

**THE PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS MET IN
COMMITTEE ROOM 2, PARLIAMENT HOUSE, HOBART, ON WEDNESDAY
22 AUGUST 2007**

CRADLE VALLEY CENTRALISED SEWERAGE SCHEME

PETER SIMS, AND **ANDREW ROBERTS**, MANAGER BUSINESS AND ASSET SERVICES PARKS AND WILDLIFE SERVICE WERE CALLED, MADE THE STATUTORY DECLARATION AND WERE EXAMINED.

CHAIR (Mr Harriss) - Thanks, Peter, with that formality we would look to your verbal submission to the committee and, following that, there could be some questions.

Mr SIMS - Mr Chairman, who are the other members?

CHAIR - Okay, we have Brenton Best, Graeme Sturges and Greg Hall, and Mrs Napier is running a little late so she will join us later. That will be the full complement of the committee.

Mr SIMS - Fine.

CHAIR - Okay, we are right for you to proceed now, Peter.

Mr SIMS - Thank you for giving me the opportunity to give a verbal submission. This will really be backing the two documents that I have forwarded to the committee, one dated 22 August and the second one, 12 July, which I understand the secretary has photocopied for you and which you should have before you.

I propose to treat this within the time constraints by firstly signalling the 11 key issues that you would have received on 22 August - the one that you have before you. I thought that might be the easiest way to deal with this because there are a lot of issues that I put in the 12 July report that are repeated in the 22 August one. What I propose to do, Mr Chairman, if this meets with your approval, is to home in on those 11 key issues. I have just done a summary from the two submissions that relate to each of those 11 key issues. Does that make sense?

CHAIR - Yes, that will be fine.

Mr SIMS - Okay, fine. What I would like to do perhaps is to refresh your memory with the area using attachment one, which was the map that I drew. Hopefully that has come out all right. If you have that before you, just to familiarise yourselves with the key areas that I will be discussing in the submission. The World Heritage area is the hatched area in the right-hand corner. Then there is that section that goes from the World Heritage area at Pencil Pine North to the Belvoir-Cradle Mountain Road and that is the precinct that is in the local area plan, the LAP. The LAP is presently being drawn up to be submitted to the Kentish Council as an amendment or an addition to the planning scheme and that includes two areas. The dotted one in the middle with 't' is the tourist services

precinct and that is the social and economic hub for services and amenities. Then there is the sustainable tourism precinct which is the area outside of that dotted area which goes from Pencil Pine, the boundary of the park, right through to the main road and that is primarily for accommodation facilities and passive recreation.

In the sustainable tourist precinct you will notice that right at the top there is 'b', which is the bed and breakfast accommodation that has been approved by Kentish Council, and the hatched area is the land that has been purchased by Alpine Enterprises (Grollo) of Melbourne and there is yet to come before the council an application for cabins and more accommodation in that area, which fits in with the proposed planning scheme for Kentish under this local area plan that is yet to be confirmed. That is only a provision at this stage.

The other area is the big 'x' in the middle which is the proposed area for the sewerage plant and bottom right-hand corner of that local area plan is 'm' that is the old mill site. They are the key points to bear in mind as I am going through this. It is unfortunate you were not able to have a look at the sewerage site at some of these other areas where some of these issues would become very apparent to you but, having said that, I can just run through those if I may.

The first key issue was the siting. The wrong site was selected for the central sewerage scheme from the outset. I consider this to be prime land suitable for future residential development on the hilltop between the existing village and the new Grollo resort.

In my July submission I mentioned that the local area plan needs to be considered as part of this proposed development and I do not think you have had an opportunity of seeing that draft local area plan. I think it should have been made available to you at the time of your deliberations which would have helped you to see the bigger picture as to where the sewerage plant fits in with not only the development around the airstrip but also in the larger context.

You can see 'x' fits slap-bang right in the middle of the two developments, one for the village around the old airstrip, and the other one to the north. That is one of the reasons we say that that really is the wrong place. When I raised this with Parks in early 2005 I had a good look at the area and that is why I was very concerned that the initial proposal would not work because of the very small catchment of the Iris River which at the time in March 2005 was almost dry and it was very dry for many, many months. The proposed amount of flow coming from the sewerage works would be far greater than the flow in the Iris River so this to me looked to be just not on. When I expressed these concerns to Parks they arranged a meeting on 11 March when a local landowner and myself representing the Conservation Trust strongly objected to the proposal of the irrigation scheme, the plantation and the discharge into the Upper Iris. Eventually, the engineer from GH & D who was present said to us that he was quite concerned with the proposal. He must have seen the Iris River just being a trickle so he went back to Hobart and said, 'I will have to rethink the whole thing.' So we were able to get that point across very early on, which was useful to have.

A copy of those minutes I have given to you as attachment 3 in the latest documentation, 22 August, and in that you will find that Parks and Wildlife did the minutes and I objected to the way that had been slanted. I asked for the amendments to go out with

those minutes to the respective people, which Parks did. It just shows you some of the problems that we experienced very early on with this project, trying to get some of the points across, get proper consultation and get some input into the whole of the development.

The development is very necessary. I think I made that quite clear, that the trust is not objecting to the proposal, it is just looking at some of these issues that should have been considered very early on instead of Parks virtually taking the lead role and really not addressing the issues.

