



PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS

Great Eastern Drive Tourism Support Additional Packages - Component 1

*Presented to Her Excellency the Governor pursuant to the provisions of the
Public Works Committee Act 1914.*

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

Legislative Council

*Ms Rattray (Deputy Chair)
Mr Valentine (Chair)*

House of Assembly

*Ms Butler
Mr Tucker
Mr Wood*

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1 INTRODUCTION

To Her Excellency the Honourable Barbara Baker AC, Governor in and over the State of Tasmania and its Dependencies in the Commonwealth of Australia.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY

The Committee has investigated the following proposal:-

Great Eastern Drive Tourism Support Additional Packages - Component 1

and now has the honour to present the Report to Your Excellency in accordance with the Public Works Committee Act 1914 (the Act).

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 This reference recommended the Committee approve works on the Great Eastern Drive to improve the driver experience, safety of travel and travel time reliability.
- 2.2 The Great Eastern Drive extends along the Tasman Highway between Orford and St Helens, and is a key tourist route. The current traffic volume averages approximately 1600 vehicles per day, however, this average value is not representative of demand, as the figure doubles in the summer holiday months and halves in the winter period.
- 2.3 The Great Eastern Drive does not meet contemporary design standards. While some sections have already been upgraded to meet contemporary design standards, the fact that other areas have not been upgraded results in an inconsistent drive experience for road users, and resultant safety concerns.
- 2.4 The three main issues with non-conformance to contemporary design standards that are evident on the Great Eastern Drive are:
 - inadequate road width;
 - poor alignment; and
 - insufficient overtaking opportunities.
- 2.5 Under the Tasmanian Road Design Specifications, the width of this road is now deemed inadequate for the volume of traffic being experienced in the peak tourism periods. More than 80 km of the full 176 km has an existing sealed width of approximately 6 metres. These sections have narrow unsealed shoulders or a traversable verge.
- 2.6 An assessment of the previously widened sections in the higher speed environments, generally outside of the townships, reveals crash statistics that are up to 50% lower than adjoining sections of narrower road with similar alignment and traffic volumes. The widened sections achieve higher levels of safety through

the provision of adequate width for edge lines, raised pavement markers and room for driver correction if required.

- 2.7 The existing road alignment does not conform to Austroads standards. Road camber is regularly adverse (meaning the road slopes towards the outside of the curve) and many corners are too tight for the speed limit. Vertical geometry prevents adequate sight distances from being realised. Sections with the poorest alignment have a high number of crashes recorded in close proximity.
- 2.8 Overtaking opportunities are also minimal, with a northbound overtaking lane to the south of Cherry Tree Hill and newly constructed overtaking facilities directly south of St Helens being the only dedicated overtaking opportunities along the Great Eastern Drive.
- 2.9 In summary, driver safety and the road user experience is compromised by a combination of the existing highway's poor alignment, high traffic volumes, inadequate road width, inconsistent seal quality and a high proportion of tourists with large campervans and caravans using the route. This is reflected in a high crash rate along the corridor in areas with poor alignment, and highly variable travel time through the region with queueing and traffic being delayed due to slow moving vehicles.
- 2.10 The Tasmanian and Australian Governments have jointly committed \$125 million to fund further upgrades to the Great Eastern Drive. This project will use approximately \$50 million of this funding to provide upgrades in specifically identified areas of the highway, with the works divided into 2 packages:
- The Apsley package covers the section of Tasman Highway from Bicheno to Coles Bay Road turn-off, and a corner improvement north of Glen Gala. The upgrades include road widening, the east coast's first southbound overtaking lane, and realignment of corners that have high crash statistics;
 - The Lisdillon package of works will look at road realignment and road widening on two sections of the Tasman Highway near Lisdillon; a section of about 1.3 km located just to the north of Triabunna, and 13 km of road between Pontypool and Rocky Hills to the north of Little Swanport. The Lisdillon package will also include 2 new overtaking opportunities.
- 2.11 The proposed works will include the following specific elements:
- The existing width of ~6m will be increased to 8.2m, and slightly more in the corners to allow longer commercial vehicles to track within the sealed pavement. The new width is made up of 1.0m wide shoulders and 3.1m wide lanes.
 - The road alignment at the following locations will be improved to conform to contemporary standards:
 - radius increases for the 'S' bend corners at the northern end of the new overtaking lane at Glen Gala (Apsley Package)
 - corner improvement directly south of the Coles Bay Junction (Apsley Package)

- realignment of 'S' bend corners south of Bicheno (Apsley Package)
 - corner realignment for a 750m long stretch just north of Triabunna (Lisdillon Package)
 - corner realignment at Saltworks Road turnoff to Little Swanport (Lisdillon Package)
- The following new safe overtaking opportunities will also be included:
 - a 1.6 km long overtaking lane south of Apsley River (Apsley Package)
 - two overtaking lanes between Triabunna and Rocky Hills, one in each direction (Lisdillon Package).

3 PROJECT COSTS

- 3.1 Pursuant to the Message from Her Excellency the Governor-in-Council, the estimated cost of the work is \$125 million.

The following table details the current p50 and p90 cost estimates for the project:

Item	P50 estimate	P90 estimate	Notes
Base Estimate	\$40,594,400	\$40,594,400	Works including investigations, design, community engagement, approvals, acquisition (including related compensation), project management and construction.
Contingency	\$4,899,900	\$14,132,900	Contingency 12 % (P50) to 35 % (P90) of base estimate.
Escalation	\$784,700	\$919,500	Escalation 1.8 % - 2.0 % of base estimate. Note that escalation is not applied to the forecasted spend for 2023/'24 so the % uplift to the base estimate is not the % escalation applied.
Total	\$46,279,000	\$55,646,800	

The Department's submission notes *"This demonstrates that the works are currently forecast to be delivered well within budget. Additional works yet to be determined are expected to make up the balance of funding."*¹

¹ Great Eastern Drive Tourism Support Additional Packages - Component 1, Public Works Committee Submission, Department of State Growth, Final to PWC 29 May 2023, page 10.

4 EVIDENCE

4.1 The Committee commenced its inquiry on Wednesday, 2 August last with a presentation on the proposed works. The Committee then commenced the formal hearing, whereupon the following witnesses appeared, made the Statutory Declaration and were examined by the Committee in public:-

- Stefano Conforti, Project Manager, Programming and Delivery, Department of State Growth;
- Zack Hepburn, Team Leader, Programming and Delivery, Department of State Growth; and
- Lidiya Hudson, Transport Network Planner, Infrastructure Tasmania

The following Committee Members were present:

- Mr Valentine (Chair);
- Ms Rattray (Deputy Chair);
- Ms Butler;
- Mr Wood; and
- Mr Tucker.

