

THE PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS MET AT HENTY HOUSE, LAUNCESTON ON MONDAY 28 JUNE 2004.

WEST TAMAR HIGHWAY - CORMISTON ROAD TO LEGANA (LEGANA PARK DRIVE), HIGHWAY DUPLICATION

Mr GRAEME NICHOLS, SENIOR PROJECT MANAGER, DIER; **Mr PETER TODD**, MANAGER, TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE, DIER; **Mr LEIGH BARRETT**, CONSULTANT, PITT & SHERRY; AND **Dr IAN WOODWARD**, CONSULTANT, PITT & SHERRY WERE CALLED, MADE THE STATUTORY DECLARATION AND WERE EXAMINED.

Mr HARRISS (Chairman) - Welcome, gentlemen. I would like to thank Mr Nichols and Mr Barratt for the tour of the site earlier this morning. It gave us a better appreciation and it is always valuable for us to do that. You are all familiar with the process; you have all been before us previously with other projects. If we could have your verbal submission to the committee, we will then open up for questions.

Mr TODD - Mr Chairman, after my brief introduction, Mr Graeme Nichols, our senior project manager for this project will speak on the project justification, the construction program and the costs. Mr Leigh Barrett from our consultants, Pitt & Sherry, is a senior road design engineer and he will give a description of the project. Dr Ian Woodward, principal environmental scientist with our consultants, Pitt & Sherry, will discuss and present evidence on the environmental and social implications. I will now proceed to give a very brief introduction to the project.

The planning for this project commenced in the late 1980s. In 1992, the committee then approved a project, the first stage of which was to construct the dual carriageway from Cormiston Creek to Danbury Drive South. The construction of the those works were delayed because of the sediments - the very poor river silts in that area. Those silts have been monitored; there has been loading put on those silts to prepare it for construction, and that consolidation has now occurred. The delay in that construction has now allowed the second stage to be incorporated into this project so that the project will now go from Cormiston Creek through to Legana, or Legana Park Drive. It does include some works between Cormiston Road and Cormiston Creek TO improve the road safety on that section of road. Since the committee gave approval in 1992 design standards have changed, costs have changed and there needs to be a complete revision in the estimate of the project costs.

There has been a substantial change in the level of service and the design standards since the project was approved by the committee in 1992, therefore the project has been resubmitted to the committee for its consideration.

There are a number of objectives for this project. Firstly, to upgrade the West Tamar Highway to a four-lane dual carriageway from Cormiston Creek to Legana - Legana Park

Drive - to make provision for cycle traffic on the highway, to rationalise accesses onto the highway where possible and to improve safety and junction turning facilities.

With that, Mr Chairman, I will hand over to Mr Nichols to continue.

Mr NICHOLS - I wish to talk about the project justification. The significant justifications for this project are the traffic conditions on the highway and at the junctions and safety for road users, including recreational cyclists. Firstly, with the traffic, the most recent traffic count on the section of the West Tamar Highway was conducted in June 2001 and indicated an average annual daily traffic of 10 200 vehicles per day, and that is in both directions. The AADP in 1990 was 7 500 which represents a growth rate from 1990 to 2001 of 3 per cent. The peak traffic volume in June 2001 was measured as 1 128 vehicles and that gives a 78:22 per cent directional split, so that would be south, 78 per cent and north, 22 per cent of that 1 128 vehicles per hour.

Using the 2001 directional count results and allowing for an average growth rate of 3 per cent gives a current peak hourly traffic volume of 1 230 vehicles per hour. This volume of traffic on the existing highway exceeds the volume of traffic for a level service D. I will just explain that level service D is close to the limit of stable flow. All drivers are severely restricted in their freedom to select their desired speed and to manoeuvre within the traffic stream. The general level of comfort and convenience is poor and small increases in traffic flow will generally cause operational problems. This level of service on the highway results in significant difficulties and delays in accessing the highway from side roads or accesses. At a growth rate of 3 per cent into the future it is expected that the highway will be at capacity which is level service E by the year 2016. A four-lane, dual carriageway highway as proposed would provide a level service A, the highest level, with the current traffic volumes. At a growth rate of 3 per cent the traffic volumes on the four-lane dual carriageway highway will reach a level service D in 42 years or by 2046.

Just dealing with the safety under the project justification, there have not been a significant number of accidents on the section of West Tamar Highway for the past several years, however it is expected that with decreasing level service being provided by the existing two-lane, two-way highway there will be a rapid increase in the number of accidents and accident severity. The construction of dual carriageway and turning facilities at junctions and accesses would improve the safety on this section of highway. This section of the West Tamar Highway is used extensively by cyclists for training and recreational purposes. The existing highway provides approximately 1 metre wide sealed shoulder adjacent to 3 metre wide through lanes within 100 kph speed zone. This is not considered to be a safe facility for cyclists as there is little width for motorists to manoeuvre to avoid a cyclist and the air turbulence caused by larger vehicles can result in cyclists losing control and possibly entering the path of the following vehicle. The construction of the dual carriageway with 3.5 metre lanes and 2 metre wide sealed shoulders would provide a significant improvement in safety for cyclists.

The main roadworks contract is programmed to commence in October 2004 with completion anticipated by March 2006. Telstra and Aurora service relocations have already occurred and they were completed in May. The roadwork construction is anticipated to cost \$6.1 million; Esk water relocations, \$0.5 million; Aurora and Telstra

service relocations \$0.3 million; acquisition, \$0.1 million; Tamar Island Wetland car park reconstruction, \$0.1 million; and fees, \$0.9 million, making a total of \$8 million.

Mr BARRETT - I have a large set of plans on the aerial photograph. The project is to construct a dual carriageway to increase the existing road from two lanes to four lanes - two lanes in each direction. A typical cross-section for the road will provide two 3.5 metre lanes for through traffic in each direction with a 2 metre sealed shoulder on the outside of each carriageway, with a 1 metre sealed shoulder on the inside of the carriageway. There will also be an installation of a grass median between the two carriageways; we also propose to install a wire-rope safety barrier to prevent cross median traffic accidents.

Mrs NAPIER - That is for the whole length of the road?

Mr BARRETT - Yes.

The horizontal alignments is not fixed by the existing road. The current road has the design standard in excess of 100 kilometres an hour horizontally, so there is no need to modify that. The additional new carriageway will simply follow the existing road. The existing road is generally very flat and provides design standard in excess of 100 kilometres an hour, so there is going to be very little change to the existing vertical alignment proposed.

As to the provision for cyclists, a number of options were considered for this section of the highway: a formal cycleway on the outside of each carriageway; a 2-metre sealed shoulder on the outside of each carriageway; separate two-way cycleway; a northbound cycleway on the northbound carriageway and a separate southbound cycleway. It is considered the most cost-effective option, to provide a 2-metre sealed shoulder on the outside of each carriageway. It is not proposed at this stage to mark the sealed shoulder as a designated cycleway, though it will certainly be allowed for use by cyclists.

Mr STURGES - Mr Barrett, could you explain why you are not going to mark it as a cycleway?

Mr BARRETT - If it is designated as a cycleway, it prevents any motorists from using the shoulder or that area of the pavement. They would not be allowed to pull up in that area to, say, take a mobile phone call or for an emergency.

Mr STURGES - So once it is designated a cycleway, that is it?

Mr BARRETT - Yes. It is a lane for cyclists. As I understand, if a motorist was to pull up in that area, they could be booked by the police for standing in a cycle lane.

Mr HALL - I notice that you did say 'not marked at this stage', so is there an intention that it might be marked down the track?

Mr BARRETT - To make it a cycle lane would simply mean installing signs and putting marking paint on the ground. If at some future date it was decided it would become a cycle lane, it would be very inexpensive. Our proposal at this stage is not to do that. If it

was considered later on that it was appropriate, what we are building would not prevent that occurring.

Mr HALL - I recognise what is being proposed is a great improvement as far as cyclists go, but you note that in other States and other places formal cycleways are marked - even in urban streets of Melbourne and everywhere else. It would appear from the representations that we have had that it is a very important issue.

Mr TODD - Through you, Mr Chairman - we would then need to consider allowing for car parking and I think that the member would recognise that in other cities where there are designated cycle lanes there is car parking on the other side of that so you need to look at the suite of those things.

Mr BARRETT - I move into the junctions and accesses and I will just briefly describe that we are proposing to -

Mrs NAPIER - Will you go through the four options that you have considered in terms of catering for cyclists or you will return to that? I noticed on page 4 under 3.5 you deal with the fact that you looked at four options, one of which was the 2-metre sealed shoulder. I just wonder why the others were not considered. Can you deal with that? You do not have to now.

Mr BARRETT - I will come back to that question. The first junction we are treating is the Cormiston Road junction which is south of Cormiston Creek. The existing intersection does not have a right turn lane for travelling south to East Cormiston Road. At present if a vehicle was propped in the middle of the median opening waiting to turn right into Cormiston Road any other vehicles which want to turn right into Cormiston Road would have to effectively stop in the through lane and cause a significant safety hazard. What we are proposing is to construct a right-turn lane for traffic turning right into Cormiston Road. This can be constructed within the existing grass median.

We move to the first access - a 350-metre access which services approximately five properties. We are proposing to provide a right-turn slot for the median opening and, as you can see on the plans, we are also providing a U-turn facility which will be used for vehicles coming out of the car park which I will describe in a little while. Vehicles coming out of this particular access will be able to turn both left or right using the median opening.

The next access along is just short of 700 metres. We haven't provided a median opening at this particular access, however access will be gained from the two median openings either side of the access.

The next access is a combination of two accesses. We are proposing to construct a service road to combine two accesses so that we have actually provided access to a total of five properties. The reason we are relocating one of the accesses is that it is directly opposite the access to the Tamar Island wetland car park and due to the change in the arrangements for the car park it was considered unsafe to have an access directly opposite the car park entrance. Providing this service road has relocated that access back to the south 250 metres. Vehicles exiting this service road would be able to pull across into the dedicated right-turn slot for the wetland car park and do a U-turn if they wish to go back

to Launceston. Also the traffic wanting to gain access to this service road from the north could easily be gained from the median opening back at tranche 350, where we have the U-turn facility.

Mr STURGES - Mr Barrett, will that be facilitated through the configuration of the car park? Is the car park going to a one-way through car park? You were talking about access north and access south from the car park. What additional work is going to be provided for that?

