



---

PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA

---

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS

# **Burnie Court Complex Relocation Project**

---

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

---

## MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

Legislative Council

Mr Harriss (*Deputy Chair*)  
Ms Rattray

House of Assembly

Ms Butler (*Chair*)  
Ms Burnet  
Mr Shelton

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION.....	3
2	BACKGROUND.....	3
3	PROJECT COSTS .....	5
4	EVIDENCE.....	6
5	DOCUMENTS TAKEN INTO EVIDENCE .....	25
6	CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION .....	26

## 1 INTRODUCTION

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

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY

The Committee has investigated the following proposal:-

### **Burnie Court Complex Relocation Project**

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

## 2 BACKGROUND

2.1 This reference recommended the Committee approve construction of a new Burnie Court Complex at 106 Wilson Street, Burnie, to replace the existing facility located at 38-40 Alexander Street, Burnie.

2.2 The current Burnie Court Complex houses both the Burnie Supreme and Magistrates Courts. It was originally opened in the 1970's and has not had any significant refurbishment or upgrade since this time. The building is no longer fit for purpose and does not meet the essential functional and operational requirements of a modern court facility, with deficiencies that impede court operations and create safety and security risks. Building assessments have identified the following areas of concern with the current Burnie Court Complex:

- the presence of friable asbestos;
- access and safety issues for Judges, Magistrates and persons in custody, including:
  - poor circulation to and from Chambers and cells to the Courts;
  - limited access to lifts;
  - the need to navigate multiple stairs and landings; and
  - restricted movement due to the building design and subsequent modifications.
- outdated, inefficient and redundant mechanical, hydraulic and electrical services;
- public access issues resulting in “bottlenecking” and reduced efficiency and building security;
- rigid existing structure and layout, which is not fit for effective refurbishment;

- lack of separate, secure access points for staff, vulnerable witnesses and jurors; and
  - non-compliant/partially compliant disability access and facilities.
- 2.3 These challenges are compounded by the growing demand for court services. The combination of the current facility's deficiencies and an increasing court workload has contributed to a significant case backlog, resulting in delays that impede timely and effective access to justice.
- 2.4 The new Burnie Courts Complex has been designed to address the shortcomings of the current facility and to deliver a contemporary, purpose-built, multi-jurisdictional court that improves operational efficiency and strengthens community access to justice.
- 2.5 The proposed works will deliver the following elements:
- A contemporary courts facility, incorporating the following functions:
    - One Supreme Court;
    - One Flexible Court (suitable for multi jurisdictional use);
    - Two Magistrates Courts;
    - Public entry foyer and security screening area;
    - Chambers for Judges and Magistrates with direct access to courts and dedicated secure car parking;
    - Dedicated jury suites and an empanelment room;
    - Dedicated protected witness suite with secure access;
    - Secure custody area with appropriate separation for the management of juveniles and females including a vehicle sally port;
    - Mediation rooms, private meeting and interview rooms;
    - Separate registries and reception counters for the Supreme and Magistrates Courts; and
    - Staff offices and amenities.
  - Provision for transient and permanent legal and court support services persons to work on site.
  - Contemporary audio visual and connectivity technology within the courts and meeting rooms.
  - A facility that is accessible for all and meets requirements under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*.
  - A custody centre that meets all modern requirements under the relevant Acts and Standards.

### 3 PROJECT COSTS

3.1 Pursuant to the Message from Her Excellency the Governor-in-Council, the estimated cost of the work is \$86.5 million.

The following table details the current cost estimates for the project:

DESCRIPTION	COST ESTIMATE \$
<b>Expenditure to June 2023 – Mooreville Road</b>	\$3,200,000
<b>Consultancy allocation</b>	\$6,402,370
<b>Construction allocation</b>	\$60,318,000
<b>Enabling Works Package</b>	\$1,237,922
<b>Land Acquisition/Management</b>	\$4,323,436
<b>Post Occupancy Allowance</b>	\$100,000
<b>Tasmanian Government Art Scheme</b>	\$80,000
<b>AV/ICT allocation</b>	\$1,574,592
<b>Security allocation *</b>	\$3,002,240
<b>Furniture, Fittings and Equipment allocation</b>	\$1,199,783
<b>Project Management/Statutory/Insurance allocation</b>	\$6,017,916
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$87,456,259</b>

All cost estimates exclude GST

Note: Figures are indicative only and based on pre-tender estimates. Actual costs will be subject to tender outcomes, contract finalisation and market conditions.

\* Due to the complexities associated with the security element of the project, the procurement of equipment, installation, configuration and integration of security systems will be undertaken under a separate contract directly engaged by the Department. The Main Works Contractor will be required to allow for and undertake a coordination role.<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Burnie Courts Complex Relocation Project, Submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, Strategic Infrastructure Projects, Department of Justice, January 2026, Appendix D

## 4 EVIDENCE

4.1 The Committee commenced its inquiry on Tuesday, 3 February 2026 with an inspection of the site of the proposed works. The Committee then returned to the function Room, at the Cradle Coast Authority building, whereupon the following witnesses appeared, made the Statutory Declaration and were examined by the Committee in public:-

- Pauline van Adrichem, Deputy Secretary, Justice and Reform, Department of Justice;
- Amber Smith, Director, Strategic Infrastructure Projects, Department of Justice; and
- Alex Newman, Director, Xsquared Architects

The following Committee Members were present:

- Ms Jen Butler MP (Chair);
- Hon Dean Harriss MLC (Deputy Chair);
- Ms Helen Burnet MP;
- Hon Tania Rattray MLC; and
- Mr Mark Shelton MP.

### Overview

4.2 Ms van Adrichem provided an overview of the proposed works:

*... The Burnie Court Complex Relocation Project is a critical piece of justice infrastructure for Tasmania's North West Coast. The project responds to longstanding and well-documented limitations of the existing Burnie Courthouse on Alexander Street, which no longer meets contemporary requirements for safety, security, accessibility or operational efficiency. The current facility also constrains the ability of the courts to respond to increasing demand, contributes to court delays, and presents work, health and safety risks for staff, judiciary, court users and vulnerable members of our community. These issues cannot be adequately resolved through refurbishments of the existing building and doing so would require decanting court services with no suitable alternatives within Burnie.*

*Following a comprehensive options assessment and extensive due diligence, a new purpose-built court complex at 106 Wilson Street, Burnie, to permanently accommodate both the Magistrates Court and the Supreme Court, as well as provide for a flexible multi-jurisdictional fourth court, is proposed. This option was identified as the most sustainable, strategic and cost-effective long-term solution.*

*Importantly, the project aims to improve access to justice, reduce court backlogs, strengthen community safety, and ensures that justice services are delivered in facilities that are safe, inclusive and fit for purpose. By retaining court services within the Burnie CBD, the project maintains the court's connection to local legal, government and support services. In simple terms, the project is about ensuring access to justice in the North West of Tasmania now and into the future.*

## **Need for and Benefits of the New Burnie Court Complex**

4.3 The Committee gathered a range of evidence supporting the need for the proposed works, including the deficiencies and limitations of the current Burnie Court building. The Committee also learnt of the significant adverse impact this has on the functioning of the court system, on staff, the Judiciary, jurors, and those in custody, and ultimately, how this presents a barrier to the community's access to the justice system.