Overview

4.2 Mr Conforti provided a comprehensive overview of the proposed works:

Mr CONFORTI - The Great Eastern Drive Tourism Support Additional Package Component 1 - I will explain the title of the project first of all. The Great Eastern Drive Tourism Support has been a project that has gone on for many years. We had a number of funding packages since approximately 2017. We went to six separate tenders to address some of the areas between Orford and St Helens. This is an additional package and additional funding of \$125 million, which includes \$100 million from the Australian Government and a contribution of \$25 million from the Tasmanian Government.

The Great Eastern Drive is the section of the Tasman Highway included between Orford and St Helens. In this particular site we look at two packages we have been looking at tendering very soon - as early as before the end of the calendar year. They are called Apsley River and Lisdillon. I will describe them in my presentation.

We look at the objective of the project, the strategic context, the design that we will undertake in these areas where we will describe the key stakeholders we have identified for this project and some characteristics of the heritage and the environment that we know at this stage. We will describe the completed works so far and some characteristics of the cross section of the road and some corner alignment that is a priority to be implemented as soon as possible, as part of this package.

The main issues with the Tasman Highway between Orford and St Helens are that the design standards are not adequate to current road design standards. The coordinates are too tight and do not have a super elevation adequate for vehicles travelling at 100 kilometres an hour and a very poor alignment, both vertically and horizontally. There is no intersection of works that we are going to undertake; there is no shoulder extended off the sealed area above the lane width in which a vehicle could recover from a loss of control. There is the networking efficiency that will be addressed with a series of overtaking lanes and that will be in the years

to come. What happens is there are no overtaking lanes in the section of work we are looking at. There are just two overtaking lanes immediately south of St Helens and just one northbound overtaking lane north of Cranbrook, immediately after Glengarry Road. What happens - especially in the summer, when the traffic conditions vary substantially from the traffic conditions in winter - is there is no opportunity to overtake slower vehicles. The vehicles that take the opportunity to overtake others do so in inappropriate areas where the road width is not available. They take risks and we would like to eliminate that component.

The sections of work we will undertake soon will be approximately 23 kilometres of road out of the 176 kilometres between Orford and St Helens.

The project objectives are: widening the road pavement to a 3.1-metre width lane plus a 1-metre shoulder, and then the verge and drain. We have been improving the geometry of the road - that is the vertical alignment. Sometimes the vertical alignments do not allow the sight distance for a vehicle travelling at 100 kilometres an hour or it is on an alignment with very sharp bends that may lose control or not have adequate sight distance to see what is coming from the other direction.

We upgrade the junction and the axes in this section of road as I was about to describe. Before, we had approximately 38 different junctions and axes that we had upgraded in the past. Now, we are just trying to lead with the same standard on these works that we have done to have a consistent section of road. Upgrading the road will improve and will extend the life of the asset - of the road itself - and that should be about 30 years for the actual road pavement and 15 years for the seal of the road.

Everything will be designed to the Department of State Growth's standards and the policies and Australian Standards, Austroads guidelines and all the local and federal legislation.

Now, I am going to describe what section of the road we will tackle first. We have done an extended study to see which were the areas that needed to be done as a priority so we did not just look at the safety but also the economy to achieve the particular standard.

First of all, we designed the section of road that goes from immediately south of Bicheno to the north of Coles Bay Road, then there will be a bend that we will have to adjust, upgrade, that is immediately south of Coles Bay Road junction. Then there will be a bend that is very inadequate at the moment, which is immediately after the overtaking lane that we created in the north of Glen Gala Road or the north of Cranbrook. That is the area where the bend is located.

There will be one package of work which we named Apsley Package. There will then be the Lisdillon Package that goes from the south of Rocky Hill to the Pontypool intersection with the Tasman Highway. Then there will also be a bend that is north of Triabunna. That is a section of work that is about 1.5 kilometres immediately north of Triabunna that we will upgrade and realign.

That is the scope of the work that we are presenting now. I have already described the funding, where it comes from. The total that we are looking at spending in the next two to three financial years is \$125 million.

Corner realignment, upgrading the seal and pavement of the roads, addressing the pavement. Also, there is a section south of Bicheno which experienced some flooding and we will have to strengthen the pavement there. We are also looking at increasing the size of some culverts so the water can travel below the road without overtopping the road. That is very early at this stage; we are still investigating the area. We are looking at how often that floods and what to do about it.

We have identified the main stakeholders around the area and East Coast Tasmania tourism has been talking with us for a number of years and we keep talking with them, informing them of what we are doing and basically finding their agreement on what we do. The local, national and international tourists are one of the main stakeholders, especially when you consider the safety of people travelling up and down the coast. Glamorgan-Spring Bay Council, Parks and Wildlife Service, the businesses and the property owners that would be affected by the work,

both in terms of acquisition when there is acquisition and informing them of what's going on. The tourism operators, again, mainly businesses that we have around here - and that is what we have identified so far.

We'll come across heritage and environmental features along the project; there are endemic species everywhere in Tasmania. We'll come across some of them, which we will try to avoid with engineering solutions if possible and, if that is not possible, we will have to go through the approval [process], the permits to take and we will work very closely, which we are already doing, with Aboriginal Heritage Tasmania. Once we know the actual entity of the species that we have around us, we will, as I said, model the design to try to avoid them and then start talking with the local council and include a development application.

I mentioned the completed works and I said that there are some 38 areas that have been already upgraded. Mainly they were intersections with local businesses, traffic coming in and out of the vineyards, for example. We made the intersection safe but that is in isolation, in each vineyard. We included the overtaking lanes that are described in the south of St Helens and north of Cranbrook and now we are looking at linking all these isolated locations with a consistent section of the road.

I described the section of the road as being a 3.1-metre lane, so 3.1 + 3.1 + 1 metre of shoulder that is sealed in the same manner as the rest of the lane and then there will be half a metre of verge, unsealed, and then down to the drains. That is the typical section. This one may be increased around the bends, just for allowing heavy vehicles to have that radius that is necessary for them to turn around.

Possibly, the most important part of - the more risky - the area that is more prone to accidents is now the north of the overtaking lane in Glen Gala Road. There is a very sharp bend on the right, so we will have to do both a vertical and horizontal realignment of that. It's basically an S-bend that we will have to improve.