Mr BARRETT - I will describe the car park and that might answer your question. What we are proposing with the car park is to have a separate entrance and exit, with one-way traffic in the car park. The reason for that is that it is very unsafe having vehicles exiting the car park through the existing median opening as longer vehicles such as buses would not be able to do so without hanging back over the through lanes. It is unsafe to allow vehicles to travel back out of the car park through the entrance, so we propose to separate the entrance and exit. However, that would place the exit at a location where there is no median opening which would prevent vehicles turning right. To allow vehicles to turn right to head north out of the car park we propose to construct a U-turn facility at the first access, which is two-dimensional. That U-turn facility is designed for 19-metre semis, so it can be used by other road users.

Mrs NAPIER - While you were talking about that U-turn, I noticed that if you are heading north, you need to be able to turn around and go back, as you often do on this Riverside/West Tamar Highway. There is no slip road for you to ease into that turning area if you are heading north.

Mr BARRETT - It is only designed for traffic heading south which wants to turn around and head north. If vehicles were to exist the car park to the Parks and Wildlife facility and they want to head north, they would have to travel south to the U-turn facility and then travel north.

Mrs NAPIER - You can do a U-turn at Cormiston Road, remembering that a lot of people who are going into the schools use that area. The next point at which you could turn and come back would be opposite the Walker's, but you have not put a slip road in for you to be able to go in and use that as a U-turn as well. I just wondered if you had considered that.

Mr BARRETT - No, I had not considered providing a U-turn for traffic coming from Launceston.

Mrs NAPIER - I just thought there might be as much argument for the need for a slip road there for a U-turn. It is quite logical that you would have it from the car park coming south, but on that western side of the U-turn opposite the Taylor's and the Walker's - every so often you would have people doing U-turns there - going north and needing to come back.

Mr TODD - Through you, Mr Chairman - there is the option then to do a U-turn at the wetlands car park. I know it is further along but there is a slip lane there for that.

CHAIRMAN - With the configuration of the road - and I was thinking of exactly the same thing that Mr Todd has just mentioned, that people might use that car park entrance for a U-turn - would they need to enter and exit the car park to facilitate a U-turn? Is there a danger of people simply using the right-turn lane and doing a quick U-turn and flowing back into the traffic to head south?

Mr BARRETT - It would be quite possible that they would not need to use the car park. They could use the car park during the day hours when the car park was open, however they could also do the U-turn without going into the car park.

CHAIRMAN - You do not intend any prohibition on that?

Mr BARRETT - No.

Mrs NAPIER - The configuration, though, especially those people coming down from that service road that is being built in, there will be quite a few people who will want to go into Launceston. They will go with the flow heading north, then they will want to do a U-turn there in front of the car park and the way you have that buffer in there it does not facilitate it. If you come in there and you try to slip across there it is a fairly hard, sharp right to come back onto the road. I would have thought you would need a more open buffer so that it is quite clear that you could either go into the car park or you could do a U-turn.

Mr BARRETT - That is designed so that light vehicles, cars, can turn around and do a U-turn there without hitting any of the kerbs. It is designed for cars. Obviously, larger and longer vehicles wouldn't be able to do a U-turn within the road; they would have to go through the car park or, alternatively, find somewhere else on the highway to do a U-turn.

CHAIRMAN - That point Mrs Napier is making applies also to the access road at chainage 700 and they are going to be in exactly the same position. That is their only way to head back into Launceston, to go up to that same location, so it will have to be constructed in such a way that it easily facilitates a U-turn for light vehicles.

Mr TODD - There is quite a width there between the widths of the median and that lane. My guess is it is about 10 metres -

Mr BARRETT - It is 10 metres.

Mr TODD - There is 10 metres there so there is plenty of room for a vehicle to turn and look to the left to see that the lane is clear before turning, so there is plenty of room to accommodate those vehicles.

Mr BARRETT - I move on to the access at chainage 1 500 which -

Mrs NAPIER - Just before you leave that one because you are still talking about that facility, the Danbury Drive south at which you can obviously do a U-turn, once you hit that, the configuration of the buffer - I am calling it a 'buffer' but there might be a more technical word - seems more open to enable a car to keep to their side of the road because you

could have someone trying to do a turn to go north at the same time that someone is trying to do a turn to go south. It just looks a bit close to me.

Mr BARRETT - One of the reasons why we did actually try to close up that median opening is to prevent vehicles from coming out of the entrance to the car park. Some adventurous drivers might try to save the trip down to the U-turn facility and go the wrong way out of the entrance and drive across through the median opening. By having the median opening closed up as tight as possible without restricting the U-turn facility we can make it look obviously wrong to go out the wrong way through that median opening. By closing up that median opening as much as possible we are trying to prevent people doing the wrong thing. Opening it up it allows room for vehicles to make wrong turns and unsafe turns. But I do take your point though that there are going to be a considerable number of vehicles doing U-turns at that point and we do need to allow for their safe U-turn.

Mrs NAPIER - Yes, you will have people coming into the car park but you will also have other people wanting to hang in that area to be able to come around and go back into Launceston.

CHAIRMAN - Will there be signage on the car park exit to indicate that 600 metres south there is a U-turn facility for vehicles wishing to head north?

Mr BARRETT - Yes, there will be a sign up so that people are aware that when they come out of the exit they won't see a median opening in front of them and if they want to go north they are going to be wondering how they are going to do that, so we will provide signs that indicate what they have to do.

At the access chainage 1 500, this access provides access to seven houses and we are providing a right-turn slot for the southbound traffic to turn right into the access road and, again, traffic coming out of the access road wanting to head towards Launceston will be able to prop in the median opening. We have a dedicated left-turn lane turning into Danbury Drive South and a dedicated right-turn slot turning in. In that also there are bus bays around this junction. The first one is to short chainage 1 600 on the left-hand side, a bit before the left turn lane into Danbury Drive South. We will also be providing a footpath from the bus bay, around and into Danbury Drive South. There is a bus bay just to the north of Danbury Drive South on the southbound carriageway and there will be a footpath around that and a footpath on the other side of the highway to allow for pedestrian movements.

Between Danbury Drive South and Danbury Drive North there are a number of accesses for private properties and they will gain access via the median openings for Danbury Drive North and Danbury Drive South. We have only allowed a short taper of the left turn movements into Danbury Drive North, as we expect the vast majority of people going into the Danbury Drive area and turning left would do it at Danbury Drive South. We anticipate there would be very few movements that would turn left into Danbury Drive North. We have also provided a right-turn slot for vehicles coming from Legana and turning right into Danbury Drive North. There are bus bays on the other side of the highway adjacent to Danbury Drive North.

Between Danbury Drive North and Acropolis Drive we are tapering the four-lane dual carriageway back to one lane in each direction, just prior to reaching the roundabout in Acropolis Drive. The roundabout in Acropolis Drive is a single-lane roundabout and the design and layout of the roundabout and the termination of the dual carriageway as it approaches the roundabout is very similar to the Holyman Avenue roundabout on the Tasman Highway, which is the roundabout at the entrance to the Hobart Airport. That roundabout takes a similar volume of traffic as the West Tamar Highway does. As that roundabout works very well, we anticipate that this roundabout will also work very well.

Mr STURGES - What is the distance of the tapering lane coming into the roundabout as you are heading north?

Mr BARRETT - So tapering from two lanes down to one lane?

Mr STURGES - Yes.

Mr BARRETT - It is approximately 150 metres. It has been designed to meet the standard for a 100-kph taper.

Mr STURGES - I am assuming that there will also be speed signs limiting the speed as you come through - 80, 60 - what is the speed will we go through the roundabout at?

Mr BARRETT - It will be signed at 80 kph.

Mr STURGES - So coming from 100 to 80, to go through the roundabout at 80 kilometres an hour - literally?

Mr NICHOLS - There will be advisory speed warning signs on the roundabout. It was going to be 40, wasn't it, Leigh?

Mr BARRETT - Yes, 40 is the advisory speed. It is within an 80 kph zone and that does not imply that people can do 80 kph at a roundabout. You do have to give way.

Mr STURGES - So it goes from 100 to 80 but recommended 40 around the roundabout. I'm just trying to get my mind wrapped around that.

Mr BARRETT - There have been generally complaints of the number of speed zones within the whole road network and if we were to then put the extra speed zones in and have, say, 40 kilometre speed zones at roundabouts, I expect that it is just going to add to the complaints of the general public about having more and more speed zones.

Mr STURGES - I think you have explained yourself clearly, thanks.

Mr HALL - What is the quantum of properties in Acropolis Drive?

Mr BARRETT - It is increasing, as Mr Tsinoglou, the owner, is subdividing.

Mr HALL - Currently, how many roughly?

Mr BARRETT - Of the order of 40 properties.

Mr HALL - I would imagine there is a fair bit of potential subdivision going on up in there.

Mr BARRETT - Yes.

Mr HALL - How many properties roughly?

Mr BARRETT - Mr Tsingoglou has plans to subdivide quite a lot of area up there. He hasn't indicated how many properties, but it could be quite considerable.

Mr HALL - The council might be able to help us there.

CHAIRMAN - Yes.

Mr BARRETT - I come to the Acropolis Drive roundabout. A roundabout was chosen as it has the advantage of providing a break between the normal open highway and coming into an urban area. The roundabout will slow traffic down. At present people reach the 80 kilometre speed limit just north of Acropolis Drive and many motorists are still travelling past the caravan park at speeds exceeding 80 kph. The roundabout will provide an obstacle to slow people down to drive at appropriate speeds through an urban area. The roundabout also provides improved access to the industrial estate. At present the industrial estate has a junction onto the highway directly opposite the caravan park and at peak hours it is extremely difficult to enter the highway due to the traffic on the highway.

In our discussions with the owners of the industrial estate that was one of the key things that was brought out by all of the owners, that access to the highway, especially at peak hours, is extremely difficult and dangerous, they felt. Providing a roundabout with a leg going into the industrial estate will provide far greater access to the industrial estate and a far safer access to the highway for people in the industrial estate.

North of the roundabout we would bring the two lanes back together to merge into the existing highway with the works being just north of the existing Legana Park Drive. The works have been designed to incorporate any future roadworks north of this area so that we won't have to come back and reconstruct anything that we are proposing now. It has been designed to match in with any future works.

Mr HALL - So there is a potential for that bit of road north of the roundabout to be four lanes in future years?