4.4 The Department of Justice submission highlighted the problems with the current building and how they have an adverse impact on access to justice:

*The Magistrates Court of Tasmania serves the community by providing access to an accountable, independent and impartial system of justice which is administered according to law. The purpose of the Magistrates Court of Tasmania is to protect rights and to uphold the law fairly and impartially. The ability to fulfil these functions on the North West is being limited by the inadequacies of the current Alexander Street court building.*

*In recent years, there has been a significant increase in the use of technology both in court and by those attending court. The current site cannot adequately cater for this, nor can the layout of the current court rooms be altered to improve this.*

*At present, there are no dedicated spaces for counsel or court support staff to brief clients privately, complete their paperwork or undertake their other day-to-day duties. The existing registry space has been altered as much as possible to accommodate these needs, however, the space remains inadequate. The registry is no longer fit for purpose, with many issues that present significant security risks. There is inadequate space to locate all staff in one area and there is no direct connection between the registry and the Magistrates' chambers, therefore, if Magistrates need to access the registry, they must go through the public waiting area.*

*The existing Magistrates' chambers are dated, and Chamber One opens directly onto the court, again, posing a significant security issue. Furthermore, there is no secondary entrance/exit for staff other than the front door, which again presents a significant security risk for staff.*

*Given the nature of the work undertaken by the Magistrates Court, the need for accessible storage is very high. Within the existing facility, the staff kitchen is situated in an old cleaning cupboard and the staff lunchroom doubles as file storage, an arrangement that is completely inadequate.<sup>2</sup>*

*The Supreme Court of Tasmania has three registries, located in Hobart, Launceston and Burnie. Judges sit at each of the locations, supported by chambers and registry staff, transcription typists, and jury and security officers. One of the Supreme Court's seven judges sits almost entirely in Burnie, although she regularly sits on appeals in Hobart, and from time-to-time other judges circuit to Burnie.*

*The criminal caseload in Burnie accounts for approximately 25% of the statewide criminal lodgements, but because there is only one Supreme Court courtroom in the existing building there is no scope for more than one judge to sit in Burnie. This limitation makes it very difficult to address regional case backlogs, and places significant and ongoing pressure on the judge and staff in Burnie. The existing courtroom is small, and unable to accommodate multi-defendant trials which occur regularly. The courtroom has inadequate seating space for the public, who are unable to watch proceedings from inside the courtroom. A small linoleum-*

---

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, page 16.

floored room off the foyer on the Supreme Court level provides limited seating for the media and public to watch some proceedings on a screen by video-link. This level of access is sub-standard.

The lack of courtrooms is not the only limitation of the existing Court facilities in Burnie. The presence of asbestos in the building means that no alterations can be made to the fabric of the building, which is not fit-for-purpose. There are no dedicated mediation rooms, and mediations in civil matters are held in the converted library space, which has been cleared of books. It can only be accessed through staff areas, which members of the public should not have access to.

Circulation spaces more generally are inappropriate. Chambers staff (i.e. those who work directly with the judge and in proximity to the judge's office) are separated from the registry by the courtroom and public foyer. The physical layout of the area compromises efficient work practices and limits effective communication between staff.

There has been an increase in the workload in the Burnie area, and more staff are needed to properly support the work of the Court. Staff regularly come to Burnie from Launceston and Hobart, but there is no space to accommodate them within the existing floorplan.

The work of the Supreme Court in Burnie would be supported by a modern, fit-for-purpose building with sufficient facilities (especially courtrooms) to accommodate its existing and future workload.<sup>3</sup>

The Burnie Courts Complex is increasingly recognised as no longer being fit for purpose, with its deteriorating infrastructure posing significant operational challenges for the Tasmania Prison Service (TPS). The building's age limitations hinder the safe and efficient management of custodial operations, particularly during the escorting, detention and daily court proceedings for remanded or sentenced offenders.

One of the most pressing concerns is the presence of asbestos within the building, which raises serious health and safety risks for staff, prisoners and visitors. This issue alone limits the scope of maintenance and refurbishment work that can be safely undertaken. Additionally, the building continues to experience persistent moisture issues, particularly within the brick walls of the holding cells. These conditions contribute to the ongoing deterioration of the TPS managed areas and create an unhealthy environment for staff and prisoners. Despite previous attempts to address the problem, remediation efforts have been unsuccessful.

The courts layout does not support contemporary correctional practices, resulting in a greater reliance on TPS staff to manage escorts and supervise remandees throughout the court complex. This not only places additional strain on staff resources but also increases the risk associated with escort movements and limits staff's capacity to respond effectively to emergencies.

The outdated condition of the Burnie Courts facility impacts interagency coordination. Limited space and inadequate amenities restrict the ability of Tasmania Police, Ashley Youth Detention Centre, Legal Representatives and TPS personnel to operate effectively. These constraints contribute to reduced operational efficiencies and place additional pressure on staff. Over time, this has led to increased fatigue and a noticeable decline in staff morale.<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, pages 16-17.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid*, page 17.

4.5 The Department's submission also noted how the new court environment would provide significant benefits in the delivery of court services:

**Enhanced Court Efficiency**

The new Burnie Courts Complex will streamline court processes and enable the efficient handling of legal matters, leading to faster resolutions and outcomes due to improved technology, increased availability of meeting rooms, mediation facilities, security enhancements and capacity. Supported by the four court design, this increased capacity is expected to contribute to reducing the backlog of cases and support timely access to justice.

**Purpose Built**

The Burnie Courts Complex has been designed with functionality at the forefront. The extensive consultation process undertaken with court users and stakeholders has ensured that the facility is fit-for-purpose and addresses the shortfalls of the existing court complex. Improvements in circulation pathways, security, technology and accommodation schedules, results in a facility that meets the recommended standards and allows for efficiency.

**Improved Security and Safety**

With industry leading security systems, including surveillance cameras, access control systems and secure custody facilities that allow for the appropriate management and separation of women and youth in custody, the new complex will provide a safe environment for judges, magistrates, staff, service providers, people in custody and court users.

In addition to the main public access point off the forecourt area, the new facility includes two secure entry points for court staff, a secure sallyport entrance for police and secure custody vehicles, and separate, private entry points for jurors and protected witnesses.