They are the main points on issue one. Mr Chairman, does anyone wish to raise the questions as I go for each issue?

CHAIR - Peter, people will certainly jump in as they feel the need to.

Mr HALL - When you say it is located in the wrong spot, do you have an alternative site?

Mr SIMS - Yes, that is the suggestion we made about the old mill site, which I will come into in the next key issue.

Mr HALL - Yes. The other quick question I had was, all that hatched area under 'b' is owned by Grollo?

Mr SIMS - Yes, that is right.

Mr HALL - That little bit to the north, that is also theirs?

Mr SIMS - Yes, over the road, that is also Grollo.

Mr HALL - Thank you.

Mr SIMS - I will go to issue two and this was on the reference to the onsite inspection and possible alternative sites. When we raised the issue of the old timber mill site we noted at the time that as it was an old timber mill. As you would know, Mr Hall, old timber mills do have a lot of contamination around them, oil drums and hydrocarbons, there is a general messy nature to them. It was quite apparent to me that this being right on the edge of the World Heritage area and draining into the World Heritage area, it should have been cleaned up. This would have been a very good opportunity to do two things - firstly, to clean up the site, which has to be cleaned up anyway and secondly, to put the sewerage works in there, which is away from the main development areas, to the west. When I looked at the DPMP, the Development Proposal and Environmental Management Plan, which I received from GH & D during the public comment period, it had been looked at by GH & D but they virtually dismissed it as being unsuitable because it would drain into the World Heritage area. But when I looked at the site, it is on a watershed and, as you know with a watershed, the water goes both ways and here, some of it goes into the World Heritage area and the rest of it seeps eventually into Black Bob Creek which goes into the Iris. So it is quite apparent that with all this infrastructure that is proposed, it was quite easy of course to have the excess overflow go down into the Iris system rather than World Heritage. But this was just dismissed out of hand. The reason that site was never looked at was that, on key recommendation 11 in the Cradle

Tourist Development Plan 2003 mentions the recommendations for a sewerage plan, that it not drain into the World Heritage area, and that was taken ad lib, without consideration of the possibility that it might be necessary to get the dilution. Of course that was obvious to those of us who know the area well, we just know what the systems are like there and even in the dry period. That was not necessarily a statutory requirement. The Cradle Tourist Development Plan is not a statutory document -

CHAIR - Peter, could we get you to speak up a little as we have to transcribe this onto the *Hansard*. We have a microphone directly over the speaker so if you could keep the volume up a little, please.

Mr SIMS - Thank you, I will just keep a bit closer - but there is that note in No. 11, that the sewerage plan was a key recommendation but for it not to be drained into the World Heritage area.

I set out in my submission to you, 12 July, the pros and cons of both sites. I think that is probably all we can do as far as making you aware of some of the issues relating to the selection of the site, knowing full well now it is probably too late to change it but it is up to you to decide that. I just make those points to you because I think they were very key issues that should have been addressed much more thoroughly, much earlier in the stage rather than us taking actions to try to get this site either looked at and/or changed. Any questions there, Mr Chairman?

CHAIR - It does not look like it.

Mr SIMS - Okay. Passing through now to that disused mill site, just to amplify more there, I consider it to be currently a contaminated site and with any contaminated site in the State the authorities need to take account of that and have it cleaned up. In view of the fact that that drainage, although it is a small soak that is running into the World Heritage area, I think is contaminated with hydrocarbons, it should be looked at. If this could be a recommendation from your committee it may alert the Environment department and Parks that they need to action that pretty quickly to avoid any contamination of the World Heritage site. It seems strange that they have turned their back on an actual pollution that is occurring uncontrolled, which is the old mill site, and yet they were not prepared to look at the sewerage works there where it could have all been cleaned up and the discharge could have gone the other way into the Iris system. That is probably enough on that.

CHAIR - Yes. Brenton Best has a question for you, Peter.

Mr BEST - Peter, have any studies been done on cleaning up the old mill site?

Mr SIMS - I understand nothing has been done.

Mr BEST - So you are saying it has not even been looked at in terms of cleaning it up?

Mr SIMS - No, it is something that should, I think, be followed up anyway and your committee may be able to make a recommendation for that.

Mr BEST - Who owns that land?

CHAIR - We have just been advised, Peter, that that land is privately owned.

Mr SIMS - It is privately owned.

CHAIR - Yes, that is in answer to Brenton's question.

Mr SIMS - Yes.

CHAIR - Okay.

Mr SIMS - The area purchased by Parks for the sewerage works was privately owned too but that decision for buying that bit of land was made very early on and in fact it was made far too early before all the studies and the options had been considered.

CHAIR - We are clear, Peter; please proceed.

