



PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS

New Bridgewater Police Station

Brought up by Ms Butler and ordered by the House of Assembly to be printed.

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

The Committee has the honour to report to the House of Assembly in accordance with the provisions of the *Public Works Committee Act 1914* on the -

New Bridgewater Police Station

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 This reference recommended the Committee approve works to demolish the existing Bridgewater Police Station and Police residence at 20-22 Green Point Road, Bridgewater, and construct a new Police Station on the site. To ensure ongoing service delivery and police presence in the area while the new station is being constructed, the proposed works also include the creation of a police shopfront at the Brighton Civic Centre and the fit-out of a vacant space at the Glenorchy Police Station to accommodate Bridgewater police personnel.
- 2.2 The existing police station is the Bridgewater Divisional Station. The current station is a 24/7 station, with a public enquiries office open from 8:40am until 4:30pm Monday-Friday. The Bridgewater Police Station provides policing services to the rapidly growing Brighton municipality. Being a divisional station, it also services the needs of, and provides backup to, both the New Norfolk and Oatlands subdivisions, and other Southern District Divisions (Hobart, Glenorchy, Clarence, Kingston and East Coast) when required.
- 2.3 The Bridgewater Police Station was built in 1981 and has been upgraded several times to meet the demands of policing in the Division. The station was originally built to house 15 to 20 police officers and currently accommodates 62 personnel.
- 2.4 Despite being upgraded several times, the station no longer has the appropriate space, layout or supporting infrastructure to adequately allow police operations to continue efficiently or effectively. It also does not have capacity to accommodate an expected further increase in police numbers. The station has now reached a point where further refurbishment and upgrades are unlikely to provide the best design to suit future policing needs, or provide a value for money investment.
- 2.5 In recognition of the identified deficiencies with the current station, and to ensure Tasmania police can continue to deliver effective policing to the area, the Tasmanian Government has committed \$12.5 million to construct a contemporary and efficient state-of-the-art Bridgewater Police Station.
- 2.6 The new Bridgewater Police Station will initially accommodate approximately 63 staff:
- 44 constables;
 - 6 sergeants;
 - 1 divisional sergeant;
 - 1 inspector;

- 3 State Service Employees;
- 1 CIB sergeant; and
- 7 CIB constables.

It is anticipated that these numbers will increase into the future and growth of police numbers has been considered in the new police station design, with the new station able to accommodate 83 personnel including CIB and three state employees

- 2.7 Whilst the new station is being constructed, staff are to be decanted into the 830 m² void at the Glenorchy police station. This will involve a minimal fit-out of the void to accommodate current staff numbers.
- 2.8 To ensure an ongoing police presence in the Bridgewater community during the build, a dedicated space within the Brighton Civic Centre will be leased for use as a police station shopfront. The hours of operation for the public enquiries office will remain as 8:40am until 4:30pm, Monday to Friday and the shopfront will mean the local community will not be required to travel to the Glenorchy Police Station to seek police assistance. Inside the current hours of operation, the Bridgewater Station's Customer Service Officers (CSOs) will be based within the temporary shopfront police station. Once a police officer's shift commences, they will also operate from the Civic Centre site, ensuring that service delivery and police response times within the local community are not impacted.
- 2.9 It is expected that once constructed, the new Bridgewater Police Station will deliver a police facility with the capacity and security requirements to respond to the community's policing needs effectively and efficiently by:
 - providing a fit for purpose station to meet the workflow and functionality required for the demands of a modern policing environment;
 - building a facility that is designed to meet expected future police numbers;
 - improving the Work Health and Safety of employees through the provision of state of the art, purpose-built facilities;
 - providing a modern facility to interface and interact with the public and anyone visiting the facility,
 - providing a vulnerable witness interview room designed to meet best practice for victim survivors;
 - creating an additional location for incident management and incident staging, due to the inclusion of a Major Incident Room (MIR) and conference facilities;
 - providing disability access throughout that meets current standards;
 - providing suitable secure parking and storage; and

- providing parking areas for visitors, and other personnel.

3 PROJECT COSTS

- 3.1 Pursuant to the Message from Her Excellency the Governor-in-Council, the estimated cost of the work is \$12.5 million.

The Department of Police, Fire and Emergency Management (DPFEM) submission provided further detail on the cost estimates for this project:

... The allocated funding for the Bridgewater Police Station provided by the Tasmanian State Government is \$12.5 million. This funding covers both the construction and non-construction costs, which includes architectural fees, furniture, decant fit out, police shopfront fit-out, IT plus an \$80,000 public art works component. Funding has been allocated across 2022-23 through 2025-26.