The timing for this project - we are currently finalising the investigations and then after that, we will model the design and see whether the horizontal alignment may have to avoid some heritage sites that we know of, but we don't know the details of it. Again, we'll have to model the species, the vegetation species, that we find along the way to try to avoid them. We think that we'll be able to go with a first tender before the end of this calendar year and then with the next one immediately into the next calendar year, 2024.

The contracts that we are proposing are lump sum contracts. Basically, the Department of State Growth prepares all the designs in a detailed manner, then issues that one to the potential tenderers and they will have to tender for the work in a lump sum. That means just one component. We anticipate that will probably take a couple of construction seasons. We consider construction seasons the summer periods. This one will go across this summer, the next summer coming and the next one. Obviously, the contractors will choose when to work exactly and will provide us with a program at tender stage.

Prioritising and Designing the Upgrades

- 4.3 The Department's submission highlighted the approach to defining what upgrades would be undertaken. The approach employed was to use an operating speed model (the speed at which motor vehicles generally travel on a road) to determine the upgrades required, as opposed to a design speed model (the speed selected to determine the geometric design of a roadway, i.e. the target speed at which drivers are intended to travel):

When considering options, keeping the existing look and feel of the existing alignment was important from a cost and visual amenity perspective. The basis of the design is to accept comfortable levels of braking and acceleration between corners, which can allow tighter corners to exist so long as the journey to the tight corner has gently coached the driver to anticipate the alignment. This is often referred to as an 'operating speed model'. This enables

the majority of the existing alignment to be adopted presenting the best value, and least disruption.

The alternative was a design speed model that would allow motorists to set an automatic speed control on their vehicles. To achieve this, considerable lengths of the highway would require straightening for a full realignment impacting the cost, properties, accesses and existing viewing points that make the Great Eastern Drive the tourist road it is.²

4.4 The Committee explored this further with the witnesses at the hearing:

CHAIR - ... I have a note here that says really these works are a choice between a time priority model and a carefree relaxed pina colada model. A lot of people are wanting to get to work and there is a lot of holiday traffic - those who really have all the time in the world. It is getting that balance right.

Mr HEPBURN - That is what we are trying to achieve. As well as enhancing safety by other means, we are trying to improve that driver experience and where our overtaking opportunities are coming into play.

CHAIR - It is not just all about the most efficient speed, it is particularly about safety and trying to cater both for those who have to do it in a timely manner and those who are probably driving a vehicle that needs a little more consideration.

Mr CONFORTI - That is exactly right. As Zack just said, the overtaking facility will probably improve that aspect so the people who want to go slow can be overtaken by people who are going to work or to their business.

4.5 The Committee sought to understand how the scope of the proposed works had been determined and why they had been prioritised over other works in other areas:

CHAIR - ... To clarify again, we are talking about the two main components here of the whole set of works that you are looking at completing over some period of time. The two main components are the Aspley Package and the Lisdillon Package. Is that correct? Is that the best way to describe these two we are dealing with today?

Mr CONFORTI - Yes.

... They will not take the whole of the budget. These are the first two we will start with.

... Obviously, we would not be able to open the whole of the Tasman Highway, so we space them away from each other and then fill the gaps.

CHAIR - And as part of that, you have assessed possibilities for projects along the route, but some are far more expensive than others. Lots of rock would take up the whole available budget just to do that particular section. Clearly, these are ones that are within the capacity of the department to deliver.

Mr CONFORTI - Yes, we wanted to strike a balance or make the most of the funding and to obtain more extended stretches of road to be upgraded to a certain level of safety standards.

4.6 The Committee understood the incidence of crashes had played a role in determining the prioritisation of works. The Committee sought further information

² Great Eastern Drive Tourism Support Additional Packages - Component 1, Public Works Committee Submission, Department of State Growth, Final to PWC 29 May 2023, page 4.

from the witnesses on the crash statistics in the areas covered by the two works packages:

CHAIR - ... One thing we did talk about earlier this morning was crash statistics. Were you able to find out any further information about crash statistics or is that something we put on notice to you?

Mr CONFORTI - Yes, the crash statistics came into play with the initial assessment and selection of the areas. We did not include that information in the submission -

CHAIR - You mentioned it on page 3, about the high crash rate along the corridor and high variable travel time through the region, but you did not have any figures.

Mr CONFORTI - We can take the question on notice and provide those figures in a separate submission.

4.7 The Department of State Growth subsequently provided the following crash statistics for the works areas:

Apsley Package

Total accidents over proceeding 5 years (2018-2023) = 65

No. Fatalities	0
No. Serious	4 (including two motorcycle)
No. First Aid	12
No. Minor	21 (including six motorcycle)
No. Property Damage Only	28

Lisdillon Package

Total accidents over proceeding 5 years (2018-2023) = 34

No. Fatalities	0
No. Serious	6 (including one motorcycle)
No. First Aid	4
No. Minor	11 (including one motorcycle)
No. Property Damage Only	13 ³

4.8 The Committee was aware of safety concerns on the tight bend with poor alignment near the Coles Bay turn-off. The Committee sought confirmation that this area would be upgraded as part of this project:

Mr TUCKER - Just north of The Pondering Frog, where you have done that turn-in section ... where you go around and you come up to the Coles Bay turn - that is part of the upgrade, is it not? Is that correct?

Mr CONFORTI - Yes. Between the new access that we constructed for The Pondering Frog and the Coles Bay Road junction, there will be an upgrade of the tight bend that we have there.

Mr TUCKER - Because there are quite a few accidents on that corner and that is why you have put that guard railing around there, which pushes them back into the coming traffic.

Mr CONFORTI - We are looking into whether to adjust the horizontal alignment, to actually create a superelevation for the vehicles that travel to have a better shape of the road.

Mr TUCKER - With the piece of guarding you have put up there, if people hit that coming down the wrong way they will bounce back into the traffic coming the other way. I know why you

³ Great Eastern Drive Tourism Support – Additional Information, Department of State Growth, page 1

did it because there were too many going over the bank there and into the paddock, but it is a section that needs significant work to fix that issue.

Mr HEPBURN - That is that superelevation camber issue Stefano is talking about; even when you are going around at the moment, it actually is pushing you the wrong way and is part of the reason.

Mr CONFORTI - We do not know the detail of the design yet, but we are definitely addressing the particular corner you are talking about as part of this package, yes.