Mr SIMS - Turning to issue No. 4 - the inadequate precautions to prevent contamination of the Iris River catchment. This applies to the present system as has been presented to you. What I was concerned about there was that the dam footprint or the actual storage footprint for the lagoon is 15 000 square metres - that is 1.5 hectares - which is 3.7 acres. Mr Hall, you would clearly realise what 3.7 acres is. It is a huge area. It has been explained to you that this was to safeguard against dry periods when the dilution required in the Pencil Pine Creek would be insufficient and so they would have to store the treated effluent. There are issues here that apply also to the Iris catchment, as any accidental overflow from this whole system will now go straight into the Iris catchment. To get into the Iris catchment it goes right through the local area plan - the area where this tourist development is to occur - so it could cause some huge problems unless that is looked at much more thoroughly by the engineers. There is nothing there to show where the overflow is likely to occur. They are just hoping that it will not. The Iris River goes down eventually into Lake Gairdner, where there is recreational fishing and camping. People drink the water there straight from the river. It also goes through a private nature reserve. Its classification is 'pristine'. That is the classification under the environmental management goals for Tasmania's surplus waters. There is a duty of care that the pristine nature of any of the Tasmanian rivers are to be maintained. I think some extra effort should be made to see that there are proper precautions to prevent any contamination of the Iris catchment. That is the point I wanted to make there: accidental spills, overflows, right through the sustainable tourism precinct.

CHAIR - Right. Everybody is clear there at the moment.

Mr SIMS - The fifth key issue is the pipeline trench. I do not know whether you have not looked at that when you drove into the area or whether you realise where that is to go. But we have quite severe concerns about this. During the various presentations by GH&D and Parks to the stakeholders it was apparent that the trench was going to follow the Telstra line. I think everybody in the room at the presentation said, 'No, there have been enough problems with that Telstra line. There is enough disturbance there. Don't make it any worse than it is'. That is, I think, 3 metres wide. Now we are looking at almost double, up to 6 metres wide, utilising that same trench. What most of the stakeholders, and ourselves, said was, 'Why not follow the roadside and use the road

edge, improve the ditch on the side of the road - which is already disturbed - and put a proper drainage system in. Have the trench and the pipe underneath that and have a spoon drain on top'. Then put a boardwalk on top of that - all the accommodation places want to get people off the road, which is very dangerous - and virtually follow the road. That would have an advantage of getting the machinery for the trench to utilise the already paved surface of the road. It would take up half the road, but this could be achieved quite easily by flagging off half the road, constraining some of that traffic and having people park back at the transit centre. At the same time, it would cover two very good issues. It would cover the fact that the people going from one accommodation area to the other could walk safely and it would be lit. Some of the services could be under the boardwalk and other services would be in the trench. This would be quite suitable.

There was an objection by DIER, who obviously did not want the bother of having anybody interfere with their road. They did not want the expense of having to redo the road, because it would mean some repaving afterwards, and the disruption there. But DIER never had anybody come along to any of those presentations to discuss it with stakeholders. This is just another ongoing issue that the stakeholders have just been fed information without any opportunity to feed back responses to the proposals. It is pointless having a lot of these meetings that Parks arrange, unless it works two ways.

I think local stakeholders are going to be very cross that this trench is going to go across a lot of private land and that there will not be a boardwalk included in that. That is the location of it and I have pointed out some of the problems associated with putting that trench through the Telstra line in the latest submission I made on 22 August and also it is in my earlier one. But in addition to that it is putting a protective envelope on the main sewage pipe that is coming out of the park and linking up to the works.

The Henty Gold mine and other mines on the West Coast put these high-density envelopes around strategic pipes. They are not expensive. They are just like an envelope and if the pipe or the connections rupture there is that protection straight away. We are looking at 25 years to bury that pipe and a lot of things can happen in 25 years. So that should be a consideration that should again be looked at by the proponents of this.

Make DIER look in some detail at the location of that trench to go by the road. Okay, it is going to cost some money but whatever you do is going to cost money. If we are looking at a vision and a thing that is going to last 25 years, and we are spending \$12 million, let us do it properly. That is what we have been saying to Parks: do it properly, instead of this half measure which may require going back some time later, admitting that we put it in the wrong place and saying that we should have stuck it down the road, made the road a little wider and put a boardwalk there.

CHAIR - Peter, if I can interrupt for a second, I just want to get an indication from our members as to what their commitments are for the rest of the afternoon. Because we are in the middle of a range of briefings regarding the pulp mill. So if I just get an indication from members -

Mr SIMS - How much more time have you got, Mr Chairman?

CHAIR - I am just trying to determine that. Mr Hall and I are clear for a little while, but I am not sure about the House of Assembly members.

Mr SIMS - We are more than halfway through.

CHAIR - The House of Assembly members have indicated to me that they need to be gone by about 2 p.m. and I should have indicated to you at the outset that we do have Parks representatives here, Ralf Zenke, Andrew Roberts and Anita Jungalwalla and also Ray Dodson from GH&D.

Mr SIMS - Excellent. You have got Anna Harper from the Department of Environment?

CHAIR - Yes.

Mr SIMS - That is good. Okay, I hope that they can take up some of the issues that I raise also.

Mrs NAPIER - Peter, Sue Napier speaking, we did raise the question of the envelope. I cannot recall the figure just at the moment - I have it in my notes somewhere - but it was quite expensive.

Mr SIMS - Was it?

Mrs NAPIER - We are talking millions.

Mr SIMS - It should not be that much. I cannot see Henty Goldmines spending millions on a pipeline which runs some kilometres from their works to the tailings dam. I think that figure is highly suspect.

Mrs NAPIER - They can wipe theirs off on tax.

Mr SIMS - Oh, no. Well, they can do that, but I have been involved with the environmental conditions of Henty for some years and that was not considered a big issue with them.

CHAIR - Okay, thank you Peter.