**Accessibility and Inclusivity**

The new complex has been designed with accessibility in mind, ensuring equal access for all court users. Features such as ramps, elevators, and assistive technologies will make all courts easily navigable, accommodating diverse needs and promoting inclusivity. An adult change facility is included on the ground floor and a parenting room, with baby change facilities is located on the first floor.

**Technological Advancements**

Equipped with contemporary technology, the new complex will leverage digital tools to streamline administrative tasks and future-proof the courts for advancements in file management. The inclusion of digital wayfinding displays at the entrance to courtrooms will make public access and movement throughout the facility easier, while reducing pressure on security, registry and concierge staff. Full virtual conferencing hardware is included in meeting, conference and breakout rooms allowing for remote, real-time engagement between court staff, legal practitioners, clients and support services.

These technological integrations will enhance the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the judicial process.

**Enhanced Courtroom Experience**

The Burnie Courts Complex will feature spacious and well-equipped courtrooms, offering comfortable seating, modern audiovisual systems, and advanced presentation technologies. These enhancements will create a conducive environment for Judges, Magistrates, the legal community, witnesses, court users and jurors, improving the overall courtroom experience. The design incorporates a full Protected Witness Suite on the first floor which includes waiting areas, multiple video conference rooms, an external screened balcony, tea station and accessible amenities.

**Collaborative Spaces and Amenities**

The complex will include dedicated spaces for alternative dispute resolution, mediation, and consultation, promoting earlier resolution of disputes. Additionally, amenities such as conference rooms, and breakout areas will provide secure spaces for legal practitioners to provide legal advice or seek instructions, as well as enabling communication, or discussion between legal professionals to resolve disputes. Furthermore, dedicated working areas for legal professionals are provided with separate spaces for both the prosecution and defence distributed throughout the building, including robing areas.<sup>5</sup>

4.6 The Committee asked the witnesses to expand on these issues, and explain how the new facility will deliver an improved Magistrates Court service:

**CHAIR** - ... I have some questions ... about the current arrangements at the Magistrates Court and how this project ... will improve the functions of the Magistrates Court as opposed to what we have at the moment...

**Ms van ADRICHEM** - Obviously in the existing Magistrates Court, the staff areas, chambers areas and even management of staff areas are all disconnected, with public access to areas that ideally shouldn't have public access, like to get to the protected witness room. The new facility will address all those issues by ensuring appropriate circulation, appropriate workplace health and safety measures, still having appropriate public access. For court users who need to access the Magistrates Court, there's a separate counter for those discussions to occur. They can access chambers, they can access courts, they can access staff areas. There's a separate entry point for staff which currently isn't available unless, I suppose, they go through the kind of back car park area. From a staff security, staff amenity perspective the new complex will be a vast improvement to the existing facility, which I think will have implications on staff wellbeing and welfare as well in a positive way.

4.7 The Committee also questioned the witnesses on how the new Burnie Court Complex would enhance Supreme Court operations:

**CHAIR** - ... With the Supreme Court, can you quickly run through the main difference between the current Supreme Court and the proposed Supreme Court project - what we've got at the moment and what we are going to have, for the record, and how that will improve security as well for the Supreme Court and maybe some quick information on how that will improve security for the judicial work as well, because apparently that is also not up to what the public expectation of protecting our jurors would be.

**Ms van ADRICHEM** - The current building doesn't have a dedicated jury entry or secure jury pathways to access the Supreme Court. In the current building they have to access or go through the front entry like everybody else and head upstairs to the Supreme Court area. When a jury has been empanelled, court security will ensure that their leaving court at the end of the day is done in a way that limits crossover with potential parties or other people who may be involved in the proceedings.

What this means in practice is they basically clear the floor, clear the upstairs and downstairs area to accommodate and facilitate the exit of the jury. However, in the mornings, because everybody attends at the same time, it's a little trickier to ensure that that access - or to mitigate that crossover between jurors and parties to proceedings. The new facility will have a separate, dedicated jury access which takes them to a secure jury area which has appropriate amenities as well, and then access to the court. So, entry and exit from the court in the new facility can be accommodated by dedicated secure pathways, which means that that crossover risk is, at least within the court building, very minimal, which is a huge improvement on current arrangements.

---

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid*, pages 20-22.

The difficulty as well with the current court building is the delays that it creates by having to undertake these additional security measures to be able to escort juries in and back out again and avoiding potential mistrials, for example, if there is a perception of communication between an empanelled juror and a party to the proceeding or a witness, and it's about ensuring that there's confidence in the administration of justice, and that's what this new design is tailored towards ensuring.

**CHAIR** - This new design of the proposed project could potentially minimise that risk of mistrial.

**Ms van ADRICHEM** - Yes, by virtue of design rather than relying on people: it's design.

**Mr NEWMAN** - I will give you a specific example of something we've managed to achieve in the plan, which is occasionally you have cases where there's more than one person in the dock, and there might be a person in custody as a witness, and bringing that person into the courtroom can be quite problematic. If you're taking somebody up from Risdon Prison for the day to be a witness, how do you securely get them in? It has involved, as I understand, quite a lot of extra manpower for staff to get that process done, and we've managed to resolve it in the plan of the Supreme Court layout for that to be achieved. That's far safer for the staff running that process.

**CHAIR** - It's safer for staff. It minimises that risk. It's very expensive to have mistrials, but it also contributes to that backlog, doesn't it?

**Ms van ADRICHEM** - Yes, because the matter would need to be relisted, or decisions made about empanelling the new jury, potentially.

#### 4.8 The witnesses were asked to detail the security concerns that arise because of the nature of the current Burnie Court building and how this will be improved in the new facility:

**CHAIR** - Can you provide us with a comparison between the current security arrangements in the Magistrates Court and the current design in the Magistrates Court with security arrangements as opposed to the new design and how that will improve security for staff, for people attending court and the community?

**Ms van ADRICHEM** - The existing court security arrangements are quite interesting within the Burnie Court Complex because -

**CHAIR** - The current one?

**Ms van ADRICHEM** - The current one in the context of - it's obviously a contracted security for the Magistrates Court and it's in-house security for the Supreme Court, and then there's, obviously, the Tasmanian Prison Service that look after the holding cells upstairs. The current building where security screening occurs is very much a bottleneck which creates risks in and of itself, but along - if you pass security, there is no, I suppose, separate room for security to be able to monitor all the security cameras. They're actually visible for the general public.

There's a slight area, I suppose, near the stairs where the public can see what's happening in other parts of the court building, which is of significant concern from a risk and safety perspective. Court security is highly professional and they do what they can within the design restrictions of the current facility, but moving into the new building, appropriate CCTV and other security measures are incorporated into the design. The business analyst who we spoke about earlier is also looking at the security arrangements for the new building because it's moving to, obviously, a four-court model across multiple levels.