- 4.9 The Committee expressed concern over the highway in the Cherry Tree Hill area, noting that it was a particularly unsafe section. The Committee sought to understand why it had not been prioritised and included in these works and asked if there were plans to upgrade this section in future:

Ms BUTLER - As we discussed earlier this morning, I was asking questions about the Cherry Tree Hill section of the Great Eastern Drive and why that section - which is very much an area of the Great Eastern Drive and which certainly needs some work. It is really not appropriate at all and not safe and at 100 kilometres an hour it is a goat track. Why is that section of the road not being prioritised for the upgrades?

Mr CONFORTI - We carried out an analysis which took into consideration the project cost value in economic terms. That section of road is particularly winding and also very rocky, and we thought that to approach that section of road first would not have obtained the results in terms of safety as much as these two sections that we took into consideration now. Basically, it is very expensive to tackle that particular section of road - which we know of and will eventually be upgrading, but that will be in the future.

Ms BUTLER - So just to confirm, for the record, Cherry Tree Hill will be upgraded in due course?

Mr CONFORTI - Yes.

...

Mr TUCKER - Following on from Jen's questions about Cherry Tree Hill, is the reason you walked away from that area that you would have to do a total reconstruction of the road?

Mr CONFORTI - Pretty much. The alignment is so windy and poor at the moment that it will take a considerable amount of work to upgrade to the current standard.

Mr TUCKER - Is the realignment of that section of road planned for the future?

Mr CONFORTI - Yes, the whole section between Orford and St Helens is to be upgraded but that will depend on funding.

Mr TUCKER - That realignment is for the Cherry Tree Hill section - is that correct?

Mr CONFORTI - Yes, that is included in the whole scope of work. What we've done though in Cherry Tree Hill is put in a northbound overtaking lane that will basically give the opportunity for vehicles to overtake slower vehicles. So as not to have to do it in the most critical area, we are looking at including a southbound overtaking lane in the north of Cherry Tree Hill. That will give the same opportunity to people travelling south to overtake vehicles before the windy section of the road.

Mr HEPBURN - ...I guess that is technically an interim measure that we would try to implement, to remove that driver frustration and to enable overtaking opportunities before you get into the windy section.

Mr TUCKER - But if we are going to take that piece of windy section out and you can straighten that out and go straight through, yes, from that overtaking lane is coming out of -

Mr CONFORTI - Glen Gala Road.

Mr TUCKER - An overtaking lane there, you come straight through with a more direct line that would be a lot better route - which is why you are leaving that section out -

Mr HEPBURN - Value for money based on prior corridor studies and investigations. Reiterating what Stefano said, but the value for money in that section was deemed not appropriate or not as high a priority as these ones. Our client, Lidiya, is working on a larger corridor study at the moment which will give us more accurate - not so much more accurate but more up-to-date - information on the remaining sections. That would be an important part of that corridor study.

Safety Improvements

- 4.10 The Committee understood the road cross section would be improved to provide a safer and more consistent travel environment, complementing the earlier works packages. This would be achieved by providing a wider sealed pavement, some curve and vertical realignments, and adverse camber corrections. The Committee recognised that safety barriers are another measure that can be employed to improve safety and questioned the witnesses on where and why these might be installed:

Ms RATTRAY - ... It's 3.1 m plus 3.1 m road pavement, with a metre of sealed works on either side. Is there an intention to use safety rails on any of these sections proposed for upgrading? My experience from recent works is the safety rails are put so close to the edge of the road they are of no value and you certainly cannot pull off in any of the areas. Useless pavement outside of the safety rail. Is there intended use of safety rails in any of these sections?

Mr CONFORTI - We use safety barriers, not flexible barriers on this project. They will be necessary in some areas where there are bends or where there are obstacles outside the road. For example, where there is a TasNetworks pole very close to the road there will be the necessity to put a safety barrier and in this case it will be positioned on the verge, not on the sealed road.

Ms RATTRAY - Why is there a use of safety barriers, safety rails on other more recent upgrades where they have part of the metre of road verge sealed, but the rails are well inside that? If that is the intention, I have no issue, but if you are going to put them well inside the metre, what is the point of having that extra metre?

Mr HEPBURN - The design principle around where we do and don't apply the safety barrier in particular on the sides of the road is first and foremost that it depends what the speed limit is and what actual characteristics of the road we are going to achieve.

As Stefano alluded to, we are trying to achieve those 3.1 plus 1's, which is adequate room, but what we do need to give a consideration for is those roadside hazards we may not be able to address. The majority of the length might have very small drop-offs and things off the edge of that verge, where some sections might have a 10-metre drop-off. Specification on road standards would require us to actually protect that area. We would only be looking to add that barrier and use protection where it was required and where we could not accommodate improvements through the road designs.

Ms RATTRAY - So I can expect in the future not to see wasted metrage of road verge with a Armc0 rail 600 or 700 millimetres inside of that?

Ms HUDSON - Some seal will be needed to ensure safety for the maintenance contractors to be able to undertake maintenance on those pieces of barrier or side of the road. It also assists them in being able to safely do their jobs.

4.11 The Committee understood the growing popularity of cycling tourism, and was keen to understand how cyclists' safety would be improved:

CHAIR - And pedestrians or cyclists? Would cyclists be going on the inside or the outside of that rail?

Mr HEPBURN - Generally speaking, where we might need to use rail on the side of the road we still try to achieve that sealed suitable pavement for a cyclist to be able to ride on the edge of the road.

CHAIR - If cycle tourism is a thing.

Mr HEPBURN - Yes, and Stefano can probably elaborate further on the use of this particular section of road or sections of road for cyclists.

Ms RATTRAY - You are expecting cyclists to actually ride on the outside of the safety rails?

Mr CONFORTI - That is not the case. For this project, the cyclists will travel on the shoulder -

Ms RATTRAY - They will be on the main road pavement?

Mr CONFORTI - On the shoulder, yes.

CHAIR - Is there enough space between the 3.1-metre pavement for vehicles in general to fit a cyclist before the barrier starts?

Mr CONFORTI - The vehicles is expected to travel in the 3.1-metre lane, the cyclist will have 1 metre available.

CHAIR - And then the barrier?

Mr CONFORTI - And then the barrier.

CHAIR - Going up through some of those twisty, winding hills where you are putting new pavement down, will there be enough room for cyclist to get away from the main flow of traffic?

Mr CONFORTI - There will be a 1-metre shoulder available, yes, there should be sufficient.

Mr HEPBURN - There is not a designated cycle lane. The other opportunity is you do not seal as much as you said. That then leaves an inconsistency in the pavement and if a cyclist is trying to just move over that little bit to let a car go past, they can lose their stability on a change of the surface. Generally, in this type of treatment with or without barrier, we will try to extend that seal to give us that metre straight outside the travelling lane so there is a bit of room there for cyclists.