The project working group provided the industry knowledge PLA needed to prepare the approved schematic Bridgewater Police Station design. An estimate of likely construction cost was ordered in April 2023, and indicated at the early design stage the project would exceed the \$12.5 million allocated budget. As the initial overall station footprint (excluding outbuildings) was quite large (1745m²), this was reduced by over 220m² to realign the costs with the budget, without altering the overall functional layout (Refer section 5.1). As a cost saving measure, the existing Shed A in Figure 2 will partially be retained as the structure is still sound.

...

As is best practice, a contingency amount is included in the quantity estimate to allow for any cost creep, as well as design variations and unforeseen construction costs. The initial cost estimate allowed for a six-monthly percentage escalation of 5.2%, with a 10% design and contingency allowance.¹

¹ *Bridgewater Police Station 20-22 Green Point Road, Submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, Department of Police, Fire and Emergency Management, 13 November 2023, page 18.*

4 EVIDENCE

4.1 The Committee commenced its inquiry on Monday, 13 November last with an inspection of the site of the proposed works. The Committee then returned to Parliament House, whereupon the following witnesses appeared, made the Statutory Declaration and were examined by the Committee in public:-

- Jonothan Higgins, Deputy Commissioner, Tasmania Police;
- Lisa Kavanagh, Project Manager, DPFEM;
- Peter Gaggin, Project Director, Philp Lighton Architects;
- Maciek Salacinski, Project Architect, Philp Lighton Architects;
- Jarrod Burton, Senior Electrical Engineer, JMG Engineers and Planners; and
- Mandy Clark, Deputy Secretary, DPFEM;

The following Committee Members were present:

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

Overview

4.2 Mr Higgins provided an overview of the proposed works:

Mr HIGGINS - ... The Tasmanian Government has allocated \$12.5 million over four years from 2022-23 to the 2025-26 financial year to upgrade the existing Bridgewater Police Station. Initial scoping identified that the current building is no longer suitable to be further upgraded or expanded. Funds committed will be used to demolish the existing station and vacant residence to enable the construction of a new, contemporary, fit-for-purpose police station. The funding covers the construction and the non-construction costs, which include architectural fees, furniture and IT infrastructure plus \$80 000 for public artwork.

The Department of Police, Fire and Emergency Management is presenting this submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works for approval to construct a new police station on the existing site at 20-22 Green Point Road, Bridgewater.

In March 2022, project funds were approved by the former Minister of Police, Fire and Emergency Management, the Honourable Jacquie Petrusma, to be used to perform minor works to the Glenorchy Police Station void to accommodate Bridgewater personnel during construction. To ensure a police presence in Bridgewater during the build, a space within the Brighton Civic Centre across the road from the existing station, will be leased in order to establish a police shopfront.

Geographically, Bridgewater Division is one of the largest Tasmanian Police Divisions in the state and covers four municipalities - Brighton, Derwent Valley, Central Highlands and Southern Midlands. Bridgewater Division includes the subdivisional stations at New Norfolk, which incorporates the one-person police stations at Bushy Park, Hamilton and Maydena, and Oatlands, which incorporates the one-person police stations at Liawenee, Bothwell and Kempton.

The need for a new station is consistent with the predicted population growth in the Brighton municipality, driven by the supply of land for affordable housing, as well as infrastructure projects such as the new Brighton High School and Brighton Industrial Estate.

As a result of predicted growth rates, the timely provision of a new police station and associated infrastructure will become increasingly significant for the area and caters for a future growth in police numbers. Additionally, the new police station will provide a modern and efficient operating environment contained within the building's functional layout, including state-of-the-art IT technologies, a major incident room, conference room and a vulnerable witness room.

It will reduce maintenance costs as the existing police station is rundown and cannot be further upgraded or expanded. It will reduce operating costs, resulting from building efficiency, including provision of solar panels and electrical vehicle charging to be installed. It will improve the work health safety of employees. It will improve access, safety and security for the local community.

The Need for a New Bridgewater Police Station – Addressing the Inadequacies of the Current Station

- 4.3 The Committee had undertaken a site inspection of the current Bridgewater Police Station, and Members witnessed firsthand many of the deficiencies with the station. At the public hearing the witnesses were asked to put on the record reasons why a new Bridgewater Police Station was needed:

Ms BUTLER - It might be opportune for the record if you could run through in your own words the current station and why that is not fit for purpose and provide some examples.

...

Mr HIGGINS - I used the example, or the reality of the decontamination area out the back, which was the hose and the hook on the wall. Going into the charge room, not an all-weather type entry, not a sally port in what we would see on the fantastic site at New Norfolk, which is very large, indoors and able to cope with it; a very similar climate, similar temperatures in the winter. That is just an example of that.

So being able to safely move people who may be in custody in and out of that charge area is particularly important. Also splitting up, I used this as an example in the charge area where someone might be brought in for a breathalyser, as opposed to a crime going straight to the charge area. At the moment, they both come through the same door. So being able to look at how that is done to ensure that we are appropriately dealing with - I will call them 'clients' - at the time, I think it is important.

