowest) the criteria used were travel time reliability, provision for pedestrians, provision for public transport, provision for cyclists, stakeholder acceptance, community acceptance, safety performance and constructability.

4.2 Materials

The works are substantially road construction.

The road design has been completed in accordance with Austroads Guidelines with the road pavements designed for a service life of at least 40 years and the bitumen surfacing, being sprayed or asphalt seal, a service life of at least 15 years.

The majority of the materials for the road construction are aggregates sourced from local quarries that have been certified in accordance with Transport Victoria specifications as adopted by the Department of State Growth. These aggregates include the crushed rock used to build the underpinning structure of the road (the pavement), as well as stone used in sealing (when mixed with bitumen) and used in concrete elements (when mixed with cement and water).

All road construction must meet the department's road and bridge specifications which have been developed from the Transport Victoria specifications as amended to reflect Tasmanian conditions, industry products and construction methods. The quarries are certified under a Quality Assurance process administered by Transport Victoria which includes regular audits. The department decided some years ago to enter into an arrangement with Transport Victoria to use their specifications under licence, with appropriate modifications, rather than to divert substantial departmental resources into the professional maintenance and upkeep of these documents. This approach enables Tasmania to leverage off the depth of knowledge and resources available in a larger state.

Concrete structures, line marking, road barriers and other traffic furniture are likewise designed and constructed in accordance with Austroads Guidelines and sourced from local suppliers where available.

Concrete is manufactured in Tasmanian concrete plants from locally sourced stone and water with either locally produced or imported cement. Some concrete is poured on site (for example, bridge piers or bus stop bases), while other concrete products are manufactured offsite in casting yards elsewhere in Tasmania (for example, drainage culverts).

Steel is commonly fabricated outside Tasmania, with some final detailing in Tasmania. For example, poles and sheet metal inputs for signage are imported into Tasmania with the final signs being printed and assembled here. Metal barriers are typically manufactured on the Australian mainland or overseas and assembled in Tasmania.

Electronic components, where required, are imported into Tasmania as there is no local manufacturing base.

5. Benefits

The benefits of upgrading the Acton Road intersection include:

- alleviating congestion and maintaining travel time into Hobart's CBD
- improving connectivity to the South Arm Road from Acton Road
- improving safety for all road users
- providing new opportunities for active and public transport
- managing congestion and safety at school drop-off and pick-up times
- making the intersection safer for cyclists, motorists and pedestrians.

Economic assessment has determined a Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) of 3.7 at a discount rate of 4%. This means that for every dollar spent on these works, there is $3.70 benefit to the community.

This is a strong result and confirms the value of the works.

6. Progress to date

Completed, ongoing and underway activities include:

- Design:
    - Land survey
    - Highway pavement strength assessments
    - Environmental (flora and fauna) investigations
    - Heritage (Aboriginal and historic) investigations
    - Confirmation of procurement method
    - Concept design
    - Preliminary design
    - Detailed design
    - Flood mapping
    - Noise investigations
    - Road Safety Audit
    - Road Safety Assessment Report
    - Safety in Design Report
    - Concept Design Report
    - Preliminary Design Report
    - Detailed Design Report
    - Design update briefings to the Rokeby Corridor Planning Study working group members
- Stakeholder Engagement:
    - Concept Design Public consultation period
    - Three Community walk-in Information Sessions
    - Online consultation via Social Pinpoint
    - Letters to identified suburbs advertising the consultation period
    - Door knock businesses in Rokeby and Lauderdale ahead of the public consultation period
    - Social media posts
    - Ongoing updates to the project specific webpage including links to online consultation: https://www.transport.tas.gov.au/
    - Media releases
    - Public notices
    - Preliminary Design Public consultation period
    - Community walk-in Information Session
    - Public display at Clarence City Council with feedback forms