CHAIR - Okay, it is an important consideration, I think, with cycle tourism on the east coast possibly increasing although we do not have figures on that.

Mr CONFORTI - No.

CHAIR - Is that something you can get?

Mr CONFORTI - We may look into it, but I am not sure whether there are figures available.

Mr HEPBURN - ... If you were to put it on notice, we would be able to come back here with a response giving you some idea of the figures.

4.12 The Department subsequently provided additional information with respect to cycling demand and how the works will improve cyclist safety:

'Strava', a very popular activity and cycling monitor App has been able to provide an insight to the popularity of the usage of this route. Information provided does not differentiate racers from cycle tourists or commuters, and it also does not provide information on cyclists that do not use the App. Therefore, the figures summarized below from 2011 onwards are likely to be lower than actual figures:

- the Apsley Package section has recorded 1051 cyclists travelling northbound, and 1 423 southbound. On average this equates to 4 cyclists a week.
- The Lisdillon Package has 1182 northbound and 1986 in the southbound direction. This equates to 6.4 cyclists per week.

For some wider context:

- the recently released 2030 Tasmanian Visitor Economy Strategy states that Tasmania will be a leading destination for climate-conscious travel. Cycling is a sustainable transport option and can directly assist with reducing the emissions footprint of visitors, thereby addressing some of the needs of climate-conscious travel.
- the Australian Cycling Economy 2021 Report notes cycling contributed a total (direct and indirect) of \$256 million to the Tasmanian economy in 2020, however this is not broken down to reflect a specific East Coast value.

The upgrades proposed provide a 1 metre wide sealed shoulder in both directions, and this will improve the separation distance between cyclists and motorists travelling along the road, and therefore improve safety and the overall experience for cyclists.⁴

Traffic Management During Construction

4.13 Road construction can be very disruptive and appropriate traffic management is important to ensure drivers can travel to their destinations in a safe and timely manner. The Committee recognised the current wider community concerns on the impact of roadworks on the travelling public, and sought further information on the Department's expectations on contractors undertaking these projects:

CHAIR - ...With regard to traffic management during construction, I am really keen to understand the sort of interaction you have with contractors in making sure when they are not on site that the speed limits are lifted to a reasonable thing. People using the Midland Highway complain at 11 or 12 o'clock at night there is a 40 km speed limit with not a worker in sight. Yes, there might be a slightly steeper drop-off and there are witches' hats and other infrastructure.

Mr TUCKER - They put those signs up for your safety.

⁴ Great Eastern Drive Tourism Support – Additional Information, Department of State Growth, page 2

CHAIR - Yes. It is really for the safety of the workers, but it does not take much to put on a hood with a different speed limit over it, locked onto those signs. Then when they come back to work, just take the hoods off.

Mr HEPBURN - Certainly. What we are doing here in terms of the areas we are looking at on Lisdillon and Apsley versus the likes of the Midland Highway are very different. The department, on that note, is considering how we manage the contractors' traffic management set-ups, through our specifications on roads like the Midland Highway and Bass Highway where there are known issues with exactly what you are mentioning.

CHAIR - It just causes accidents or delays for no good reasons.

Mr HEPBURN - Yes, it is probably a little different on this type of road as it is much narrower. In most cases it is just a single lane in each direction. In a lot of cases we do have quite undulating terrain or geometry. You are going to have roadside hazards and steep drop-offs whilst we are undertaking these works. I would expect there would be times when lowered speed limits will need to remain in place overnight and over weekends. That is actually for the safety of the travelling public. I acknowledge your concerns in regards to those other roads like the Midland Highway. This one will be a little different and we will need to have those speed limits in place for the safety of motorists while the works are being undertaken.

Property Acquisition

4.14 The Committee sought further details on the quantum and method of property acquisition for the project:

Ms BUTLER - ... It says here that there will be approximately 12 properties; even though they are large properties, the acquisition areas are relatively small. Can you speak us through that and whether or not that may be an inhibitor or whether that acquisition process should proceed quite nicely?

Mr CONFORTI - We mainly use the existing alignment. We may need to adjust or widen the road and so we are predicting that we may need to take just very thin sides of the property adjoining the road corridor.

...

Mr TUCKER - To confirm and put this on the record, with the acquisition, there is no compulsory acquisition. It has all been negotiated out with the landowners?

Mr CONFORTI - It is compulsory.

Mr TUCKER - It is a compulsory acquisition?

Mr CONFORTI - Yes.

Mr TUCKER - It is all compulsory acquisition? Why don't we negotiate with landowners before we go to compulsory acquisition?

Mr CONFORTI - I am not in the position to give you much of the history. But I understand that it was done in the past - before my time - and they had the potential to cause many delays into the negotiation. But if you want to know more details, I will have to take it -

Mr HEPBURN - It is worth noting, although it is compulsory acquisition and that sounds very confronting, we are discussing with these property owners before anything is absolutely set

in stone. There are always opportunities to reconsider the design and see if there are things they can change.

Mr TUCKER - You allow the landowners to point out issues to you with their properties before you come in, and you work with them. That is the main thing I am asking you about.

Mr CONFORTI - There will be plenty of negotiation before we do the actual acquisition and the landowner will be completely informed of what is going on. But the acquisition will still be compulsory.

Mr TUCKER - Yes. Right. But you are in negotiation with them before you do move to that stage to try to keep everyone on site?

Mr HEPBURN - Correct, it is part of our stakeholder engagement processes. What we do not have control over is the valuation or the compensation that may be paid to people.

...But certainly, we do have means of negotiating the sale: 'This is what we are planning to do, this is how it may affect the property, what do you think?' We have those discussions. It ties in with fencing agreements as generally where we are acquiring property, we are doing widening. We need to remove fences or reinstall fences and all of that is going on as part of the stakeholder engagement. There are always times where we cannot satisfy everyone when we are doing large lengths of upgrades as a result of our projects. But we do our best to try to accommodate people where we can through that process.

Relocating Other Service Providers' Infrastructure

4.15 The Department's submission noted that there would be a need to relocate power pole infrastructure owned by TasNetworks. The Committee was aware that this was often a lengthy process that can have impacts on the planned timeframe for roadworks. The Committee asked the witnesses to expand on this process and the challenges it presents:

Ms RATTRAY - A question on other infrastructure providers when we are commencing road upgrades as proposed: what is the process with TasNetworks and any impediments that causes to a project? If you could share that with the committee, it would be helpful.

Mr HEPBURN - The department maintains relationships with all of our service providers in Tasmania, TasNetwork being one of those.