In the uniform area and I guess, the amenities that are there for the members when they are having their meal breaks and down time, it's extremely dated. It's small, it's only designed for a small number of people as opposed to the reality now where they can have crossover shifts of anything up to 20 plus people who might be using that area.

The CIB area, as I described at the time, is like being in a corridor, and it was. We can see that they have covered up the windows that come from the corridor inside and the corridor is probably less than a metre or so across, not very wide, and it will be two metres in the new station to be able to move around. So having that purpose-built area there.

Having an area in a new station where they've actually got more facilities, amenities, toilets, changerooms. I showed you there are two showers. Two showers for the 60-odd people who work there, not all at the same time, but imagine needing to have a shower on shift for

whatever reason, being contaminated or something, it's challenging if the entire shift needs to do that in a reasonable time.

The toilet areas. There were two female toilets. In the men's there was literally a couple of urinals and a toilet. Not fit for purpose for now, not modern, not what you would expect for our members and the facilities they should have from now and into the next few decades that we expect a station to ask for.

I showed you where the property is currently stored... whilst it's secure, the area is not designed for property to go into it. For instance, it had another purpose when it was originally built. That changes that situation there.

We went to the back of the car park and in the middle of the back car park area, you have to understand that had big trees in it as well, so it was landscaped but with the age, they have been cut down. Even that, with the number of police vehicles and private vehicles, they are essentially racked and stacked. They don't have their own car spots necessarily. They are parked wherever they can find a spot, including when I walked outside the charge room, the divisional van was literally right there [directly outside the rear door] and they make do. We have incredible staff who make do with things to get the job done.

Ms BUTLER - And disability access is also an issue as well with the current station, is that correct?

Mr HIGGINS - In the front, in the public inquiries, the access is fine. In the back though, and the charge area was a good example of that, or even into the rear door where staff were coming out, yes, it's not.

Continuation of Policing During Construction

4.4 The Committee sought to understand how policing would continue to be delivered to the community while the new Bridgewater Police Station was being built:

Ms BUTLER - ... it might be positive to explain the overall logistical plan with the build and the use of the Civic Centre and Glenorchy Station and also the New Norfolk Station. For the record, it would be good to have an explanation of what that is going to look like over the next 18 months while this project is initiated and to fruition.

Mr HIGGINS - Certainly, it is important you and the greater community understand that service delivery will continue. The first part of work that will need to be done will be to fit out a void at Glenorchy Police Station where we can decant the staff at Bridgewater station. The Bridgewater station has gone from a staff of 25 only three years ago to a number of CIB people as well ... so up to about 30 people - to 62 staff. It is considerable.

CHAIR - Is that combining shifts?

Mr HIGGINS - Yes, combining all the shifts at Bridgewater. That does not include New Norfolk and the outer subdivisions. We need a home for them, not necessarily to deploy from during their shift but from the start of their shift. The Glenorchy Station will be that. There is a void within that building with nothing in it at all. We will fit that out - a basic fit-out where staff can keep their equipment and have personal space to be able to start. The Civic Centre across the road from the current police station will then also be fitted out to be a shopfront. The community will not lose a shopfront. It is still within a very close proximity to where the current station is and familiar with the area and will be able to still maintain that without having to look for the station and where it might be.

In that, we will have a public inquiries area. It will also have a charging suite. Our charging suite will probably be to a lesser degree than a formal station but able to function. Also, it will have space where staff on shift can go back to during their taskings, whether it is completing paperwork or coming back to speak to a member of the public or otherwise. They can do that without going outside their area. They will commence, though, from Glenorchy Station.

New Norfolk station is less than 15 minutes up the Lyle Highway and will be used for probably the more complex charging. That can also go back to Glenorchy and Hobart as another option. Part of that subdivision, still keeping staff within their greater division and being able to service that entire community, as they do at New Norfolk after their operating hours at the current New Norfolk station. That won't change at all. Bridgewater does respond to that now. It is essentially within their response area now.

- 4.5 The Committee recognised there may be some concern that service to the community and police response times for incidents may be affected during the build. The Committee sought further information from the witnesses, who assured the Committee the measures being put in place during the build would ensure an ongoing community presence and response times would not be adversely impacted:

Ms BUTLER - ... there is concern within the New Norfolk community or the Derwent Valley about the response time when the station is not operational. If police officers are coming from Glenorchy to the Derwent Valley instead of from Bridgewater to the Derwent Valley, there may be a greater response time? Will they be coming from Glenorchy or from the Civic Centre? Is there going to be a further delay in response time in those hours between 1 a.m. and 6 a.m.?

Mr HIGGINS - I can certainly allay the figures there. The staff on shift will be working from Bridgewater from that Civic Centre area. They will commence at Glenorchy but there are crossovers of our shifts. They will be working essentially across the road from where they are working now so the response time will be the same. Bear in mind that our sworn members do not sit at the station. They are only there when they are doing work and outside that they are responding to jobs or are proactively patrolling the community.