Consideration will need to be given to what does security look like in this new facility. There's obviously greater capacity within the custodial holding cell area as well. That is a business readiness issue that we need to work through, but the security model is contractor security, in-house security and Tasmanian Prison Service as well in the custodial area.

...

**Ms SMITH** - ... the Department has engaged the security consulting group, specialist security specialists to undertake risk assessment and an appropriate design for the facility. That includes dynamic and static security, noting the ability for technology to come into play in terms of that security. We have a statewide security strategy for corrective services. We've been able to leverage on that and the security consultants have provided us with a strategy that encompasses the courts as well. They've drawn on ensuring that the design meets the required standards in terms of, not only just in terms of CCTV, but the security of rooms and access to those rooms through door controls and ensuring that the public aren't able to go into, obviously, what is secure space, particularly when you've got court files and things such as that.

There was an extensive risk assessment process undertaken where those consultants sat down with key stakeholders to understand how the current court works now and where the deficiencies are, and to overlap that with the current design and make a range of recommendations that ultimately led to the security systems being specced and door controls and just the movement in general through the facility to ensure safety of staff, safety of the public. It was all taken into consideration.

- 4.9 The Committee understood the capacity to use digital technology to enhance court procedures was hampered in the current building. The witnesses were asked to explain how the new building design would increase the utilisation of digital technology, and enable courts to operate more efficiently and effectively:

**CHAIR** - ...if you can provide us information about the improved ability to provide digital technology within the new design. For witness statements - I believe at the moment it's quite clunky and it's been hard to update to current, I suppose, digital standards or some of the advancements. Can you talk us through that?

**Ms SMITH** - Yes. Through the engagement of the contact group, through that contract through our ICT department, what we are leveraging on is statewide consistency in terms of our infrastructure and our audio-visual installations through all our court facilities so that it doesn't matter where any of the staff are located, all the systems are the same. I think that's really important as well. This is the most up-to-date technology that we will be utilising. We've also created the space to equip that equipment, noting that at the moment, I think, we've talked through the inability - well, the lack of ability to appropriately have vulnerable witnesses provide evidence at times. We have a dedicated suite that includes three rooms within this facility that enables that evidence to be provided from vulnerable witnesses into the court.

**Ms van ADRICHEM** - I think - obviously the existing site, some audio or IT equipment has been installed, but because of the asbestos in the walls and the rewiring that might be required because it just wasn't necessarily designed when it was built back in the late 1960s or 1970s, it wasn't necessarily done in contemplation of the advancements in IT technologies. Even though they've made it work in the existing site, it has been very challenging to be able to uplift IT capability. Obviously, the staff lunchroom that's also used as a meeting room does not have any IT capability at all. If there was a statewide meeting, for example, with members from the Devonport, Launceston or Hobart registries, that becomes far more challenging to accommodate in that way, which with the new design and the staff amenities around meeting

rooms or using other rooms that are not in use for mediations or other purposes enable greater connection to the rest of the state.

**CHAIR** - In the new proposed project, having access to that enhanced ICT capacity or IT capacity, will that assist in minimising or helping to minimise that waiting list that we're currently experiencing...

**Ms van ADRICHEM** - Yes, the perfect example would be the protected witness rooms moving from one that's shared between three courts to three dedicated rooms for four courts, but because of the IT capability that will be built into other rooms, and connection to external sites if the courts were minded to go down that path. I know in the Hobart registry there is an external site in a different building that's used for protected witness evidence from time to time, so that very vulnerable person then doesn't even have to attend a court building to be able to give their evidence, but you need to have the IT capacity to receive that evidence and know that that's reliable. Even though having four courtrooms and three dedicated protected witness rooms, because of the IT uplift associated with the new complex or proposed new complex, it builds greater flexibility to be able to hear evidence from protected witnesses.

**Ms SMITH** - Could I add that we did a lot of work with the judges and magistrates around the placement of the cameras, particularly when vulnerable witnesses are providing that evidence. As Pauline touched on, there's one thing to provide the evidence, but it has to mirror that ability that it would in a live courtroom so that there's no misinterpretation. We did a lot of work with the magistrates and justices to ensure the placement of those cameras and that everything that needs to be captured in that picture and the quality is adhered to.

**CHAIR** - And you're going to have enough staff, I suppose, to be able to ensure that the ICT can be rolled out in the courtroom because it will be enhanced, but there will probably be more staff required, I imagine, as well?

**Ms van ADRICHEM** - That's part of the business analyst's work around what - for a larger site and what will the consequences be from a staffing profile perspective to be able to manage that site. That's something we're still working through.

**Ms SMITH** - Noting the efficiencies that the design creates as well. At the moment there's a lot of downtime for those staff having to work through workarounds. They do their very best. They do a wonderful job but by creating a design that is more efficient for them, so it doesn't necessarily mean if it was double the size, that it's double the staffing cohort. It's about allowing the business analyst to undertake that work in mind of the design that we have.

#### 4.10 The Department's submission also described how technology will be deployed to enhance courtroom operations:

Courtroom technology in the new Burnie Courts Complex has been designed to support contemporary judicial processes and ensure a secure, functional environment for all participants. Each courtroom is equipped with integrated AV systems, including microphones for clear speech capture and recording, and display screens to support evidence presentation, remote appearances and digital proceedings. Electrically operated visual screens are incorporated to conceal witnesses when required, supporting privacy and procedural integrity.

Centralised control of the AV systems is provided at the clerk's bench, allowing court staff to manage audio, visual and display functions efficiently during proceedings. In addition, the lighting design accommodates digitally-controlled scene settings, enabling adjustments to suit different court functions – such as hearings, witness testimony or remote appearances – while maintaining appropriate visibility and comfort. These integrated technologies ensure

*the courtrooms are equipped to meet the complex operational needs of a modern justice facility, enhancing accessibility, security and procedural flexibility.*<sup>6</sup>

- 4.11 The Committee understood a key driver of the need for the new court complex was to cater for future expected growth in demand for court services. The Committee asked the witnesses to detail the growth that been experienced and was expected in the future:

**CHAIR** - ... Do you have any data on what that expected growth over the coming years will be?

**Ms van ADRICHEM** - I do not have that to hand. I do have data on the growth that has occurred over the last five years. In the context of the Magistrates Court, in 2021 there were 15,713 listings in total, and in 2025 that's now 23,068 listings, both across criminal and civil matters.

**CHAIR** - Just to clarify, can you explain 'listings' for the record?

**Ms van ADRICHEM** - They are court appearances, so where a matter has been called on to be listed again. As to whether people attend that listing is obviously a secondary question, and it may be that it could be adjourned by consent, but they're basically court events that require a matter to return on a particular date at a particular time for a particular event.