Mr SIMS - Number six. This is now the storage lagoon of 3.7 acres or 1.5 hectares. I found in the DPMP that it is 15 000 square metres. I think in the submission made by GH&D they could not tell you what that area was, but it is 15 000 square metres. That is equivalent to 23 Olympic size swimming pools. Now, that is quite a large pond or lake or lagoon which I think has already been named by the locals. Again, that seems to be a huge capacity to hold the amount of water for that and I could not find that that lagoon had anything in the budget, but perhaps it is included in contingencies. No, that was the covering of it. It is the covering of the storage lagoon which would be impacted by flood rains and contamination possibly by wildlife. This may be an application that might have to be put up to you in the future but, again, I think it should be included right now so everybody knows what one is in for in this proposal.

I notice that the Devonport water supply at Kelsey Tier has a cover over it and that would be, I think, a similar area. It might be a bit smaller. The water storages are

covered but anyway I think that should be included as part of the costing just to point out to you folks exactly what is possible with various proposals.

Point No.7: charges need to be made known for connections and service fees. I noticed in the DPMP that existing development connection will not be compulsory for existing developments. I noticed I think in the presentation to you by GH&D that it would be compulsory for commercial enterprises but not necessary for everybody else.

The whole reason for putting in this essential service was for everybody to be connected and it is to share the cost and also to protect the environment. It seems rather bad planning if everybody is not going to be connected to that in the first instance or at some stage. It may be done in two stages. It is the expenditure that will be directed to each of the users that needs to be spelled out pretty clearly right now. There are land-holders in that area who are getting very jumpy about how much they are likely to be charged. They are quite supportive of the principle but, again, they are pretty uncertain about how much they are going to be charged.

One of the commercial enterprises said it would cost him \$30 per person per night to cover the running costs of the sewerage works. These figures can run away very quickly in a community like Cradle unless there are some very clear money costs put up very early on with this proposal. I think there is sufficient data that we have before us to indicate that if all the commercial enterprises connect, costs will be 'x' and if everybody connects it will be 'y' and that will give everybody some idea where they are heading. To have this multi-million dollar scheme going past the door people are going to get very, very jumpy and very hostile unless they get some proper feedback from the proponent.

I noticed Kentish Council has imposed a special condition on the bed and breakfast at Learys Corner. There is a clause there that says 'within 60 days of the Cradle Valley re-use, water must be connected' and there is a similar clause relating to the connection of the central sewerage scheme. So Kentish Council has put that in as a condition and that falls in line with the local area plan for the development in that area. That is on charges.

Point No. 8 is budgeting. This sewerage plant when it was first mooted was about \$4.7 million and is now \$11.7 million. It has changed so much and for very good reasons that we can appreciate but it is this changing and alteration of the scheme from its original inception right through to now that most people cannot get their heads around. If you look at the DPMP, you will see it is quite an involved and detailed document. I wrote a comment to the Kentish Council on that proposal as part of the consultation - 10 pages I think I put there, and there was no response at all. I just wonder how much of those comments have been taken into consideration. Some of these comments I am making again to you because this is another opportunity for the public to have input into proposals.

But, like your committee, I found that the raw figures of the budget and some estimates that were 18 months old did not provide sufficient detail to have any real meaning.

This leads me now into the consultation process. I consider it to be quite unsatisfactory, especially as the so-called steering committee is largely dormant and stakeholders' input is limited. I have pointed out here that the Cradle development tourist plan was evolved through very good consultation and very good input from a whole range of stakeholders,

and that then produced that document which is quite important. One of the recommendations was to develop the central sewage treatment plant.

To my knowledge the steering committee has never formally endorsed the present membrane and, as its last meeting was in February 2006 - last year, that is more than a year ago, that is a year and a half ago - and this steering committee is presently in limbo and has not met for more than one-and-a-half years. Now I am on that committee representing the conservation trust so I know how often this committee has met and what the requirements of the steering committee could have been, had it been properly informed by Parks at every step of the way. It would have saved a lot of this hassle that we are still going through to get this resolved.

The steering committee, I think, has been ineffective and in my submission in July under section 8, I outlined the composition of that steering committee which was a little different to what Parks had indicated to you. Members of the steering committee had been informed that the land acquisitions had been completed prior to the end of 2005, which indicates that if the land acquisition was at the end of 2005, it was way before there had been any decision made as to the selection of the site or looking at the options.

It is a bit like the cart before the horse. Most of our concerns could have been resolved much earlier had Parks continued to effectively consult with the stakeholders and the steering committee at every step of the process. They had presentations, but presentations are only one way. The other way, of course, is to get feedback and Parks repeatedly would make a presentation, wave a document around, saying, 'This is a draft, this is available', and then they did not follow it up any more. You had to then try to get a copy of that by asking and sometimes you got it and sometimes you do not, or you only got half. It is this half-hearted approach to the stakeholders by Parks which makes people very uneasy.

I turn now to 10: the need for a properly constituted and resourced management committee. The recommendations in the Cradle tourism plan are Nos. 28, 29 and 30, which have been excluded from GH & D's submission, and which have been excluded from Parks'. I have given you a copy of that under attachment 2. You see very clearly there that 28, 29 and 30 relate to setting up of the management committee. Now, that is a key recommendation from that committee. The other key recommendation is the sewerage plant. The two go hand in hand. The committee needs to be aware that this is a de facto management committee; it has not met since February 2006, which I mentioned. The application by the trust to have a representative on that committee did not occur until November 2005. So to say that this plan or the plans have been endorsed by the trust is quite mischievous. It certainly has not had that opportunity. Even at the March meeting of the steering committee in Sheffield, when I was not present, there was a presentation but there were no final plans submitted to that committee for ratification. As I mentioned, I supplied Kentish Council with detailed comments on the DPMP without any response.