Mr BARRETT - That is always a possibility. This design wasn't designed on the basis of dual carriageway going through north of the roundabout, as the roundabout is only a single-lane roundabout. If in the future a dual carriageway were to be constructed through Legana, that would require reconstruction work on the roundabout to make it a two-lane roundabout and to extend the two lanes south of the roundabout through the roundabout and then through into Legana. It would be quite a large exercise to do that, that is if our design hadn't incorporated that.

Mrs NAPIER - The 2-metre seal that is maintained up to opposite Legana Park Drive?

Mr BARRETT - Yes, it has 2 metres to control it.

Mrs NAPIER - Alongside?

Mr BARRETT - Yes, alongside.

Mrs NAPIER - This is probably outside your province and one of the officers might need to answer it. Given that it has been argued that a four-lane extension to the highway from Cormiston is needed on the basis of average annual daily traffic volumes and the level to which it is increasing, and it is currently being said that it exceeds level of service D, what was the rationale for stopping at Legana Park Drive? As I said on the bus, most of the people who use that road actually come from Legana and further down the West Tamar, Grindelwald and so on. That is where a lot of your commuter traffic comes from. I am still struggling to understand the rationale for stopping it there, which is not a major point of feed-off into the suburbs.

Mr TODD - The reason that the project concludes here is that it is entering into a more urban area. There is certainly development on the left-hand side going north and the speed zone drops here. The levels of service are measured slightly differently where the speed zones are different and so this gives quite a different feel to the road when you go between this roundabout and the roundabout at Freshwater Point Road, so it is a different environment. That doesn't preclude that in the future there may be a project to duplicate it to four lanes. That is not ruled out but it is certainly not in the plans at this stage.

Mrs NAPIER - And you said it was worth \$3 million or thereabouts if you had to build it? The cost of going from the roundabout at Acropolis Drive to the Legana roundabout would cost about \$3 million for four lanes?

Mr NICHOLS - I would think so, yes, at least, depending on the level of service relocation that would be required.

Mr TODD - And there are a number of other issues in terms of the number of accesses and junctions that would need to be sorted out as well, so it maybe of that order but I wouldn't say that is implicitly right. I don't know of any detailed estimate that has been carried out but I would expect in the order of \$3 million would be appropriate.

CHAIRMAN - Can I just come back to that point for a moment then. Isn't it true that the planning done in the 1980s was to consider from Cormiston Road or Cormiston Creek in fact to Legana and not just to this area that we are talking about? I guess that question more rightly lodges on Mr Todd's area.

Mr TODD - Mr Chairman, I don't know the details of that as it was well before my time. I could find that out if the committee was interested to know that information, but then again plans do change, as they must, depending on the circumstances of the time. There has been no decision to continue the duplication further but that doesn't preclude it happening in the future. I don't know what the plan was 25 years ago and I would have to find out if the committee wanted to get that information.

CHAIRMAN - I guess from where I sit and thinking about what Mrs Napier has raised, if in fact that was the case 20-odd years ago, then with the growth of places like Legana and indeed further north, if that was the planning and thinking then, surely that is only reinforced by what has happened in those growth areas in the intervening period.

Mr NICHOLS - Mr Chairman, in 1992, when we last considered this project the planning was just to go to Danbury Road South with a dual carriageway.

CHAIRMAN - That is right.

Mr NICHOLS - I don't know what the plan was in 1980 but I doubt it would have been to go any further than that.

CHAIRMAN - I am just looking at the very first page of your submission, which suggests that the planning for the dual carriageway was intended from Cormiston Creek to Legana. It is your document which suggests that that was the planning and I want to be clear in my mind, if that was the planning back then, there ought to be a continuation of that planning now - and picking up on Mrs Napier's point, I think. I recognise what Mr Todd says, that we are into a more urban environment from Acropolis Drive onwards, and I accept that.

Mr NICHOLS - We might be talking about slightly different things here. We are talking about planning and I guess having a plan to duplicate the highway is different to the stage we have reached where we have done the design for it. As you can see, the road reservation through Legana is wide enough in most instances to take a dual carriageway. We have planned for that eventuality but, at this stage, we have not progressed the plans to the stage where we have decided to do a preliminary design for that. We usually approach the parliamentary standing committee at the stage that we have finished at least the preliminary design. So we have moved on on the stage from planning.

Mrs NAPIER - It is my understanding that in about June 2003 Mr Triffett of DIER advised the West Tamar Council's technical services manager that the works on this project would now extend only as far as Acropolis Drive and that the previously proposed safety improvements between Acropolis Drive and Legana roundabout, which apparently were estimated to cost \$900 000, would no longer be included in the project. Could you tell me why that decision was made? I am conscious of the fact that cyclists, cars and most of the traffic volume is still going to be as heavy as ever until you get to the Legana roundabout, when you lose a reasonable slice of the traffic down into the shopping centre and into the community.

Mr TODD - Preliminary design has been done for traffic management improvements through that section. It is not a duplication. It involves marking medians, better definition of lanes, better traffic management. That was not included in the project because of the increased cost of this part of the project. There are significant pavement works that need to be done on this project. You may have travelled over some of the road today in your bus tour and noticed the movement due to the silts underneath. So the budget really is limited to this part of the project. That does not mean that that will not be considered as a future project, but it is not incorporated in this one.

Mrs NAPIER - We talked about in front of the cabins area, the caravan park, that you are going to realign the footpath. One of the considerations was, given that you say that this is becoming a built-up area and because there is going to be a lower speed limit you could argue that the two lanes will do for now, wasn't the plan originally to put a bit of emphasis on both the cyclists and the pedestrians as part of those improvements that were proposed?

Mr TODD - Certainly in terms of cyclists up to this point, but the only times we have addressed the issue of pedestrians is at the bus bays and allowing people safe access from those bus bays to Danbury Drive South - and I think there are a couple of other locations. There has been no particular emphasis on pedestrians. Perhaps Mrs Napier could clarify her question.

Mrs NAPIER - I was thinking about discussions that have been held, as I understand it, between the department's officers and the council in relation to any measures that would occur beyond Acropolis Drive to the Legana roundabout. My understanding was that there was no suggestion - even though we would like it to be - that it was going to be four lanes but that there would at least be some improvements to the road so that it was safer for cars, pedestrians and cyclists.

Mr TODD - Those discussions have gone on, like they do with many councils about many roads, but that is not within the scope of this project. This is where this project finishes and, as I said, that could be considered as a future project, subject to the funds and the normal budget process.

Mrs NAPIER - It is interesting that you are arguing that we can go to a two-lane road even though we have just as much traffic as ever - that is the reason for having a four-lane road - and then we get to that particular point, and we do not take the four-lane road and other safety measures up to the roundabout. Neither do we provide for the pedestrian traffic, which one would assume would be increased in a more urban zone, nor are we planning at least some safety measures for the cyclists. It seems to me as a logical extension if we are trying to cater for and encourage both professional and recreational cyclists, given the number of recreational cyclists that use the road. In this day and age, when we know people are dying of cardiovascular disease and diabetes probably more than they are dying on the roads, it seems we should encourage people to ride bikes. So wouldn't it be logical to at least complete those safety works into that urban zone of Legana?

Mr TODD - Mr Barrett might be able to give me the information, but the sealed width through Legana is already 12 metres.

Mrs NAPIER - So all you need is some markings?

Mr TODD - There is already plenty of width there for cyclists to use the road and cars to travel as a two-lane road. I acknowledge that it is not marked in that way. The issue that Mr Hall raised before about marking cycle lanes and then the issue of parking does create a problem. We have not gone down that track, but there is adequate width there now for the cyclists.

Mrs NAPIER - But not the markings or the road surface in places, as I understand?

Mr TODD - I believe it to be sealed right through.

Mr BARRETT - I will move on to the proposed design on the services and briefly describe those works we are intending to do with services. The first is the Esk water main. Apparently the Esk water main is the major trunk line located between Danbury Drive South and Legana. It is on the river side of the highway and a substantial length of the pipeline is located underneath the ultimate southbound carriageway. In discussions with Esk Water they indicated that they are not happy to have the water main underneath the carriage way, as any repair works they would have to carry out would have occupational health and safety issues. They are not prepared to allow the water main to be underneath the roadway. Also, if there is any blow-out in the water main, that could possibly cause holes in the roadway, which would present a major safety hazard. We are proposing to purchase an easement for the water main on private property outside the road reserve and construct a new water main from Danbury Drive South through to north of Acropolis Drive within that easement to allow the construction of the new southbound carriageway.

There are a number of smaller off-take mains off that water main. There is one at Acropolis Drive, which we are upgrading at the crossing to provide for any future developments. There is a water main for a number of wayside users - houses which take water off the bulk main - and we have taken the option of relocating them onto council water mains where they are more appropriately serviced. That will require the installation of a small main from Danbury Drive North, back along the road reserve to the south of approximately 300 metres to provide a water supply to several houses.

Telstra services - there are quite a number of Telstra services located within the road reserve and outside the road reserve in this area, including fibre-optic cables. Fibre-optic cables in this area constitute one of two links from the State to the mainland and are critical to the supply of telecommunications to the State. Because of that, we have undertaken to relocate those services prior to the roadworks contract to minimise any risk of disruption to the Telstra services. There are three locations in which they have been relocated. They are now clear of all the earthworks so when the roadworks contractor starts there is a substantially reduced risk of any incidents which might cut the State off from the mainland.

There are also a number of Aurora poles within the road reserve which we are relocating. The majority of those are around Acropolis Drive at the roundabout. With the Aurora relocations we would also get Aurora to install lighting into the roundabouts - lighting for median openings, junctions and also to the new junction in Legana Park Drive with the new access road. Those are the only services that are being affected.

Mrs NAPIER - Could I return then to that question about the four options that were looked at in terms of the bypass, so we can clear up that whole area. In your submission you said that there were four options that were looked at in relation to handling the cycle traffic there and I would suggest to you that there is huge potential for cycle traffic to increase; it is just for safety reasons a lot of people don't like using the road. What was the premise for your having decided on the solution that you have and what was the cost difference in terms of the other three options? In our papers - on page 4/9 - it is \$3.5 million.