I think from a work throughput that's obviously a very significant increase over the last five years in particular. From the Supreme Court perspective in Burnie, overall the number of lodgements in 2021 was 162, and in 2024-25 was 203. Bail applications have grown quite significantly from 333 in 2020-21 to 438. Civil matters have grown in lodgements from 434 in 2020-21 to 681 lodgements in 2024-25, and jurors' summoned - so we had the benefit today of the empanelment that was about to happen as we were leaving - but jurors summoned in 2020-21 was 2605, now it's 5862. Of those that attended, in 2020-21 it was 472, and in 2024-25 it was 1160 individual jurors attended during that that year.

On that basis, demand has grown, but obviously the backlog of cases is another issue across the court system and the criminal and civil justice system that we're working through. With the increase in lodgements, some matters are unfortunately delayed because - well, there are multiple reasons for a backlog, but it's around core capacity disclosure, availability of defence lawyers, prosecution availability, witnesses, a whole range of factors. It means that if matters don't resolve early, they're obviously relisted and then it just takes more time before they're finally resolved.

- 4.12 The Department of Justice provided additional information to the Committee on the anticipated growth in demand for court services on 5 March 2026:

*Demand for court services at Burnie is reflected across both the Magistrates Court and Supreme Court jurisdictions.*

Magistrates Court – Criminal Lodgements

*Criminal lodgements to the Magistrates Court Burnie increased from 2,132 matters in 2014 to 3,087 matters in 2025 — an increase of 955 lodgements (44.8%) over the period. Recent years have seen a marked increase in demand, with lodgements rising from 2,186 in 2023 to 2,850 in 2024 and to 3,087 in 2025.*

*Population modelling projects a baseline planning range of approximately 2,555–3,090 lodgements per annum over 2026–2036, with higher-growth sensitivity modelling reaching approximately 4,470–4,757 lodgements by 2036, if recent growth trends continue.*

---

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid*, page 26.

The Department considers the population-based modelling to represent an appropriate baseline planning range, with growth-based modelling used for longer-term capacity sensitivity testing.

#### Supreme Court – Criminal Matters

Burnie recorded a 6.8 per cent increase in criminal lodgements in 2024–25, representing 203 new criminal matters reported in the most recent Annual Report. This was the largest increase recorded statewide, exceeding Hobart (3.0 per cent) and Launceston (4.1 per cent).

Supreme Court criminal lodgements at Burnie increased from 152 matters in 2022–23, to 190 matters in 2023–24, and to 203 matters in 2024–25.

Across both jurisdictions, the data demonstrates sustained demand growth and recent acceleration in activity at Burnie.<sup>7</sup>

- 4.13 The Committee was also aware of a significant case backlog within the Tasmanian court system. The Committee was interested to understand the case backlog in the Burnie courts and how the current facility may be contributing to this:

**Ms BURNET** - ... I'm interested to know how much you think the current set-up of the current courts contribute to that backlog.

**Ms van ADRICHEM** - Obviously there's a benefit of the walk-through earlier today as well. It's very evident as soon as you walk through into that court building. It's quite a narrow entry, a relatively small waiting area for the number of people that need to attend court; limited availability of mediation rooms to be able to resolve matters on an earlier occasion; vulnerable witnesses needing to access through the same pathway and have limited protected witness room facilities, which means that if there's a hearing in the Supreme Court and there's a hearing in the Magistrates Court, they may not be able to hear the evidence of a vulnerable witness because a protected witness room is occupied; so then delays or a hearing might be stood down.

I think the benefit of the new design is that it incorporates additional facilities for not just court staff, but also to support services, the legal professionals that work in court on a day-to-day basis to try to negotiate and lead to outcomes. The additional fourth court will make a huge difference to the flexibility that both the Supreme Court and Magistrates Court will have to be able to list matters and hear matters. The criminal case management listing process, which commenced in September last year, is undertaken by the associate judge with the example given earlier today that he undertakes that listing for the North West on Friday mornings. It takes about an hour, an hour and a half, but he has to be zoomed in to the Supreme Court courtroom, which means that Justice Jago is not able to use that courtroom for running her matters. Those practical timetabling difficulties really are creating delays in the judiciary being able to work through some of those matters.

...

**Ms BURNET** - We heard about a case this morning. Can you just talk to me?

**Ms van ADRICHEM** - Yes, the case that was mentioned this morning was a matter that the offending occurred in 2019 is my understanding, and the Supreme Court was looking at

---

<sup>7</sup> Burnie Courts Complex Relocation Project -Department of Justice-response to Question on Notice - 5 March 2026, page 1.

sentencing today so that's six to seven years from the point in time that the incident occurred to the Supreme Court being in a position to consider the final outcome and sentencing in that matter.

**Ms BURNET** - What sort of impact does that have on community and people who are either appearing or even who are charged?

**Ms van ADRICHEM** - In that example, from a legal process perspective, first and foremost is the quality of the evidence. If witnesses are required many years post-incident, their ability to recollect the events in great detail can be more difficult. Their willingness to participate in a court process if it's offending with a victim or violent offending - their lives might have moved on and to come back into a court adversarial setting and give evidence of events that were highly traumatic is re-traumatising in and of itself. Ideally, those matters are dealt with in a more expedient way, in which the courts can consider the evidence and make a finding of guilty or not guilty, or a defendant may choose to plead one or the other and have those matters resolved, so all parties can move towards healing. Delays of six years or more is simply not providing access to justice. It's delaying justice and it's unfortunately potentially also impacting the quality of the evidence that the court can hear to make final decisions.

4.14 The Department of Justice provided additional information to the Committee on 5 March 2026 on the case backlog in both the Supreme and Magistrates Court:

Supreme Court – Criminal Backlog

Burnie reported a criminal backlog of 193 matters in 2022–23, 206 matters in 2023–24, and 235 matters in 2024–25. This represents a continuing upward trend.

In comparison, Hobart experienced only a marginal increase (to 420 matters from 419), and Launceston recorded a slight reduction (to 257 matters from 260). The overall statewide increase in criminal backlog in the most recent reporting period was largely driven by the rise in Burnie's pending matters.

Magistrates Court

Magistrates Court workload at Burnie has increased over the past five years, reflected in both rising lodgements and the growing number of matters pending before the Court. Annual lodgements increased from 2,491 matters in 2021 to 3,079 matters in 2025, while pending matters increased from 3,295 to 4,828 over the same period.

The difference between annual lodgements and the total number of matters pending at the end of each year provides an indication of the volume of matters carried forward within the court system. This gap increased from 804 matters in 2021 to 1,749 matters in 2025, demonstrating a growing accumulation of matters awaiting finalisation.