...

Ms BUTLER - There is also a police presence in the Derwent Valley in those early morning hours with bail checks and so forth. Could you talk us through that for the record?

MR HIGGINS - As in from Bridgewater or New Norfolk?

Ms BUTLER - From Bridgewater or New Norfolk - there is that presence there while those checks are being undertaken.

Mr HIGGINS - The Bridgewater 24-hour station supplements the staffing across that division. If, say Derwent Valley or the Oatlands subdivision needs assistance, that can be deployed very easily in the first instance from the Bridgewater 24-hour station, where there will be three vehicles on with multiple-member response.

In those smaller stations in the Derwent Valley or the Oatlands subdivision, they are either working a shift or they are on an on-day. They generally work an eight-hour day within a full 24-hour day. They are available during that time. It won't change the response time or the service to those communities. Whether it's bail checks in the early hours of the morning, up through the greater New Norfolk area, that may be done through the Bridgewater staff as well.

Brighton Civic Centre Police Shopfront

- 4.6 The Committee understood a police shopfront would be established in the Brighton Civic Centre, which is directly across the road from the police station, to ensure a continued police presence in the community during construction. The Committee sought further information on how this facility would operate:

CHAIR - Given you are operating out of the Civic Centre at Bridgewater, what are the operating hours of the Civic Centre?

Mr HIGGINS - The public inquiries will be only during the day but the staffing for a sworn deployment will be 24 hours a day.

...

CHAIR - In effect, for any major aspects of your operations, it just serves as a staging point?

Mr HIGGINS - That is exactly right. If there was a major incident for example, when we have moved to the Civic Centre -having knocked down the current Bridgewater station to build it, if there was something that was required outside of that, there is a fully functional major incident room in the New Norfolk police station. That could service that.

There was an example used almost out of the blue by one of our detective sergeants, when they described an incident last year where it was used for a major incident at the New Norfolk station to respond to something in that Bridgewater area where we also had specialist units; having the space to be briefed properly, not in a cramped environment as you experienced out there in the current station; to be able to do it to ensure they are getting all the taskings they need and all safety requirements adhered to.

CHAIR - While the Civic Centre is virtually a staging centre or serving public inquiries, is it a secure location?

Mr HIGGINS - Yes, the Civic Centre will be and there will be security added to that. The council has security measures, but having essentially a pseudo-police station within will require a little bit more. We will ensure that is the case and it is suitably upgraded to ensure the safety of the staff is paramount.

Ms BUTLER - Could it also be viewed as an opportunity for TasPolice to engage on a community level with the Bridgewater, Gagebrook and Herdsmans Cove community by having that shopfront in that Civic Centre. Could you run through what that might look like for the record?

Mr HIGGINS - There is a coffee shop inside. We had a number of community members in there enjoying a morning coffee. They are very close to the staff who are working.

...

Mr HIGGINS - No doubt there will be many coffees purchased by the staff and engagement with the community. It will be positive engagement during that time.

...

CHAIR - Are you expecting to hold offenders at the Civic Centre or would you be doing that at Glenorchy or New Norfolk?

Mr HIGGINS - Any offenders who present a greater risk will not be at the Civic Centre. They will be taken to Glenorchy and Hobart. This tends to be the case now. If somebody is held for court, they are not held at Bridgewater now. I did show you there is a decontamination site at the back of the Bridgewater station. I noted the surprise at the time. That is what they have to deal with. We still need something that is close by. We have requirements to make sure that someone who is taken into custody is tended to as well, if capsicum spray or something is used on them. There will still be things that can mitigate that for them and decontaminate. But no, the civic centre is not an area with any cells or lockup facilities.

CHAIR - Are you improving external access, such as windows and those sorts of things? As a civic centre, it is not something that people would be concerned about incursion too much but a police station they might.

Mr HIGGINS - Bear in mind that there will not be any equipment stored there that presents a risk to the public. There will be upgrades to the security and windows to make it safe. Being a civic centre in a public space, it is not an area we want to bring people who present a risk to the community, particularly with how close the coffee shop is there.

Measures to Ensure the Safety of Vulnerable People

- 4.7 The Committee recognised vulnerable persons or witnesses may need to attend the police station. The Committee was keen to understand how the new station design would ensure these interactions could be conducted in a manner which is sensitive to the needs and safety of vulnerable persons:

CHAIR - With respect to vulnerable witnesses, you are catering for them when they are in the building. Those sorts of witnesses need to get to the building and if they are vulnerable they are not going to be wanting to walk up to the front door. Are these sorts of people likely to be brought in a police car and then taken out the back and enter through a sally port or what?