Mr BARRETT - I have a copy of the preliminary design report for the first section from Cormiston Creek to Danbury Drive South in which we actually investigated the options of cycleways. I will give you the details of the four options. The first option is of a formal cycleway on the outer side of each carriageway - and I will just read from this report. The Australian road standards indicate that for a single-lane cycleway adjacent to a road with a speed limit of 100 kph the following widths are required: a 1.5 metre clear width of the edge line and cyclists; a 1 metre width allowance for cyclists; a 1 metre clearance between cyclists and an embankment. To allow for a formal cycleway on the outside edge carriageway on this section of the highway, the width of the dual carriageway would need to be increased by 4 metres beyond the original preliminary design width. To accommodate the increase -

Mr STURGES - Sorry, what was that?

Mr BARRETT - An extra 4 metres.

Mr STURGES - Is that 2 metres either side or -

Mr BARRETT - It would mean a complete redesign from what we have at the moment to widen out towards the river as we are restricted by the hillside - we can't go into the hillside - and then pushing the carriageways over and adding 4 metres towards the river.

Mrs NAPIER - So that would be an extra 2 metres than what you have allowed for or an extra 4 metres?

Mr BARRETT - An extra 4 metres. To combat the increasing width of pavement the existing surcharge embankment would need to be widened by up to 4 metres over a length of approximately 800 metres of the site. The widening of the surcharge embankment by up to 4 metres would present considerable geotechnical issues that would likely result in delaying the construction of the dual carriageway. The widening of the surcharge embankment by up to 4 metres could be expected to cause primary consolidation with the underlying silts as a result of the settlement rate of the order of 200 millimetres per year. This is not considered to be a viable option on this section of the highway. The existing design that we are proposing uses all of those compacted bounds, so if we were to then put another 4 metres on we would be spilling over into the soft silts again.

The option of a 2-metre sealed shoulder: sealed shoulders 2 metres wide with a 0.5 metre verge on the outside could be installed on the outside of each carriageway without having to widen the surcharge embankment. This would eliminate the geotechnical problems that are associated with other options.

A separate cycleway on the east side of the highway: as an alternative to constructing cycleway facilities on the highway, a separate two-way cycle path could be constructed on the east side of the highway. Off-road standards for a dual-lane cycleway that is separated from a roadway are as follows: a 1 metre width allowance for each cycle lane; a 0.5 metre clearance between opposing cycle lanes and a 0.5 metre minimum clearance to obstacles. This could be constructed on lower surcharge embankment berms on this section of the highway. There are some sections between Cormiston Creek and Danbury Drive South where there is no existing surcharge or berm. In these areas the

embankment berms could be constructed with maybe only minor settle issues due to less fill being required to the cycleway.

A separate cycle path would have significant advantages as follows: cyclists will be further away from the motorists, improving safety; cyclists will not be buffered about by wind generated by large vehicles; the reduced width of the carriageways will require less width of the existing surcharge embankment; the cycleway is likely to stay cleaner than the sealed shoulder and will reduce riding risks. The facilities would need to be constructed to allow northbound cyclists to cross the highway at Cormiston Creek and at Danbury Drive South so that they can access the cycleway.

A northbound option: a north bound cycleway adjacent to the highway with a southbound separate from the highway. The northbound cycleway could be constructed adjacent to the northbound carriageway, while a separate cycle path to be constructed on the eastern side of the highway. This could be constructed without widening the existing surcharge embankment. It is expected that the southbound cycleway that would be separated from the highway would carry cycle traffic in both directions even if a northbound cycleway were provided adjacent to the highway. This separated cycleway would need dual lanes to provide for cycle traffic in both directions and would effectively be the same as a cycleway previously described. Facilities would need to be constructed to allow northbound cyclists to cross the highway at Cormiston Creek and at Danbury Drive South as they are likely to do this even if a formal facility to cross the highway is not provided.

Mrs NAPIER - What is your cost on that third option? What extra would it cost?

Mr BARRETT - I could give you some cost estimates on each of the options. The first option of a formal cycleway: for this first stage from Cormiston Creek through to Danbury Drive South, the cost is estimated at \$500 000.

Mr STURGES - Mr Barrett, is that first option separated from the roadway?

Mr BARRETT - The first option is a formal cycleway on either side.

Mr STURGES - The point I am getting to, though, is that you have spoken about a dedicated cycleway - I am just trying to get this clear in my mind and I will get to the reason why if I need to - separated from the roadway, as opposed to a cycleway allocated on the shoulder. Can I just get that clear, please?

Mr BARRETT - The first option, a formal cycleway, would be adjacent to the through lanes, so it would be a part of the road, whereas a separate cycleway could be 30, 40, 50 metres away from the road so it would not be linked to the road at all.

Mr STURGES - I am sorry for cutting across the explanation you are giving, if I may, but if we are going to start talking about separated cycleways - I have heard in evidence the implications for other road users if in fact it is signed 'cycleway', so I will not go back over that ground again - what I want to do is get clear the issue of a separated cycleway as opposed to a signed cycleway as part of the road. I then want to talk about precedent for funding of the separated cycleways if we are going to start going down that road.

Mrs NAPIER - I am interested in what the costs were.

Mr BARRETT - For the formal cycleway adjacent to each road, my cost estimates for the first section from Cormiston Creek through to Danbury Drive South is \$500 000. The 2-metre sealed shoulders, as proposed in our design, will cost \$200 000. The separate cycleway on the eastern side of the highway is a cost of \$270 000. The northbound adjacent to the highway and the southbound separate from the highway is a cost of \$450 000.

Mr HALL - So the quantum of difference between the separate two-lane cycleway, as is proposed, that was \$270 000, was it not -

Mr BARRETT - Yes.

Mr HALL - yet the formal cycleway, which is the first point - it is still on that same 2-metre strip, isn't it? Is that what you are saying?

Mr BARRETT - The formal cycleway on the outside of each carriageway will be considerably wider.

Mr NICHOLS - We would have to preconsolidate the fill again, so you'd be probably looking at another 20 years' delay with that.

Mr HALL - I am just trying to clear that up. So you cannot formally mark the 2-metre one that is proposed here as a formal cycleway?

Mrs NAPIER - Well, you could but there would be implications for drivers being able to stop and park.

Mr HALL - I know Mr Todd gave that answer before but I can think of roads around Melbourne, for example, where that is not the case, where there are the two lanes and a formal cycleway on the side yet there is no provision for cars to pull over. I do not know how that fits with Australian safety standards or anything else, but I have seen that in other areas.

Mrs NAPIER - Obviously the \$500 000 for a formal cycleway outside of each carriageway is a lot of extra bickies. You are saying that the 2-metre sealed shoulder, which is in the plan, is \$200 000 but instead of doing that, if we went ahead with a separate two-way cycleway, which could be done on the eastern side of the road, that would cost \$270 000. So there is only \$70 000 difference between what we are proposing and what would have been another alternative, which would be to have a separate two-way cycleway.

Mr NICHOLS - That is moving out into the wetlands, too. I was not that familiar with what was intended, but there would also be an issue with preconsolidating that fill too to build the cycleway and we would be encroaching upon the wetlands.

Mrs NAPIER - So presumably you would be doing is going back to your 1 metre verge at the edges of the road which would give you 2 metres at least, so what is the width of your two-way cycleway again - 4 metres?

Mr NICHOLS - That's not quite correct, we would still have a sealed shoulder.

Mrs NAPIER - Would you have 1 metre or 1.5?

Mr NICHOLS - For me, it would probably be at least 1.5.

Mr BARRETT - This is based on a base case of being a 1-metre sealed shoulder.

Mrs NAPIER - If you went with your 1-metre verge on either side of your highway instead of the 2 metres as is currently proposed, how much additional encroachment into the wetland would you require? Are we after a 4-metre wide cycle pathway? Is that what we are after? It seems awful wide to me.

Mr NICHOLS - I presume that it would be a separate embankment that would be separate to our road.

Mr BARRETT - In the order of both 3.5 metres wide.

Mrs NAPIER - I guess the most contentious area is that wetland area and that compacted area, how much would it need to be further encroached if you went for 3.5 metres?

Mr BARRETT - That would have to be actually built within the wetland itself.

Mrs NAPIER - Okay, so it is not there right now?

Mr BARRETT - It is not there now.

Mr TODD - The other point of course is that that estimate is only to Danbury Drive South so you need to double it really to take it through to the end of the project. That was some preliminary work which was done through Danbury Drive South so that 270 is only to about chainage 1 800 and the length of the project is -

Mrs NAPIER - It is pretty flat land thereafter.

Mr TODD - Yes, that is right. It still needs to be constructed.

Mr STURGES - Mr Chairman, I am not trying to be provocative but I am just trying to get all the issues out - and I support your line of questioning too with regard to catering for cyclists; I have no problem with that - but again I come down to the issue of funding for cycleways which are separate from existing roadways. If you can, Mr Todd, give an indication to the committee about funding arrangements in other areas for those types of cycleways?

Mr TODD - It is the general practice of the department not to fund those as separate facilities. Where we interfere with where there is access, we will make good to allow access but the department doesn't build specially built cycleways. It is not its policy or practice.

The other thing is that within our discussions with cyclists and particularly training cyclists their preference is to ride on the shoulder of the road and they have expressed to

us that they would not support a separate cycleway. They tend to become rough and bumpy, they do not present the same level of service, particularly for training cyclists. I suggest that, even if this sort of facility was built, they would still ride on whatever shoulder was there on the existing highway. That seems to be the experience that we are aware of and that would certainly represent the representation made to us some months ago.

Mrs NAPIER - Road cyclists versus recreational.

Mr TODD - Recreational cyclists yes, and we are talking about a reasonable distance between Cormiston through to Legana. I am not sure where you draw the line but training cyclists are certainly looking at going longer distances and we know that they would prefer to be on the road shoulder if it was sealed.

Mr STURGES - At the risk of labouring the point, Chairman, but again for the record, that is not a funding arrangement of DIER, is that correct?

Mr TODD - That is correct.

Mr STURGES - And my understanding, again for the record, was that they strongly support the establishment of separated cycleways for recreation and more professional training. My understanding also is that there are other arrangements funded through government in conjunction with partnerships with local councils. I just wanted to make sure that we were on the right track there and didn't get at cross purposes.

Mrs NAPIER - I am very aware that there are other funding sources for cycleways. However, here we are in a situation where we know we have a road that has a very high incidence of cycle accidents and I guess it is a matter of exploring all the possibilities as to the best way of trying to tackle it.

Mr STURGES - I am not taking issue with you; I am just trying to clarify that - if we are going to separate it, as opposed to conjoined use, signage, traffic.