It is interesting that with the stakeholder meetings - and these are quite separate to the steering committee meetings - the last one was in June this year. Prior to that it was July last year. There was an 11-month gap between meetings at a very critical time. There was an update by letter on 28 November. Prior to that there was a meeting every three to four months in 2005-06. So there were quite regular meetings and then all of a sudden

they stopped after July last year. That should be highlighted to Parks; the steering committee has served its purpose with the Cradle Development Tourist Plan. It should now have a management committee for the whole area. It is not only about the sewerage works; there is a whole heap of things going on in the area that need to be properly overseen by a proper management committee with proper statutory requirements.

This leads me on to number 11, a key issue. I have no confidence in Parks' capacity to manage such a large, expensive project up to its commissioning. They have shown, in what I have given your committee, that they have been mucking around with this project for far too long. They do not have the ability to properly communicate to stakeholders and they have continued this methodology, if it is a methodology, of not properly communicating and receiving input from the stakeholders.

It is putting people offside, but we are the very people that should be onside with Parks because we do agree with many of the principles that the department is trying to pursue. It is a great tragedy that Parks have been allowed to continue with this project. It should be managed away from Parks because the whole of the infrastructure is something that is outside the park and certainly outside of the World Heritage Area. It needs to be managed by another department. That could be the Department of Economic Development or DIER or someone like that. Also there is a pecuniary interest because one of the users of the sewerage works will be Parks - a very large user. So they obviously have an interest in that.

That is the general thrust of my submissions to you. There are other points in it but I thought that I would concentrate on those in the time available. I think that I have explained the concerns of the trust and a lot of other stakeholders about how this project is being managed, how it is likely to be managed in the future, and the issues that concern us and that we consider should be addressed. The trust will certainly be pursuing this in every possible way to see that these issues are brought to the public's attention and that there are measures taken to rectify the situation.

CHAIR - Okay, Peter, thanks very much for that. We will keep you on line because we may have questions for you.

Mr BEST - On that matter of consultation, Peter, I am just a little concerned. Are you saying that the steering committee largely has not met for a year and a half?

Mr SIMS - That is right. I have given you a copy of the minutes of the last meeting, attachment 4. There has been no other communication to the steering committee from that date.

Mr BEST - Up until 11 March 2005, how regularly would this steering committee have been meeting? I suppose it had not started long before?

Mr SIMS - November 2005 was when I represented the trust and the next meeting was in March, so that was the frequency of those two meetings. Andrew might have a better idea of what occurred up to there perhaps.

Mr BEST - We heard on evidence when we were at Cradle Mountain that the steering committee was functioning quite well.

Mr SIMS - It certainly was not functioning quite well from November 2005.

Mr BEST - I would put it to you that it was not functioning at all.

Mr SIMS - Not functioning at all, that is right. That was made quite clear also by Roger Jaensch from the Cradle Coast Authority at the meeting in Hobart in November. He considered it, amongst other things, to be a waste of time. There were issues that were clearly presented to the committee beforehand so that everybody was properly familiarised with what was to be discussed on the agenda.

Mr HALL - A question to Parks or the engineers. Mr Sims raised the issue of the pipeline corridor. I just cannot recall when we took evidence at Cradle whether that was discussed. I think it was brought forward but was there actually a monetary figure put on that. I know that DIER were not happy with it because of the extra roadworks that were involved but was there actually a monetary figure put on that as a cost option compared to the Telstra trench?

Mr DODSON - No, we did not actually work out the final cost but what needs to be appreciated is that the trench has to accommodate four pipes, so the trench is about 2 metres wide. You can imagine the impact that would have on the road during the construction period. A number of parts of the road are actually in a cutting so putting in the walkway that you requested would have had a very major impact on those sections of the road. There would be parts of the road in flatter areas where it would be less of a problem. It would not be an easy exercise to put the boardwalk there but we were not involved in looking at the boardwalk option as such. The trench in the road would be a major impact.

Mr ROBERTS - I can add to that. This issue was a recurring topic at stakeholder meetings that were regularly held with both landholders and the interested Cradle people, who were not always at the same meeting. We investigated this as far as taking it to head of agency level because DIER were adamant that it was acceptable to them. The principal reasoning apart from what has just been said is that the road is a fairly narrow seal and that the depth of construction is not that deep. It is a road that has become subject to higher usage over the years and was not been built for that many to start with. They felt that to dig a trench in would break down the integrity of the road and they wanted Parks and Wildlife to take on full accountability for any degradation of the road that might happen as a result of this. That option was put up through head of agency level and between the head of DIER and the head of our department it was agreed that the DIER decision would stand. So we did not follow that any further.

Later in the piece there was another rearguard action to put the ditch in the road through an area that had the most sensitive trees. We went back again and asked to look closely and again we received the same response.