    - Public display for school parents at Lauderdale Primary School with feedback forms
    - Letters to identified suburbs advertising the consultation period
    - Social media posts
    - Posters in local businesses
    - Update to the project specific webpage including link to online consultation: https://www.transport.tas.gov.au/
    - Public notices
- Ongoing consultation:
    - Meetings with adjoining property owners to facilitate investigations and property acquisitions
    - Engagement with Office of the Valuer General regarding proposed acquisition
    - Ongoing engagement with Rokeby Corridor Planning Study working group members
    - Dedicated phone line and email address for ongoing enquires
- Activities currently underway:
    - Publishing the South Arm Road and Acton Road Intersection Upgrade Consultation Feedback Summary Report
    - Additional Indigenous heritage investigations near Ralphs Bay
    - Preparation of tender documentation
    - Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) self-assessment

Impacts arising from the investigations and engagement are addressed in the section below.

Future activities are discussed in the section on Timing later in this document.

7. Potential impacts and opportunities

7.1 Community

The stakeholder engagement undertaken to date has identified the following community impacts and opportunities, with actions to date and proposed.

Community impact	**Involved parties**	**Actions implemented to date**	**Potential actions** (to be resolved during design finalisation)	**Notes**
Property Accesses	7 property owners involving 8 property accesses will be impacted by the	Two accesses across two titles owned by the same property owner have been realigned with		7 property owners involving 8 property accesses will be impacted by the

Community impact	**Involved parties**	**Actions implemented to date**	**Potential actions** (to be resolved during design finalisation)	**Notes**
	Acton Road intersection upgrade.	one title now to have left in, left out access only.		Acton Road intersection upgrade.
Property Acquisition	Eight property titles will be impacted by partial land acquisition for the Acton Road intersection upgrade.	Acquisition area reduced as far as practical while maintaining benefit of works.	Eight property titles will be impacted by partial land acquisition for the Acton Road intersection upgrade.	Acquisition area reduced as far as practical while maintaining benefit of works.
Noise	Adjacent property owners and businesses	Noise assessments have been completed for the Acton Road intersection upgrade.	-	Noise assessments undertaken and assessed against State Growth Noise Guidelines during design development, confirming no mitigation required.
Utilities disruptions during construction	Adjacent and nearby property owners	The design for Acton Road intersection has been developed to minimise the need for relocation of utilities as much as possible	Ongoing consultation with utility owners regarding the relocation works.	Adjacent and nearby property owners will be notified of any disruptions during construction.
Traffic Management during construction	Through traffic Local traffic	Through traffic Local traffic	The design for Acton Road intersection has been developed to minimise disruption to traffic during construction.	-

The Stakeholder Engagement Consultation and Feedback Summary Report is appended in Attachment B.

7.2 Environmental and heritage

The multi-disciplinary investigations undertaken to date have identified the following community impacts and opportunities with actions to date and proposed.

Environmental / heritage topic	**Potential impact or opportunity**	**Actions implemented to date**	**Potential actions** (to be resolved during design finalisation)	**Notes**
Birdlife – swift parrots	Some of the trees within the project area have been identified as swift parrot habitat, and further reports and approvals are now needed.	Desktop assessment and site inspections. Further tree assessments have been completed at the Acton Road Intersection.	Pending outcome of EPBC self-assessment review with the Department of Climate Change, Energy, Environment and Water (DCCEEW) a EPBC full referral may be required i.e. if the project is assessed by DCCEEW to have a significant impact, or required to be assessed as part of the overall proposed project from Pass Road to Acton Road, rather than a standalone action.	EPBC self-assessment completed.
Indigenous heritage	May be impact to middens at Ralphs Bay.	Desktop assessment and site inspections of works.	Further investigations to be undertaken near Ralphs Bay to confirm any impact on middens.	An Unanticipated Discovery Plan will be required to be in place during construction.

8. Funding and cost

The works are funded under the 2018 election commitments for State Road Upgrades – Southern Region, which has a commitment of $11 million from the Tasmanian Government and $44 million from the Australian Government.

