(No. 25)



#### PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS

# **Tasman Bridge Upgrades**

Brought up by Mr Tucker and ordered by the House of Assembly to be printed.

#### MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

Legislative Council

Ms Rattray (Deputy Chair) Mr Valentine (Chair) House of Assembly

Ms Butler Mr Tucker Mr Wood

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

The Committee has the honour to report to the House of Assembly in accordance with the provisions of the Public Works Committee Act 1914 on the -

## Tasman Bridge Upgrades

## 2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 This reference recommended the Committee approve works to undertake a major upgrade of the Tasman Bridge, by constructing a 3.5 m pathway on both sides of the bridge to provide better cyclist and pedestrian access, and to make other necessary improvements. \$130 Million has allocated to the project from funding provided by the Australian and Tasmanian Governments under Greater Hobart Traffic Solution.
- 2.2 The Tasman Bridge is an important part of Hobart and a key transport link. It provides the main traffic route between the eastern and western shores of Hobart and is a key link in the Tasman Highway, a major transport corridor serving the Hobart International Airport and regional centres around Greater Hobart, connecting the City of Clarence and the City of Hobart.
- 2.3 The corridor's existing road infrastructure is at capacity at peak times, and with limited alternative transport choices, congestion at the Tasman Bridge's eastern approach and the Mornington Interchange is resulting in extensive queuing and delays during peak periods. These traffic issues are expected to get worse in the future because of further significant residential growth in the outer Clarence areas and the Sorell municipality.
- 2.4 Significant planning has been undertaken to identify measures to reduce congestion, improve service levels and travel time reliability on this corridor. The Tasman Bridge Upgrades is one of a suite of elements that have been developed to address these issues. These elements include the South East Traffic Solution, the On-road Traveller Information System (OTIS), the Lane Use Management System (LUMS), and the priorities outlined in the Sorell to Hobart Corridor Plan and the Greater Hobart Traffic Solution.
- 2.5 The Tasman Bridge Upgrades will include the following proposed works:
  - construction of a 3.5 m pathway on both sides of the bridge;
  - the addition of heightened safety barriers on both sides of each path that adopt all suicide prevention measures;
  - upgraded bridge maintenance and inspection access, separate from the new pathways;
  - improved pathway lighting; and
  - bridge strengthening works.
- 2.6 Once completed the works will provide the following benefits:

- better and safer access for cyclists, pedestrians and other micro-mobility vehicle users;
- improved active transport connections between the existing pathway network on the eastern and western shores, leading to increased active transport demand;
- contribute to an improvement in congestion on the bridge and in the city during peak hours;
- increased safety for all pathway users;
- improved safety for maintenance personnel;
- reduced impact on the pathways and traffic lanes when maintenance or inspection of the Bridge is required; and
- improved emergency access to pathway users and maintenance workers.

## 3 PROJECT COSTS

3.1 Pursuant to the Message from Her Excellency the Governor-in-Council, the estimated cost of the work is \$130 million.

The following table details the current P50 and P90 cost estimates for the project:

	P50 (\$m AUD)	P90 (\$m AUD)
Base Cost Estimate	119.18	119.18
Contingency	5.67	12.76
Total Project Cost Estimate	124.85	131.94
Escalation	4.74	5.01
Total Outturn Cost Estimate	129.59	136.95

### 4 EVIDENCE

- 4.1 The Committee commenced its inquiry on Tuesday, 30 August last with an inspection of the site of the proposed works. The Committee then returned to Committee Room 1, Parliament House, whereupon the following witnesses appeared, made the Statutory Declaration and were examined by the Committee in public:-
  - Ms. Robyn Hawkins, Project Manager, Department of State Growth;
  - Mr. Adrian Paine, Director Programming and Delivery, Department of State Growth; and
  - Mr. Luke Middleton, Project Client, Land Planner, Department of State Growth.