Mr STURGES - I apologise for the fact that I was not able to get up to the site inspection, although I am aware of the area. Somebody at the table might be able to answer this question. Mr Sims has made a claim that he is concerned about inadequate precautions regarding the overflow, should that occur, and then went on to say that further down the

river it is used for recreational pursuits, et cetera. What contingency do you have in place? Are you satisfied that will not occur?

Mr DODSON - There are a number of contingencies. At each sewage pump station we have storage capacity for eight hours, if there is a breakdown with power or mechanically with pumps. Up at the treatment plant itself, within the treatment building, there is a small extra storage capacity there for about half a day. If that is filled we have a three megalitre HDPE-lined lagoon, which is equivalent to about six days future average dry weather flow. In addition to that we will be installing an overflow arrangement, so that if the 23 megalitre storage for the treated effluent is not all used, then it can be diverted into there. So there are a lot of belts and braces in that system. That is why we have the very large storage lagoon system up there that Mr Sims refers to as 1.5 hectares or 1.5 acres.

Mr STURGES - So you would suggest that claim is not correct, based on your contingencies?

Mr DODSON - It depends of the circumstances. Taking reasonable precautions, trying to cater for the worst situation, I think what we have there is a reasonable thing.

Mr ROBERTS - We talked about the budget ever-escalating from earlier estimates. One of the reasons the costs have gone up is the conditions being placed by the environmental regulations about all these fail-safe things. Each of them has cost money each time - bigger pump, well capacity, bigger protection and bigger storage dams. Part of the added cost of this system has come from the fact that we are looking at discharge into the World Heritage Area, which we are on the edge of. Parks and Wildlife are also managing the project.

Mr STURGES - Okay, thanks.

Mr DODSON - With this whole job there are pros and cons of doing it this way or that way and what we are trying to do is look at all the pros and cons and work out the least risk option. With the issue of building the plant down at the old mill site, basically it was judged on quite solid criteria, but we were in a less risk situation in the site that we have adopted than down at the mill site.

Mr STURGES - Thank you.

Mr BEST - Mr Chairman, the day we were up there at Cradle you put the plans up and we went through a bit of details about the system itself. Maybe we could get an appraisal or maybe you have a document covering the points of that? I have not seen any report detailing the pros and cons of both sides.

Ms JUNGALWALLA - There is an alternative option section in the DPMP that has a table comparing the various sites.

Mr DODSON - That has been gone through

Mr BEST - Okay.

Ms JUNGALWALLA - It starts on page 56.

Mr BEST - Did I get that?

Mrs NAPIER - I do not think we got that.

Mr BEST - No.

Ms JUNGALWALLA - This is the DPMP document which I think we discussed last time. We are able to provide if it is required. The DPMP and the supplement are on the basis of effectively all the environmental and planning approval documentation.

Mr BEST - Maybe we could get that document.

Mr DODSON - There has been a lot of effort gone into looking at the options, Peter. You say that you view one as being better than the other, but we did go through a fairly rigorous process to try and pick the most appropriate and least-risk option there.

CHAIR - Any further questions?

Mrs NAPIER - It has been indicated that the stakeholders have not met since May last year -

Mr BEST - No, that is not right. I gave the wrong date.

Mrs NAPIER - and we have the minutes of March. Why is it that the stakeholder management meetings have not been continued beyond earlier last year?

Mr ROBERTS - The last stakeholder meeting was held just recently. The one we had previously was in November or around about that time. The term stakeholder is the general public meeting we called at Cradle Mountain for anybody who was interested to come and hear about the project.

We have also been meeting with the 12 landowners, who are most directly related to this. This project in its present form has been submitted for environmental approval since September of last year, so the feeling was that there was no point having another stakeholder meeting while there was nothing to discuss because this was still going through the system. All the way through the most topical thing that we are managing is the end operator cost. As a future user of the system, that is as much in Parks and Wildlife -

Mrs NAPIER - Has that been resolved with the Kentish Council yet?

Mr ROBERTS - The Kentish Council is a small council which is duty bound to try to cover their own costs. The problem they have is that they want to recover the depreciation charge.

When most councils in Tasmania build a system they spread the charges across the whole ratepayer base. In this case Kentish want to charge it back to the 12 land users. In all the discussions we have had, this greater sewerage and water review that the State Government has going will have a significant effect on the way this is managed.

Mrs NAPIER - I think that has been pushed out to some two years away.

Mr ROBERTS - Yes.

Mrs NAPIER - So, how do you anticipate that this will be managed and controlled given that it is unlikely that anything significant is going to come out of the statewide water management for about five years?

Mr ROBERTS - The Kentish Council is still designated as the end operator until something is changed. For the user charge to get to a reasonable level while there is low use of the system, as it is not up to its designed capacity, that depreciation charge will still be a problem and we will need to investigate that.

Mrs NAPIER - So is it likely that the cost is going to be the equivalent of \$30 per head?

Mr ROBERTS - No, I think that was a flippant comment. The worst case we have looked at is \$16 a kilolitre. Presently it is about \$8 they are paying. Without its depreciation charge you can get it under \$10. You can have a system that is designed for full capacity for peak loads but only ever operates down here. So the charge you are trying to shoot back to everybody is a user charge based on the number of litres they use. So it gets a bit confusing, but our analysis is that if you can take the depreciation charge off or reduce it you can get an end user charge not dissimilar to what we have in the interim albeit marginally environmentally successful plants that we have at the moment.