This submission seeks the release of a portion of this funding for the construction of the Acton Road Intersection Upgrade only.

The current cost estimate is summarised below.

Item	P50 estimate	P90 estimate	Notes
Base Estimate	$12,041,295	$12,041,295	Works including investigations, design, community engagement, approvals, acquisition (including related compensation), project management and construction.
Contingency	$2,386,051	$3,786,051	Contingency 19 % – 30 % of base estimate.
Escalation	$672,654	$721,197	Escalation 5.6% - 6.0% of base estimate. Refer below for discussion.
Total	$15,100,000	$16,500,000	

This demonstrates that the works are currently forecast to be delivered within the available budget.

8.1 Contingency

The contingency allowance provides for contingent events – that is events which may or may not occur. For this project, key contingent risk items include:

- Additional utilities requiring relocation resulting in additional cost
- Tender prices escalate due to market saturation
- The extent of ground improvement works required is greater than anticipated
- Heavier rainfall than envisaged delays delivery of the project.

8.2 Escalation

The escalation allowance is a provision in costs for changes in economic and market conditions over time.

Estimates of escalation are not intended to be precise forecast of future prices, they are approximations intended to represent the average trends for a large group of projects in a broad region.

The escalation rate for projects which are part funded by the Australian Government is determined by the Australian Government and is included in the project cost estimates as part of funding submissions from the department to the Australian Government. The Australian Government commissions considerable economic investigation in order to provide state specific forecast escalation, and the department has not diverted resources into challenging these Australian Government requirements.

9. Timing

Past and current activities are described in the “Progress to Date” section above. Future activities include:

- Refresh the webpage to include a copy of the South Arm Road and Action Road Intersection Upgrade Consultation Summary Report (November 2025).

- Notify the wider community and key stakeholder groups of the project design and reference the updated website (October 2025)
- Continue drafting Notice of Accommodation Works letters (September 2025)
- Continue discussions with individual property owners that are close by but not directly impacted (Ongoing from February 2025)
- Continue drafting the land acquisition documents (February 2025 – February 2026)
- EPBC Self-assessment (April 2025 to September 2025)
- EPBC Full Referral (if required: October 2025 – October 2026)
- Detailed Design completion (October 2025)
- Advertise Tenders* (February 2026)
- Assess Tenders and Award Contract* (March 2026 to May 2026)
- Update the wider community on the project construction timeframes (January 2026)
- Commence Construction* (July 2026)
- Complete Construction* (August 2027)
- Close out project* (December 2027)

* Assumes full EPBC referral is not required.

These works are being presented to the PWC at this time when the design is well developed and community feedback known, with some details to be resolved in the coming months ahead of advertising construction tenders.

10. Conclusion and recommendation

The proposed Rokeby Road – South Arm Road Upgrades: Acton Road Intersection works have been developed in response to the need to improve the operation and safety of the South Arm Road/ Acton Road intersection particularly during the peak drop off and pick up periods for Lauderdale Primary School.

The proposed works comprise the installation of traffic signals at the South Arm Road/ Acton Road intersection. Key benefits of these works include:

- alleviating congestion and maintaining travel time into Hobart's CBD
- improving connectivity and safety for all road users
- providing new opportunities for active and public transport; and
- managing congestion and safety at school drop-off and pick-up times.

The works are at the detailed design stage and construction tenders are scheduled to be advertised in February 2026, subject to receipt of PWC and other relevant approvals.

The estimated cost of the works is $15.1M, which is within the budget of $55M[1]. The current cost estimate is considered reasonable for the scale and scope of works proposed.

These Rokeby Road – South Arm Road Upgrades: Acton Road Intersection works are considered to be a fit for purpose and value for money solution to address the existing community need of upgrading safety at the South Arm Road and Acton Road intersection and maintaining travel times.