The following Committee Members were present:

- Hon. Mr Rob Valentine MLC (Chair);
- Hon. Ms Tania Rattray MLC (Deputy Chair);
- Ms. Jen Butler MP; and
- Mr. John Tucker MP;

#### Overview

4.2 Ms Hawkins provided an overview of the proposed works:

**Ms HAWKINS** - ..... Today we are seeking consideration of the Tasman Bridge Pathways Upgrade project, which is supported by a \$130 million commitment from the Australian and Tasmanian Governments as part of the Greater Hobart Traffic Solution.

The Tasman Bridge is a key link in the road network connecting the eastern and western shores of Hobart. The Tasman Bridge opened in 1965 to replace the original floating pontoon Hobart Bridge, and celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2015. This project will be the first major upgrade since it was repaired following the SS Lake Illawarra colliding with the bridge in 1975. The bridge has an overall length of 1.4 km, and overall width of 17.7 metres, with 15.85 metres between kerbs.

The Tasman Bridge Pathways Upgrades project is a complex project, not only in terms of structural design and construction considerations, but equally due to the unique nature of this urban project and the role the Tasman Bridge plays in our daily lives, whether this be as a commuter, service provision or as a vista we enjoy daily. The bridge provides the main traffic route between the eastern and western shores of Hobart, and has an annual average daily traffic volume in excess of 70 000 vehicles per day.

It currently has two narrow walkways on either side that accommodate a maintenance inspection gantry, bridge lighting and major services. The project aims to provide a 3.5 metre shared path on each side of the bridge, with improvements to the connections to the existing path network on the eastern and western sides of the bridge. Pathway railings on each side will adopt all safety measures, improvements to path lighting, upgrades to the bridge maintenance and inspection access, and bridge strengthening.

In addition, the lane use management upgrade is to be delivered concurrently, which is not included in the project costs presented today.

The project aims to ensure a safe, practical and aesthetically pleasing outcome, broad community and stakeholder support, minimum disruption to traffic during construction and minimum disruption to bridge usage by active transport during construction.

As part of the response to the coroner's report, Deaths From a Public Place, 28 November 2016, the Department of State Growth commenced investigations into the possibility of widening the existing shared path on both sides of the bridge and installing full-height public safety barriers. While investigations were progressed, a number of improvements have been implemented to improve the safety for all path users and these include: installation of cameras monitoring the pathways; phones connecting to crisis support services and signage; and where possible, existing services such as electrical boxes on the pathway have been relocated so that they sit flush with the barrier.

The project incorporates numerous positive outcomes and benefits to the community. The primary positive outcome is the creation of safe access for all on an iconic piece of infrastructure in Hobart.

Project benefits include: enhanced safety and security for pedestrians and cyclists using the bridge; improved access between upstream and downstream paths; easier access and exit for bridge maintenance contractors and emergency services during operation or in case of emergency or breakdown; enhanced connectivity between western and eastern shores; enhanced visual aesthetics on the bridge and from all vantage points across Hobart; and job creation during planning and construction.

As one of Hobart's key landmarks and an essential connector between the western and eastern shores and beyond, public and stakeholder participation and consultation is critical to the success of this project at all stages.

The high profile and heavy usage of this critical core infrastructure means that consultation to date has focused primarily on providing clear communication of the project objectives and anticipated benefits to attract widespread support for the proposed upgrades.

All the feedback received from the community consultation engagement has been used to inform the design, development and delivery of the project. In terms of cost, the project is forecast to cost \$130 million at P50 level. The project's cost estimates to date have been prepared based on concept and options and analysis information.

Once delivered, the Tasman Bridge will provide a safe and usable connection for pedestrians and cyclists, giving people options to travel to and from the eastern and western shores for work, education and recreational activities.

Overall, we submit that the project is an important safety upgrade, with the provision of shared paths facilitating active travel as both an incentive to increased uptake of this mode as well as being a traffic congestion measure that at the same time provides improved barriers to address the safety concern.

We recognise the significance of stakeholder contribution and engagement for the success of the project and we will continue to engage with stakeholders to ensure key objectives of the project are delivered while being mindful of the available budget and the impact of the Tasman Bridge during construction and holding the aesthetic values of this iconic structure.

