



PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS

Macquarie Point Northern Access Road

*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) until 2 May 2026
Mr Hiscutt from 26 May 2026
Ms Rattray (Deputy Chair from 11 May 2026)

House of Assembly

Ms Butler (Chair)
Ms Burnet
Mr Shelton

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1 INTRODUCTION

To Her Excellency the Honourable Caroline Wells, 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:-

Macquarie Point Northern Access Road

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 the construction of the Macquarie Point Northern Access Road, to link the Tasman Highway to the Macquarie Point Precinct and provide an alternative northern access to the Port of Hobart. It is a key infrastructure initiative tied to the broader redevelopment of the Macquarie Point Precinct.
- 2.2 Planning is currently underway for the redevelopment of the Macquarie Point Precinct including the construction of a new multi-purpose stadium, an Antarctic facilities zone and mixed-use development zone. Additional developments are also proposed for the existing foreshore area in the vicinity of the Domain and Regatta Grounds.
- 2.3 A key element in facilitating these and other developments in the Macquarie Point Precinct is supporting future transport connectivity to the Macquarie Point Precinct by provision of road access from the north. The Northern Access Road will provide an alternative route for heavy vehicles to access the Port of Hobart and will support developments in the Macquarie Point Precinct and Regatta Point foreshore area.
- 2.4 A northern entry into the Port of Hobart will ease the pressure on the surrounding road network, enhance connectivity and provide more opportunity for land use and investment within Macquarie Point
- 2.5 The new road will link the Tasman Highway with the Macquarie Point Precinct and includes an event bus plaza that will help manage public transport during events at the multipurpose stadium.
- 2.6 The works for the Northern Access Road project are comprised of two main parts:
Northern Access Road:
 - New road extending from Tasman Highway through to northern side of Macquarie Point development site via the existing rail corridor;
 - Turning circle at the Northern Access Road termination;

- Vehicle access to TasPorts and TasWater facilities and the stadium;
- Installation of four bus stopping zones and extended paved hardstand area with pedestrian shelters for event day public transportation services;
- Relocated vehicle access to the City of Hobart carpark, Domain Shipyards and Regatta Grounds foreshore area;
- New bridge structure over the Domain Shipyards access road;
- New pedestrian underpass for the Intercity Cycleway;
- New shared use paths on either side of the Northern Access Road;
- New roadway and pedestrian lighting; and
- Retaining walls along the majority of new road length (both upslope and downslope).

Tasman Highway Modifications:

- Addition of a southbound acceleration lane joining onto the third lane that commences at the Brooker Avenue Intersection;
- Tasman Highway modification to create a short northbound acceleration lane from McVilly Drive;
- Relocated shared use path where impacted by the southbound acceleration lane;
- Half clover-leaf widening to accommodate 26m B-Doubles;
- Removal of the footpath on the eastern side of the clover-leaf and underpass; and
- Pedestrian crossing improvements.

3 PROJECT COSTS

- 3.1 Pursuant to the Message from Her Excellency the Governor-in-Council, the estimated cost of the work is \$75.9 million.

The following Department's submission provided the following information on the cost estimates for the project:

The project has a funding commitment of \$75.9 from the Tasmanian Government in the 2025-26 budget in addition to \$3.0M allocated in the 2024-25 budget for scoping, planning and design development.

The current cost estimate is summarised below.

Item	Cost estimate	Notes
Base Estimate	\$49,045,697	Works including investigations, design, community engagement, approvals, acquisition (including related compensation), project management and construction.
Contingency	\$26,975,133	Contingency 55% of base estimate.
Escalation	\$2,221,869	Escalation 4.7% of base estimate. Refer below for discussion.
Total	\$78,242,699	

Note, given that the project is at Concept Design Stage, the project cost estimate has been completed as a deterministic estimate with the contingency value based on the range recommended by Infrastructure Australia guidelines. The estimate has been prepared in accordance with Association for the Advancement of Cost Engineering (AACE) Class 5 guidelines.