Attachments

Attachment A	Plans
Attachment B	Stakeholder Engagement Consultation and Feedback Summary Report

[1] *Australian Government contribution $12,080,000 (of $44,000,000), Tasmanian Government contribution $3,020,000 (of $11,000,000).*

Department of State Growth

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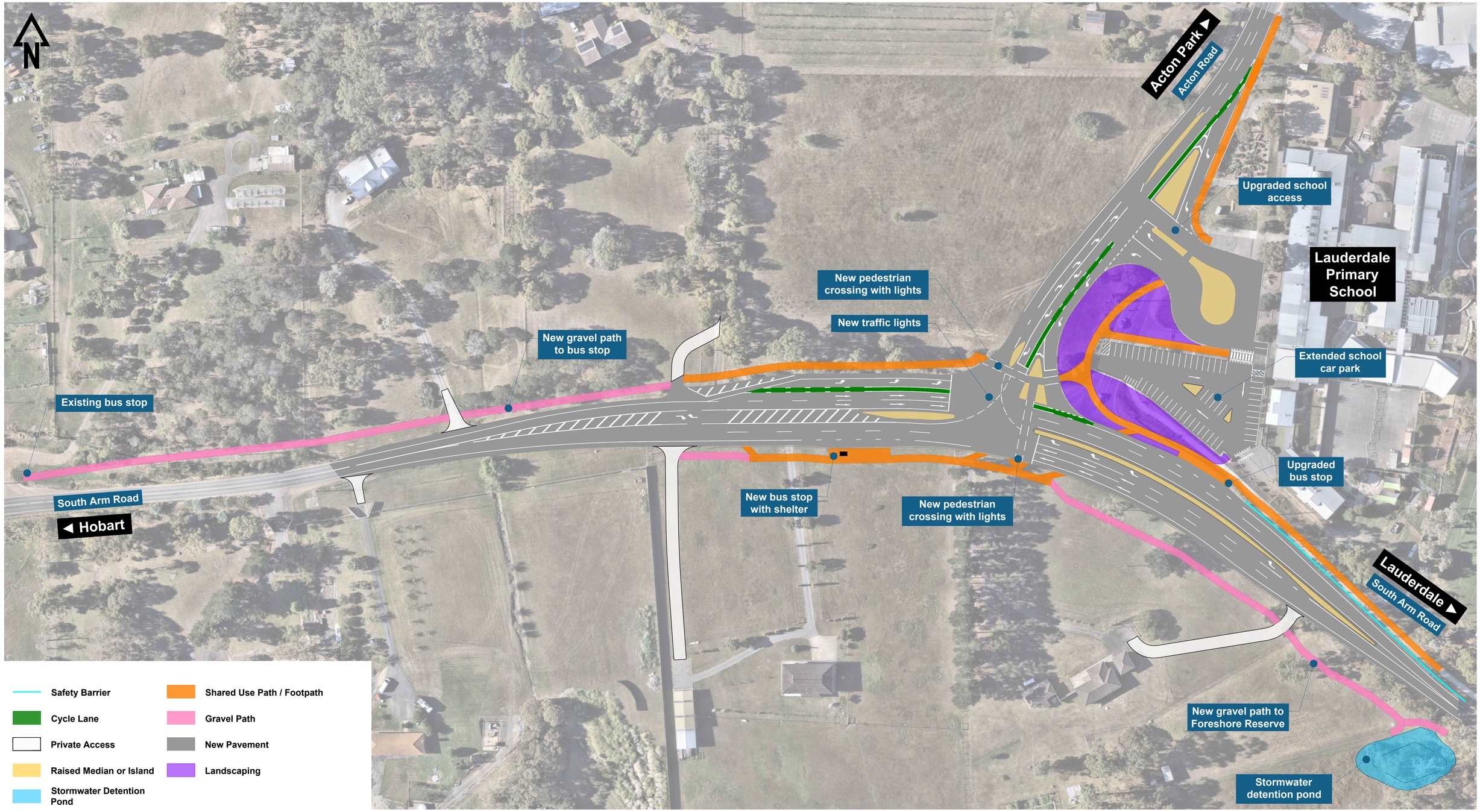
South Arm Road - Acton Road Junction



Department of State Growth

Australian Government
BUILDING AUSTRALIA

Tasmanian Government

Consultation and Feedback Findings Summary

South Arm Highway Upgrade – Acton Road Intersection Upgrade

Project overview

The Australian and Tasmanian Governments have committed $55 million to the South Arm Highway Upgrade.