We are seeking legislative approvals as required. We believe that the costs are appropriate and in conclusion, this project is a good use of taxpayers' money.

#### Expected Lifespan of the Tasman Bridge

4.3 The Committee noted there may be some concern within the community on the Tasman Bridge's longevity, considering its age and the addition of new structures. The Committee asked the witnesses to address these concerns:

**CHAIR** - ..... You have mentioned the age of the bridge. There would be a lot of people in the community who may not understand what the life of the bridge is expected to be and whether spending \$130 million like this on providing extra amenity is money well-spent in terms of the actual structure itself and how long it's expected to survive.

Can you give us a bit of an idea as to the structure that these walkways are going to go on and what the expected lifespan is likely to be?

**Ms HAWKINS** - Certainly. In terms of the Tasman Bridge, part of the ongoing maintenance of the structure includes routine inspection and maintenance, as is required.

.....Going into their design, bridges are typically designed for 100-year life, but in terms of them being decommissioned after that 100 years, that's not necessarily the case. That ongoing maintenance and inspection regime ensures that the structure remains serviceable and fit for purpose.

#### **Options Considered**

4.4 The Committee sought further detail on the options considered for the pathways and how the preferred option being presented to the Committee had been selected:

**CHAIR** - .... On the site, we talked about the options for one wide walkway versus two, and the other options that may have been considered. Can you go through some of that....

**Ms HAWKINS** - Certainly. In terms of the two options that we've presented in our submission, the first option was essentially a widening of the existing walkway - but due to the nature of the walkway, effectively that would require it to be reconstructed. It's not just a matter of adding -

Ms RATTRAY - A bit on the side.

**Ms HAWKINS** -Yes. The second option - which we've talked about, and which is the preferred option - is essentially the truss or modular arrangement that will sit outside the existing walkway, on the extended head-stocks of the beam of the bridge.

The reason that was selected as a preferred option was considering its constructability - the opportunities for potentially doing a lot of the fabrication of those truss units off site, and trying to minimise the disruption to traffic.

In the design development of the cantilevered option - or extension of the existing walkway it was considered that there would be a greater impact on the actual road, in terms of having to build it from the deck, rather than other opportunities to potentially lift it from the water. We looked at that, as well as the impact on the existing services on the bridge.

The existing pathways on either side of the bridge have a significant amount of services that run the length of the bridge, including to two reasonably-sized water mains, as well as electrical and telecommunications conduits that run across the bridge.

CHAIR - That are under the pathways at the moment?

**Ms HAWKINS** - They are under the pathways at the moment, so when maintenance activities are required on any of the service infrastructure that is located there, it essentially requires the pathway to be closed.

The preferred concept that the department has taken to the community would actually mean that, as I mentioned previously, that pathway remains usable from a maintenance and service point of view, without having to be impacted with the delivery of the pathways.

CHAIR - So, slinging it underneath, or putting it over the top?

**Ms HAWKINS** - The option of providing a pathway underneath the bridge was quickly ruled out due to the impact on shipping traffic. We have limitations that we can't change - the height from the water through the navigable span.

Our current cost estimate provides for a pathway on both sides of the bridge. With that cost estimate, we have looked at constructability in terms of how that was put together.

#### **New Barrier Treatment**

4.5 The Committee noted that a key driver of the project was the requirement for improved safety barriers. The Committee sought further detail on the proposed barriers:

**CHAIR** - ..... Can you describe for us what's actually going to happen to the present barrier? People would be interested to know that. What are they going to be replaced with, just so that it's very clear?

**Ms HAWKINS** - Certainly. In terms of the current barriers, they will effectively be decommissioned as part of this project. Essentially, the current concept presented to the community has the new pathway sitting on the outside of the existing pathway which will essentially become a maintenance corridor and not be incorporated into the new pathway itself.

CHAIR - In short, the 3.5 metres is going to be a clear pathway with no intrusions into that?

**Ms HAWKINS** - That is correct. The safety railing that is on both sides of the bridge, that is designed and it will be of a height that ensures the safety of all users of the path.