Taken together, the data indicates increasing demand for Magistrates Court services at Burnie and a corresponding rise in matters remaining before the Court, which can be considered indicative of growing backlog pressures over the period.

Annual totals do not capture courtroom utilisation, listing pressures, adjournments or matter duration. However, sustained increases in lodgements are a key driver of registry and courtroom workload.<sup>8</sup>

4.15 Having toured the current Burnie Courts, Committee Members had seen the environment court staff were working in. The Committee asked the witnesses to detail the adverse impacts the current facility has on staff:

**Ms BURNET** - ...I see with the 'drivers for change' you've listed three things, but I don't see that there has been any list for - I guess it's no longer fit for purpose - but what is the impact

---

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid*, page 2.

on the current set-up for staff within that - working from day-to-day within that system and that facility?

**Ms van ADRICHEM** - There are a number of impacts on staff in that facility. From a safety and security perspective, obviously the registry, particularly in the Magistrates Court, is separate from their management and support and their staff areas. The staff area that they do use is accessed by the public because the protected witness room is in there, so their ability to have a safe and secure space even for their lunchbreak or other breaks is impacted because it's not necessarily safe and secure.

The workload is obviously significant, because with a growing backlog and the filing system that's used - and you obviously saw the storage area with the many files piled up in the lunch room - it has a real impact on the day-to-day requirements of the role. I think the benefit of new facilities, modern facilities, where there is connection between the registry to chambers, and between the registry to other secure areas of the courts, will have a significant benefit to overall efficiency.

Even with things like the separation between chambers and registry, if both courts are sitting, having to go through a custodial hallway to access chambers is highly inefficient, and obviously brings with it risks that staff are navigating very capably and with resilience by putting other measures in place to ensure that they can undertake their duties appropriately, but it's creating delays and frustration, I'd expect.

4.16 The Committee also sought further information on matters reported under the Department's workplace health and safety (WHS) system at the Burnie Courts:

**Ms BURNET** - ... how often are there attacks on the staff because of the current situation, because of the current layout of the courts? Have you got work health and safety figures?

**Ms van ADRICHEM** - For the last financial year, for the Supreme Court there were two injuries reported and one property damage, and Magistrates Court were two hazards reported from a security incident perspective.

This is in the 2025 calendar year: there was one code black, which is violent threat to personal safety - multiple officer response; there were three code greys, which is single officer response; and there were three code browns, which is external threat.

I think that also speaks to the efforts of security, because they have had to think really critically about how to bring people into the courts and how to exit them back out again to be able to undertake that due diligence.

**Ms BURNET** - These are physical injuries. What about psychological injuries associated with working at the current Burnie Courts?

**Ms van ADRICHEM** - I don't have any data broken down as to whether the two injuries were physical injuries or psychological injuries. I could take that on notice.

4.17 The Department subsequently provided data on the number of reports lodged through its WHS system at the Burnie Courts:

The Department reviewed all reports lodged in the Department of Justice WHS system (iVanti) between 1 January 2021 and 31 December 2025 across the Supreme Court, Magistrates Court and Tasmania Prison Service operating within the Burnie Court Complex.

Over this five-year period, 55 reports were recorded, comprising:

- 25 Hazards, 6 Injuries,

- 4 Illness reports,
- 14 Near Miss reports and,
- 6 Property Damage reports.

Six reports contained psychosocial hazard elements, including incidents involving violence and aggression, environmental conditions, harassment and one traumatic event classified as an actual mental health injury.

Five physical injuries were recorded during the review period, comprising slips, trips and falls, a strain injury and an impact injury. No injury report identified building design as contributing to the injury.

There were no workers compensation claims arising from injuries reported at the Burnie Court Complex between 2021 and 2025.

The new Burnie Court Complex incorporates contemporary safe-design principles, improved separation, security controls and staff amenities to further mitigate operational and psychosocial risks.<sup>9</sup>

### **Design of the New Burnie Court Complex**

4.18 The Committee asked the witnesses how the design and size of the proposed new complex compared to the current facility:

**CHAIR** - Just on the general project scope, if you can provide for the record - it states here the new Burnie Court Complex facility scope encompasses a nominal floor area of 5785 metres squared. Can you provide a comparison of the existing nominal floor area of the existing complex, just for the record, so we get an understanding of how much bigger the new court will be?

...

**Ms SMITH** - It was roughly 3000 metres squared, is the current site, with an increase to the 5785 metres squared. We've also ensured through the process the efficiency of those spaces. It's one thing to provide space, but the - I think the important part is to ensure that the space you're providing is fit for purpose and it is efficient, which I think from today we were able to see the level of inefficiencies, which just creates - what can seem to be quite simple tasks just take so much longer than they need to.

**CHAIR** - Is that size of the proposed project, does that account - is that futureproofing, because I'm sure when the current court was built that was probably seen as appropriate for that time, so is this being built with the future in mind?

**Ms SMITH** - Yes, definitely. Part of the process as well was for us to do that jurisdictional scan of what other jurisdictions are doing and ensuring that we're meeting best practice. We were able to send Xsquared and representatives of the project team as well to the mainland to visit some recently completed facilities over there for that like-to-like comparison. You can futureproof to the best that you can - unfortunately - a crystal ball would be wonderful. We're also obviously very aware of our budget and ensuring that the design, whilst it meets fit for purpose requirements, we still have the constraint of the budget requirements that we need to work within.

---

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid*, page 3.

**Mr NEWMAN** - We've taken great care to benchmark against other courthouses - we went to Bendigo and Shepparton law courts and looked at the sizes of those new courts, both built within the last 10 years or so, and made sure that what we were proposing was on a similar level.

**Ms van ADRICHEM** - The other element in the design is that multipurpose use of various meeting rooms or mediation rooms to be able to be designed, that they can be used for different purposes as required. I think the discussions with the Federal Circuit and Family Court - obviously, their needs have been taken into account for the purposes of some of the breakout spaces that they might require for those types of hearings, and being able to leverage the space that's on that floor for that purpose as required. We've looked at it in a way that it's going to be effective space with appropriate technology as well and the separation of individuals if required.

4.19 Having earlier seen the current cells in the Burnie Court Complex, the Committee sought to understand how cell design and layout would be improved:

**CHAIR** - When it comes to TPS and the design, can you quickly discuss in the design of the proposed project the difference in holding cells, because they're just day cells, I believe - the difference between the cells that would hold vulnerable people, or women and younger people, as opposed to the other cells, if you can talk us through that for the record; and how that also enhances the safety for the people who are in those cells as well as the TPS staff?

