Allison Waddington

From: [redacted]
Sent: Sunday, 18 July 2021 3:39 PM
To: RST
Subject: Inquiry Into Road Safety In Tasmania - Electronic - Submission
Attachments: Los Angelos Road - Sanwae Drive Intersection PDF.pdf; Response Nick Browne - Launceston City Council.pdf; Smoke Signals - Letter to the Editor - Resident Concerns - Los Angelos Road.pdf

18 July 2021

Mr Tim Mills

Inquiry Secretary

Parliament House
HOBART Tas 7000

By email: rst@parliament.tas.gov.au

Dear Sir

INQUIRY INTO ROAD SAFETY IN TASMANIA

We wish to submit a submission to the Select Committee which relates to safety concerns to Los Angelos Road SWAN BAY, which is under the jurisdiction of Local Government, i.e Launceston City Council.

Due to a new subdivision, changes to Los Angelos Road needed to take place to incorporate a T junction linking Sanwae Drive.

Residents of the Swan Bay community have expressed their concerns to the Launceston City Council on the safety aspects relating to the approved design.

As a result of the current design of Los Angelos Road, heavy or larger vehicles which are continuing along Los Angelos Road at the T junction, need to cross into the adjacent lane to negotiate their vehicles around the corner.

The road safety aspect and concern of these larger vehicles requiring to use both their lane and the adjacent lane places them in direct line of oncoming traffic coming over the crest of a blind hill.

The driver of the heavy vehicle, using both lanes, has no line of vision of any approaching oncoming vehicle, who may or could be travelling at the speed limit of 70km, until the vehicle broaches the crest of the hill.

The same applies to the oncoming traffic approaching the T junction intersection. The oncoming traffic are travelling within a blind dip on Los Angelos Road, they then travel up over a blind hill and will only have visual line of sight once they come over the crest of the hill.

The distance once the heavy vehicle, occupying both lanes, and the oncoming vehicle cresting the blind hill, will have little or no braking distance time, depending on the speed of the oncoming vehicle if it is travelling at 70 km, to avoid a head on collision. The driver of the heavy vehicle will have no option available to them to move onto the correct side of the road, as they have needed both lanes to negotiate around the corner, as it has now been designed.

In regards to road safety, we believe, the Launceston City Council has failed to factor in the distance a heavy vehicle would need to travel along Los Angelos Road when navigating at the T junction, before that said vehicle can return to the correct side of the road. We also believe, the Launceston City Council has failed to factor in the oncoming vehicles are approaching the T junction from a blind dip, where their vehicles are unseen. Vehicles from both approaches are unseen to all drivers up until a short distance from the T junction.

Thank you for your time. This email is giving a brief outline of our concerns with road safety in our area. It is our hope our submission will be accepted as part of the Inquiry Into Road Safety In Tasmania.

Please see attached the following PDF's, which will outline in detail our Traffic Management Assessment submitted to the Launceston City Council. The reply from Nick Browne on behalf of the Launceston City Council. Along with resident concerns, published in our local community newsletter "Smoke Signals".

Kind regards

Dennis & Berrice Miller

[redacted]

Los Angelos Road/Sanwae Drive intersection

After recent roadworks at the intersection of Los Angelos Road and Sanwae Drive, Swan Bay, the residents and the broader community that use this intersection have some safety concerns regarding the design.

We appreciate the 40kph signs attached to the 'Changed Traffic Conditions' sign poles on Los Angelos Road, either side of the said intersection but it may not be clear to traffic which roads this speed applies to and when they can return to the normal 70kph as there are no 70kph signs or derestriction signs visible. Below is from the *Traffic Regulations 1999, Part 3 – Speed Limits* and is only an example of speed signage. The actual speed limit on said roads is 70kph.

https://www.legislation.tas.gov.au/view/whole/html/asmade/sr-1999-131

- *(3) A speed-limit sign on a road applies to the length of road beginning at the sign and ending at the nearest of the following:*
  (a) a speed-limit sign on the road with a different number on the sign;
  (b) an end speed-limit sign or speed derestriction sign on the road;
  (c) if the road ends at a T-intersection or dead end – the end of the road.