Ms RATTRAY - An important one.

Mr HEPBURN - Yes, they are very important and probably one of the providers we are working with most commonly these days, especially on large lineal projects like this one. The process the department follows in terms of managing TasNetworks infrastructure in the road reserve and, in particular, when we are conducting construction within the state road network, is agreed with TasNetworks. It is important to mention we do not have full control over how that goes. We do have to work with TasNetworks and tie into their internal processes and time frames as well. Generally speaking, TasNetworks will not allow the department to do the design of their infrastructure in relocating and upgrading any poles or stays that may need doing. They take that on themselves because they are the owner and the expert in that area.

Generally speaking, at this point in time TasNetworks will not commence that design activity until we give them at least a confident prelim design or detailed design. That does put a bit of a hold on things in terms of getting TasNetworks' infrastructure sorted at the end of the project. Once we provide that prelim or detailed design, TasNetworks will then issue an offer

to us which we can accept or not. Once accepted, they will commence the design activity. This is their design phase, as they call it.

Once their design is complete, they will provide that package to us for formal acceptance, which will have costs or estimated costs associated. That time frame on that design does vary and it depends greatly on the amount of infrastructure that needs relocating, where it is around the network and what resources TasNetworks has available at the time for their design. Once accepted, in terms of the design supply from TasNetworks and the associated estimated cost, the department then needs to arrange for the signing or acceptance of any required easement deeds as a result of that location.

That means in some cases we can just relocate the TasNetworks infrastructure - or they can - and it remains within the road reserve and within existing easement so there is no action required. More often than not now, we are going into private property. If not with the infrastructure, the easement is going into private property. Where that happens, we do need to get an easement deed signed by the property owner.

To present that easement deed - and this is something that TasNetworks is expecting the department to manage as it is the result of our road project - we need to seek an independent valuation from the Office of the Valuer-General on what the compensation may be for that easement or asset going onto the land. Once that is achieved, we can then present that to the property owner, requesting that they sign the easement deed. We have no control over whether they do or do not. We can simply ask the question. If they won't sign it, we need to reconsider our design and look at things like potentially undergrounding or changing the design significantly, which takes time and costs money.

Once we do have all easement deeds signed, where required, we can then return all of that information including the accepted offer to TasNetworks. That is the point in time TasNetworks will then progress from a design to a construction phase on their side of things.

CHAIR - And that is at your department's cost? Is there a cost involved in this?

Mr HEPBURN - Absolutely, we pay for all components of this work. Now, again, once in the construction phase we do not have any control over when TasNetworks does the work. They do the work themselves with their own contractors or subcontractors. The timing varies and it does depend again on the materials, the type of infrastructure that is going in and the workload that they and their subcontractors may have on at the time.

Ms RATTRAY - So, effectively, there could be a stretch of road that has been upgraded, even safety rails put up the side, bitumen, line marking - the whole box and dice - and you can have some power poles sitting still on the road verge with a mound of dirt around them and TasNetworks just decides when they want to move those poles or relocate those poles at their discretion?

Mr HEPBURN - It would be rare that we actually can do all of that work. If we can, that is great in terms of us being able to keep the project moving. But it is rare that we would actually be able to do earthworks, pavement works, sealing works and the line marking while their infrastructure is there because, generally speaking, where we require their relocations it is because we are building the road over a point where that infrastructure might already be. Generally, the only time we may be able to leave the infrastructure in place and protect it by a barrier is if it sits outside where the road widening is going to go and outside any table drains or anything else that ties into the road function, but still within a clear zone. As a safety precaution you would put a barrier around it to leave it in its position. That could be temporary or that could be permanent.

Ms RATTRAY - So, who takes the liability if that actually happens? If there is no action by TasNetworks to relocate, and it's scheduled and it has been signed off and the roadworks have

been completed, who takes the liability there? Is it TasNetworks for not getting on and doing the job or is it the Tasmanian people? Well, both actually, they're involved in both, but is it the Tasmanian people on behalf of State Growth who have to wear the liability?

Mr HEPBURN - Well, my understanding would be, in that particular set of circumstances, the department is the road owner, so if we choose to open the road while it is in some - if it has a pole there but it's protected by a barrier that is -

Ms RATTRAY - So, there is no time frame for when TasNetworks would be required to complete a relocation of infrastructure - their infrastructure - for a project, a road upgrade?

Mr HEPBURN - There is never a guaranteed time frame. In my experience, I have never had a guaranteed time frame. It's always an estimate...

Ms RATTRAY - You might not be able to answer this, but should there be? ...

...I'll answer it for you: yes, there should be.

Timeline for Completion of Works

4.16 The Committee questioned the witnesses on when the works were expected to be completed, and whether there was a time limit governing when the overall funding allocation for the Great Eastern Drive had to be expended:

Ms BUTLER - ...Also, just a quick question about the time lines for the work. Can you advise whether or not there is a time line for completion of the allocated funds federally for the overall project of the Great Eastern Drive?

Mr CONFORTI - ... We do not have an exact program because that will be included in the tender presented by the contractors. We estimate that will probably take two construction seasons and that will include next summer and the summer after that.

Ms BUTLER - Is there a completion date for the overall upgrade to the whole Great Eastern Drive? Does it have to be done within a decade?

Mr CONFORTI - The funding is spread in the next five to six years...

Ms BUTLER - So it is not a situation which can happen with some projects if the pool of money is not spent within a certain amount of time that funding is lost? We do not have those kinds of arrangements in place with this, do we?

Mr CONFORTI - We have a certain degree of freedom to carry forward budget - and correct me if I am wrong, Lidiya or Zack - but I think with the Australian Government funding we do not lose money in any case. Obviously, we want to do as much as possible, as quickly as possible, but within reason. As I said, we cannot open the whole Tasman Highway anyway even if we want to.

Mr HEPBURN - Just to elaborate, I think things can change with funding even when it is approved. At this point in time we have the \$125 million approved and there is no time frame set on us to expend that money at this point in time.

...

Ms BUTLER - ...I want to confirm the time line documented here in the submission is accurate. To advertise for tenders starts in September 2023, that is next month. The close of tenders will only take a two-month process and then to assess tenders and award the contracts

between November to December 2023, noting not much really happens in government pretty much from 10 December onwards. Service relocations, November 2023; then to commence construction in January 2024.

Is that for the first project?

Mr CONFORTI - Yes.

Ms BUTLER - Is that likely, do you think?

