



PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS

Rokeby Main Road

*Presented to His Excellency the Governor pursuant to the provisions of the
Public Works Committee Act 1914.*

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

Legislative Council

Mr Harriss (Chairman)
Mr Hall

House of Assembly

Mr Booth
Mr Brooks
Ms White

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INTRODUCTION

To His Excellency the Honourable Peter Underwood, AC, Governor in and over the State of Tasmania and its Dependencies in the Commonwealth of Australia.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY

The Committee has investigated the following proposals: -

Rokeby Main Road

and now has the honour to present the Report to Your Excellency in accordance with the Public Works Committee Act 1914.

BACKGROUND

This reference recommended that the Committee approve upgrade works on Rokeby Main Road between Buckingham Drive to Diosma Street including improvement to the road geometry and constructing four lanes with a median barrier from east of Buckingham Drive to Diosma Street. A new signalised intersection will connect Pass Road and Tollard Drive to Rokeby Main Road.

The objectives are to:-

- Improve access to residential areas;
- Improve safety outcomes;
- Improve transport efficiency; and
- Provide a consistent traffic environment along the road corridor from the Tasman Highway at the Mornington roundabout to Rokeby.

The full submission of the Department of Infrastructure, Energy & Resources in support of these references are published on the website of the Committee at:

<http://www.parliament.tas.gov.au/ctee/Joint/works.htm>

PROJECT COSTS

Cost Item	\$
Scoping and Development	1,300,000
Design, Project Management & Contract Administration	1,200,000
Property Acquisition	20,000
Environmental Works	260,000
Temporary Works/Traffic Management	300,00

Public Utilities Adjustments	31,000
Bulk Earthworks	1,900,000
Drainage	710,000
Noise Barriers	370,000
Pavements	3,100,000
Road Lighting	170,000
Road marking, signage, furniture	490,000
Traffic Signals and Control Systems	340,000
Landscaping	710,000
Supplementary Items	110,000
Inherent Contingency (P50)	130,000
Contingent Contingency (P50)	1,400,000
Escalation	890,000
TOTAL	13,400,000

EVIDENCE

The Committee inspected the site of the proposed works and conducted a public hearing on Friday, 16 November last. The following witnesses appeared, made the Statutory Declaration and were examined by the Committee in public:-

- Adrian Paine, Senior Project Manager, Department of Infrastructure, Energy and Resources
- Sarah Boyle, Manager, Planning and Design, Department of Infrastructure, Energy and Resources

Overview

Ms Boyle provided the following overview of the proposed works:-

The background to this project is that there has been an ongoing upgrading of Rokeby Main Road from Oceana Drive heading south.

The Community Roads Package announced at the last election allocated \$10 million for continuity of the works from Oceana Drive south. It became clear very early on that the funding would not cover the project all the way through, so we scoped up the project that had the highest priority in terms of the traffic that would be generated by the approved subdivisions in this area. There are three or four, and about 600 lots have been approved, so we are expecting substantial growth in the future. It was envisaged that this project would support those subdivision movements, and particularly those vehicles coming out of Pass Road from Glebe Hill Estate.

As we scoped up this work it became evident also that \$10 million was not going to be sufficient, and that it was going to be closer to a \$14.4 million project. Initially Clarence Council had indicated that they would fund the extension of Tollard Drive so that we'd design in a length and hook up the existing Tollard Drive with the Pass Road intersection and have all that incorporated in the traffic signals at that intersection.

However, Council have decided, in recent months, to withdraw that funding and so we will proceed with the stub of the road to hook in with the existing road to enable access from the fire service. So the fire station will be able to have access onto the new highway through that stub and we'll proceed with the design for Tollard Drive. That will be available should a situation arise where the Council can in fact fund that extension while the contractors are on site.

It's a duplication so it is going to be four lanes - two lanes in each direction - and it will be separated by a wire rope fence. That's part of improving the safety of the area and it will also be a feature of the next section back to Oceana Drive as well; so it will be a divided four lanes of highway.

There are a number of major services that are on-site and the work has been done to avoid those services, although there is some relocation of Aurora power poles. So we're minimising impact on services as much as possible.

As we heard this morning, the road is going to be lifted in that area in order to improve the curve. To set up the situation at Tollard Drive, there is a flatter route. The whole of Pass Road and Rokeby Main Road will be lifted so it will be a bit higher than the current level and there'll be significant fill in order to achieve that.

Approvals

Mr Paine made the following submission in relation to approvals:-

In terms of approvals, the council has given us their planning approval. We have all the relevant reports done for flora, fauna, Aboriginal Heritage and Historic Heritage. The only things that have fallen out of that are some flora, which is the [To be confirmed.11:58:18.] and a couple of other smaller species, but particularly the *Austrodanthonia popinensis* is one that we are dealing with, with the federal government to provide an offset to.