Mr TODD - I fully endorse what Mrs Napier said, and that is in fact what the department has endeavoured to do: balancing it but looking at all the issues to provide the best facilities we possibly can to allow cyclists within the constraints of the corridor, the embankments and so on. I believe we have gone down that path to do that.

Mrs NAPIER - I just wanted to flesh that out so that we had on the record exactly what all the options were - disadvantages and advantages.

CHAIRMAN - Mr Todd, you did say at the outset that Dr Woodward was going to make a presentation as part of your group.

Mr TODD - That is correct, on the environmental and social issues.

CHAIRMAN - Can you give me an indication of how long that might be because Ms Povey does have another commitment? But bear in mind that we need to proceed in a reasonable and rational manner.

Ms ANNA POVEY, RESIDENT OF TREVALLYN WAS CALLED, MADE THE STATUTORY DECLARATION AND WAS EXAMINED.

Ms POVEY - My evidence is probably pretty relevant to what has just gone on. It is a difficult position to be in. I saw the advertisement for this hearing last Saturday and, despite efforts, we have not had the option of looking at the preliminary document. I can tell that cyclists have been consulted and we know you have obviously considered us in this proposed.

My aim is to highlight the importance of this stretch of highway for cyclists in Tasmania so that the committee can make a good decision as far as supporting cyclist facilities on this highway. It is probably the most important stretch of road in Tasmania for cyclists. We want cyclists to have access around a lot of areas but this particular stretch is used almost every day by racing cyclists - they are the ones you see - and they probably comprise the bulk of people you have consulted with. It is also a fabulous access for recreational cyclists and for commuters from Launceston to the major areas of Legana and the north. For cycle tours along the river, inland and in all directions - to the ferry for cycle tourists - this stretch is absolutely critical. If you are trying to get out of Launceston, this is the best way out. The southern outlet is not the best.

Most cycle tourists who arrive in Tasmania - of which there are hundreds; I was one in my first trip to Tasmania - launch off onto the Scottsdale road, which isn't the best either. But with some direction I think this could be promoted as a cycle tourist destination at the highest level. I have been around the world on my bike. In France, cycle touring routes are marked and the accommodation is packed with cycle tourists around those areas. I think that is an enormous growth potential for northern Tasmania that we have not looked at or promoted. Without this stretch, the possibilities are going to continue to be limited.

The East Tamar Highway is a death trap. The West Tamar Highway already has serious issues for safety for cyclists. If anywhere in Tasmania you are going to be committed to cyclists, this is the place to start. It is great to see the possibility of a bigger shoulder. Two metres would improve things hugely, but we do think it is worthwhile going the extra step of somehow making this a dedicated bicycle lane. We didn't get a chance -

Mr STURGES - Sorry, Ms Povey - dedicated or separated?

Ms POVEY - I don't think that the separate cycleway, often away from the road, is the best option for all people. Yes, it would be nice for families and it would be nice for cycle tourists. I think they are right that the training bunch wouldn't use it. Also, where would it come from? There is nobody who goes around building a slow cycle path. Basically if that was the option it would never happen without an enormous amount of effort and seeking of funding from who knows where and going over the wetland - I just can't see that ever happening.

As far as a bicycle lane goes, 2 to 3 metres, according to this guide, 'Perfect Engineering Advice for Bicycles', Part 14, is what we would need for a bicycle lane that is adjacent to the road, so we have 2 metres of shoulder. I am confused as to why an exclusive bicycle lane suddenly needs 4 metres extra of consolidated material. As far as I can tell, it would be pretty light. The 2 metres of shoulder marked as a bicycle lane is all that we would require and it is what is typically marked as a bicycle lane in other places. As far as the guidelines in here are concerned,

it seems to fit. What the difference is is that it is marked and recognised and it particularly doesn't leave us in the lurch at intersections.

Mr HALL - Just to interrupt there to clarify that, you would be happy with the 2 metres sealed shoulder as proposed but as long as it is marked as a cycleway?

Ms POVEY - As long as it is marked and it is swept. It wouldn't need to be swept very often but it does need to be maintained occasionally otherwise people won't be able to use it, especially with those skinny racing bikes as they can't go over the bumps. To use the shoulder, it needs to be swept and kept reasonably smooth. But cyclists not being very heavy, I don't think that it needs an enormous amount of extra material and I am not sure whether you were thinking an extra dedicated bicycle lane meant something with 2 metres to itself plus a gap. I don't quite understand where all those extra metres of consolidated stuff comes from.

Mrs NAPIER - It was questioned whether the lane is used as a run-off for cars for safety or not.

Ms POVEY - My understanding is that for emergency stopping, you are allowed to emergency stop in a bicycle lane. I don't know anywhere in Australia where someone is not allowed to stop for an emergency in a bike lane and along that stretch I have hardly come across a car parked ever. It is not used for car parking. If someone has to answer their mobile phone then there is plenty of turn-offs dedicated in this proposal. They can drive a few more metres and pull off into the proper turning area and if we have to stop cycle lanes for the sake of people pulling over to answer their mobile phone then we are stuffed all around Australia because we are not going to be able to have one anywhere.

Mrs NAPIER - Intersections, what was your comment?

Ms POVEY - Intersections is where we get run into. In actual fact it is amazing; there have been awful incidents of people deliberating opening their car doors onto a bunch of cyclists along a straight stretch but usually that is not the case. Usually people do try not to run into you if you ride in front of them in a straight. At intersections it is amazing how much people misjudge how fast a bike is travelling. How many times I have had to brake when someone has pulled left in front of me, and I have been run into by someone turning right. They were in a right-turn lane, not on this particular stretch of highway, but people are looking ahead for cars to avoid and they do not look at the distance where a cyclist is. If there is a marked, coloured lane with cycle symbols along it - this book has a picture of options for cycle lanes to go across intersections. Obviously the cars are allowed to turn across there. The difference is in the psychology for the driver, the awareness of the bikes and that they have to look out for them. If people have to turn across a coloured, with dashed lines, lane, they will, hopefully, look out for a cyclist in it. I have cycled in France, Italy, England and Asia and you would imagine that they would be difficult for cycling. In fact, I have had the best treatment in the countries with the most difficulties. Someone mentioned earlier comfort for drivers - it was just the normal description of what this is going to do for drivers. The more comfortable the driver, the less accommodating that person is of all other users. The more the speed, the more straight, the easier the drive, the worse drivers behave towards anybody who gets in their way. If it is a log truck, you cannot argue with a log truck. People get frustrated but they are not going to risk their lives. Yet they are risking our lives. It is only a few seconds that anyone ever has to wait for a cyclist in order to pass safely, but the level of the frustration is obscene. I have had more aggressive treatment from drivers in Tasmania than anywhere else in the world, and it is because driving is comfortable in Tasmania.

There is hardly any traffic; in Launceston you can drive to the shop you require and have a good chance of finding a car park right out the front of it - yet this is where we get the worst treatment.

If cyclists are only allowed a shoulder - granted the shoulder is a huge improvement - if we want more than just the training bunch to ride on that road, if we want to make this an option for our community, we need to have awareness of cyclists built into our roads. I think if there is one place in Tasmania you can test that out, it is here on the West Tamar Highway and that stretch is the best starting place. Then we might have a chance of getting our community fit again. I have a three year old and I put him on the seat on the bike - Sue has probably seen me cycling all around town - and I would like to feel that he was safe in some of these places. I take him carefully up much worse bits. I take him to the footpath where necessary, holding a lane where necessary, getting out of people's way. I try to keep out of people's way; all of us do. We do not want harassed drivers stopping behind us, but there are points where cyclists are forced into the path of cars and that is where cyclists need to be given their due. It is only for a few seconds and it just means that, like any other vehicles, at a roundabout they don't try to pass you. At this roundabout, if there is not a cyclist lane marked somehow to get through, people will try to overtake us. They do it and it is absolutely frightening. It is those extra little steps of painted lines, lots of signs, little painted bicycles, that will make the difference. Then it can be part of a vision for northern Tasmania. This is a really fabulous destination for cycling, a fabulous city for cycling and it would not take much.

Mrs NAPIER - And then we will do the East Tamar.

Ms POVEY - The East Tamar would be really nice. It is such a pity that is not safe. I have done it on Christmas Day when everyone else was at home.

We have written it all down and tried to cover everything. There are ample books. I am sorry if I don't have the detailed knowledge of exactly where the legislation stands but my friend, Jenny, was the State bicycle developmental officer and she, with her husband, has done a road cycle safety audit of the West Tamar Highway. Her understanding was that there was an advisory bicycle lane - which, as far as I can tell, is an exclusive bicycle lane except that bikes do not have to stay in it and people are allowed to park in that for emergency use. Although, I can't imagine a cycle lane forbidding anybody parking in it for emergency use.

Mrs NAPIER - You make the point in your submission - and I agree that it is a very good submission - about school-age cyclists and the fact that less than 2 per cent of students cycle to school on any given day to Riverside and Exeter - that is 3 000 students. That is amazing.

Ms POVEY - It is not good for the future health of our community. I do not think that fixing this stretch of highway is necessarily going to have hundreds of extra people cycling to school but they certainly ARE not going to if even this highway can't get treatment for cyclists. The other links in a network that would allow people to cycle to school need to happen too, but they will not happen if this one doesn't. Of all parts of Tasmania this is the place to put the cycle lane.

CHAIRMAN - Thank you. Gentlemen, thanks for allowing us to move down that path. Dr Woodward, we are back to you.

Dr WOODWARD - Thanks, Mr Chairman. As you would have seen from your visit there this morning, most of the project area has been cleared for residential and agricultural use. There are some patches of remanent vegetation and there ARE also some exotic trees that have been

planted at various places along the project area. The most obvious environmental issue is the Tamar Island Wetlands Reserve which is an area of 60 hectares and it forms part of the Tamar River Conservation Area, which is on the register of the National Estate. It has abundant wildlife, perhaps more than 45 bird species, and it is a designated Ramsar wetland.

Within the project area itself, however, there are no threatened species, no listed heritage sites and no known Aboriginal sites, so the project area itself, although surrounded on the eastern side at least by sensitive environmental areas, the featured area is of no particular sensitivity.

In terms of planning, the project is covered by the Beaconsfield Planning Scheme 1986. Under the planning scheme, the road upgrade works that occur within the road reserve do not require planning approval, nevertheless we have prepared a detailed environmental management plan which will govern the construction of the works. There are a few components of the project which fall outside that road reserve and they have required the preparation and submission of four separate development applications: one for the Esk Water water supply main relocation, one for the shared private driveway, one for the industrial estate's new access road, and one for the car park upgrade. As I said, those development applications have been submitted to council and been approved and the permits have been issued.