This demonstrates that the Northern Access Road works are forecast to be delivered within the original budget. Due to the relatively early stage of design development, the contingency allowances are quite large. It is expected that further design development will allow the estimated cost of the Northern Access Road, including Tasman Highway on-ramp upgrades to be refined and ensure that it remains within the budget allocation. Opportunities for Australian Government contribution to the Tasman Highway improvement component will be explored given the expected benefit to the National Land Transport Network connection to the Port of Hobart.¹

...

The contingency allowance provides for contingent events – that is events which may or may not occur.

For this project, key contingent risk items include:

- Delays to program caused by:
 - Service relocation process
 - Environmental/heritage/planning approvals
 - Stakeholder opposition
 - Scope change
 - Land acquisition
 - Adjacent project changes/clashes
- Site conditions risk including:

¹ Macquarie Point Northern Access Road Project, Submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, State Roads, Department of State Growth, 28 January 2026, p. 14

- Unforeseen geotechnical conditions such as
- Unsuitable foundation material
- Softer subgrade than anticipated requiring additional treatment or importation of material
- Rock in excavations increasing cost and time during construction
- Contaminated material found requiring remediation or disposal
- Construction risks including
 - Service/utility strike
 - Unanticipated discovery of Aboriginal artefacts
 - Adjacent construction activities restrict/limit access to and from site
- Market factors including:
 - Contractor availability
 - Material availability²

...

The escalation allowance is a provision in costs for changes in economic and market conditions over time.

Estimates of escalation are not intended to be precise forecast of future prices, they are approximations intended to represent the average trends for a large group of projects in a broad region.

The escalation rate has been determined in accordance with Australian Government guidelines. The Australian Government commissions considerable economic investigation in order to provide state specific forecast escalation, and the department has not diverted resources into challenging these Australian Government requirements.³

² *Macquarie Point Northern Access Road Project*, Submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, State Roads, Department of State Growth, 28 January 2026, pp. 14-15

³ *Macquarie Point Northern Access Road Project*, Submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, State Roads, Department of State Growth, 28 January 2026, pp. 15

4 EVIDENCE

- 4.1 The Committee commenced its inquiry on Thursday, 12 February 2026 with an inspection of the site of the proposed works. The Committee then returned to Committee Room 1, Parliament House, whereupon the following witnesses appeared, made the Statutory Declaration and were examined by the Committee in public:-

Proponent

- Kevin Bourne, Director, Major Transport Projects, Department of State Growth;
- Ben Moloney, Executive Director, Major Transport Projects, Department of State Growth;
- Laura Middleton, Manager Stakeholder Communications, Major Transport Projects, Department of State Growth; and
- Mia Potter, Manager Approvals, Major Transport Projects, Department of State Growth.

Public

- Toby Rowallan, President, Hobart Northern Suburbs Rail Action Group
- Stephen Zvillis, Vice President, Hobart Northern Suburbs Rail Action Group; and
- Mark Donnellon, President, Streets People Love Hobart

The following Committee Members were present:

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

Overview

- 4.2 Mr Bourne provided an overview of the proposed works, highlighting the proposed design and the need for and benefits of the project:

Mr BOURNE - Today we are seeking consideration of the Macquarie Point Northern Access Road, which is fully funded by the Tasmanian Government, with an approved budget of \$78.9 million.

...

Originally conceived several years ago, the primary purpose of the Northern Access Road is to unlock opportunities for further economic development of public land in the Macquarie Point Precinct and to provide an additional point of access to the Port of Hobart as it continues to expand operations and reduce reliance on the current access to the port via Evans Street. This improved port access is important as it will support critical port operations including, for example, Antarctic logistics as part of Tasmania's role as a gateway to the Antarctic and Southern Ocean.

The Northern Access will also be a key piece of enabling infrastructure for future pedestrian, cycling and passenger transport access to the Regatta Grounds foreshore and to the new bus plaza at the proposed multipurpose stadium. The road will also provide access to infrastructure managed by TasNetworks, TasWater and other owners and businesses within the precinct.

If this project was unable to proceed for any reason, the identified needs would not be met and once the new port and Macquarie Point Stadium became operational, traffic congestion issues would be expected to increase on the Tasman Highway, Davey Street and Evans Street.

The primary objectives of the project will be to provide safe and efficient vehicle access from the Tasman Highway to the port access and the adjacent precinct. Also to provide hardstand areas and infrastructure to support efficient operation of public transport during major events at the stadium, and to deliver the project in a manner that considers the needs and interests of other projects and users in the broad area.