**Ms RATTRAY** - Supplementary to that, can we have some understanding of why it is not suitable to be reused or continue to be part of the new design when you are going still have that existing very narrow one metre pathway.

**Ms HAWKINS** - Maybe as a good description of why that might not be the case, from our site inspection this morning you would have observed the height of the existing barrier. The height of the barrier that will be provided will be considerably higher than what is currently there.

CHAIR - It is on the inside? On the road side you are talking about?

**Ms HAWKINS** - On the outside. Just a guess in terms of being able to support that kind of height barrier, retro fitting of the existing barrier is not a cost-effective option to making sure the barrier meets all of the safety requirements.

CHAIR - A barrier on the inside, on the road side? Is that going to be significantly higher?

**Ms HAWKINS** - It will be higher than what is there currently. In terms of the barrier on the roadside you have the added advantage there will be additional separation from the road because of the existing pathway width that is there. With the roadside barrier, consideration also needs to be given to how activities like, potentially, emergency services might access that

pathway if there happened to be an incident on that pathway. That has certainly been considered as the design has been progressed.

**Ms BUTLER** - ..... In the submission you have provided it talks about the coroner's report Deaths from A Public Place, dated 28 November 2016, acknowledging the sensitivity of that report - I do think it is important for the record - can you explain, very briefly and acknowledging the sensitivity of that information, the recommendations from that coroner's report in relation to the railings and how the recommendations have been incorporated into this project?

**Ms HAWKINS** - Sure, I guess just for the committee's awareness and in terms of opening to that question, the project in terms of our stakeholder engagement has been mindful in terms of how we manage the information we are providing to the community. We want to be sympathetic to people who might have been unfortunate to have had experience with incidents on the bridge. The coroner's recommendations were basically to provide barriers to a sufficient height that would prevent people from using the bridge. As an interim step, as I described in my opening address, the department has sought to remove any obstacles on the pathways where possible and in addition to, measures undertaken include the provision of cameras and the monitoring of the pathways, together with the phones that provide connection to crisis support services.

**Ms BUTLER** - Are you confident that the railings to be utilised in this project, based on other bridges such as the West Gate Bridge, are they similar to the scope and size and effectiveness of those used in other jurisdictions in Australia?

**Ms HAWKINS** - In the design development we are making sure the barriers are compliant with the relevant standards which consider the accessibility of the barrier itself. As a project team we are also looking at other projects that have been implemented, with the same objectives.

#### Impact on Congestion

4.6 The Committee noted that one of the anticipated benefits of the project was a reduction in traffic congestion. The Committee asked the witnesses to explain how this benefit would be realised:

**Ms RATTRAY** - ..... how does adding those two pathways to the bridge help at all with the traffic congestion? It doesn't, actually, does it?

**Mr PAINE** - There are two parts to that. Encouraging active transport will remove some vehicles from the road. It is not necessarily going to make a huge difference, but it is a contributing factor to addressing congestion.

The other component is the bridge strengthening, which will allow for greater traffic loads and heavier vehicles and like - so, heavier trucks and greater utilisation of the highway as well.

Ms RATTRAY - Right, so there is a limit now as to what can go across the bridge?

Mr PAINE - There are some limits in terms of the mass of a vehicle that could safely go across.

..... there are some constraints on what vehicles can travel across the bridge.

**Ms HAWKINS** - From our site visit this morning, you would have seen that just in terms of the actual volumes of pedestrians and cyclists that we currently see, the width of the path is a significant impediment to the use of the bridge.

Given that the bridge has an average traffic volume in excess of 70 000 vehicles a day, I think the proposed upgrades we are going to implement to the pathways will certainly attract a greater number of people than we currently see crossing the bridge - just because it is a safer, more usable pathway than they're currently using.

**Ms RATTRAY** - Through your community consultation process - and it has been quite significant - are there any projected numbers on how many more people might use the new shared pathway than currently do on those very narrow one metre pathways? You certainly do have to get yourself out of the way when you see someone else coming.