Just running through those DAs very quickly, the Esk Water relocation project required removal of only a few trees, particularly some Monterey cypress trees in a residential lot. They were large and possibly 60 years old and they were quite unsafe anyway. They will be removed and there is a small patch of *melaleuca ericifolia* that has to be removed as well.

The shared private driveway; there will be a loss of some vegetation, a mix of native and non-native. One large spruce tree has been particularly protected from the construction works and we are ensuring that there are appropriate run-off controls along that driveway as well.

The industrial estate access fairly obviously crosses pastures and there is no significant vegetation there. The old access road will be replanted under a landscaping plan which will be prepared and submitted to council for approval. Subsequent to the planning approval, the owner of the land, Mr Griffiths, requested that drainage be improved in one corner where there is currently quite a boggy area and that drainage will be redirected into an existing drain on council land.

The carpark at the Tamar Islands Interpretation Centre; the current sewage treatment tanks are in the carpark area itself as are the absorption beds for the septic effluent. The treatment tanks themselves can remain in place but the reconstruction of the carpark will require the absorption beds to be relocated. Although it is in the road reserve, that relocation will be the responsibility of the Parks and Wildlife Service. We have provided some assistance to them and we understand that they have now submitted their plans to council and I think they are still finalising the vegetation planting for those relocated beds.

Within the main project area itself, the main issue that we looked at was noise. Under the draft State noise policy there was a desirable target standard of 63 decibels to meet at the facade of residential properties. We looked at the possibility of that being achieved on this project. We did some measurements and noise modelling and we think that probably at the moment about 15 houses already exceed that 63 db standard. The predictions are that in 2006, when the project is opened, with the natural growth of traffic there will probably be 17 houses that will exceed it, and 10 years after that probably 21 houses will exceed it. This is virtually entirely due to the

natural 3 per cent per annum traffic growth. Obviously more vehicles on the road adds to the noise. The typical increase, though, for all those houses will generally be less than 1 decibel, which for most people would not be perceptible. Nevertheless, we are looking at the draft noise policy and the desirability on new projects of trying to construct the roads so that that 63 db target is met. We did examine the possibility of constructing noise barriers but the terrain means that that is neither feasible nor desirable. It probably would require several hundred metres of noise barriers and they might be up to 15 metres high, which would hardly be something that the community would be wanting on a stretch of road like that, so no particular noise barriers will be constructed.

The environmental management plan is being finalised and will be incorporated in the construction contract. It will be an obligation of the contractor to meet the commitments in that plan. Those commitments reflect the permit conditions that have been issued by the West Tamar Council.

CHAIRMAN - I want to come back to a couple of general questions, and forgive me if it has already been asked because I did not write it down. What is the cost of construction of the roundabout?

Mr NICHOLS - It is \$300 000.

CHAIRMAN - When we were on the site visit this morning it was explained to us that with traffic exiting the Legana Park Drive at the end of work time there is some difficulty, I presume, in wanting to head north more than heading south. Heading south you are going against the flow of traffic at that time of day and getting across the highway to head north would be the major problem.

Mr NICHOLS - Yes, that would be correct.

CHAIRMAN - And then the desirability of constructing the roundabout at Acropolis Drive arises because it serves an extra purpose - and that is, calming traffic at that location given the expected development in Acropolis Drive down the track.

Mr NICHOLS - Yes. This would certainly calm the traffic travelling north and entering Legana, but it also serves the new development on the western side of the highway.

CHAIRMAN - If you could identify an overarching reason for the roundabout, what would it be?

Mr NICHOLS - It really provides a safe junction on the highway.

CHAIRMAN - Primarily for the industrial estate?

Mr NICHOLS - Yes, with the secondary use being to provide for Acropolis Drive.

CHAIRMAN - So it is the industrial estate access and egress which is the main problem for you?

Mr TODD - Mr Chairman, the other matter it does deal with is that where the access is coming out now it is more or less opposite the caravan park and the retirement village in which there are movements of traffic which are a bit different. This solution also closes that junction and removes the traffic complexity in that area and we believe will make that area safer as well.

CHAIRMAN - So the existing Legana Park Drive junction with the West Tamar Highway will be closed?

Mr NICHOLS - That is correct.

CHAIRMAN - Why wouldn't you leave it open for southbound traffic to enter the industrial estate and indeed for southbound traffic if they chose to exit the estate without going across the highway? Why would you not leave it open to facilitate that? Well, it is not a long drive - I acknowledge that - to go to the roundabout and come back into the industrial estate, but the road is there, it is constructed, why close it off if it can be used usefully?

Mr BARRETT - Because we are trying to centralise it to that roundabout and there is always a risk that people will come out. If it was left in/left out then people could still try to come out and turn across the traffic.

Mr NICHOLS - And as I said before, Mr Chairman, it does remove that junction from immediately opposite the caravan park and the retirement village where we do have caravans turning with older drivers and it would be better to keep the traffic movement in that area as simple as possible. Therefore if it is closed, all the commercial traffic and the other traffic is exiting at the roundabout.

CHAIRMAN - What are the vehicle movements from the industrial estate?

Mr BARRETT - I don't have any traffic counts. Council would not have anything available on traffic counts in industrial estates.

CHAIRMAN - So you didn't seek to obtain any for the purposes of this design?

Mr BARRETT - No.

CHAIRMAN - So you're acting on anecdotal advice that you have received from whom to determine the fact that there is a traffic problem at that intersection?

Mr BARRETT - During the consultation we met with all the property owners within the industrial estate and one of the key points raised by a vast majority of the owners was that that was a big problem. We haven't done any traffic counts but during the site visits we have observed the traffic and the problems of getting access to the highway. So it is just from anecdotal evidence and also from inspection as well.

Mr HALL - Regarding the roundabout, were alternatives considered in regard to traffic lights there instead? I suppose it depends on the quantum of traffic, doesn't it, and what costs did -

Mr TODD - I couldn't give you the exact costs on all of those but I know there were 14 different options looked at in terms of where to bring the dual back to a single carriageway, so there was quite an extensive process but I don't have the detailed costs. I don't know whether Mr Nichols has?

Mr NICHOLS - No. I was going to refer that question on to Mr Barrett.

Mr BARRETT - As Mr Todd mentioned, we have considered quite a lot of options for terminating the dual carriageway. A lot of those options were considered and eliminated on safety grounds and therefore it didn't go forward to actually doing detailed cost estimates, so we can't provide that sort of information.

CHAIRMAN - Is that something you want to pursue, Mr Hall, to get that information?

Mr HALL - Yes, I think, Mr Chairman, if the committee could be provided with those cost options, I would like that to occur.

Mr TODD - That is specifically for traffic lights where the roundabout -

Mr HALL - Yes, and - I don't know what else was considered - slip lanes or whatever. I'm not a traffic engineer so I don't know, but I would be interested to have a look at some of those if that is possible.

Mr STURGES - Just following on on that line of questioning, Mr Chairman, I had a similar situation in my electorate on the Brooker Highway where a number of constituents were seeking to get traffic lights in lieu of an existing roundabout. I was advised then that there are traffic flow reasons and perhaps if that is the case I would appreciate that along with the cost option that you are going to provide. A representative of DIER - I forget the gentleman's name - put a very persuasive case forward so I think if we are going to get costs I would also like to have the other factors to weigh up there.

Mrs NAPIER - Can I ask a further question on cycleways - and I know we have spent some time on it already - in relation to the Acropolis Drive roundabout that we were just talking about and were we to request that this become a bicycle-designated path. Do the dimensions of this roundabout at Acropolis Drive and the slipways accommodate a bicycle pathway, were it to be so designated and painted?

Mr BARRETT - The cyclists have been considered in the design of the roundabout to provide sufficient width. Though there is no dedicated cycleway in the roundabout, we have designed to allow the islands to be set back sufficiently to allow cyclists to travel around the roundabout. I also add that with the junctions we have also set the islands back away from the road so that the 2-metre sealed shoulder travels through the junction so cyclists are not pushed out into the through lane by traffic islands as they are riding through the junction.

Mrs NAPIER - Relative to a slipway, where to you put the cyclists - on the land side or is there a crossover point at which if someone comes onto a slipway to turn left - in terms of international best practice, where is the crossover point closest to the intersection or at the point at which the slip road begins?

Mr BARRETT - I think there is a large opinion in both ways to do the crossover at the junction. In some cases it would be the cross back prior to the start of the left-turn slip lane. In some cases with high turning movements, it is more advantageous to take the cycle lane along the outside of the left-turning slip lane and terminate the cycle lane and then the cyclists virtually stop and cross over the junction and give way to traffic, which of course is not going to be ideal for training cyclists. However, if you have large numbers of turning vehicles, you are always going to have conflicts with the cyclists crossing the cars.

Mrs NAPIER - Is there an international best practice or a national best practice on that?

Mr BARRETT - The reference guide does give guidance on treatment for cyclists.

Mr TODD - It does give a number of options, depending on the circumstances, as Mr Barrett was saying.

CHAIRMAN - Thank you very much, gentlemen, for that submission and presentation.

THE WITNESSES WITHDREW.

BARRY EASTHER, MAYOR, WEST TAMAR COUNCIL, **IAN PEARCE**, GENERAL MANAGER, WEST TAMAR COUNCIL AND **RAY WRIGHT**, TECHNICAL SERVICES MANAGER, WEST TAMAR COUNCIL WERE CALLED, MADE THE STATUTORY DECLARATION AND WERE EXAMINED.

CHAIRMAN - We are happy to receive your verbal submission. Mr Mayor, do you want to lead that?

Mr EASTHER - I will make a few brief remarks and then our Technical Services Manager might like to add something and certainly we are all available to answer any questions that the committee may have. I think, put very succinctly, the West Tamar Council has consistently maintained over a long period the need for upgrading the West Tamar Highway to four lanes, extending from Cormiston Creek to Legana and we certainly support the submission that was put before you by the department this morning.

The basis for our support of this work is certainly to improve the safety of that area, taking into account the very high volume of traffic that is being experienced. We heard today of a traffic movement figure of 11 000 per day. It is certainly at least that and it is increasing. There has been over a long period a lot of community pressure based on council and the State Government for this roadwork to be done and of course the commitments go back over 20 years.