Mr CONFORTI - No, there has already been a delay since we have submitted this report. The September 2023 first line in the timing section should be October 2023 and all the rest will move a month from then. This is our best guess and our plan at the moment, but you know there are things during the life of a project that could further delay the issue of the tender -

Ms BUTLER - ... When do you think the first project will be complete?

Mr CONFORTI - We suspect the first project will start at the beginning of 2024 and finish in mid-2025.

...

Ms BUTLER - Then the second tranche of this?

Mr CONFORTI - Yes, the second project will hopefully be tendered within three or four months from the first one.

Ms RATTRAY - Which goes first: Apsley or Lisdillon?

Mr CONFORTI - Apsley.

Ms BUTLER - What is the overall projection for both projects to be complete by?

Mr CONFORTI - By the end of 2025.

Ms BUTLER - That is both?

CHAIR - The assessment of tenders and awarding of the contract in November to December is now going to be December to January. The assessments will be done during January by the department.

Mr CONFORTI - No, hopefully the assessment will be done before Christmas, then I am not sure whether the contract will be -

CHAIR - But if you haven't got the tenders to assess, the tenders will not close till November.

Mr CONFORTI - Yes, usually we can do the assessment two weeks after the closing date.

Mr HEPBURN - Business would continue in our office over that period; it is just that we cease awarding tenders for a period over Christmas. If we can achieve those prior dates, we would still be looking to award rather than in November - December, it would be more like December - January, it would most likely be late January.

Ensuring Quality of Materials and Workmanship

- 4.18 The Committee was aware of instances of road construction materials being sourced from areas remote to the location of the works, rather than locally. In some cases, the work had subsequently failed, and required remediation work. The Committee was keen to understand from where the material for these works would be sourced, and the measures in place to ensure the quality of materials and workmanship:

Ms RATTRAY - With regard to locally sourced materials - and you talk about that in the next paragraph, about local quarries - do you envisage that there will have to be extensive cartage of materials or will it be able to be sourced fairly locally? I drove past a quarry supply place as we came into Swansea, so they get their resources fairly locally. That makes a difference, I understand, to the cost of the project.

Mr HEPBURN - Absolutely. Until we actually have a design, and in particular the pavement design, finalised, we don't know exactly what aggregates and materials will be used. Obviously, our quarries around the state vary on what they can and can't provide. Ideally speaking, the contractors who deliver this work will try to access the most local quarries which have those materials required available because it will lessen the cartage and the cost.

Ms RATTRAY - Given that we've already spent \$30 million on behalf of the Tasmanian community on 38 projects thus far, I'd expect that there'd be some information about the type of aggregate or resource that you are going to use for these upgrades. They're only a continuation of what's already been used. I expect that you will have some knowledge of that.

Mr HEPBURN - Yes, we do have knowledge of what we likely would use and the quarries that would have those materials available.

Ms RATTRAY - Are they local?

Mr HEPBURN - I believe we have quite a few available around the Launceston area, so a little further north.

Ms RATTRAY - That is not very local.

Mr CONFORTI - There is one in the south of Bicheno.

Mr HEPBURN - Just south of Bicheno township.

CHAIR - A bluestone quarry?

Mr CONFORTI - I don't know what kind of stone they have but we cannot be mandatory to the contractors who indicate what quarry to use. It is entirely up to the contractor to source the material as long as the material is to our standards.

CHAIR - Where would they get the bitumen from?

Mr CONFORTI - I don't know.

Mr HEPBURN - It will depend on the contractor who is successful in obtaining the works.

CHAIR - The reason I am asking that is, if it has to be carted a long way, it cools down. I know you have ways of keeping it heated but it can also mean that it is not at the right temperature when they lay it and it strips off, like we have seen so often. You would take those sorts of things into account in your tender?

Mr CONFORTI - Everybody has an interest to keep the project under budget and being cost effective. We cannot be prescriptive on where to go to get the material to the contractors. It is entirely up to the contractors to source the material. Obviously, they will find the nearest or cheapest source.

CHAIR - You would be prescriptive in the temperature that the material is laid at, wouldn't you?

Mr CONFORTI - Yes, we will have technical specifications that we will define exactly what kind of material has to be used.

Mr TUCKER - ... We saw this happen down at the Smithton to Marrawah highway where the seal lifted off. They carted the material from Sheffield

... This is where the problem occurs. You are carting material from another area; yes, it might meet specifications but as soon as you put that material on the east coast or down near Smithton and Marrawah, guess what? It did not work. What are you doing to protect the east coast residents to ensure this will not happen here if you are allowing the contractors to cart material from Launceston or even further afield when they have local material here that works in the area? How do we prevent something similar from happening here?

Mr HEPBURN - Generally, the protection we have on the materials that we use and the treatments that are applied are bound by our contract specifications.

Mr TUCKER - That is what they were at Smithton to Marrawah, and that is where the problem occurred.

Mr HEPBURN - I cannot speak on that particular job or why that may or may not have failed but, generally speaking, we are talking about not state but national guidelines and specifications. As long as we are meeting those specifications - or our contractors are - the design should work and the seal should hold. There are sometimes circumstances where that does not work.

CHAIR - We have noticed it quite a few times and that is why we bring it up regularly. It is part of value for money, at the end of the day. I know that the contractors themselves are responsible to make sure that the work is durable and if it does break up, yes, they have to come back and fix it up. There is the issue of the inconvenience to the public again and that is why we bring these things up all the time. It is important to fix it because quite often it is not appropriate. The longevity of the work is simply not there.

I look back at the work that was just prior to Launceston coming from the Perth side, at the Perth bypass. It was just weeks or a month or two before it started to strip off. We need a better resolution than that.

Mr HEPBURN - I know that we have had some issues like that and we probably will into the future. Sometimes things happen that are out of our control. I will add to the fact that although we have our specifications there to try to control that sort of thing from occurring, we do still go through a tender process where we are giving consideration to the submissions and some of those things are given consideration to what the contractor may be specifying as their quarry material and where they might be getting it. It does come into play. It is not a game changer. It is not a big-ticket item but it is certainly something we consider.

- 4.19 The Committee was also interested to establish how a contractor's previous performance was factored in when assessing future tenders:

Mr TUCKER - If you have had a road fail under a certain contractor and he has bought the aggregate from another area, when he puts in the next tender, is there a big black mark against him if he is going to pull it from that same area again, or not?

Mr HEPBURN - It generally depends on the tender and how that procurement is taking place. If we have something in there for past contractor performance or giving consideration to the specifics of how that contractor may have performed in the past, we could, but if that is not in the tender -

Mr TUCKER - Why would that not be in the tender?