**Ms HAWKINS** - We have the numbers who currently use the pathway, and we have looked at the numbers who are using the Derwent River ferry as well. The department has done some work on the broader shared path network. We are still currently working on the projected benefits of the project.

**Ms RATTRAY** - So, really, it's difficult to be able to conclude that this project - and I'm not saying it's not worthy - will actually do a lot for the Greater Hobart transport solution. It may do a little bit, but it won't do a lot.

**Ms HAWKINS** - Usage is one benefit of the project. The safety aspect is also a significant benefit.

Ms RATTRAY - And the strengthening of the current bridge.

**CHAIR** - I suppose the fact that it's a part of a whole traffic issue adds a dimension that might, as the member says, make it hard to be conclusive as to how many people might use it - but in totality, the different measures that are made fit a bit like a jigsaw.

**Ms HAWKINS** - Yes, and in terms of the cost of the network and in terms of options, it gives people the opportunity to choose.

**CHAIR** - It is an extra option - and the safety side of it, more particularly. Is that what you are saying?

Ms HAWKINS - Yes, absolutely.

#### Pathway Connections and Accessibility

4.7 The Committee noted that accessibility was considered a key benefit of the project, and was important in encouraging greater use for active transport. The Committee sought further information on the measures being taken, aside from the provision of wider pathways, to improve accessibility:

**CHAIR** - With respect to the surface of these pathways obviously, we went over part of it this morning. Clearly, for bikes and other micro-mobility vehicles, slipping is a thing and being able to mitigate that sort of a nature, is that well and high in the mind of your specs and the like?

**Ms HAWKINS** - It certainly is part of the design development process of the treatment we might use for the pathway deck and has been considered with how we documented the project requirements.

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**Ms BUTLER** - ..... Has there been assessment done because there will be a lot more additional traffic through those pedestrian, bike and micro-mobility vehicle entrance and exit points. A lot of those entrance and exit points at the moment are quite dark and there are known to be

antisocial behaviours at those points. I am aware of definitely on the eastern shore side underneath the bridge.

Is there mindfulness of those considerations in the actual planning of where pedestrians and bikes will exit and enter?

**Ms HAWKINS** - Again, as part of the design development and the discussions with key stakeholders, we have considered the connections to the pathways and access from an accessibility point of view looking at opportunities for people to park near the pathways to use mobility scooters or those kinds of devices.

As the design is developed, we have also looked at the connections between the downstream and upstream side on each side of the bridge and how that will be better accommodated. We are looking at lighting as part of the project. All of those in combination would probably help to manage some of the issues you are raising about antisocial activity. It is interesting, to my knowledge, I do not think that came up as part of the consultation to date but it would be certainly interesting to consider it.

With people's thinking of the bridge, there were quite a number of other aspects they were probably focused on.

Ms BUTLER - Not the actual getting on and off section.

**Ms HAWKINS** - Just that antisocial kind of thing. We certainly have considered how it connects to the existing path networks.

Again, from our site inspection this morning, the narrowness of the connections compared to what it will be will be a significant improvement.

## 4.8 The Committee also sought further information on the disability access measures that would be provided:

**Ms BUTLER** - Could you run through some of the disability access provisions that you have been building into the project, especially in relation to detectable warning surfaces, tactile tiles or tactile paving for the visually impaired?

**Ms HAWKINS** - The key stakeholder workshops that we undertook, speaking directly with representatives of various accessibility groups, were a really good opportunity for the project team to expand on their knowledge that they had already in what might likely be required depending on a person's accessibility requirements and the varying natures of those and how we need to be able to work with all of those needs. It was quite helpful talking to the groups that we did talk to and that will certainly continue as the design is developed.

We talked to groups about potentially making sure that things like the edge of the path was clearly identified for vision impaired, talking about tactile indicator facilities for service dogs. Talking about people with mobility access requirements and taking into consideration accessible parking at each end of the bridge so that people can use the bridge for a recreational purpose if they require. We are currently working through that range of issues in documenting the requirements for the pathways.