Mr HIGGINS - Good question. With our new Family Sexual Violence Command, which predominately are now the ones that service vulnerable witnesses and interview and take statements and so forth, the idea with Bridgewater Station is to have a site where they can take witnesses like that to a safe environment. An option might be coming in the front door if that is what they are comfortable doing, but it might be coming with one of the specialist investigators into the actual station itself and not going through the front door and having a far better experience than they have now.

I did show you what I would class as an old-style vulnerable witness room. It would be fair to say that it is not what is expected today and it is not used for that purpose any more, especially with our new Arch centres. They are operating in Launceston and Hobart where the witnesses are going now. Bridgewater is an alternate site to use because the witness may not want to go into the city. There need to be options there for people to be able to get the best experience they can when they are going through the traumatic event.

CHAIR - Even walking through the internals of the station, if a detective or a constable is bringing someone in from the rear of the building, the secure access and interview room is pretty close to where the access is. Having to walk right through, being observed even by officers might be a traumatic thing for them.

Mr HIGGINS - This was highlighted in the commission of inquiry with an experience of a person in the Launceston Station which was pretty traumatic. Everything we do in this area now, particularly with new builds and new facilities, is with a trauma-informed approach, with input from victims/survivors and what they may need. This is not a primary facility for a victims/survivor to come to but a site, if need be, where they can be reassured.

CHAIR - It could be a holding point.

Mr HIGGINS - Yes, or it could be where they want to go and they may not want to go into the city. It may be comfortable staying in their own suburb for that matter. Any interactions there by the specialist investigators will be done in a trauma-informed way without parading through a station.

Mr GAGGIN - Further to that, there are alternate doors accessible straight from vehicle parks out the front of the building which is around in a secure site. If they come in in a police vehicle they can go around the side, enter in. There are options. It will be the officer's call which door they use.

Ms KAVANAGH - They can avoid the sally port area and come in another door.

Mr GAGGIN - There is a back door, which is near the kitchen and the toilet. They can walk through there, but it is a fair way away. There is also another door just off the administrative hub at the front of the building which they could use, which is still on the secure side of the line in the sand.

Incident Response Facilities

4.8 The Committee had seen the lack of appropriate incident response facilities at the current station. The Committee asked the witnesses to provide further detail on the incident response capability that would be provided in the new station:

CHAIR - We also saw this morning the area where officers have their lunch and also the fact that it is used as a presentation area from time to time. Or as a sort of incident area?

Mr HIGGINS - Yes, a briefing area. Yes.

CHAIR - Can you explain how that is going to change?

Mr HIGGINS - Yes, so they will have separate areas. There will be a separate incident room where briefings can occur and a separate area where the staff can have a break, without having operational things around them and having tables in an incident room. They will have a space where they have functional kitchen facilities to have meals, to have that break, to be at a gathering with their shift, or otherwise to be able to unwind and have that break that they deserve.

CHAIR - I note in the submission - I assume it might be what we have just been talking about - it says 'a MIR and conference facilities'.

Mr HIGGINS - That is the major incident room.

CHAIR - ...Given the area you're covering, it could be a significant set of incidents that you might have to deal with on an annual basis. Are there any special facilities that are being incorporated into the new build that increase the equipment and the like that is going to help cope with incidents like that?

Ms KAVANAGH - The MIR will have TV and computer setup a bit like the Sorell setup. There will be lots of TVs on the wall, which allows them to manage a major incident from that room.

CHAIR - So, you would expect other emergency services to be utilising that space in a circumstance like that, or would that be likely to be somewhere else, if it was involving multiple emergency services like SES [State Emergency Service]?

Mr HIGGINS - Not necessarily. It could be an area which is multipurpose. As a general rule, it is a police facility; but if an incident required a greater, multi-agency response, it certainly could. It might have Fire, it might have SES and police all working in the same area.

Bearing in mind that Fire do have facilities in other parts of the division there as well, but this would probably be the most modern one, with New Norfolk as well.

CHAIR - I am presuming that there is a statewide plan for handling incidents. I was wondering if Bridgewater as the new build was factored into that, or if this is for incidents in the general area as opposed to more widespread incidents?

Mr HIGGINS - No; it certainly could be used for a multi-agency response with our partner agencies. We work very closely together and, if required, it could do it.

The beauty of being one department is we have the same computer system, access to things. It is not like the Sorell hub, which is a multi-agency station. This would be one that we work in collaboration with Bridgewater Police.

Building Security

- 4.9 The Committee recognised the need for a police station to have adequate security, not just in terms of incursion, but across a broad range of elements. The Committee questioned the witnesses in detail about the range of security measures being incorporated into the station design:

CHAIR - The reality of somebody being able to walk up to the building and just look through the window and eyeball the person that is being interviewed. That is pretty sub-par. What is the circumstance with the new build and protection of the witnesses, as much as the officers that might be there?

Mr GAGGIN - We have placed the windows to all the offices about 2.1 metres above the floor level of the station. With the slope of the ground, by the time you get down to the front it is 3 metres above.