Mrs NAPIER - Returning to the issue of the management committee, I understand you have steering committees, management committees and then stakeholder group meetings. What is the current status of the management committee? Is it regarded as being an important - this is presumably the Cradle management committee? Is this envisaged to be an important part of ongoing management by Parks in the area or what is its current status?

Mr ROBERTS - The steering committee that is being referred to, the names have been used interchangeably in different styles. The steering committee came out of the enthusiasm and passion that came out of this first document when it was being championed by Jim Bacon and money was being thrown at this project. A lot of the earlier stuff was put in place and the big project was getting the sewerage system to ground.

The steering committee that Peter refers to, at the time he came to it, was a communication thing to the major regional stakeholders like Cradle Coast, Kentish Council. I think there was a friend of the Cradle's rep and Peter and the Conservation Trust and I think that was about the size of it. As the project became more singularly focused on the sewerage scheme we were regularly still meeting with the Kentish Council, the Cradle Coast was occasionally coming to those discussions, we were regularly still meeting with landowners and occasionally with a stakeholder meeting.

So all these people were getting picked up, but it just was not through this steering committee. So that particular group was not managed through that. In a project-management sense, sitting above all this was a project control group - the head of agency and things like that - and they were making the major financial decisions. However, the

steering committee could not make decisions on where the money was spent; it could advise or give input but at the end of the day it was a government decision because it was a government project.

Mrs NAPIER - So you are continuing the Cradle management group?

Mr ROBERTS - This steering committee, as referred to?

Mrs NAPIER - I am not sure whether you are calling it a management group or a steering committee.

Mr BEST - There is not one, that is the thing. It is a steering committee.

Mrs NAPIER - It was written in that there should be an ongoing management committee with various representatives. Is such a committee to continue?

Mr ROBERTS - There is not one current or planned at the moment. One of the problems through all this process has been that Parks and Wildlife were given this major infrastructure project, not willingly might I add. We tried to give it to DIER; DIER did not want it, State Development did not want it and they gave it to us to manage. We are wearing quite a few hats in this as a contributor to the scheme and as a stakeholder in the area and then operating in the development of this system. It has been quite a bit of a dance to keep in touch with all that. At this stage I am not aware of an overall committee.

There is the Cradle Tourism Association, which is a gathering of the tourism operators. There are the stakeholder meetings, there are the Friends of Cradle, there are a lot of people having input into the area. When this was mooted

Mrs NAPIER - So it is on a random basis.

Mr ROBERTS - Yes. This management committee as this plan was mooted was more on the style of a non-statutory body I suppose, that sort of overseeing, that type of thing. That was the concept but there has not been the will or the wherewithal to set it up.

Mrs NAPIER - The will or the time?

Mr ROBERTS - Well, it takes more than one government agency to get a group like that up and keep it going. When this was done, as I say, it was done under the banner of Jim Bacon up there saying 'This is my vision for the world'. That dropped off and we are managing it within the systems we have.

Mrs NAPIER - I could have some fun with that but I won't. I know we raised it before but could you just remind me what the additional costs were of providing an environmental wrap on the sewerage pipe?

Mr DODSON - I did not give you a figure and I could not give a figure off the top of my head now. There are about 13 kilometres of pipes in the project. Some of them are treated effluent pipes, some of them are raw sewage pipes, some are pressure pipes and some are gravity pipes. But even if we look only at the one that is sewage under

pressure, there is around 2 to 3 kilometres of that. Trying to feed an inner pipe inside an outer pipe would be a very expensive exercise.

There have to be connections made to that inner pipe in any case because the area that is on the low side of the road, which will be developed in the future, has to be pumped into in the future. So that will have to go through one pipe to get to the one inside and there is going to be penetration through it anyway. We have used a high-pressure pipe, we have nominated fairly high levels of construction requirements to do that, and it will all be tested to twice what it will be subjected to under its normal working condition. There are a whole lot of steps that have to be undertaken to ensure that we minimise the risk of a failure. We do not have a wrap. I am not convinced that a wrap would actually do what Peter is suggesting it will do and we have taken other steps to overcome most of those risks in any case.

Mr HALL - One very quick one as I am conscious of the time, Mr Chairman, and that is on the sawmill site. I am just trying to recall whether we could discuss it at all as an option.

Ms JUNGALWALLA - It was discussed at the last meeting and we looked at a couple of maps in relation to where it sat on the boundary of the World Heritage Area.

Mrs NAPIER - Some of Mr Sims' material.

Mr HALL - Yes, okay. That is all right. We have been down that track.

Mr BEST - That was the point that was raised by Mr Sims, to prevent any contamination of the Iris catchment, I think. What guarantee would you give then? Would you guarantee that you are not going to contaminate the Iris catchment? You cannot guarantee that then?

Mr DODSON - No, we cannot guarantee.

Mr BEST - What level can you guarantee it to then at least?

Mr DODSON - The measures that I have explained to you before that we have taken with all these storages of the pump stations within that plant itself and then outside the plant, the 3 megalitre sewage storage and the 23 megalitre treated effluent storage, that represents many days of storage with nothing discharged to the river. If we have a plant or a pump failure or whatever, there are a lot of days' controlled storage before we have a discharge to the environment, so it gives us a lot of time to get plant or equipment or whatever is necessary. We will have spares of critical equipment -

Mr BEST - Can you have a backup? Could you have a tanker or is it just too much to tanker out?