We believe that the work should be undertaken as quickly as possible, certainly as a matter of urgency. The traffic movements on that section of road are considerable right now. In the future, with Legana being West Tamar Council's growth area for residential development, it will continue to increase. We certainly would agree with the forecast of something like 3 per cent in traffic in each year. Right at the moment, council has inquiries and draft plans for subdivision in the Legana area consisting of in excess of 400 lots and we heard this morning the land at Acropolis Drive, owned by Jimmy Tsinoglou. I believe he is considering putting a proposal into council for in the order of 150 allotments in there.

We support the work that is proposed to be undertaken and we look forward to it being done with a lot of haste.

CHAIRMAN - Have you anything to add, Mr Pearce?

Mr PEARCE - No, I do not wish to add to that.

CHAIRMAN - Mr Wright, is there anything you wish to add at the moment?

Mr WRIGHT - The only thing I would add is that over the last couple of years I have had a lot of discussions with departmental officers on details relating to this project. Council has put in a number of submissions to the department on various aspects of the proposal. We are just glad at this stage that we have now got to the situation where the project can proceed.

CHAIRMAN - Thank you. Any questions? Can I just kick off with a couple. On page 3 of your submission you have made the comment there at point 4 that you are concerned about the cost effectiveness of the roundabout at Acropolis Drive. Have your concerns about that matter been addressed or allayed or do you still hold some concerns about that roundabout and what are they?

Mr EASTHER - I would venture to say that we don't consider the roundabout is really necessary. There is a lot of money involved in the construction of the roundabout. I heard \$300 000 mentioned today and that didn't include the \$350 000 for the new road into the industrial estate that was mentioned on the development application and it certainly doesn't include any costs for acquiring land. So we considered the money out of this total project of \$8 million being expended on a roundabout to be a lot of money that could be well spent on other areas of the West Tamar Highway to improve some of the other less than satisfactory places.

We have been told by the department that they did consider a number of options but they weren't prepared to agree to change even though the first plan that we saw did not have a roundabout in it and that was an agreement that we made with the then minister and now Premier Lennon. I don't know whether Mr Wright would have anything else that he would like to add with regard to the roundabout.

Mr WRIGHT - No, that summary is correct. We have questioned the cost effectiveness, not the safety. There is no doubt the roundabout is a very safe option but we have questioned whether there are other options that are more cost effective to equally deal with the change from four lanes down to two lanes while dealing with the intersections at that location.

CHAIRMAN - What would you say might be some of those options?

Mr WRIGHT - We are aware of the options that the department have considered. We have seen something like 14 options that they have considered and those included putting the roundabout at the junction of the existing access to the industrial estate so the caravan park access, which was a bit of an issue there, came off that roundabout. Other options were: channelisation of the intersections there providing a separate T-junction not directly opposite Acropolis Drive rather than having a cross roads; having a separate T-junction for the industrial estate; and changing the location of the narrowing down from two lanes to one lane in each direction. There were a number of options there. We didn't come up with any different options and we didn't do any specific engineering studies on that. We felt the department was the best organisation to actually look at the detail of all those options but what we were saying was, 'Just go back and have a look. There's a lot of money tied up here that may be better used on dealing with safety issues between the industrial estate access road and Freshwater Point Road further into Legana'.

CHAIRMAN - What are you advocating then in that regard?

Mr WRIGHT - We are not advocating any particular option there. What we have said is there may be better options -

CHAIRMAN - I know that. I heard what you said there. What sort of works would you like to see the money spent on?

Mr WRIGHT - I don't think that is a decision that I can make here and now. What we are saying is get the most cost effective option. If you are spending very close to \$1 million on that part of the project it is worth looking at very closely to see whether there is a better way of spending that money on the road and getting a result that is just the same.

Mr STURGES - So council haven't undertaken any analysis or any investigation in regard to -

Mr WRIGHT - No. We haven't undertaken any detailed design work or anything which you would need to do to have a really close look at the safety issues there.

Mr PEARCE - One of the issues that was raised was that the first set of plans that we saw from the then Minister Lennon had no roundabout and at the speed limit sign coming into Legana the four lanes came down to two lanes. But there were also some additional works done between Acropolis Drive and Bridgenorth Road, so that there were enough centre turns for people to get off the highway. I suppose that would be about the only other issue that we would raise.

Mr HALL - Just another point: on page 7 of your submission you talk about the nature of facilities provided to sites. Did you have any preconceived idea - and I might ask the engineer, Mr Wright - as to what the best option is there? We heard the evidence this morning where there were four different options provided or put forward by the department and the selection of one.

Mr WRIGHT - Certainly council had a view on that and put a detailed submission to the department after reviewing the preliminary design reports which Mr Barrett this morning was quoting from when he talked about the four options. Council's preferred option was for a separate combined cycleway/footway, separate from the road pavement. Council was looking at not only your recreational cyclist but also your pedestrians, the walking community, and it felt that the safest option for those people was a separate, combined cycleway/footway reducing the sealed shoulders on the highway from 2 metres back to 1 metre, so that gave you 2 metres of effective width already for a 2.5 metre combined walkway/cycleway.

We felt that there was not a lost of cost difference between that option and what was proposed by the department because the sealed shoulders on the highway have 0.5-metre deep full highway pavement and that is not the sort of pavement you need for that cycleway/footway separate. So on a cost basis we felt there was very little cost increase in providing that separate facility right through the project. We did recognise that that facility was unlikely to be used by your training cyclists and given that the highway was being upgraded to two lanes in each direction it was felt that safety would be improved for those competitive cyclists as well because traffic could pass them. They generally train in a group and they don't often train only two abreast which is what they would have to do if it was a marked cycleway. If it is a marked cycleway on the highway they are bound to use it by law and, in our view, it wouldn't really suit the training patterns of those cyclists who generally train in a bunch and take up a whole traffic lane.

Mr HALL - Just in regard to bus stops, I notice you talk about the minimal provisions for pedestrian access to bus stops. Has that been addressed or have you had a chance to consider that at all?

Mr WRIGHT - We haven't seen the final plans. I would hope, and certainly there was some mention this morning about the footpath from the bus stop to Danbury Drive South. I would think that all the bus stops have been dealt with by the sound of that but I haven't seen the final plans.

Mrs NAPIER - Given the discussions that you have had with the department about the concept of a separate cycleway/pedestrian pathway, are you able to comment in any way in which you think that the pedestrians could be catered for if the decision is to go ahead with the 2 metres on either side designated for cycleways?

Mr EASTHER - If that question is directed to me, Mrs Napier. I would say that if a footpath was necessary it will probably have to be constructed at a later time to council's cost. Council is very

supportive of footpaths and construction of same because that seems to be the most popular sought-after method of exercise these days and we are very keen to establish footpaths and walking trails throughout the municipality. To have a footpath along this proposed newly constructed part of the West Tamar Highway would certainly link the footpaths from Riverside to Legana quite nicely.

Mrs NAPIER - But you wouldn't consider doing it at the same time - a co-construction?

Mr EASTHER - Council funds at this point in time would not allow that to occur.

Mrs NAPIER - In the discussions that were had at one stage, apparently about potential road improvements beyond Acropolis Drive towards the Legana roundabout, what were the kind of things that you regarded as probably being important in those improvements?

Mr WRIGHT - I can probably answer that because I was involved fairly closely in those discussions and looking at draft plans that the department had. Those draft plans included a 2-metre shoulder on the western side of the road, a single traffic lane in each direction but a centre lane with linemarking, so that there would be provision for turning vehicles to stand in that centre lane. That would make it very safe for turning vehicles so that they would not be run into the back of.

There was also provision in those draft plans for traffic islands and deceleration lanes at the two major intersections - Bridgenorth Road and Fulton Street - where there are traffic-conflict issues. Certainly in our initial discussions with the department some years ago, the council felt that the upgrading should proceed right through to the Freshwater Point Road roundabout.

Mrs NAPIER - That is down the bottom side of the hill - Freshwater Point?

Mr WRIGHT - No, the existing roundabout near the supermarket.

Mrs NAPIER - Oh, that is the existing one, okay.

Mr WRIGHT - Basically, it was dealing with the traffic volume and the safety of the traffic in the section from the industrial estate through to the supermarket at Legana.

Mrs NAPIER - Do you have a view about whether this 2-metre verge on either side of the road that is being proposed for construction should be designated for cyclists, or not?

Mr WRIGHT - I guess I can put the council's view that the facility for cyclists was to be a separate cycleway/footway. My understanding of the recommendations in the Austroads document is that a cycleway like that needs to be 2.5 metres wide to be marked as a dedicated cycleway. It would certainly be much safer for recreational cyclists. Once it is marked as a dedicated cycleway, the competitive cyclists would also be bound to use it by law because you cannot cycle in the traffic lanes if there is a marked cycleway. Whether that would adequately fit the needs of those training cyclists, given the bunches that they train in, I do not know - you would have to ask those training cyclists, the competitive cyclists.

CHAIRMAN - Can I come back to the Acropolis Road roundabout, because it is certainly a point of some tension within the community as I read the submissions we have received. You have heard what the department has said this morning with regard particularly to traffic volumes

coming out of the industrial estate and the difficulty of turning right at peak hour. Has the council thought of how that particular problem might be overcome?

Mr EASTHER - Yes, Mr Chairman. We do not believe there is an issue with the traffic entering the highway from the industrial estate. I drive past there on a regular basis and occasionally I see a truck coming out, or maybe a car going in. I perhaps do not travel at peak hour and if there was a large volume of traffic wishing to drive out of the industrial estate and head north, it might be difficult for a couple of minutes to get a safe movement. But I do not believe there is sufficient traffic being generated by the businesses in the industrial estate for there to be a problem at that intersection. That is my view.

Mr STURGES - Following that line of questioning - and excuse my ignorance but I am not all that familiar with the area - what is the potential for growth, bearing in mind that this is a forward plan in that industrial area? Your forecast accurately -

Mr EASTHER - The industrial area is just about full.

Mr PEARCE - There are only about three or four more blocks to be subdivided in that area.

Mr EASTHER - The other issue, I suppose, when DIER came back to us regarding the roundabout, it has been more on the basis of safety. I do not think the traffic out of the industrial estate was emphasised to us, it was more the conflict with the nursing home and the caravan park. It was more the conflict of the accesses to those establishments in line with where the industrial estate road currently was. That was more the issue, as I understood it, and Ray could correct me if I am wrong. But that, to me, was really the issue and from a safety point of view, I suppose we cannot really argue too strongly about it.