Mr SALACINSKI - Unless you are high in the ground somewhere; and you would have to have binoculars or something.

Mr GAGGIN - The other side of that is, because the ground slopes from the back to the front towards Green Point Road, the front is accessed by stairs and an accessible ramp. We have made that quite glazed so it is welcoming and that is where the lights will be on and those sorts of things; but once again it is 1.5 to 2 metres above ground level so you won't be able to drive a vehicle in there.

The other thing we have put in is basically a line in the sand around the building about what is secure and insecure. The front with the public car park is come and go, public access; then up the driveway which is separated from the driveway for the public vehicles, you have the police driveway - that is controlled by a big boom gate on a swipe card. The other thing we have put in is, if for some reason the driveway into the back of the station is blocked, either accidentally or maliciously, we have another emergency exit built to the uphill side as you look at it. That will be a locked gate and a carpark. So, there is alternate egress out of the station.

Another thing we have done is in the more sociable areas, for example, the inspector and the vulnerable witness person, we have built a light court around the outside that is secured from the side. What we have worked on is restricting vision in, so you have to be standing right outside to see in. Again, it is at quite a height. We are planning a garden outside that, so the view out from the vulnerable person room, there will be a window out into that garden.

...

CHAIR - In what I am looking at here, the front façade of the building, there is quite a lot of glass. Presumably that glass is pretty heavy duty?

Mr GAGGIN - Yes, indeed. You can see from that picture, the level of the floor is considerably above the ground.

CHAIR - Yes, and these windows are higher. The plantings next to the building - I am assuming you wouldn't be having lots of bushes right up next to the building?

Mr GAGGIN - We are planning on basically having a low-maintenance rock garden - but not throwable rocks, more of a pebble garden. The other concern raised was the trees in the south-west corner fronting onto Green Point Road being a concealment spot for comings and goings so we are removing those. The other concern raised by operational staff at the station was the boundary, where you notice the houses above the station look down; and quite a few of them take a keen interest in, not so much the coming and going of police, but the comings and goings of people out of the front door, community members. We are planning on planting a screening hedge or something along those lines.

CHAIR - In effect there is a term for it when I was in local government - 'designing out crime'.

Mr GAGGIN - That is right, it is called Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design [CPTED]. The aim is to eliminate any hidey-holes, work out a path of travel, keep it well lit, keep it under surveillance, which is what we have planned in here. It has been designed under CPTED conditions, even to the extent where someone is charged and bailed to appear in the charge suite, they are not led back out of the secure zone. They are exited out into the public area, but not through the station. We have planned for all those sorts of things. There is a definite public presence and then through technology and locks, basically, there is a limit to how far you can go into the building once that happens.

Ms BUTLER - How will the East Derwent Highway side of the complex be protected?

Mr GAGGIN - A secure fence similar to the Glenorchy station that backs onto the bike path. Spear-topped aluminium pole fence.

...

CHAIR - In terms of some of the electronic services and the like, I'm presuming that that's all catered for, in a security sense, in terms of placement in the building, and access?

...

Ms KAVANAGH - Yes, it has been taken care of.

Mr GAGGIN - There is a Gallagher card system throughout the building, with CCTV where required.

Ms KAVANAGH - And it gets reviewed by a special response area.

CHAIR - But server rooms and those sorts of things?

Ms KAVANAGH - Yes, they're positioned where they're secure, and they do have CCTV cameras and alarms on most doors.

...

CHAIR - You have traffic management, you have showed us where the staff cars are going to be, secure and separate. There will be proper gates, not just boom gates.

Mr GAGGIN - Big sliding gates.

CHAIR - That stop incursion.

Mr GAGGIN - Yes, controlled by swipe cards or proximity.

CHAIR - Including an emergency access from the rear car park?

Mr GAGGIN - Yes, around the top side of the car park there will be an emergency road that leads down into the public car park. If something or someone blocks the standard car park the police can unlock the other side. They can still get in or out.

...

Ms BUTLER - Page 14 - I have a question about CCTV. What will that look like within the station, and also around the perimeters of the station?

Ms KAVANAGAH - We have to cover everywhere. There's areas inside that need to be covered, particularly in the charge area, but not in the rest of the station. Externally, we've had it maximised so we've positioned cameras so that we can look at the whole site. The contractor has done that. I can't remember how many cameras there are off the top of my head; but they put them wherever they need to put them, so that the whole site is covered.

Ms BUTLER - Will the Civic Centre have additional CCTV?

Ms KAVANAGH - Yes, we have to include that. We have already had a meeting with the council's CCTV and IT people and our own contractors on site. They have all worked together, so we know where they're going to go and how it will all tie in together so that neither will interfere with the other.