Note 1: T-intersection is defined in the dictionary.
Note 2: Rule 322(1) and (2) deal with the meaning of a traffic sign on a road.
Speed-limit signs

Speed-limit sign (Standard sign)

Speed-limit sign (Variable illuminated message sign)

Other signs

End speed-limit sign

Speed derestriction sign

Pictures above: 40kph signs posted on Los Angelos Road, either side of the intersection.

Could there be individual speed limits signs erected for approach and departure of said intersection. Approach 40kph – Departure 70kph

This will hopefully remove any confusion in the speed limited areas to all road users.

Issues facing drivers at the said intersection at the 'Give Way' holding line is compromised visibility.

Giving way to the right, if the driver is sitting behind the holding line correctly, he has limited vision of traffic approaching from the right.

There are 78 metres from the far guidepost at the culvert on Los Angelos Road approaching the T intersection at the holding line. So therefore, a car travelling towards Sanwae Drive at 70kph, (posted speed sign at the beginning of Los Angelos Road, coming off John Lees Drive, as not sure if 40kph signs are permanent as they are only affixed with wire) is moving at 19.4444mps, (metres per second). From said guidepost to the T intersection, the car will take approximately four seconds but visible for approximately three seconds. This calculation does not consider any variables such as weather, faster speed, cyclist etc. (Measurements were taken from the culvert guidepost on Los Angelos Road. This guidepost is not visible to the driver if he is pulling up AT the holding line to check for any traffic, he may have to give way too on the right.

- *Meter per second is a unit of speed and a unit of the Si system. The meter per second corresponds to the speed at which the body travels one meter in a time of one second. A meter per second equals 3.6 kilometers per hour, or 2.236936 miles per hour.*

https://www.unitscounter.com/speed/meter-per-second

Picture above: Sitting at the holding line looking to the right

Picture above: Moved forward over holding line by 2 metres for clearer vision.

Giving way to the left, the driver has limited vision of traffic coming along Sanwae Drive towards the intersection.

Having spoken to motorists, they have advised that they need to look out their back passenger window to obtain clear view as to whether traffic is approaching.

This view has not taken into consideration any future developments or landscaping on the corner block which may compromise the driver's visibility further.

Picture above: Drivers view, looking to the left from the holding line.

Take note above, without passenger's aid in moving forward or backwards the drivers' vision is totally obstructed in this case. This does not take into consideration car sizes or drivers height.

The intersection itself is creating a hazard with motorists negotiating the left-hand bend/corner approaching the intersection from the eastern side of Los Angelos Road.

Picture above shows wheel marks on tight corner and vehicle has come into contact with the guidepost on the way round.

Above picture shows intersection corner creating its own hazard. This poses a danger to vulnerable road users, such as motorcycles, cyclists etc.

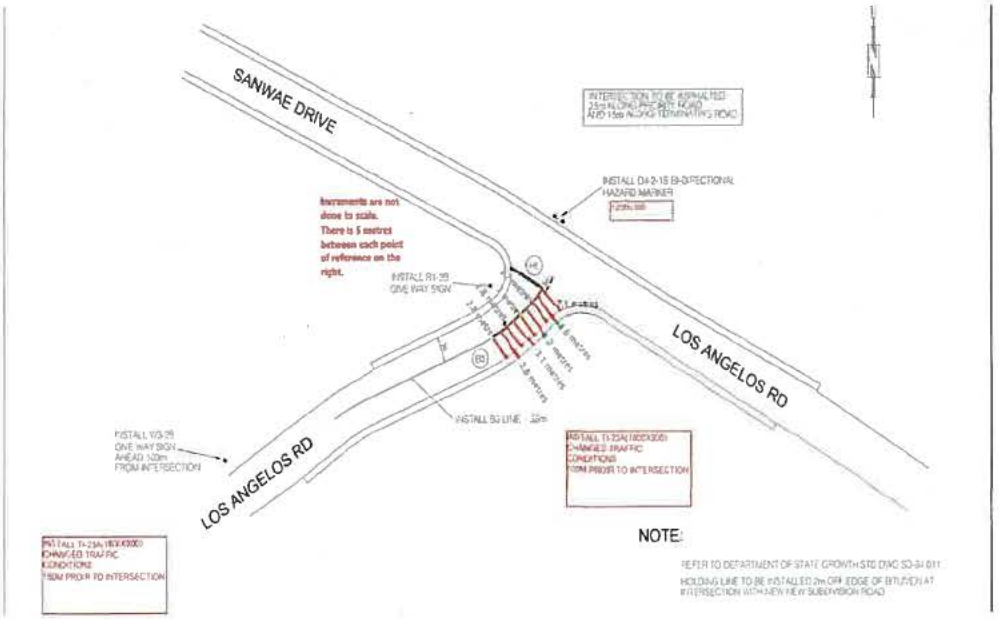
Above picture shows barely enough room for a standard vehicle to negotiate corner doing less than 40kph without touching the hard centre white line.