The South Arm Road and Acton Road intersection upgrade forms part of the South Arm Highway Upgrade, an initiative aimed at improving travel time reliability, reducing traffic congestion, improving traffic flow, and road safety for eastern shore communities accessing Hobart's CBD.

The Acton Road intersection upgrade has been prioritised for delivery and is expected to start construction in mid-2026.

Project benefits:

- Safer intersection with traffic lights
- Safer walking paths and pedestrian crossings
- Bike paths
- More predictable travel times
- Improved bus stops
- Improved access to Lauderdale Primary School

Consultation summary

The public consultation period was held over four weeks, from Thursday, 27 February 2025 to Thursday, 27 March 2025. The goal was to engage a broad range of interested parties, including key stakeholders, road users, residents and wider community members, to gather valuable feedback and insights that would assist our design development.

To maximise engagement, we used a variety of tools and methods to promote the consultation and encourage participation throughout the four-week period.

Figure 1 Public consultation advertising and activities

Notification letter	10 nearby property owners
Unaddressed postcard	1 postcard, 8 suburbs, 5,442 residents
Poster	Distributed to Lauderdale businesses
RoadsTas Facebook page	1 post
Mercury and Eastern Shore Sun Newspapers	3 public notices
Lauderdale Primary School newsletter	1 publication
Community Information session	1 session: Lauderdale Primary School
School display	Lauderdale Primary School
Static display	Clarence City Council

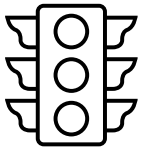
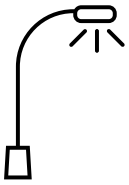
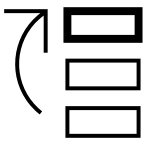
Throughout the four-week public consultation period, we received 28 formal feedback submissions, a summary of the feedback received is provided in Figure 2.

Figure 2 Volume of feedback

Project inbox	17 emails
Community information session	74 attendees, 8 feedback forms
School display	2 feedback forms
Council display	1 feedback form

Feedback summary

Table 1 Key feedback themes

	**Traffic flow and congestion** Some stakeholders supported the inclusion of traffic lights, believing they would improve traffic flow and safety, particularly turning right out of Acton Road. Others expressed concern that the proposed use of traffic lights could increase travel times rather than improve them. A roundabout and pedestrian overpasses or underpasses were frequently suggested as a more effective alternative for managing traffic flow. There were also worries about traffic backing up at the Acton Road lights and impacting the Ringwood Road intersection.	10
	**Pedestrian and cyclist connectivity** Safety and accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists were key priorities and there was strong support for improved walking and cycling paths between Oakdowns and Lauderdale.	8
	**Safety and design features** Safety was a recurring focus, particularly around intersections and school zones. Suggestions included a roundabout instead of traffic lights, clearer signage, extending pedestrian barriers, improving the slope of the road at the intersection, improving the entrance to the sports centre school car park, and pedestrian overpasses/underpasses instead of signalised crossings.	22
	**Project prioritisation** While support for the South Arm Road and Acton Road intersection upgrade was clear, some feedback questioned the overall project prioritisation, with several suggestions to prioritise the section of South Arm Road between Oakdowns and Lauderdale due to urgent safety concerns.	3