Also while we're dealing with this matter with the federal government, we've included the potential impact on *E. ovata* which is part of stage two so it is not part of this section of road from Buckingham Drive to Diosma but there will be an impact on *E. ovata* between Oceana Drive and Buckingham Drive, which is the proposed stage two works, so we've identified that and we're dealing with that with EPBC at the same time.

... We're working through the required offsets which we believe we've now secured and we're updating the federal government on the process.

Ms Boyle added:-

Further to that, although we've nominated a tender date in January, we won't be tendering a project until we have the full [To be confirmed.]APBCA federal government approvals.

Prioritisation

The Committee questioned the witnesses as to how this project was prioritised for action by the Department. Ms Boyle responded:-

This is part of a long-term strategy, since the whole duplication from Mornington interchange and moving through to Oceana Drive. This has been part of a 20-year, or probably longer, construction program when the Mornington interchange was built. This has been a long-term strategy that the department has had in recognition of the

growth that is occurring in this area - Droughty Point in the south. It an ongoing delivery of a longer term strategy to provide duplication through to the Police Academy.

... This road has a different function to other parts of the highway. In terms of prioritisation, we need to be aware that this has a commuter function. It is safety, commuter efficiency as opposed to a freight route on the national highway, which has a predominant freight function and any works we do there picks up safety aspects. Then you have a black spots program, which is targeted, known, but smaller projects. They tend to be smaller projects for black spots.

There is the ranking and recognition that there is different use for different routes and the different transport requirements within those different categories of routes will have different priorities.

... In terms of an urban road project off the national network, in a more rural, urban environment, it is a missing link for us basically and it is part of fulfilling a long-term strategy and moving south.

Landscaping

The Committee sought detail of the landscaping budget. Mr Paine responded:-

A lot of (the budget) would be in regard to the substantial fills that would need grass treatment.

... Bulk earthworks is putting the soil in place and building the road up. The landscaping comes along afterwards where you need to treat that.

Ms Boyle added:-

There has likely been some tree planting because at the moment we are waiting for the federal government to give us guidance on what our requirements are in terms of replacing the populations of the grasslands or for stage 2, the eucalyptus ovata. We put several options to the Australian government and one of them is replanting. So there will be some specific replanting of the threatened species as well.

Cycleway

The Committee questioned the witnesses as to what provision was proposed for cyclists. Mr Paine responded:-

We are providing that link on the western side near the existing shared cycleway to bring it up to a bus stop that is just next to the intersection and also bring it up to the intersection so people can go either across and continue on towards Rokeby or they can head north up Pass Road. There will be a cycleway up the western side of Pass Road and then, as you can see, there is a link back down onto the cycleway on the eastern side of the intersection there.

... We had allowed for noise barriers down on both the western and the eastern side of Rokeby Main Road down near housing. We have consulted the property owners there and they are all opposed to noise barriers for a couple of reasons and one is obviously they are not particularly attractive. Two, is they are subject to vandalism which makes them less attractive and, three, they believe it creates a privacy screen so they believe there is a security risk because you don't have that visibility of traffic passing by to keep an eye on potential vandalism on their properties. We have agreed to remove those

sound walls and we will be consulting with those landowners over double glazing or other treatment ...

... The details of the connection on the eastern side may change because this was done as a preliminary indication following the council's decision not to proceed with the full Tollard Drive link. We will be reviewing that as to whether there is a more direct or better way to bring the intersection road back onto the existing shared pathway. It links back into the shared pathway which, as you saw when you visited the site today, drops off into the top end of Grange Road West which is used as the extension further down to Diosma Street. There is also provision made on the road for a two-metre wide shoulder for cyclists. Those who want to use the road have room to use the road.

Ms McParland made the following submission in respect of the provision for cyclists:-

I have been involved in this process since May 2010 when DIER invited me in for an initial discussion around the plans for the Rokeby Road upgrade and the opportunity for active transport connections. Consistently all along, I have said that I believe that there is a need to not just replace the existing pathway that is currently there between Buckingham Drive and the fire station at Rokeby, but to extend it through Rokeby because we have a lot of growth happening at Oakdowns near the police academy; it is a big growth area.

We also have residents in Rokeby who need to move through Rokeby and currently what exists is Grange Road West. It is a quiet road but it is not appropriate for families with young children to be riding on it. They are intimidated by that. The alternative is a footpath which is a narrow, quite decrepit footpath with driveway crossings. It seems to me that if you are going to upgrade the road corridor for one user group - which is motor vehicles - you should also be upgrading that corridor for other active transport modes.

The whole way through as part of the budget allocation, there is not any funding for actually constructing the path beyond the fire station - which I accept; that is fine. But there was scope to include that in further stages of Rokeby road development because there is still the section in front of the Howrah Fruit Market to be done and through Rokeby that will also be done in the future as well.