As this picture was taken on the weekend, we did not have to opportunity to witness larger vehicles such as, school buses, trucks and other plant equipment using the intersection.

Above picture shows driver turning right into Los Angelos Road from Sanwae Drive, undoubtedly cutting the corner. This was not an isolated incident in the time that we were there.

Above pictures are taken one week apart. We will refer to these pictures in our conclusion. *(^^This is the parcel of land donated).*

The width of Los Angelos Road from the edge to the holding line is 7.1 metres. Then measuring up Los Angelos Road in 5 metre increments the road narrows.
The left-hand lane heading up the hill starts at 7.1m at the holding line but decreases to 2.8m where the new seal ends on the terminating road.
The sharpness of the corner allows for ease of access from smaller vehicles, but for larger vehicles, e.g., school buses, trucks, (as this is a farming area) farming plant equipment, building contractors, etc, these cannot safely turn the corner to continue along Los Angelos Road without crossing over the centre white hard line. Any large vehicle turning up this road will be on the wrong side of the road, and any traffic coming over the crest of the hill from the other side of Los Angelos Road are going to come head on to a large vehicle.
See photo on next page.



Conclusion

In the 1980's a parcel of land was donated to the Council by the resident owners of 357 Los Angelos Road. Land donation measuring 152m².

(The land was taken from the title of 365 Los Angelos Road back in the 80's. There seems to be some changes made on Google Maps indicating the corner block is now 357 Los Angelos Road. Parcel of land was donated by the owner/residents who are still the same owner/residents now).

This parcel of land was donated because of a vehicle accident to improve the corner.

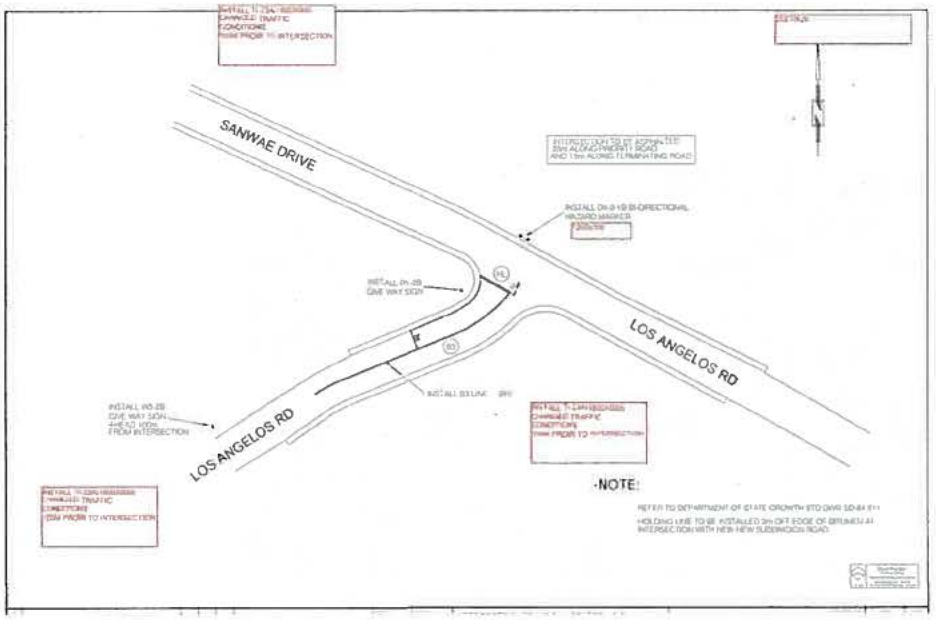
As it was, it was a sharp corner to negotiate. The council accepted this donation of land and improved the quality of the corner.