One of the challenges of this project will be interfacing with the other precinct projects at various stages of design and delivery. The project is already working closely with the Macquarie Point Development Corporation, TasPorts, TasWater and TasNetworks on those projects that will be delivered concurrently, including the multipurpose stadium, decommissioning and demolition of the wastewater treatment plant, and the Macquarie Point Wharf No. 6.

In addition, we are working with proponents on what allowances to make for other future projects including the Macquarie Point Urban Developments, historic tram museum, Regatta Point ferry terminal, Northern Suburbs Transit Corridor and the lane use management system.

With several interfaces with other projects to be managed, the project decided the best approach was to undertake the detailed design first, then seek tenders for a construct only contract. The design consultant is already developing the detailed design documentation to inform planning approvals and procurement documentation required later this year.

The design includes new retaining walls along parts of the route, allowing for shared use paths on either side of the new road that connect to the Intercity Cycleway via a new underpass. The road connects with the port access before looping back to the bus plaza, providing an area for passengers to get on or off buses during stadium events. The design also includes an underpass below the new access road to connect with the Domain slipways.

While the new road provides safe and efficient access to the Macquarie Point Precinct, the increase in the number of trucks and buses going to the port and stadium precinct necessitate improvements to the traffic efficiency and safety at the McVilly Drive interchange on the Tasman Highway by addressing some current issues that can sometimes cause congestion at peak times. The project scope includes an upgrade to both the northbound and southbound Tasman Highway onramps at McVilly Drive to cater for this increased heavy vehicle traffic.

During the planning of the project, we've been speaking to a lot of stakeholders to ensure their needs have been identified and are, wherever possible, addressed by the design of the project. In addition, we have recently launched a public consultation period to allow other stakeholder and community groups to provide feedback on the design developed today. This feedback will inform further detailed design development over coming months.

Following the Public Works Committee hearing and other public consultation, the project will submit a development application to the City of Hobart seeking formal planning approval as well as other permits as required. The development application will provide further opportunities for public feedback and representations before the project is approved to proceed with construction.

Developing a detailed design before inviting the construction tenders will ensure that an appropriate selection is made and delivered to meet the identified needs in the most cost effective and responsible way. When the project is successfully delivered in this way, the benefits will include enhanced resilience and efficiency in port operations, facilitation of development and urban renewal across the precinct, a bus plaza that is functional, safe and

efficient for stadium events, and improved safety and connectivity for road users, pedestrians and cyclists.

In conclusion, the project is needed and is a good use of taxpayers' money. The proposed solution is an appropriate way to address the identified needs by supporting critical infrastructure development, providing improved access and ensuring public safety in the further development and use of this important public area.⁴

Need For and Benefits of the Project

4.3 The Department of State Growth's submission highlighted the need for the Northern Access Road:

The Macquarie Point Northern Access Road is important as it supports ongoing port operations, in particular Antarctic logistics as part of Tasmania's role as a Gateway to the Antarctic and Southern Ocean. The northern access will also be a key piece of enabling infrastructure for future passenger transport planning, will improve access to the Regatta Grounds foreshore area, pedestrian and cycling links and support access to and from Macquarie Point, and the stadium.

Originally conceived more than seven years ago in the development of the Hobart City Deal, the primary purpose of the Northern Access Road is to unlock opportunities for further economic development of important public land and provide additional access to the Port of Hobart as it continues to expand operations and reduce reliance on the Evans Street access to the Port.

The new road also provides safe and efficient access to the Macquarie Point precinct, for both heavy vehicles to the Port or the stadium precinct, and infrastructure to support efficient passenger transport operations for stadium events.

The project also enables improvements to the traffic efficiency and safety at the McVilly Drive interchange by addressing some current issues that can cause congestion at peak times. The scope will include an upgrade to both the northbound and southbound Tasman Highway on-ramps at McVilly Drive to cater for increased heavy vehicle traffic originating from the Port of Hobart operations and from the Macquarie Point precinct.

If the project could not proceed, these needs would not be met and traffic congestion issues would increase on Tasman Highway, Davey Street and Evans Street once the new Port and Macquarie Point Stadium Precinct became operational, generating additional traffic movements.