Ms RATTRAY - Should it be in a tender, in all tenders, given we do not have a large suite of tenderers to choose from in Tasmania? It is just a fact.

Mr HEPBURN - It is a percentage on the selection criteria or how we evaluate our tenders. Generally, we only have a few, a handful of things we are actually assessing against because otherwise it would become very hard to pick a clear winner. Construction methodology is probably where that sits and it is a large component in our assessments for a lot of our tenders.

Consultation with Local Councils

4.20 The Committee questioned the witnesses on the level of engagement with local councils when determining where and what type of works would be undertaken:

Ms RATTRAY - Wouldn't it be prudent to actually have a conversation with the council prior to the design because then you get that local input before you have something on paper? It is not as easy to change something after the event as it is to put it in prior, so wouldn't that be a prudent way of approaching something?

Mr HEPBURN - Yes and we do talk to local governments who are directly affected by all of our projects through the course of the development of the design and our projects. We also have expertise through our design consultants and our internal staff regarding development and planning. These types of projects, when we are doing minor widening, so lineal lengths of road upgrade by way of minor widening, in a lot of cases the majority of those sections will be exempt because under the planning scheme you can actually upgrade within 3 metres of the existing road reserve. We certainly have those discussions and even on those projects as soon as we start doing accesses or junction upgrades, that is where we are going into their area of potentially requiring a DA.

Those discussions are occurring as early as they possibly can, noting that the formal submission of any DA or otherwise exemption request cannot go out until the design is final. Otherwise, we are essentially -

Ms RATTRAY - But given that in this case, local government areas know their areas like the back of their hand, they would have feedback from visitors or locals about a particular stretch of road that, with all due respect, your designers might never have even travelled on.

Ms HUDSON - That is where our work comes into play because that's the conversation we have during the planning phase with councils, with major stakeholders, with locals, interest groups. We do all of that work beforehand so that when we hand it over to these guys they are well aware of what is happening and so are the councils -

Ms RATTRAY - Okay, there are no surprises.

Ms HUDSON - No surprises, yes.

Mr HEPBURN - Sorry for the confusion, this sort of progress in our submission here is talking about in particular planning permits and development applications as opposed to the general discussions.

How Will Priorities for Future Works be Determined?

- 4.21 The Committee noted that the Great Eastern Drive was part of the larger Tasman Highway corridor, which suggests it should not be looked at in isolation from the rest of the corridor. The Committee was also aware that there was a significant portion of the allocated budget \$125M remaining to be spent on further upgrades to the Great Eastern Drive. The witnesses indicated that a Tasman Highway corridor study was currently being undertaken, which would inform a strategy for prioritising future upgrades across the entire corridor:

Ms RATTRAY - In regards to the road audit referred to be undertaken by Lidiya and her team, given that the significant number of people travelling to the Great Eastern Drive have to get there on the other 160 kilometres of the Tasman Highway, is that also included in the road audit looking for upgrades? And possibly more about the 80 kilometres from St Helens through to where you are actually at this point in time putting in a couple of overtaking lanes.

Ms HUDSON - The transport network planning team in ITAS [Infrastructure Tasmania] is looking at doing a corridor strategy for the Tasman Highway from Sorell all the way through to Launceston. That will incorporate this part of the Great Eastern Drive but also look at the rest of the Tasman Highway.

... We will be looking at a whole range of issues across safety, tourism, road design, transport and all those things. More than likely, the corridor strategy will be sectioned off into the different components of the Tasman Highway with The Great Eastern Drive more than likely split into one or two sections. It will be covered and any sort of gaps that have been identified will be looked at and prioritised. Any remaining funding will be able to be allocated to the highest priority areas.

Does the Project Meet the Requirements of the Public Works Committee Act?

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

CHAIR - ... We do ask for answers to five questions, which are important questions for us to ask under the Public Works Committee Act and I need a definite response to these: Firstly, does the proposed works meet an identified need or needs or solve a recognised problem?

Mr CONFORTI - Yes.

CHAIR - Okay, problem being a road that is not fit for general public use.

... Does not meet standards, is that correct?

Mr CONFORTI - Yes, it does not meet any safety standards.

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

Mr CONFORTI - Yes, it does.

CHAIR - Third question, are the proposed works fit for purpose?

Mr CONFORTI - Yes, they will be.

CHAIR - Do the proposed works provide value for money?

Mr CONFORTI - Yes.

CHAIR - The last question is: are the proposed works a good use of public funds?

Mr CONFORTI - Definitely, yes.

5 DOCUMENTS TAKEN INTO EVIDENCE

5.1 The following document was taken into evidence and considered by the Committee:

- *Great Eastern Drive Tourism Support Additional Packages - Component 1*, Public Works Committee Submission, Department of State Growth, Final to PWC 29 May 2023;
- Great Eastern Drive Tourism Support – Additional Information, Department of State Growth;
- Great Eastern Drive Tourism Support – Additional Information-Attachment 1 - Great Eastern Drive - Crash History, Department of State Growth;
- Great Eastern Drive Tourism Support – Additional Information- Attachment 2 - UPDATED - Addendum 1 Page 10 of DoSG submission, Department of State Growth.

6 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

- 6.1 The Committee is satisfied that the need for the proposed works has been established. Once completed, the proposed works are expected to provide a safer road environment that meets contemporary standards, and improve travel time reliability.
- 6.2 The proposed works are expected to achieve this by widening sections of the road to provide a consistent travel environment integrating with previous upgrades, and where required in the designated work areas, curve and corner realignments, correcting adverse cambers, and improving vertical alignments to improve visibility. Additional overtaking opportunities will also be provided, to improve travel time reliability and to reduce the risks associated with driver frustration.
- 6.3 The Committee did note, however, there was no requirement for construction materials to be sourced from the local area. The Committee is of the view that this is important, not only for the stimulus this can provide to the local East Coast economy, but because of evidence that locally sourced materials are more suitable, and the resultant work less prone to failure, than when materials are sourced from elsewhere. The Committee therefore recommends the Department of State Growth give strong consideration to either including a local material requirement in tender documentation, or to give greater weight in the tender assessment to the sourcing of local materials.
- 6.4 Notwithstanding the matter of locally sourced construction materials, accordingly, the Committee recommends the Great Eastern Drive Tourism Support Additional Packages - Component 1, at an estimated p50 cost of \$46,279,000 and an estimated p90 cost of \$55,646,800, in accordance with the documentation submitted.

**Parliament House
Hobart
20 September 2023**

**Hon Rob Valentine MLC
Chair**