Now that this corner has become an intersection and has been redesigned and developed, the parcel of land is no longer being utilised, therefore some issues are starting to arise already, hence cars cutting the corner and driving through the dirt where the previous corner existed, and/or cannot negotiate the tight left-hand corner continuing along Los Angelos Road.

Parcel of land donated in the 1980's

Corner 2021

Corner before redesign and development, with donated parcel of land being used.



Corner as it is now.

We bring your attention to the actual intersection.

This photo shows the holding line as it is now, sitting this far back does not give you a clear view of either way.

Holding line would give a greater view if it were moved two (2) metres forward with rubber mounted 'Keep Left' on concrete island.

Straighten white centre hard line.

^^Approaching give way.

It may be beneficial and safer to change 'Give Way' to a 'Stop' sign.

Straighten hard white line, put in a 'Keep Left' island,

Straightening of the white centre line, move holding line forward and add 'Keep Left Island'

This will prevent corner cutting from motorists turning right from Sanwae Drive as in the photo on *page 6*.

In the bottom photo we are reusing the original donated land to make a slip lane which will be safer for cornering for larger vehicles, e.g.: school buses, stock trucks, etc.

This will work if it is a mandatory '40kph' intersection.

As it stands, it is unsafe to give way to either right or left, that is without open speed limits of 70kph as previously stated on *pages 3 and 4.*

As *page 5* photo shows, there is a considerable amount of loose gravel spraying from the corner onto the road surface which is a hazard for motorcycles and cyclists and other road users. Will this be an ongoing issue with this corner?

We have other photos and videos should you wish to view them.

ALL DRAWINGS IN THIS DOCUMENT ARE NOT TO SCALE

From: Nick Browne
Sent: Monday, July 5, 2021 9:53 AM
To: [redacted]
Subject: RE: Alterations to Los Angelos Road - New intersection with Sanwae Drive

Hello Dennis and Berrice,

I'm getting back to you in Michael's place as he's currently on leave. Thank you for providing such a detailed and considered response, I'll respond to each of your points below.

The 40 km/h speed limit signs provided at the junction are temporary and we will be asking the developer to remove these as work is now complete. The speed limit through this junction will continue to be 70 km/h as per the posted speed limit on Los Angelos Road, and we will be adding additional signage to Sanwae Drive to reinforce this.

The intersection has been inspected by our officers a number of times. Michael and I recently inspected the site with another of our traffic engineering staff to review the recent sight line improvements that were made.

As part of our inspection, we undertook measurements for the available sight distance looking left and right at the junction. All road authorities within Australia use the Austroads Design Guidelines to determine the appropriate design requirements for their roads. The guidelines require that 'Safe Intersection Sight Distance' (SISD) is required to be provided at intersections. This gives sufficient distance for a driver to observe a vehicle and enter the roadway safely. Our measurements on site indicate that sight distances at the intersection are compliant with an 70 km/h travel speed, the maximum posted speed limit on this road.

The guidelines also require that 'Approach Sight Distance' (ASD) is available at intersections, this ensures that a driver approaching a give-way control at an intersection can observe the signs and line markings at the intersection with a comfortable distance to decelerate to a stop. Our measurements confirm that the available sight lines meet this requirement as well. However, additional warning is provided through a junction warning sign placed at the preceding crest to ensure drivers aren't caught unaware. This also means that a driver approaching the junction would have sufficient sight distance to observe a larger vehicle momentarily crossing into their lane to negotiate the junction, slow down comfortably and avoid a collision.

The requirement for a larger vehicle to cross into an adjacent oncoming lane momentarily is not uncommon, indeed there are many locations across our municipality (both in the rural and city environments) where this occurs at junctions with higher traffic volumes and more heavy vehicle movements. The intersection allows for vehicles that frequently use the junction to negotiate it within their lanes, but larger less common vehicles must encroach onto the oncoming lane momentarily. As mentioned earlier, sufficient approach sight distance is available so that if an approaching driver observes a larger vehicle in their lane momentarily, they can comfortably slow down to avoid a collision. Widening the road to provide more space for larger vehicles would widen the curve and allow for small vehicles to negotiate the junction at a higher speed, resulting in a less safe outcome. The photo you have provided of a standard car and trailer negotiating the junction is an example of poor driving line selection; sufficient width is available for these vehicles if they slow down on approach to the junction and pick a more appropriate driving line.