Cells

4.10 The Committee had seen the cells at the current police station, and noted they were not currently used for their intended purpose. The Committee sought further information on the provision of cells at the new police station:

CHAIR - We noted on our way through the current cells that are there being used for anything other than their purpose. I'm assuming that this new facility will have appropriate cells for being able to hold people for shorter periods of time.

Mr HIGGINS - That's correct. It will have modern state-of-the-art compliant custody areas where people can be held. We are not talking about overnight or anything like that. It is not that type of station. They come into the city, into Hobart, for that but when someone may need to be held while other processes are happening or otherwise, at the moment, that facility doesn't exist.

CHAIR - You say state-of-the-art, so I'm assuming that things like hanging points and those sorts of things are absolutely non-existent in those new cells?

Mr HIGGINS - In new cells they would have to be fully compliant with our current requirements.

Demolition of Existing Police Residence

- 4.11 The Committee was aware there was an existing, but unused, police residence on the site that would be demolished to accommodate the new build. The Committee sought further information on why it was deemed necessary to demolish the police residence:

Mr WOOD - On the current site, there's standalone accommodation, the residence there. That's going?

Mr HIGGINS - Yes.

Mr WOOD - And going to be amalgamated within the whole footprint of the new - for the record, could we have an explanation as to why that dwelling is being removed?

Mr HIGGINS - Essentially the site, the station itself, the footprint is doubling in size. It is moving forward as well, so it will be closer to the road. There will be more car parking in the back and then encroaching onto the site of the current residence, which hasn't been renovated for many years. Sporadically, it has had members living in it. From your tour, it would probably be reasonable to say that it is not a modern house to live in and would need considerable money to upgrade it.

We did consider it as a site to use as a temporary station area, but the cost was going to be too great to warrant that, to just knock it down, and not a good use of public money to do that, in our mind. In this case, the house would be demolished as well. The footprint of the station will be increased for the new station, but also the road to the side there on that boundary to go into the car park, making it secure and functional.

Impact of External Lighting on Nearby Residences

- 4.12 The Committee understood a larger, secure car park would be provided onsite, requiring more lighting. The Committee questioned the witnesses on how this would impact, if at all, nearby residences:

Mr WOOD - Presumably you will have a larger car park, therefore in the darker months you will have more lighting and more security for staff and members of the public, and the impact on the dozen or so residences in proximity there has been considered?

Mr BURTON - The external lighting we are looking at using has got a fair degree of control and it will throw in directions we specify. There will also be screening between the housing and the car parks. All of our lights will be mounted towards the building and that throws away from the building, so you do not get backwards spill light or any spill light that will hit the face of the station.

Ms BUTLER - Subsequent to Mr Wood's question, will the surrounding properties be protected from that glare of overhead lights and so forth in that carparking area? Could you run us through what that will look like?

Mr BURTON - The expected glare would be no higher than what we have at the moment with street lighting. The way we will mount them and the mounting height, we will try to tilt the bodies away from the buildings and throw them directly down. The optics on the new LED fittings we have specified have really tight optical controls. They are not like the old high-pressure sodium or that sort of stuff where it throws light everywhere.

CHAIR - Not a lot of spill.

Mr BURTON - There is a lot of spill on the old ones. These new ones are very tight and they are designed as what is called dark skies. They are designed to not throw light anywhere you don't want them - including to the point where some of the light fittings you can change individual lenses on the LEDs. If you don't want it here, you move that lens around and you don't get light in that direction. The light fittings we have specified are only mounted at about 5 metres. They will be likely at or below the window level and the chances of light spilling back up into a window is minimised in that way. The additional planting that's been planned should remove any further light spill.

Future of Temporary Police Facilities at Glenorchy and Bridgewater

4.13 The Committee understood the need for the temporary facilities at Glenorchy Police Station and the Brighton Civic Centre, recognising they were necessary to ensure continuity of policing in the area. The Committee was interested to understand what would happen with these facilities once the new station was operational:

CHAIR - What happens to the refurbished area of the Glenorchy station after the build?

Mr HIGGINS - ... The void at Glenorchy station will be fitted out in a basic fit-out so it can be used, whether it be a corporate area or a uniform area in the future or a specialist area once the Bridgewater Station staff go back into their new station. That will be something where the money spent on the facilities will then be able to be used for the future and the future of that station. I don't think many people realise the Glenorchy station had a third that hadn't been done at all. It was done in that way that if ever need be and we had budget at that particular time, that we had room to move.

It will be re-purposed. We haven't determined what will go in there, but we will consider that over the next 12-months.

Mr GAGGIN - We were fortunate enough to have done Glenorchy station. We were the consultants for Glenorchy station and it was once again sized for the occupation of that space during the original fit-out. All the toilets and showers and space and those sorts of things were once again sized to accommodate that fit-out. So, when the Bridgewater Division moves in, during the build, there are ample toilets and showers and those sorts of things already existing that can be shared with the Glenorchy station.