The stated objectives of the Macquarie Point Northern Access Road project are:

- to provide safe and efficient vehicle access between the northern side of the Macquarie Point precinct and the Tasman Highway;
- to provide the hardstand areas and passenger amenity infrastructure necessary to support efficient operation of public transport to and from Macquarie Point during major events at the stadium;
- to plan, design, coordinate and undertake the development in a manner that appropriately considers the needs and interests of other development and utility services projects in the area, adjacent stakeholders and existing users of the area.⁵

4.4 The submission also listed the benefits of the project:

The expected positive outcomes and benefits from this project are:

- enhanced resilience for port operations by providing a second access point;

⁴ Transcript of Evidence, 12 February 2026, Department of State Growth, pp. 2-4

⁵ *Macquarie Point Northern Access Road Project*, Submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, State Roads, Department of State Growth, 28 January 2026, pp. 4-5

- facilitation of development and changes of land use along the road corridor;
- improved safety and connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists between the Intercity Cycleway and Hobart city;
- a functional, safe and efficient bus plaza that allows for the transportation mode share targets of the stadium operator to be realised;
- improved access to the Macquarie Point precinct from the Tasman Highway, via McVilly Drive, with minimal traffic impacts on the Tasman Highway, which is already heavily constrained;
- historic patterns of use of the area are not significantly impeded; and
- creation of economic and social benefits resulting from the capital infrastructure investment in accordance with the Australian Government requirements and the Tasmanian Government's Buy Local policy.

As detailed estimates of costs and benefits for the project are not yet available, a Benefit Cost Analysis has not been completed at this stage.⁶

4.5 The Committee asked the Department of State Growth if the need for the Northern Access Road had grown since the decision to construct the Macquarie Point Multipurpose Stadium:

Mr SHELTON - ... Your notes in your submission indicated that the Northern Access Road was talked about six or seven years ago, as Tania has mentioned. That's prior to any stadium debate. The need, as I understand it, was the growing need for the Antarctic Division to have better access through the port. I guess the question to you is, do you agree that now the stadium has passed the parliament that there's a greater need than there was six years ago? If it was a worthy project six years ago, then it's a more worthy project now.

Mr MOLONEY - Yes, I think we would agree with that. It's certainly more than just a stadium access project. It's a port access project and other developments in there. It's an urban renewal project. It's trying to - as I mentioned in my opening statement - it's unlocking opportunities for the whole area, not just providing access to a stadium.⁷

4.6 The Committee asked if a cost benefit analysis had been undertaken for the Northern Access Road. The Department of State Growth noted that while no cost benefit analysis had been conducted, the only way the benefits of activating Macquarie Point could be realised was by improving access to the site, regardless of what developments are undertaken across the site:

Ms BURNET - ... Is there any cost-benefit analysis actually undertaken in this project?

Mr MOLONEY - No, there is not. I guess it is a project that's been contemplated for quite some time. I think, in terms of the development of the precinct, its benefits are very important. I would also say that in terms of the order associated with the stadium, it was quite clear this was a prerequisite project that needed to proceed. In that regard, without this project, the stadium project cannot proceed. As I said, there is a range of benefits this project is providing and, on that basis, we haven't done a detailed cost-benefit analysis.

Ms BURNET - I suppose my point is again we are making decisions about state and public funds, so having a cost-benefit analysis would be quite useful - even whether it supports a stadium, supports a port, or not.

Mr MOLONEY - It's fair to say regardless of whether the stadium was there or not, this project has been contemplated for some time because the only way Tasmania can benefit from the

⁶ Macquarie Point Northern Access Road Project, Submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, State Roads, Department of State Growth, 28 January 2026, p. 8

⁷ Transcript of Evidence, 12 February 2026, Department of State Growth, p. 7

development of Macquarie Point is if we provide improved access. With or without a stadium for the Macquarie Point to be developed, this was considered to be a core prerequisite and that's why it's been a project on the books for some time now.⁸

4.7 TasPorts submission also highlighted the importance of the Northern Access Road to their operations and to the development of Macquarie Point more broadly:

The Port of Hobart operates 24 hours a day and supports statewide freight supply chains, Antarctic and Southern Ocean research, cruise tourism, marine industries and associated employment. Reliable and flexible road access is essential not only for TasPorts but for the many businesses, operators and communities that depend on the port's ongoing function.