**Ms BUTLER** - I think you answered everything because the next question I was going to ask you about was people who are wheelchair bound and whether or not the entry and exit points would be wide enough and accessible for people.

**Ms HAWKINS** - They will be and, as I mentioned, we have tried to accommodate that with the opportunity for people to park near the bridge if they cannot make it by independent means and potentially use the bridge.

#### **Maintenance Costs**

4.9 The Committee was keen to understand what impacts the proposed works would have on maintenance costs for the Tasman Bridge:

**Ms BUTLER** - In relation to those costs, there would be ongoing maintenance costs for the Tasman Bridge and I suppose, it would be budgeted to the current bridge and what we use it for and its operational capacity. How much more significant will the ongoing costs be for the Tasman Bridge with the walkways and the additional paths on both sides? Is that going to be a significant ongoing cost?

**Ms HAWKINS** - On the maintenance aspect, a part of the scope of this project is actually looking at maintenance access and the maintenance inspection gantry because it is removed from the pathways. The benefits, we are hoping some of the maintenance and the inspection activities can be better accommodated by this project once it is complete. In terms of maintenance costs, that would be something we are still considering as part of the design and development, but we have been working closely with interdepartmental maintenance personnel and our maintenance contractor as we work through the design and certainly the options for that maintenance and inspection access.

#### **Project Procurement**

4.10 The Committee understood that an Early Contactor Involvement (ECI) procurement process was being considered for this project. The Committee noted this was the procurement model used for the New Bridgewater Bridge project. The witnesses were questioned on lessons learned from that procurement process, the expected level of interest from contractors would be, and potential opportunities that may arise for Tasmanian businesses:

**Ms RATTRAY** - I did ask this question at an earlier time, because there is a reference in this about finance and procurement and it talks about, the project and the assessment also considered learnings from recent projects, such as the new Bridgewater Bridge. I am interested to know what are those learnings, have they come to fruition as yet?

We know it is still early days for that project, but that is certainly a significant project as well. Given that there will be two significant projects working together, effectively happening at the same time, how sure are you of having reasonable expressions for the tender process for this work?

**Ms HAWKINS** - In terms of its scope and scale, it is quite a significant project in the Tasmanian context. The learnings from the new Bridgewater Bridge project, as you mentioned, the project is in the early days, but for this project, the feedback from that project team and discussions with that project team were in relation to the procurement model that they used and associated learnings. That was the opportunity we had to gain from them.

Regarding the interest in the project, I believe there have been a number of approaches by contractors about the project. We believe that there certainly is interest in the market to undertake these works.

**Ms RATTRAY** - Given that they are very specialised and more than likely will need to be an outof-Tasmania-based head contractor, would that be fair to say?

**Ms HAWKINS** - I think that would be a reasonable assumption. I would think to support that head contractor, they would pretty well utilise local contractors to support those activities,

everything from the contractor activities through to the professional services as well to support the delivery of the project.

**Ms RATTRAY** - However, you anticipate that the steelworks that will be required to be off-site would more than likely be Tasmanian-based, they would not build them on the mainland and then bring them across and assemble it. Would that be a reasonable assumption or do I just have Tasmania in my heart and do not want to see it elsewhere?

**Ms HAWKINS** - I believe that that would be a reasonable assumption, but regarding where we are at with the project, we need to go to market and work through proposals that we are likely to receive. Based on additional costs associated with transport, it would probably mean that it would be more advantageous to undertake that work locally.

Ms RATTRAY - You would hope that it would be more advantageous?

**Mr PAINE** - Yes, and on that topic, there are a number of what we call 'tier one' - the major contractors on the mainland that are in regular contact with us to understand how the project is progressing and when it's likely to come to market. We do believe there is a lot of industry interest in this particular project because of the challenges and its iconic nature, it is something a contractor will be able to put on their flagship profile.

Ms RATTRAY - On their CV.