Mr DODSON - Well, you have a tanker; you have a 23 megalitre tank.

Mr BEST - Yes, I understand that but I do not know what happens if you have torrential rain or something. Does that interfere with anything?

Mr DODSON - No, the rainfall has been taken into account in working out that storage.

Mr BEST - So when would you get past that point then? Having said that you will not guarantee, why would you not guarantee then?

Mr DODSON - We can guarantee that you will not have an overflow, within a week or two weeks of no outflows sort of thing. We can guarantee that, but if we have something like the ark event, well nobody can guarantee that.

Mr BEST - Like a what, sorry?

Mr DODSON - If it rains for 20 days and 20 nights sort of thing.

Ms JUNGALWALLA - There would be an avenue I imagine to actually get vehicles in there and pump out if it became absolutely critical.

Mr DODSON - You are talking fairly large flows and you would need a whole stream of tankers, and then where do you take it?

Mr ROBERTS - And also keeping in mind the large storage is actually treated effluent which is ready to go and be discharged into a World Heritage Area so if that flowed over you would have to be thinking of the impact. It is not like raw sewage is going to go into the environment.

Ms JUNGALWALLA - The material in the main 23-megalitre storage would be class A, recycled water.

Mr DODSON - And that applies to all possible locations. If we put it somewhere else, the risk is still the same. It is just less risk because if we put it down in that mill site will it go straight into the Dove River -

Mr BEST - Mr Chairman, we only have one copy of one lot of minutes from the Cradle Steering Committee. Given that we have heard that most of these matters have been resolved with the key stakeholders, can we get those minutes so we can verify where those issues have been resolved with key stakeholders?

CHAIR - I guess that is a question to Andrew.

Mr ROBERTS - The meetings that I have referred to where the issues have been resolved are Cradle landowner meetings. Not all of those are minuted because we are discussing the values - for example, we actually had to put on the board everybody's trading figures and how it was going to affect them. We did not put them in minutes for distributing around the State.

Mr BEST - No, we do not want commercial-in-confidence stuff, just where you resolved those points that have been raised, if there have been significant issues that have been raised. You would have them minuted.

Mr ROBERTS - To the level that those things are minuted, but it was mainly about actions; it was not about everything that is being discussed.

Mr ZENKE - Just to clarify, are you referring to the steering committee or the stakeholders?

Mr BEST - I am not sure exactly because it is a little bit confusing. As I understand, there is a steering committee and there is a stakeholder group; is that right?

Mr ZENKE - The stakeholder group is an informal group which gets briefed about the processes, whereas the steering committee was the nuts and bolts where decisions were made. It was a conglomerate of key representatives - Cradle Coast Authority, Kentish Council, Tourism Tasmania and so forth. That was actually the working group, if you like. The stakeholders have an information session so that they know where we are. Which minutes are you referring to?

Mr BEST - It is on *Hansard* where these matters have been resolved; points of contention have been raised and it has been put in evidence that these issues had been considered and are being resolved. People have been consulted, so can you show me where you have done that and I will be happy with that.

CHAIR - Is everybody clear what Brenton's asking for? He's asking for those key issues which we have been advised were resolved during a meeting.

Mrs NAPIER - I raise the question that Mr Sims raised, but I must admit I thought about at the time when I was driving out. We seem to have put the sewerage pond right in the middle of the development area, if you like, where you have various resorts and commercial enterprises both on the north and south sides of the sewerage pond. What is the future plan because not many people are going to want to have a major commercial operation, let alone a residence, next to a sewerage scheme? What does this mean for future development in that area?

Mr ROBERTS - The thought was that the development zone is basically from the park boundary up to Mary's Corner. That is the area that was being considered within the window of planning of this project. Placement of this plant anywhere within that envelope has exactly the same points that you have just raised. They all have boundary overlap issues and distribution issues. It is all about focussing on trying to minimise the distribution - trench distance, safety for the land it is sitting on, all those issues.

It is a bit like the treatment systems themselves. There is more than one way you can do this, but on balance this was selected as the best alternative.

Ms JUNGALWALLA - In terms of potential boundary impacts, the attenuation distances have been established and there are buffers outlined in the document and the supplement. As is noted in the submission, there was an appeal. That appeal was dropped by the appellant in relation to the site to the north.

Mrs NAPIER - That was the Grollo one, wasn't it?

Ms JUNGALWALLA - Yes. There was a lot of information provided through that process in addition to and in summary of the DPMP, outlining the fact that the noise and the odour, those values, would not be compromised at the boundaries of the site. There will be post-commissioning monitoring, particularly noise monitoring, at that site boundary to ensure that it does not impact on the potential for neighbouring land users to develop their land.

CHAIR - Is there any other comment?

Ms JUNGALWALLA - A couple of comments were made in relation to information on the DPMP. The submission that Mr Sims made to the council has been addressed and that is in the supplement which has been available on the web site. Do you need any of this information made available by GHD?

Mr BEST - Yes.

Mrs NAPIER - That would be good.

Ms JUNGALWALLA - The full DPMP and the supplement document?

Mr BEST - Yes and I want the minutes and so forth.

CHAIR - Thank you. The meeting is adjourned.

THE WITNESSES WITHDREW.