TasPorts' interest in a Northern Port Access corridor has been a long term consideration in its planning. Work on the current iteration commenced around 2015, and the corridor was identified in the TasPorts Master Plan (2018) as a favourable future development path. That need was anticipated because of likely development in the vicinity of Evans and Davey Streets and the consequent increase in vehicular and pedestrian activity.

TasPorts supports delivery of the Northern Access Road as an important piece of enabling infrastructure for the Macquarie Point precinct. The project presents a valuable opportunity to improve access, network resilience and connectivity for a broad range of users now and into the future.⁹

Concept Design

4.8 The Committee sought some clarity on the current project design, noting it was a concept design that had been presented in the Department's submission, any changes since project inception, and the likelihood of further design changes:

CHAIR - ... What we have in front of us as a Committee is a concept design only at this stage. We have looked at various submissions from other projects in the past where we have had designs placed in front of us and those designs have been very different by the time they've been built to what we sign off on. Could you clarify, for our peace of mind, whether this concept design will be accurate? Or do you believe that there will be some significant changes?

Mr BOURNE - While it's still, I guess, at a concept level, we are progressing into detailed design. So we do have some understanding of things as they are developing beyond what's been put into the submission.

This project has been going for several years, so there's been a lot of consultation with stakeholders to identify those needs and put that together. What we feel is that the concept design presented has already been through a lot of review and development with stakeholders. And now it's about turning that concept into a more detailed engineering design that can be put to tender and constructed in accordance with that. We don't expect there'll be very much difference from this at a concept level.

CHAIR - For further clarification to that point, you've been working on this for six, seven years. But it has changed significantly now because this is now about the provider having a bus hub for a stadium, where that wouldn't have been the case seven years ago when this was first started. Is that correct?

⁸ Transcript of Evidence, 12 February 2026, Department of State Growth, pp. 10-11

⁹ *Submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works in Relation to the Proposed Northern Access Road*, TasPorts, 10 March 2026, p. 1

Mr BOURNE - That's right. There have been some changes in what the needs are in the earlier years. But yes, certainly it has been a good year of development for the current concept with the current needs to service a stadium, as well as a port.¹⁰

Project Funding

4.9 The Committee asked if any Australian Government Funding has been provided for this project, given it was a Hobart City Deal initiative:

Ms RATTRAY - The Chair touched on the fact that this has been about seven years in the development and it was part of the Hobart City Deal. You said there's no Australian Government funding. But the City Deal had Australian Government funding. Is it all just straight-out state government funding?

Mr BOURNE - My understanding is that the Hobart City Deal had funding for some initiatives within that deal, but this particular one wasn't there.

Ms RATTRAY - So this is not included?

Mr BOURNE - Not included.

Ms RATTRAY - Even though it's part of the original development of the Hobart City Deal?

Mr BOURNE - Yes. I guess it was an initiative that came out of the City Deal but not necessarily funded as part of the Hobart City Deal. That's my understanding.¹¹

4.10 The Committee noted the project was being funded from the Urban Congestion Fund. The Committee sought to understand if funding the Northern Access Road would result in adverse impacts on the funding available for other projects earmarked under this fund:

Ms BURNET - ... The 2023-24 Budget allocated \$3 million for planning and design, which is probably what you're spending now. The 2025-26 State Budget allocates \$75.6 million across three years for the Northern Access Road, which includes cycle and pedestrian infrastructure as part of that. The state contribution to the Urban Congestion Fund is a total of \$124.9 million, and the Australian Government funding is \$62.7 million, according to table 7.5 in the Budget. So, there must be some dual arrangement with funding from the federal government in relation to this project?

Mr BOURNE - You mentioned that congestion fund. My understanding, as you said, that's 120-something million dollars –

Ms BURNET - \$124.9 million.

Mr BOURNE - which, obviously, is a lot more than just this project. That covers other initiatives. I'm not able to tell you exactly what is included in that remaining \$50-odd million, but it's funding of projects outside of this area.