All I wanted to see was allocation of space for a path to go in between the Rokeby Road upgrade and Grange Road West as a medium between the two - to actually have a pathway providing a continuous, good quality experience for anyone using it - not just bike riders, but walkers, people pushing prams and people in mobility scooters.

We have Shoreline Shopping Centre not very far along and we know that a lot of people walk along the existing pathway to get there. We also have proposals for another development on the corner of Pass Road. For people to be able to walk and cycle is really important and to not provide a current good standard piece of infrastructure when you have this major road project happening, is a real lost opportunity. I notice the comments on the sealed shoulder. A 2-metre-wide sealed shoulder is very generous but it caters for the very high intensity cyclists - they are athletes and they are only a small portion of the population. It is the rest of the population who enjoy riding bikes, and we know that they do. Over half of all Tasmanian households have access to bikes but they are not riding them. The primary reason is that they do not feel safe riding on the roads and they want good bike networks to ride on. Unless we start providing separated off-road pathways, there is a whole level of Tasmanians who are excluded from participating in bike riding. They will put the bike on the car and drive to the inner city cycleway to ride but they should be able to ride in their local areas as well.

I am pleased to hear that DIER will be looking at how they can fit a path in but I just wish that it had been done earlier because I have been asking for it for two and a half years. At every meeting I have had, we have not seen or looked at how it might be fitted in. It has not really been on the radar, even though DIER has a walking and cycling policy around trying to improve active transport networks.

... We did support the widening of it for that high intensity group but they will ride on anything, but it's not for the majority. The majority need a higher quality and more separation from traffic. Council is also looking at a path at the moment between the police station in Rokeby through to Lauderdale.

So it's getting that continuous path and to have the middle bit in Rokeby sort-of disappear and you have to start using a road for that middle bit is a lost opportunity.

The Committee sought further evidence from DIER regarding the future provision of a shared pathway alongside Rokeby Main Road from Tollard Drive through to Diosma Street. In a supplementary written submission, Mr Paine submitted:-

"A shared pathway between Tollard Drive and Diosma Street can be accommodated utilising the abandoned existing road leading onto a new shared path running along the Rokeby Main Road (northern-eastern) side of Grange Road West.

The first 360 m (chainage 1280 through to 1640) of the shared path would run along the abandoned existing road and would be easy to construct at any stage and have minimal to no impact upon services. For the remaining 200 m, from chainage 1640 through to the Diosma Street intersection, the cross section between Rokeby Main Road and Grange Road West is very narrow and a retaining wall would be required in this section.

Accommodation works that would need to be completed now such that the shared pathway could be constructed at a future date include, constructing the retaining wall, relocating Aurora poles to their ultimate positions and providing stormwater drains ready to accommodate drainage from the shared pathway.

The approximate location of the retaining wall and the shared pathway alongside Grange Road West is shown in the attached plan along with the typical cross section between Rokeby Main Road and Grange Road West.

Whilst the final design cannot be completed without further discussion and agreement with Clarence City Council (who would ultimately be responsible for the shared pathway) and Aurora (to confirm the new location for the power poles), DIER has estimated the cost to construct the retaining wall and relocate services at approximately \$250,000.

Additional funding would obviously need to be secured to allow for the above shared pathway accommodation works to proceed."

DOCUMENTS TAKEN INTO EVIDENCE

The following document was taken into evidence and considered by the Committee:

- Rokeby Main Road Upgrade – Buckingham Drive to Diosma Street Stage 1 – Submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works –

October 2012, Department of Infrastructure, Energy & Resources Report to the”; and

- Correspondence dated 22 November last from Adrian Paine, Senior Project Manager, Department of Infrastructure, Energy and Resources

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The design for the proposed project on Rokeby Main Road has been carried out in accordance with appropriate road design standards and guidelines. The design has regard to an acceptable balance of priorities, risks and cost. Where necessary, the requirements of abutting landowners, Clarence City Council and public utility owners have been incorporated.

Once complete, the works will provide the following benefits:

- Improving safety by providing improved road geometry and infrastructure.
- Reduced pavement maintenance costs through improvements to pavement drainage.
- Providing a consistent traffic environment along the road corridor from the Tasman Highway at the Mornington roundabout to Rokeby as well as providing additional traffic carrying capacity.

The Committee is fully supportive of the the future development of a shared pathway between Tollard Drive and Diosma Street and particularly notes the evidence received that there was sufficient room to accommodate such a pathway by utilising the abandoned existing road leading onto a new shared path running along the Rokeby Main Road (northern-eastern) side of Grange Road West. The Committee further notes the Department’s estimated cost to construct the retaining wall and relocate services at approximately \$250,000. The Committee urges the Department to complete such works in addition to the referenced works.

The Committee recommends the project, in accordance with the documentation submitted.

**Parliament House
Hobart
7 December 2012**

**Hon. A. P. Harriss M.L.C.
Chairman**