**Mr NEWMAN** - As I mentioned earlier, I think there are six cells, and two are located to one side and there are different alternate accesses to get to those, so those are for the juveniles and the females. We've designed those to be less austere than just a concrete room, if that makes sense; we've got a basic carpet on the floor and epoxy finishes and we've got some robust furniture in there, but it still feels more - if you've seen the Southern Remand Centre that was a project that we were involved with a few years ago, we've based it on that level of finish. As best we can, we've made it less austere than a police lock up. There are blinds that are built into the glazing system on these, so that if you want to provide some privacy so they can't see somebody else that's being walked past, you can do that as well.

**CHAIR** - Have the acoustics been considered? If you had, say, a younger person in one side of the cells, and then an aggressive person on the other side of the cell area, they're not able to hear each other?

**Mr NEWMAN** - Acoustics have been considered. I will be completely honest and say that it's very hard in these things, so I don't think I can honestly say that if someone's shouting in one room that you won't be able to hear it in the other space, because we have to consider all the damage that can be created to these, and if you put seals on everything, then it becomes ligature risks or they damage things. It's very difficult to do, but it should be a lot better than what they currently have.

**CHAIR** - One of the judges mentioned today, in our walk through, that if there's a loud person in one of the holding cells, that can sometimes be heard in the actual court room, which is quite concerning. It kind of reverberates through the whole complex apparently.

**Mr NEWMAN** - One of our consultants, and I think we had a team of about 15 different members, is an acoustic engineer; so we've actually gone through every single door, every wall makeup on this building is designed to the highest standard. In some locations we have double doors. I'm very confident that we would address those concerns.

**Ms van ADRICHEM** - I think the other aspect of the custodial area is that separation in the design between obviously the youth or the vulnerable cells as opposed to the other cells. I wasn't sure if there's anything further you wish to add around that design.

**Mr NEWMAN** - There's the ability to bring them in two separate ways. Hopefully if there were multiple people attending, the juveniles don't have to be paraded in front of the male cells.

**CHAIR** - So, they might not even see each other or come across each other at the different entry and exit points?

**Ms SMITH** - If I could just add that the current court facility has three holding cells. We've increased that to six cells in this new facility and we've also been able to bring some natural light into the cells using some light wells - still allowing the privacy and ensuring that nobody can see in, but enabling those who are being held in those cells, noting it can be for some time until they're ready, the courts are ready, that there is still that natural light.

**CHAIR** - The cells, for the record, are DDA-compliant and at Australian standards for holding cells, is that right?

**Ms SMITH** - Yes.

**Mr NEWMAN** - We have one of the cells, I think, is DDA compliant from accessible pathway perspective, but they're all designed in relation to the Victorian cell guidelines with some allowance for moving to some of the furniture, which is robust plastic, which we've worked through from our perspective.

4.20 The Committee also asked the witnesses to confirm if Tasmanian Prison Service (TPS) staff had been given the opportunity to provide input into the design, and whether their feedback had been incorporated:

**Ms RATTRAY** - We heard from the site visit this morning... there were some elements of - particularly around the safety of those people who are being held at the court facility and currently it doesn't meet standards and there was some input through the process of that. Can we have some indication of how much input there was from those people on the ground that are delivering the services and actually undertaking the work?

...

**Mr NEWMAN** - A lot of discussion happened early on about the functionality and one of the specific requests was actually an opportunity to separate juveniles and females away from male people in custody coming into the centre. That's what has evolved through the plan and that was discussed in quite detail because, as far as I'm aware, it's not been done in this way before. We've discussed that in detail with TPS in early meetings.

...

**Ms SMITH** - Absolutely. Through the consultation process we have a series of governance arrangements that we undertake. We have a steering committee that has representatives from the Tasmanian Prison Service and then we have down to the level of stakeholder reference groups where individuals can provide feedback and have been provided that opportunity. Unfortunately, we can't engage with every individual, so when we go to the Magistrates Court or the Supreme Court or the Tasmanian Prison Service, we've asked them to provide a list of representatives in which we can engage with and then the idea is that equally they can engage further with their staff.

We've also made regular newsletters where we're regularly updating staff and more broadly the community on the progress of the design, and Xsquared has been great in preparing fly-throughs.

We also had a VR session where people could wear virtual reality goggles and were able to walk through the facility. Every step of the way there has been engagement, whether that's

done by us directly or by the key staff that we're engaging with from that particular area and they're engaging with their staff. There's a myriad of ways in which we're able to manage that and we feel that we have done extensive consultation with the stakeholders to date.

### **Stakeholder and Community Consultation**

4.21 The Committee had conducted an inquiry in 2021 into the relocation of the current Burnie Court to a proposed complex in Mooreville Road, Burnie. At the time there was significant community opposition to the proposed relocation and criticism that public consultation had been lacking. Ultimately, this project was discontinued, and the Department began work to identify a new site. The Committee was interested to hear about the stakeholder and community consultation undertaken for the new proposal, and how the new proposal had been received by the community:

**CHAIR** - ... I was wondering if you could run us through, briefly, the consultation process - who the main stakeholders are or were and also the community consultation...

... If you could just give us a quick brief on that.

**Ms van ADRICHEM** - For the purposes of, I suppose, detailed design, the key stakeholders were the Supreme Court and Magistrates Court, both staff and judiciary as well as the Tasmanian Prison Service. We also engaged with the Law Society and legal profession - the pages refer to, earlier, community corrections, justice support services, the victim support services, eligible persons register, and a range of other - I suppose, regular Legal Aid is another example that, obviously with our duty lawyer service and other services, provide their input on a daily basis. But having that breadth of a stakeholder input was incredibly helpful to understand the needs of individual court users, whether they were represented or not represented coming into that court environment. The needs of police prosecution or DPP were really helpful in shaping the various support rooms, for lack of a better term, that are in the design and are critical to finalising it. I think that's separation between the staff secure areas, but also between the Supreme Court and Magistrates Court because we're obviously at two different courts and an individual may appeal a Magistrates Court decision to the Supreme Court, so we needed to incorporate appropriate circulation in design that yes, there are some points of crossover, but there is clear separation between the Supreme Court and Magistrates Court as well to ensure that that confidence in the justice system is maintained through design as well as obviously the actual operations of the court.

...

**Mr NEWMAN** - From my perspective, the consultation on this project has been probably one of the most successful I've been involved with. We did it early before anything was put to paper and then we went back to them with designs, concept ideas and got the feedback and 90 per cent of the time it was positive. Like this; like this; oh, that's great. Normally there were 10 different parties on this list. There will be one person, one party that didn't quite like this element and we had the opportunity to tweak it, and I have to say I think the final building is actually through the process and we've had a good amount of time to do that consultation. It has really been successful.

**CHAIR** - The community consultation, I've noticed you had some workshops and there was a website and newsletters and so forth. Was that successful overall?

