



1996

PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS

MURCHISON HIGHWAY

QUE RIVER

TO

GUILDFORD HAMPSHIRE DEVELOPMENTAL ROAD

Brought up by Mr Cox and Ordered by the House of Assembly to be printed.

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
Mr Wilson (Chairman)
Mr Wing

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY
Mr Cox
Mr Goodluck
Mr Groom (Braddon)

By Authority: Government Printer, Tasmania

INTRODUCTION

The Committee has the honour to report to the House of Assembly in accordance with the provisions of the *Public Works Committee Act 1914* on the proposal to improve the Murchison Highway between Que River and the Guildford Hampshire Developmental Road.

PROPOSAL AND COSTING

The works are part of an ongoing program for the Murchison Highway. Works are currently under way at the southern end from the Zeehan Highway to the Ring River area and were undertaken several years ago between Animal Farm Creek and the Que River. This project commences at the Que River Bridge and extends northward to the junction with Guildford Hampshire Developmental Road a distance of 17.7 kilometres.

The sealed pavement width varies between 5.5 metres and 5.7 metres. The shoulders are generally 0.3 metres wide with a gravel surface.

The Proposal consists of the following main items:—

- Strengthen the weakest sections of the pavement by a granular overlay.
- Dig out isolated pavement failures and replace with new material.
- Sealing of the shoulders to provide a 5.5 metre running surface with 0.6 metre shoulders. It will be necessary to widen the road formation to achieve this widening.
- Improvement to the drainage by widening and deepening of the table drains.
- Resealing the entire length of the project.
- Install guard fence at bridges and high fill locations.

The work is programmed to commence in the 1996–97 financial year. Depending on the availability of funds, works would commence in November 1996. The project is scheduled for completion in 1997–98.

The major components of the work and the estimated cost of the project is as follows—

	\$
Pavement strengthening works	0.8 million
Drainage improvement works	0.5 million
Widening	1.5 million
Safety works	0.2 million
TOTAL COST	3.0 million

EVIDENCE

The Committee inspected the area of the Murchison Highway where the work is proposed to be carried out on Monday, 30 September 1996. The Committee met in Burnie with Officers of the Department of Transport, Mr Gar Fong, Acting Senior Project Manager and Mr John Ingram, Senior Executive Officer.

The Committee inspected the section of the road and was informed that the work would have a life of twenty years given the existing traffic count. Currently, the Department is spending approximately \$4000 per week on maintenance, a cost which would be removed if the upgrading is carried out. The main damage is to the north bound lane. There is to be no improvement in road geometry.

The Committee sought evidence that the materials to be used in the road works would not be subject to failure as have some materials which have been used in projects elsewhere in the State. In a written response to the Committee, the Acting Deputy Secretary, Transport Infrastructure, Department of Transport, Mr G. L. Booth, that "...procedures [had been] adopted to ensure it [use of faulty materials] does not happen again." Mr Booth explained that the problem had been traced to a particular source of gravel used in pavement construction. Departmental projects are undertaken by contract to written specifications and the contractor is responsible for the provision of materials in accordance with the specifications. Since the faulty material became evident, "the Department has amended its specifications to attempt to prevent a recurrence in similar situations."

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The inspection undertaken by the Committee and the evidence received demonstrated the need for the work to be carried out.

Accordingly, the Committee recommends the upgrading of the section of the Murchison Highway between the Que River and the Guildford Hampshire Developmental Road, at an estimated total cost of \$3 million.

Parliament House, October 1996

S. J. WILSON, M.L.C., *Chairman.*