Mr HALL - On the other hand, if I may Mr Chairman, the mayor talked about the potential subdivision in Acropolis Drive that may create an issue at the junction with West Tamar Highway down the track. Perhaps Mr Wright might like to comment on what would be the best outcome in that respect.

Mr WRIGHT - Certainly the planning scheme allows for more residential development in Acropolis Drive and there have been some tentative discussions with the landowner there regarding a fairly large subdivision in that area. In the longer run, as far as safety is concerned, the roundabout will be a very safe option for that and it will address the issue of the industrial estate and the residential area off Acropolis Drive now rather than waiting until we get down the track at some stage.

Mr HALL - I could put it to you that the proponent may not get approval for that subdivision, especially from DIER, if there is not a sufficient traffic calming device at that intersection.

Mr WRIGHT - We will certainly be carrying out a traffic impact assessment and so on and I am sure DIER would want that information, and we discussed that subdivision with them. We are looking a long way into the future as far as this is concerned and as a very safe option we cannot argue against the roundabout. We just argue at the moment about the cost effectiveness of that.

Mr HALL - I understand that.

Mr WRIGHT - There are a number of conflicting issues there too: there is the changing from four lanes to two lanes, there is a speed zone change, there are some property accesses with the retirement home and the caravan park and so on. There are a lot of issues there and I think the chief traffic engineer was saying, 'There's a lot of issues here that need to be dealt with and the safest way is to slow the traffic with a roundabout, clearly define where the road conditions change from your high speed to your lower speed, coming into an urban environment', and that is the argument they have put back to us when we grade the issues. On safety grounds we need to put the roundabout in.

Mrs NAPIER - In relation to the retirement nursing home, how many of the residents would actually drive?

Mr EASTHER - The word 'retirement' doesn't come into it. It is used as a nursing home and I don't think too many -

Mrs NAPIER - Safe access probably isn't as big an issue.

Mr EASTHER - It is visitors visiting and leaving.

CHAIRMAN - Mr Easter, Mr Pearce and Mr Wright, thank you very much.

THE WITNESSES WITHDREW.

KEITH DARKE, CHAIRMAN, **DOUG BENPORATH**, MEMBER, AND **RICHARD HOOPER**, MEMBER, NORTHERN RATEPAYERS ASSOCIATION OF THE WEST TAMAR, WERE CALLED, MADE THE STATUTORY DECLARATION AND WERE EXAMINED.

CHAIRMAN - Mr Darke, I presume you, as Chairman, would like to commence the submission to us.

Mr DARKE - Thank you very much for the opportunity to speak to our submission. Just to summarise our points that we would like to make clear, the standards of the West Tamar Highway right to Beauty Point we see as a major problem and you have evidence in the submission there. Doug has done a detailed log of defects and the meetings that we have had have generated a lot of information on the highway - public opinion and whatever - so you have minutes from that meeting and you have the log there which will give you a feel for that. Supporting what has come from the council today, it is just the economic benefit to the community of that money being spent north of Danbury Park South just at this point in time. We see that as a real problem in that the State funding is so difficult to obtain and we have some really serious issues to deal with.

The whole purpose, as far as I am aware, of the corridor study which has been run by DIER is to work out the best way for traffic movement through an area and come up with the best solutions for the road network and then identify the problems and then give a hierarchy of needs. I believe this extra funding over and above Acropolis Drive South should be measured in terms of the corridor study, which is not far away from being completed, and that is the whole purpose of that study. We would definitely like to have some input into the study and we would support the final decisions of that study. I think that is pretty much where we are at, unless you would like to add further to that, Doug.

Mr BENPORATH - The intent of our association is not to redesign the highway but to highlight to the committee and the department where the obvious black spots and danger spots are. I would say we are fully in favour of the highway being duplicated from Cormiston Creek bridges to Danbury Drive South - how to get the road out of the low part, the swampy part, get rid of existing poor alignment and surfaces - that would be great to there but it is the feeling of our association that the bulk of the money should be spent further north of Legana in the bad spots like Flowery Gully Road, which is immediately south of Beaconsfield, upgrade the crossing or have a new crossing at Supply River Bridge and a host of other points which you have in the reports in front of you.

We have heard the comments this morning about the value of this roundabout at Acropolis Drive. In your bus trip this morning you would have gone from Cormiston Creek Bridge heading north, two lanes at 70 kph into one lane at 100 kph. Okay, you are now on the open highway and that is great. Coming back into Riverside, you have one lane at 100 kph going into two lanes at 70 kph, so there is a 30 kilometre speed differential there. At Acropolis Drive we are talking about four lanes of divided highway from 100 kph to 80 kph with a roundabout in the middle. Those two lanes heading north have to converge to one at 80 kph to reduce to one at 60 kph. We heard hear this morning that the speed around the roundabout will be 40 kph but existing speeds around existing roundabouts are 35 kph. As you leave the roundabout, accelerate to 60, accelerate to 80 as you go through Legana. Conversely, as you come south through

Legana, from 80 down to 60 to 35 then up to 60, 80 and then to 100. It certainly slows the traffic down possibly to the extent that you would have a bottleneck at the roundabout because two lanes are coming into one at the roundabout.

Where the speed change lanes are at Cormiston Creek Drive, there is a higher speed change differential of 30 kph as against 20 kph up there at Legana. There is no roundabout at Cormiston Creek. We don't need a roundabout. Just get rid of the excess speed with the transitional from two lanes to one lane. Now you are going to say, 'What about the traffic at the industrial area or at the retirement village or the nursing home or the caravan park?' Sure, they will always be there but the point is, if you provide four lanes of traffic it doesn't mean overnight you are going to double the volume of traffic straightaway. There may be a temporary increase on current figures but what it does mean is that with the four lanes of highway you get the same amount of traffic from A to B in a shorter time. So there is the potential for things to bottleneck at the roundabout. Enough of that.

The whole point of our association is to just highlight the death traps along the existing West Tamar Highway as most of the people who travel on the West Tamar live north of Legana and a great many live north of the Supply River so upgrade the roadworks for all the people who live in the West Tamar region.

Mr HOOPER - I will outline very briefly what the accident level is on the highway we are talking about. Down to Legana it is very low, and that was mentioned this morning, whereas on the West Tamar Highway generally it is pretty high, particularly in the Flowery Gully area.

Mr HALL - You do not believe the roundabout is essential so what you are saying is the quantum of money that has been allocated to that should be spent in other areas at this stage. Is that what you are saying now?

Mr DARKE - Yes, definitely.

Mr HALL - Bearing in mind, and I suppose it is a separate exercise to what is happening here, that there are a lot of other spots that have been identified which need remediation and there is probably a pretty big quantum of money required for all of that in future years, one would suggest.

Mr DARKE - There is talk of the Supply River Bridge being designed -

Mr HALL - It is a very narrow bridge, if I recall.

Mr DARKE - and we are hopeful that we might get some Federal Black Spot program funding.

There are multitudes of problems like all the concentration on working to standards on this section of highway but then you look at the northern Batman Bridge intersection which is contrary to any Ausroad intersection design and that has just allowed to progress into the future with no time limits. We have a highway north of the northern Batman Bridge intersection of 5.4 metres which for that classification of roadway is way under any DIER standards or Ausroad standards, I believe. We are living with those standards of roads at the moment and especially now, with the Government as the road authority, we definitely need to start giving a higher level of priority to the care of the road users. In Victoria, there is the Road Management Act and that is about prioritisation of the road problems like, say, the corridor study. In the past governments

have been able to get out of it by non-feasance and now since the recent push, there is a real responsibility there to start having planned development for these identified deficiencies.

CHAIRMAN - I will just mention a couple of things which might be helpful to you so that you might understand the role of this committee, and we do appreciate that your submission was very extensive in terms of addressing deficiencies north of Legana in particular and certainly the extra submission which you gave to us about Acropolis Drive and the roundabout. The role of this committee is to assess this particular project before us. We don't have any jurisdiction to consider the deficiencies in the roads in other areas which you have identified, so we are required by the law to consider this submission and either approve or reject this submission. We have no jurisdiction to even propose a variation to the design. We might make comment in our report to the Governor as to our feelings about any component of the project but in the end we only have a legal opportunity to reject or approve. That might help you understand a little in terms of whether we approve this project or reject it and if we were to approve it you may then make your judgment that, based on your submission, we haven't given heed to deficiencies elsewhere. That is not our role so that is for another time.

Mr DARKE - Mr Chairman, could I just make another point. Doug's log that is in there was a direct response to the advertised public input at the time. I know both I and Richard put in objections to the design at the time, so a lot of that information was generated and there was no discussion of what public input they had to date. I noted that, so that information came about. We have no feedback from DIER regarding our input, so that was definitely generated as a response to that advertised design which is what they talked about today.

CHAIRMAN - Yes.

Mr DARKE - So it does have relevance in that respect.

CHAIRMAN - Certainly, in terms of the design which is before you.

Mr DARKE - And we got no feedback from DIER.

Mrs NAPIER - Following up on that point, have you had an opportunity to meet with representatives of DIER to work through this quite substantial proposal that you have put forward?

Mr DARKE - No.

Mrs NAPIER - Mr Chairman, although we can't require it, it would seem appropriate that there be an opportunity, whether through the West Tamar Council or directly yourselves, to put forward planning at least, but the Chairman is quite right that we can only accept, delay or agree to a proposal and I am not sure that people would want a significant delay on this road, given the history.

Mr BENPORATH - If I may, Mr Chairman, that log was born out of witnessing the department's display of the new highway works at West Tamar Council shire buildings in Beaconsfield. I went up to look at it on behalf of the association and saw all this super-duper stuff on paper and, having had a chat with these people from the committee, my log was born and following on that was the submission which we thought today was going to go specifically to the pros and cons of whether there should be a roundabout or not. That is why the second submission was put in.

CHAIRMAN - Indeed, Mr Benporath, your second submission specifically addresses the matter of the roundabout. Again, from my point of view, I would say, 'Thank you for that' because it is extensive and you certainly again go into some other matters there about the better impacts of road funding elsewhere if in fact this wasn't constructed.

Mrs NAPIER - I think this documentation would be well worth taking on board for future planning and we could always recommend stuff.

CHAIRMAN - Gentlemen, thank you very much.

THE WITNESSES WITHDREW.