



Road safety now and in the future

This year the road toll in Tasmania is higher than it has been for many years. Circular Economy Huon totally supports measures to make roads safer, particularly in the Huon Valley. At the Hearing on Monday 17 October claims were made that the proposed bypass would make Huonville a safer place with less accidents. But on a number of levels this is a flawed argument.

There is plenty of evidence pointing to public transport being safer than travel by private cars. The proposal being made by Circular Economy Huon is that proper consideration should be given to developing an integrated transport plan based on public buses, minibuses, on-demand transport etc. A recent report by the Victorian Transport Policy Institute, *'Safer Than You Think! Revisiting the Transit Safety Narrative'*, May 2022, concludes by stating that:

Public transit is, overall, a relatively safe (low crash rate) and secure (low crime rate) travel mode. Transit travel has about a tenth the crash casualty (death or injury) rate as automobile travel...

By not considering the development of an integrated transport strategy with greater usage of public transport vehicles, the Government is proposing to opting for a second best option with regard to public safety.

One of the main causes of road accidents in Tasmania is speed. Therefore it is hard to see why the new bypass is the safest option when it is proposed to increase the existing speed limit of 50 kph on Flood Road to 60 kph; and the new section of road, some 1.5 km, is to be 80kph. The correlation between speed and safety is well accepted and the bypass will sit within the township of Huonville, potentially with new road junctions in a high speed zone.

The greatest irony regarding road safety and 'the big new road plan' is that there is no plan to make Huonville safer since (we understand from evidence given at the Hearing) most accidents have taken place in Main Street in recent years. If there is really significant concern by the of the State Government and Huon Valley Council about road safety, mitigation measures should have taken place years ago.

Before committing to a \$29.2 million bypass measures such as roundabouts, traffic lights, traffic calming pods and a thorough re-examination of parking on Main Street should have been seriously addressed as it has been required for years. Vehicles exiting from the hardware store, service station, and Woolworth's precinct have very restricted line of sight

to see oncoming traffic and need to nose their way into traffic to join Main Street. It is no surprise that there would be accidents in Main Street.

Pedestrians are badly provided for in Huonville. There is only one 'zebra' crossing point for pedestrians and this is just north of Woolworths. There is one pedestrian crossing point between the roundabout and the Channel Highway intersection heading south to Franklin and one north of the roundabout, opposite Mitre 10.

These matters would have been addressed in the Transport Management Study that was recommended in the Huonville Ranelagh Master Plan 2019, and it seems premature to embark on the Huon Link Road before that study is done. Also, it seems wilfully negligent and irresponsible to be putting up a project costing taxpayers \$29.2 million for a bypass without having plans and funding to sort out existing safety deficiencies in the centre of Huonville and considering the potential role of other forms of mobility.