**Mr PAINE** - Exactly. In terms of whether the project is substantially concrete or steel or some other product, we can't be absolutely confident about that at the moment. I'm sure you're aware that there's a steel manufacturer in Tasmania that exports bridge beams to the mainland so there is definitely capability in that sort of area as well definitely in the concrete prefabrication space that benefit from this project, absolutely.

**Ms RATTRAY** - There is a policy in place, I believe, for government projects that there is always a focus on Tasmanian-made, if possible.

**Mr PAINE** - Yes, there is a Tasmanian Industry Participation policy which makes up 25 per cent of our tenders as a mandatory component under our assessment. That is a significant part of our assessment.

#### **Opportunities for Incorporating Indigenous Culture**

4.11 The Committee noted the consultation process had included engagement with the Indigenous community. The Committee was interested to hear how Indigenous culture may be incorporated into the works:

**Ms RATTRAY** - .....I note there has been input from the Indigenous community on their wanting to be inclusion of way-finding and instructional signage, artwork and storytelling. I did not see any allocation for artworks in the funding but I presume there will be. Is that correct?

**Ms HAWKINS** - At this stage, we have not allocated funding specifically or a part of the project cost for that component. The engagement that was undertaken, obviously, in this very first round we were using it as an information kind of gathering exercise. It was a great opportunity to sit down and talk to the traditional owners about what they see in outcomes of the bridge and how it might look.

**Ms RATTRAY** - That would be more likely at either end, rather than sitting perhaps on top of it.

**Ms HAWKINS** -It was quite interesting how that might be incorporated and what the opportunities might be. Certainly, some of the feedback was more about audio rather than visual aspects.

**CHAIR** - Storytelling?

**Ms HAWKINS** - Exactly. In terms of how we might deliver that as part of the project we are currently working through that.

**Ms HAWKINS** - .....It is interesting because we talked about things like QR codes that you could scan with your mobile device.

**CHAIR** - Hear it through your earphones.

**Ms HAWKINS** - It was interesting discussing how but certainly that storytelling element came up with it.

#### Future Addition of an Extra Lane on the Tasman Bridge

4.12 The Committee recognised the significant congestion issues experienced by travellers on the Tasman Highway corridor. One means of helping to address this might be the provision of an additional lane on the Tasman Bridge. The Committee sought to understand if the provision of the new pathways precluded the expansion of the Tasman Bridge's capacity in future:

**Mr TUCKER** - ..... with having a shared path on both sides of that bridge there is no room to expand that capacity on that bridge and this is something I would like you to talk more about. If we have a shared path on both sides and we do need to expand that bridge, what would happen?

**Ms HAWKINS** - The provision of the shared paths on both sides of the bridge and the funding we have for this project, it would require significantly more funds to provide an additional lane on the bridge. Also, in terms of the pathways, the actual loading that puts on the bridge is significantly less than that of putting an additional lane on the bridge. To provide an additional lane of that river crossing, there probably would have to be significant investigation undertaken to see if it was feasible, whether it would be adding to the existing structure, or whether we would have to look at other options. In relation to the question about building the shared paths and whether or not that prohibits the additional lanes, the current concept we have is a modular truss kind of arrangement that has been specifically looked at for the reasons of reducing impact on the actual road while building it. That modular arrangement potentially does give it some scope if there were some changes in the future.

#### Mr TUCKER - Yes.

**Ms HAWKINS** - On the congestion question, the on-road travel information system project that we mentioned - and certainly the lane use management system being more effective in managing peak time congestion, and incidents that may happen during that time - will help manage that congestion.

**Mr TUCKER** - Being a modular set-up, that would make it easier to pull down and move if we needed to expand that bridge further into the future?

**Ms HAWKINS** - Potentially, but I think on the question about the additional lane, there would have to be a fair bit more work looking at whether or not it was feasible.

**Mr PAINE** - One of the advantages of the proposal we've come up with is that there is the potential to have it 'hooked on', if you will, and therefore decoupled from the bridge, should there be a decision in future to put an extra lane on.

That flexibility and that option will be one of the requirements we will seek contractors to address in their submission to us, so it is certainly an issue we are considering.