Ms BUTLER - And the same question about what will happen to the space in the Civic Centre once that is no longer used for police purposes?

Ms KAVANAGH - That will be made good, back to what it was before. We will put the doors back the way they were. The council has already said, depending on what the box is that we put in - which is the charge room and the property store - they may want to keep that as storage because they are running out of storage. So, there is a possibility that it may stay and there is provision for that in the lease if they decide they want to do that. Other than that, everything will go back to the way it was.

Project Timeline

4.14 The Committee sought to understand how the project would be staged and the overall project timeframe:

Ms BUTLER - Can you run us through the timeline of the actual project?

Ms KAVANAGH -... For Bridgewater, basically we have Glenorchy first. We can't do anything with Bridgewater, until we finish the Glenorchy fit-out. That tender went out on the 14 October and closes tomorrow.

...

Ms KAVANAGH - Hopefully we can award that in December, depending on when in December and depending on the contractor's capacity. If the contract is executed, they may be able to start work in December or January. It's probably unlikely, but you can but hope they can start earlier. Practical completion is May. It has to be finished in May so we can start Bridgewater; the Brighton Civic Centre, once we award the contract for Glenorchy, we will be able to start working backwards as to when we can get the builder to work on Brighton. So that's dependent we have somebody ready to go with that and we have done all the CCTV and the rest of that stuff. It's all hinging on Glenorchy, but obviously both Glenorchy and Brighton need to be completed in May next year and then the RFT for Bridgewater will be advertised either December or January, works commencing in May - linked together, with practical completion in July 2025 and the station occupied July/August 2025.

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

4.15 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 always ask a series of questions at the end of each presentation and hearing and they come directly from the Public Works Committee Act of 1914

... The questions are: does the proposed works meet an identified need or needs, or solve a recognised problem?

Mr HIGGINS - ... If we go back to my opening statement and the question Ms Butler asked about the need for the station. The current station was built in 1981 to house 15 to 20 staff. The community then was very small.

...

Mr HIGGINS - ... The need has certainly increased with the Brighton municipality. The urban sprawl they're experiencing in Brighton but also the changes in the community there in Bridgewater, Gagebrook and encroaching into the Old Beach area, where the outer reaches are. It has certainly changed the community needs and expectations of what they want from their police. This station will provide that but also future-proof it. Essentially, we are looking at a station that will be there for a number of decades and we have to be realistic that it is going to be the case. It does need to service us for now and into the next 30 to 40 years, potentially, and it will do that.

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

Mr HIGGINS - We did scope to try to find other sites. Should we go on the site we are on, or should we look at alternate sites? At the end of the day, it was determined that the station is in the best possible position for the community needs, which is why we are proposing building on the site we currently own.

CHAIR - Are the proposed works fit for purpose?

Mr HIGGINS - They will be once they are done. It will future-proof the needs there for that greater Bridgewater area.

...

CHAIR - ... Do the proposed works provide value for money?

Mr HIGGINS - On looking at the stations we have been building in the last few years, they haven't been 24-hour stations, so a station of this magnitude, yes, absolutely it is value for money. We have seen the benefits for the community in the greater Longford area with the Longford station there, the New Norfolk station as well and the cost of those. I would agree that this one, the funding that has been allocated, will be fit for purpose and suit the needs of the community.

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

Mr HIGGINS - Yes, they are and it is highlighted there in the three phases we are doing. In particular, identifying the Civic Centre as a shopfront, using the current site we own which can be developed to a basic fit-out at Glenorchy, and then to be able to build a purpose-built 24-hour station that can house more than 80 people, demonstrates that.

5 DOCUMENTS TAKEN INTO EVIDENCE

5.1 The following documents were taken into evidence and considered by the Committee:

- *Bridgewater Police Station 20-22 Green Point Road, Submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, Department of Police, Fire and Emergency Management, 13 November 2023; and*
- New Bridgewater Police Station – Project Schedule.

6 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

- 6.1 The Committee is satisfied the need for the proposed works has been established. Once completed, the New Bridgewater Police Station is expected to be a contemporary, state of the art facility, which should support the needs of Tasmania Police and the community it serves well into the future.
- 6.2 The proposed works are expected to deliver a fit-for-purpose facility, designed to overcome the identified deficiencies of the current Bridgewater Police Station, which was not built to support the staff numbers or operations currently housed there. The New Bridgewater Police Station should allow for the effective and efficient delivery of policing to the area into the future, by providing sufficient suitable accommodation for current and expected future personnel. It is also anticipated the inclusion of a Major Incident Room, conference facilities and a modern vulnerable witness interview room will provide significant benefits.
- 6.3 Accordingly, the Committee recommends the New Bridgewater Police Station, at an estimated cost of \$12.5 million, in accordance with the documentation submitted.

**Parliament House
Hobart
12 December 2023**

**Hon Rob Valentine MLC
Chair**