Ms BURNET - That leaves about \$46 million, I think. There is \$78 million going into this project, so it doesn't leave much for any other part of the congestion fund by the sounds of it?

Mr BOURNE - I'm not sure exactly the make-up of the remaining –

Ms BURNET - My point, I suppose, is this project taking away from other projects such as the Southern Outlet?

Mr BOURNE - I probably can't comment on the impact on other projects.

¹⁰ Transcript of Evidence, 12 February 2026, Department of State Growth, p. 4

¹¹ Transcript of Evidence, 12 February 2026, Department of State Growth, p. 5

Ms BURNET - Could you perhaps take that on notice? We're talking about the spending of state money, and money specifically set aside in the budget for the Urban Congestion Fund. It would be good to know that.¹²

- 4.11 In its response to questions taken on notice, the Department of State Growth clarified specific funding for the Northern Access Road was placed in the Urban Congestion Fund, and it would not impact on the delivery of other projects as these had separate funding allocations placed within the same fund:

The Northern Access Road is funded from a specific new allocation of \$78.9 Million in the 2025-26 budget as follows:

- a. \$3 Million for project planning and scoping
- b. \$75.9 Million for delivery and construction

The Northern Access Road funding was placed into an existing transport budget item known as the Urban Congestion Fund.

Other projects funded with separate funding allocations within the Urban Congestion Fund include:

- c. *Intelligent Transport System upgrades across Greater Hobart - Tasman Highway and Tasman Bridge Lane Utilisation Management System (LUMS) and Overheard Traveller Information System (OTIS)*
- d. *Hobart Public Transport infrastructure planning for Northern Suburbs Transit Corridor and Greater Hobart rapid bus network*
- e. *Derwent Ferry infrastructure*
- f. *Active transport, with remaining funds allocated to the Channel Highway Altona pedestrian bridge overpass*
- g. *Transport decarbonisation associated with green buses planning¹³*

Project Cost Estimate

- 4.12 The Committee noted the contingency was relatively high, at 55% of the base estimate. The Committee asked the Department of State Growth for an explanation and further detail on how the project cost estimate and contingency will evolve as the design is finalised:

Mr HARRISS - ...I'm interested to understand the contingency. It sits at 55 per cent of base estimate at the moment, which to me seems pretty high, albeit at a concept design stage.

Mr BOURNE - I think there are guidelines in terms of how you go about developing cost estimates of various stages of project development. This cost estimate was based on informing the concept design and gives us some confidence that the cost estimate is going to be within the budget funding commitment.

The base estimate is based on our calculation of the various direct costs for materials to build retaining walls, to build pavements, to build kerbs, et cetera, based on the scope as we could foresee at the point of time of doing that concept design cost estimate. As the detailed design develops, we will get more certainty on some of those provisions - exactly how thick the retaining walls are, for example; what material they are going to be made from, et cetera. Then we can give more confident direct-cost-based estimate values. Correspondingly, the contingency percentage will come down over time as we develop that further detail. There could be a small increase in the base estimate, but the percentage of contingency would come

¹² Transcript of Evidence, 12 February 2026, Department of State Growth, pp. 5-6

¹³ Department of State Growth Response to Questions on Notice - Macquarie Point Northern Access Road - dated 2 March 2026, p. 1

down as we get more information there. Overall, we're confident that it will be delivered within that value, likely less.¹⁴

Mr SHELTON - ... you've stated at the table that you are very confident with the design, that that basically won't change that much, and I take you at your word. However, you've still got ... \$25 million contingency. The two just don't quite align. I imagine if you are really happy with concept plan to go to engineering, that your contingency would be somewhat less than what it is at the moment.

CHAIR - It is one of the highest that I've seen from a base estimate with the Public Works Committee.

Mr MOLONEY - In relation to that, I might make a couple of comments. In terms of the cost estimate in its preparation, I understand the cost estimate would have been prepared at the end of last year - Kevin?

Mr BOURNE - Yes, probably October or November.

Mr MOLONEY - We are utilising information that was developed back then on that concept design. We have continued to develop the design since that time to keep the project moving forward. As of today, our design is much more developed in the sense that we are approaching preliminary design by April. At the moment, our developed design looks very similar to the concept design. Kevin mentioned before that we think we have some opportunities to improve the safety of the pedestrian underpass. That's an example where there might be some change in cost and may move.