Key Community Requests and State Growth's Response

Table 2 Feedback items and State Growth's response

Key feedback requests	Count	State Growth response
Consider a roundabout as an alternative to traffic lights at this location.	3	Traffic lights were chosen because they are safer for pedestrians and minimise delays for traffic on South Arm Road during off-peak periods. They also provide safe and efficient access from Acton Road during peak times. Additionally, traffic lights require a smaller footprint compared to a roundabout, which minimises the impact on nearby properties.
Explore options to improve pedestrian and cyclist connectivity, including the potential for a shared path linking Oakdowns and Lauderdale.	5	The current scope of work for the intersection upgrade does not include a shared path beyond what is shown on the junction layout plan. The plan can be found on the Transport Tasmania website. However, the design of the upgrade considers potential future shared path connections. Clarence City Council has been exploring options for a gravel track between Oakdowns Parade and Lauderdale ahead of future highway upgrades, and we will continue engaging with them on this.
Assess the potential to extend the safety barrier on the school side of South Arm Road through to Ringwood Road.	3	Extending the safety barrier is currently outside the scope of the Acton Road Intersection project however, we recognise that the community is concerned about this. As a response we are assessing the feasibility of extending the barrier in this location and exploring potential options.
Consider the feasibility of pedestrian overpasses or underpasses as alternatives to signalised pedestrian crossings.	2	Traffic lights with pedestrian crossings were chosen as the most practical solution for this intersection. Overpasses and underpasses were not considered feasible due to space constraints, high costs, and ongoing maintenance requirements. Signalised crossings provide a more accessible and direct route for all users, including those with

Key feedback requests	Count	State Growth response
		mobility impairments, while avoiding the safety and usability concerns often associated with underpasses.
Review the proposed number of traffic lights along the South Arm Highway corridor.	3	The South Arm Highway Upgrade project includes the installation of traffic lights at key locations to provide safe and efficient connections for all road users, particularly at intersections and where side streets meet the highway. This is because the predicted increase in through-traffic for this section of the road would make these movements difficult and unsafe without traffic lights. The new traffic lights are being installed to improve traffic flow, not slow it down. While some drivers may stop more frequently, the signals will help manage congestion, reduce delays at side roads, and create a more predictable and reliable journey. The new traffic lights will provide more flexibility for us to deal with times of high traffic volume, such as peak hour traffic, and as the area continues to grow. Given the expected residential and commercial growth in the area around the project, without the proposed traffic lights and increased capacity of the highway, delays and travel times are expected to increase. Traffic modelling shows that without the upgrades, traffic heading towards Hobart, between Acton Road and Pass Road, will increase by 60% in 2029 and would continue to increase.
Review the intersection upgrade design to confirm that traffic flow from Ringwood Road will not be negatively impacted.	2	Traffic modelling indicates that the intersection upgrade will not impact the operation of Ringwood Road. The new traffic signals will be coordinated to help manage the flow of traffic on South Arm Road. With more lanes, including two straight-ahead lanes and one right-turn lane into Acton Road, the intersection

Key feedback requests	Count	State Growth response
		will also be able to accommodate more vehicles.
Prioritise the section of South Arm Road between Oakdowns and Lauderdale	3	The project delivery approach was chosen based on findings from the Rokeby Stage 3 Corridor Planning Study. This study showed higher traffic volumes between Pass Road and Oakdowns compared to the section between Oakdowns and Acton Road. Prioritising upgrades in this area will better address the project objectives of reducing traffic congestion and improving travel time reliability.

Next steps

The detailed design for the Acton Road intersection can be found on the project website and will be ready to go to tender in early 2026.

Construction is expected to commence in mid 2026 for a twelve-month period.

Contact

If you have any questions regarding this report, please contact our Stakeholder Engagement Consultant, Louella Dwyer on 0491 696 701 or southarmhighwayupgrade@stategrowth.tas.gov.au.

For more information on our projects, visit transport.tas.gov.au or scan the QR code.