**Ms SMITH** - Yes, there was a formal community consultation process run in relation to feedback sought for options for what site was chosen as well, which we definitely took on board. But equally the project team have done an enormous amount of work with the near neighbours in terms of the engagement and ensuring that they're aware of every step of the

way. We also have a public-facing website that we draw the community's attention to keep them up to date as to the progress of the project as well.

Since the design has really kicked off and been developed, as Alex pointed out, the community consultation has definitely centred on those particular near neighbours who would be most affected, with drawing the general community to our website in the first instance for facts and questions-type answer sheet.

### **Applying the Learnings from the Mooreville Road project**

4.22 The Committee sought reassurance that the Department had incorporated learnings from the earlier, unsuccessful Mooreville Road project, into planning for this project. The witnesses confirmed that applying these learnings resulted in a design that will more effectively meet user needs and support service delivery in the face of future expected growth in demand:

**Mr SHELTON** - ...has there been in that process of going through community consultations and so forth for one, that not getting over the line and going back, I would imagine that that knowledge and education has made ... what we have in front of us, even better than what it may have been if it was a one-off and that was the first one. So, any instances that you can actually tell the Committee where it has benefited and where you've got better outcomes?

**Ms SMITH** - ... given the change, and quite significant change, in terms of location and what that would mean in terms of a new building versus what we would call a brownfield, ... we felt that it changed the scope of the project.

... We definitely feel we're able to do lessons learned from that process. I think the most important one was a like-for-like replacement in terms of three courts, and three courts was not going to futureproof us. The ability to have this new build include that fourth flexible jurisdictional court has really enabled us to strategically think to the future on how we fix not just obviously a range of issues around disability access and vulnerable witness access, but also futureproofing for court backlog and reduction in that.

I definitely feel this is the right outcome and placing the facility in the CBD enables greater access. I appreciate that Mooreville is five kilometres out of the Burnie CBD, but I think here, on the North West Coast, that's a lot. There was a lot of duplication in that design in terms of having to allow for additional office space for staff because they were five kilometres out of the CBD. The site is on a bus route, with a bus stop right outside, and we've been able to take advantage of ensuring that the access - there are six or seven different accesses into the building for all the myriad of people that will be using it. I definitely think this has been the better outcome.

**Ms van ADRICHEM** - I think the other element, and it might be two ways of looking at it, but having a second process around the functional brief and the requirements of the new court complex, stakeholders have previously turned their mind to what they needed to be able to undertake their roles and responsibilities. It refined their feedback even more for this purpose as well. Notwithstanding that, we have to go back a second time around that, but it gave us greater flexibility to tailor the design to best meet the needs of court users.

### **Transition to the New Burnie Court Complex**

4.23 The Committee asked the witnesses to explain how the transition from the current courts to commencing operations at the new court complex would be managed:

**CHAIR** - ... can you explain how that transition from the existing Burnie Court to, if successful, the proposed new court - what would the transition from one court to the other court look like? Have you gone into that detail yet with the project? I know that's quite far in the future.

**Ms van ADRICHEM** - We have appointed a business analyst to engage with the Magistrates Court, Supreme Court, Tasmanian Prison Service, Family Court, as well as the Law Society and other stakeholders around what a new site looks like and what operationally would be required. I might hand to Amber to speak more specifically about what that business analyst is looking at, because there is a real transition and commissioning process that will be required, subject to appropriate approvals, to be able to transfer to a larger facility.

**CHAIR** - Will you be having half in one while the other's finished or will it all be kicking off at the same time? I'm interested in how you will do it.

**Ms SMITH** - ... That's the reason why we've engaged the business analyst, recognising it needs to be a transition process and the best way for that to be done. In relation to the scope of the engagement of the business analyst, they will do a business analysis plan, so a structured plan that outlines methodology around that approach for us on behalf of the staff. We've got a stakeholder engagement plan where they are engaging with those key stakeholders, so hearing from them how they think it will best work and to reduce and minimise downtime on the court and the operations.

A business requirements document - so that will give us a detailed summary of the business processes and we will put forward some recommendations on improvements to those processes as well, noting that the current facility is the size that it is and they will be moving to a much larger facility so there will need to be that level of work done.

A set of specifications - so functional requirements to guide the finalisation of the commissioning period, a business readiness checklist that a project manager on behalf of the courts can pick up and just help that transition for the courts, and business readiness plans or a comprehensive plan detailing the actions required from each output, noting that there's - obviously, we've focused today on the Magistrates Court and the Supreme Court, but, as Pauline has said, there are many other services that are working within a court facility, and getting in the community as well, recognising that there's been a change of location.

Our agency executive will deliver that detailed list of documentation and then they will consider and take on board the best, so there may be several recommendations around certain elements and we will adapt.

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

4.24 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 - ... Thank you for coming in today and before we move on to discuss with our Committee the information that you provided to us, there are some questions which I need to ask you. Does the proposed works meet an identified need or needs or solve a recognised problem?*

**Witnesses** - Yes.

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

**Witnesses** - Yes.

*CHAIR - Are the proposed works fit for purpose?*

**Witnesses** - Yes.

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

**Witnesses** - Yes.

*CHAIR - And are the proposed works a good use of public funds?*

**Witnesses** - Yes.

## 5 DOCUMENTS TAKEN INTO EVIDENCE

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

- *Burnie Courts Complex Relocation Project*, Submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, Strategic Infrastructure Projects, Department of Justice, January 2026.
- *Burnie Courts Complex Relocation Project -Department of Justice-response to Question on Notice - 5 March 2026.*

## 6 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

- 6.1 The Committee is satisfied that the need for the proposed works has been established. Once completed, the proposed works will provide a purpose-built court complex at 106 Wilson Street, Burnie, to permanently accommodate both the Magistrates Court and the Supreme Court, as well as provide for a flexible multi-jurisdictional fourth court.
- 6.2 The Committee recognises the limitations of the existing Burnie Courthouse, which no longer meets contemporary requirements for safety, security, accessibility or operational efficiency. The current facility limits the ability of the courts to respond to increasing demand, contributes to court delays, and presents work, health and safety risks for staff, judiciary, court users and vulnerable members of our community.
- 6.3 The proposed works will provide a new court complex that will offer much improved facilities and safer environment for staff, the judiciary, persons in custody, and for juries. It will provide the capacity to meet increased demand for court services, resolve security and safety concerns, and provide space for the family court as required. As such, it is expected to improve access to justice, reduce court backlogs, strengthen community safety, and ensure that justice services are delivered in facilities that are safe, inclusive and fit for purpose.
- 6.4 Accordingly, the Committee recommends the Burnie Court Complex Relocation Project, at an estimated cost of \$87.456 million, in accordance with the documentation submitted.



**Parliament House  
Hobart  
31 March 2026**

**Jen Butler MP  
Chair**