#### **Related Projects**

4.13 The Committee had inquired into complementary projects in February 2021, that were expected, in conjunction with this project, to moderate traffic congestion. The Committee sought further information on progress with these projects:

**CHAIR** - ..... In relation to related projects, we dealt with some - well, was it February '21? - the on-road traveller information system and lane use management system, which are mentioned in this project documentation, can you give us a brief understanding as to where they're at? Given that they're in the documentation.

**Ms HAWKINS** - The on-road traveller information system - or the OTIS project - is intending to go on the market at the end of this year. In terms of their objectives and what that project will provide in supporting the Tasman Bridge, it will give people the information that they need to make informed decisions about the route that they take to Hobart, and vice versa. The LUMS project has been incorporated into the Tasman Bridge pathways upgrade project, in that it will be delivered concurrently, but the funding source for it is separate to this project.

CHAIR - So, it's not up for approval today, obviously, because we've dealt with it earlier?

**Ms HAWKINS** - It is worthwhile noting that it's going to be delivered concurrently.

**CHAIR** - Yes, it's good to get that clarified.

**Ms BUTLER** - It might be good for the record as well, Chair, if you can run through what that LUMS project looks like and how it complements this project.

**CHAIR** - The lane use management system (LUMS).

**Ms HAWKINS** - Certainly. The project is a lane use management system. Basically, it is updating the existing lane use management system on the bridge. It's quite an old, ageing system. The purpose of the project is to bring the system in line with current standards and to enable the traffic management on the bridge in terms of the contraflow lane switch to be undertaken more efficiently, and potentially use the system to manage incidents more efficiently. I think there are benefits from a bridge road-user point of view as well as from our maintenance personnel, in terms of the activities of the traffic switch. That project is currently in design.

Does the Project Meet the Assessment Criteria under Clause 15(2) of the Public Works Committee Act 1914?

4.14 In assessing any proposed public work, the Committee seeks an assurance that each project meets the criteria detailed in Clause 15(2) of the *Public Works Committee Act* 1914. Broadly, and in simple terms, these relate to the purpose of the works, the need for and advisability of undertaking the works, and whether the works are a good use of public funds and provide value for money to the

community. The Committee questioned the witnesses who provided the following confirmation:

**CHAIR** - ..... Does the proposed works meet an identified need or needs, or solve a recognised problem?

ALL WITNESSES - Yes.

**CHAIR** - Are the proposed works the best solution to meet identified needs, or solve a recognised problem within the allocated budget?

ALL WITNESSES - Yes.

**CHAIR** - That's understanding that there could be some slight changes in design, I presume.

Are the proposed works fit for purpose?

ALL WITNESSES - Yes.

**CHAIR** - ..... Do the proposed works provide value for money?

ALL WITNESSES - Yes.

CHAIR - Are the proposed works a good use of public funds?

ALL WITNESSES - Yes.

## 5 DOCUMENTS TAKEN INTO EVIDENCE

- 5.1 The following document was taken into evidence and considered by the Committee:
  - Tasman Bridge Pathways Upgrade, Submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, Department of State Growth, 16 August 2022.

## 6 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

- 6.1 The Committee is satisfied that the need for the proposed works has been established. Once completed, the proposed works will provide safer and more functional access to the Tasman Bridge for pedestrians, cyclists and other micro-mobility vehicle users.
- 6.2 The proposed works include the construction of 3.5m-wide pathways on each side of the bridge, with higher safety barriers on each side of these pathways. Each pathway will provide improved connections to the existing path network on the eastern and western shores. This will result in improved safety and accessibility for all pathway users.
- 6.3 The proposed works will also provide improved access for bridge maintenance and emergency services. It is also anticipated that the proposed works, in conjunction with other interrelated measures, will help to reduce congestion by making active transport modes more attractive.
- 6.4 Accordingly, the Committee recommends the Tasman Bridge Upgrades, at an estimated cost of \$130 million, in accordance with the documentation submitted.

Parliament House Hobart 13 September 2022 Hon Rob Valentine MLC Chair