Similarly, the junction layout is sufficient for light vehicles to turn right into the junction without crossing the centreline, the example you have provided is an example of poor driver behaviour; this happens at many locations across the road network. Sufficient sight distance is available to drivers to observe vehicles throughout the intersection so that these drivers may modify their behaviour to avoid a collision.

Our inspection confirmed the photos of anti-social behaviour that you have identified, with vehicles driving through the inside of the curve and damaging the roadside. It might be that this behaviour will cease once the new junction arrangements have settled in, however, we will continue to monitor this.

The curve improvements you reference that were made in the 1980's were an appropriate treatment to reducing crashes on a rural curve. The changes that have been made now have not returned this to a sharp corner, it has changed the priority of the road and placed an intersection at this location. Whereas a corner on a road will be approached and traversed with higher speeds, a junction requires that traffic slows before negotiating and giving way (as required) at the junction. The measures that Council has, or will be, putting in place to highlight the junction should ensure that drivers are aware of the junction and will slow down appropriately, suggesting that drivers should not lose control negotiating the junction as they might with the previous curve arrangements.

Moving forward, Council intends to install additional junction warning signs that will highlight the presence and location of the junction to motorists, which will highlight that drivers should be alert to turning traffic as the approach the junction, and clarify the changed intersection arrangements moving forward. This will be accompanied by a short centreline through the junction. Council does not see that an additional left turn slip lane is needed, nor a realignment of the junction or installation of keep left signs.

Overall, we are satisfied that the measures we are putting in place result in a junction that will perform well and with a low level of risk.

Regards,

City of LAUNCESTON

Nick Browne
A/ Manager Infrastructure and Engineering, Infrastructure and Assets Network

T 03 6323 3000 | www.launceston.tas.gov.au

Letters To The Editor

Dear Editor

Since the Los Angelos Road/Sanwae Drive intersection opened recently, it has been the focus of many comments on our Swan Bay Community Facebook page. Particularly by regular users of Los Angelos Road who now need to negotiate this junction. At issue is how and why the Council chose to approve a design that is clearly unsafe, and many argue is an accident just waiting to happen. After several residents contacted the Council to express their concerns, a brief meeting was held one afternoon with those few who were able to attend. Concerns include speed limit, poorly re-designed and very sharp corner, and poor visibility. To put some context around the concerns, local resident Bernce said this Los Angelos corner has a history:

Some background history. This corner back in the 1980s was a narrow corner and the cause of many accidents. We raised the issue with the Launceston City Council and in late 1980 we granted to the council 152m of our land for the council to improve this corner. This resulted in an improved sweeping corner along with reducing the accidents. With the engineer design in relation to joining Sanwae Drive onto Los Angelos Road it has reverted this corner back to a narrow tight corner, and we have already witnessed near misses. Most concerning one was in relation to a large truck.

Her comments are backed up by several residents who are HGV drivers, and a school bus driver who was approached for his take on the safety angle. All are scathing, as comments posted by Brooke, and Hayley indicate: Completely unacceptable! Dangerous and not practical. Only a matter of time before serious accident or fatality! Don't even know why the new subdivision needs a through road? They have a perfectly safe exit at the river end! I for one would rather it not be a through road if I lived there for traffic and security for property! This area is still an active farming area totally not a safe corner from either direction for a large fully loaded truck . . .

. . . .They haven't allowed for the visibility issues with hills, tree shadows, sun at different times of the day etc. Only a matter of time before serious accident happens . . . .I guess all we can do is flood them with e mails and wait till an accident happens . . . .

There are so many blind spots on that intersection it's not funny and unless it's going to remain a 40 zone and people adhere to it then it's only a matter of time before something happens. . . . I assumed this day and age the professionals would have designed something better or on par with what was there before . . .

Residents keen to put further pressure on the Council before there is a serious or fatal accident on this corner, are encouraged to contact the Council on contactus@launceston.gov.tas.au The more often these concerns are raised, or incidents of near misses and close calls are registered, the more likely something will be done.

Anne Layton-Bennett

SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL BUSINESSES **WEEKSIE THE BLIND MAN**

Steven will measure, quote and install any window furnishing, with the motto

FOR SALE