04/11/2024

Mark Donnellon
[redacted]

Secretary, Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works
Parliament House, Hobart TAS 7000

Subject: Submission on the Kingston Bypass Duplication and Algona Road Roundabout Upgrade

Dear Committee Members,

I am writing to share my insights and recommendations on the Kingston Bypass Duplication and Algona Road Roundabout Upgrade project. As a long-time resident of Huntingfield, where I live with my family, I have firsthand experience with the area's transport challenges and regularly cycle for commuting purposes. The existing infrastructure around the Algona roundabout is notably intimidating and inadequate for active transport users, posing a significant barrier to all but the most confident and risk-tolerant cyclists and pedestrians.

Current Infrastructure Challenges and Observations

I cycle past the Algona roundabout multiple times a week and find it to be a hostile and unwelcoming environment for anyone outside a motor vehicle. The high-speed traffic and convoluted design exacerbate the difficulties for pedestrians and cyclists, making it clear why active transport in this area remains underutilised. Although a pedestrian overpass is included in the current upgrade plan, the specifics of its design remain unclear. Without careful attention to design elements, this critical piece of infrastructure could fall short of fostering safe, effective, and inviting active transport.

Despite many people living within convenient cycling proximity to the Huntingfield Park and Ride I remain one of the very few who opt for this mode of transport. My door-to-door commute time is short—30 to 35 minutes—including approximately 1 kilometre on each side of the bus route. This highlights the potential for more local residents to reduce their reliance on cars and benefit from the cost savings, improved health, and other advantages associated with active transport. Yet, the limitations of current infrastructure deter wider adoption of cycling and walking.

Importance of Prioritising Active Transport Infrastructure

For our community and governments to realise the many benefits to reduced car dependence and foster healthier, more sustainable transport habits, the infrastructure

must prioritise active transport through safe, continuous, and separated pathways. This aligns directly with the **Tasmanian Walk, Wheel, Ride Policy 2024**, which emphasizes the need for connected, safe, and inclusive routes. Additionally, the **Tasmanian Cycling Infrastructure Design Guide** underscores that high-quality, AAA-rated infrastructure is essential to ensure both actual and perceived safety for all ages and abilities.

Recommendations for the Overpass Design

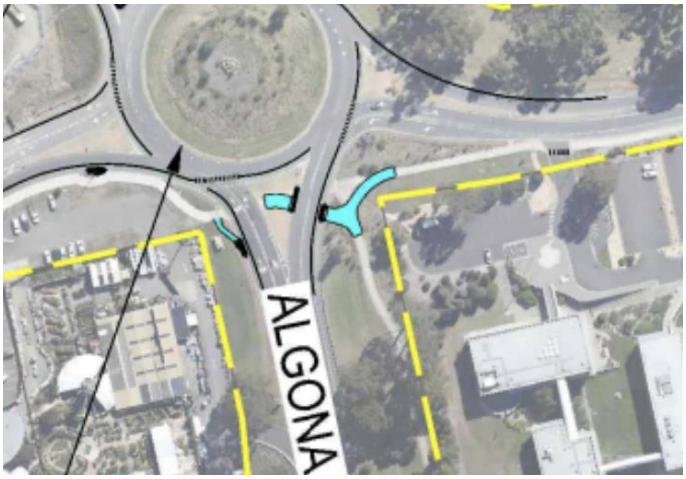
To effectively support active transport, the pedestrian overpass should be designed to comfortably accommodate both pedestrians and cyclists. Ensuring sufficient width is essential for safe and seamless movement.

The overpass must also feature a gradient that complies with accessibility standards, making it usable for individuals of all abilities. This consideration is vital to ensure inclusivity and promote regular use by the community.

Additionally, pathways leading to and from the overpass should be direct and well-aligned. Avoiding sharp or impractical turns will enhance usability and encourage more people to integrate active transport into their daily routines.

By incorporating these design elements, the overpass can be made safe, accessible, and inviting, fostering a shift toward more sustainable and active modes of transport.

Recommendations for Paths



The re-alignment of the north side will increase the distance where path users and road users can see each other, a welcome change. This could further be improved with the removal of vegetation that blocks the sightline between path users and road users turning left from Channel Hwy to Algona Rd.

The south side of Algona Road appears to have a slip lane for cyclists to leave Algona Road and join the shared path going towards Huntingfield. This will not contribute to the goal of increasing active transport use or even the amenity for existing users. A cyclist that's already willing to ride on Algona Road is just going to continue within the cycling lane on to Huntingfield Avenue, given they've accepted the level of risk already and it's a fast curve that does not require giving way to motor vehicles. The shared path is windy and ends in 50 meters. The uselessness of this path makes me think I have misunderstood its intention.

On the south side of the Algona Road crossing, a keep-clear zone or zebra crossing would be a cheap and effective way to make this part of the Algona Road crossing significantly easier for users of the path. I currently experience two lanes of traffic backed up here when crossing and find that vehicles are regularly stopped directly between the two sides of the path. This leads to a difficult to navigate, zig-zagging, crossing between momentarily stopped vehicles. Often, the drivers that can see me in the closest lane will wait for me to cross in front of them, but drivers in the next lane will not see and stop.

Designating space on the road for path users to cross may be a simple way to make this much safer and easier for path users.

The northern side of Algona Road has a shared path and a gravel path leading down to an underpass. However, the other side of the underpass is completely disconnected from good quality, safe cycling infrastructure and is a significant detour when the destination is the Huntingfield Park and Ride. A path connecting the underpass to the existing shared

path on the south side at Mitre 10 would provide a very usable, safe path option for residents to the west of Algona Road, around Redwood Road, as well as provide a safe, although long, crossing option between Huntingfield Avenue and Channel Highway.

Why This Matters

My experience highlights an unmet potential: despite a viable, efficient, and cost-saving commuting option, few residents make use of the active transport infrastructure. The current design and safety concerns deter broader participation. Implementing a well-designed pedestrian overpass and ensuring continuous, separated paths will address these issues and make cycling and walking more attractive to more people.

The potential benefits are substantial: reduced car dependency, economic savings for households, reduced traffic congestion, and positive environmental impacts. To unlock these benefits, the infrastructure needs to provide clear, connected, and safe active transport routes. These enhancements will not only make active transport safer but will signal a shift in priorities toward sustainable and community-friendly travel options.

Conclusion

I urge the Committee to ensure that the pedestrian overpass and other active transport infrastructure are designed and implemented to the highest standards, as outlined in the **Tasmanian Walk, Wheel, Ride Policy** and the **Tasmanian Cycling Infrastructure Design Guide**. By doing so, we can transform this infrastructure from a barrier into an enabler for all residents, fostering a future where active transport is a practical, preferred choice.

Yours sincerely,

Mark Donnellon
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