In terms of the contingency, and the quantity of that contingency, it does relate a little bit more to not necessarily the layout, although that could influence. It's things that Kevin mentioned: high costs in terms of retaining walls - how exactly do we go about undertaking those works? They may be influenced by the footprint we're trying to minimise and how we're moving through that area.

Impact on Traffic Congestion

4.13 Given the funding for the Northern Access Road was allocated from the Urban Congestion fund, the Committee asked the Department of State Growth to explain what impact the project would have on traffic congestion in the area:

Ms BURNET - ... this is taken out of the Urban Congestion Fund, I believe. How much traffic is likely to be diverted with the development of this Northern Access Road?

Mr BOURNE - Could you clarify what you mean by 'traffic diverted' - from where? From port? From elsewhere?

Ms BURNET - From Evans Street or - if we're looking at congestion, what is the congestion that you're looking to mitigate?

Mr BOURNE - There is congestion along the Tasman Highway from the access of McVilly Drive joining on there. There's room for improvement of the Tasman Highway flowthrough there by the work we're proposing. The number of trucks leaving the port currently along Evans Street, crossing Davey Street and Macquarie Street, joining that part of the network, which is at times congested, by diverting some of that traffic to an alternative access - it wouldn't all be moved, it would be shared. That's for TasPorts to determine the most optimum way that they manage their internal traffic to move out of the port into the network in the most efficient way. I think that's where we'd see some movement, but I don't have a way to put numbers on that at this stage.

¹⁴ Transcript of Evidence, 12 February 2026, Department of State Growth, p. 25

Ms BURNET - And traffic flow; how many traffic movements - heavy vehicles and light vehicles are moving in and out of the port presently?

Mr BOURNE - We've been working with information provided by TasPorts. We believe about five heavy vehicles per hour would be using the Northern Access Road instead of the Evans Street access. It will reduce the impact on the traffic as a result of that.¹⁵

...

Ms BURNET - So, you're saying that having a third lane to exit McVilly Drive might cause a little bit more congestion, possibly?

Mr BOURNE - Our expectation would be that that would improve because that's currently the location where there is a bit of uncertainty in terms of the line marking of the lanes through that area. I think three lanes currently merge into two, just as McVilly Drive joins in and then the Lower Domain Road exits off at the same point. We'd be trying to clarify that and hopefully prevent any delays by, let's say, messy merging behaviour at those points.¹⁶

4.14 The Committee also sought clarification on the traffic modelling undertaken for the project, and what impacts this had identified:

CHAIR - Can you talk to us a little bit around the traffic modelling and the work that's been undertaken in that?

Mr BOURNE - The traffic modelling is - as I mentioned before, the Tasman Highway can be congested at some peak times. We're putting a little bit more traffic into that location where McVilly Drive joins on, particularly in the northbound direction, and we don't want to make it worse. We are trying to assess, by that traffic modelling, whether the impact to either the Tasman Highway or to queuing along the Northern Access Road at peak times is acceptable.

...

Ms BURNET - There was a significant amount of traffic modelling undertaken... from the Macquarie Point Development Assessment. ... Was that former traffic modelling looked at as part of your considerations?

Mr BOURNE - I can't confirm that at this stage. Maybe I will take that on notice. But I know that the same sort of overall network-wide traffic models that would probably have been used for that work are being used to examine scenarios that related to what we're designing and modelling here.

Ms BURNET - So, you're saying that having a third lane to exit McVilly Drive might cause a little bit more congestion, possibly?

Mr BOURNE - Our expectation would be that that would improve because that's currently the location where there is a bit of uncertainty in terms of the line marking of the lanes through that area. I think three lanes currently merge into two, just as McVilly Drive joins in and then the Lower Domain Road exits off at the same point. We'd be trying to clarify that and hopefully prevent any delays by, let's say, messy merging behaviour at those points.

...

CHAIR - If we provide a question on notice, would you be happy to provide us with some modelling around the traffic in that area? Is that correct?

Ms BURNET - Coming into the site and off the site.

CHAIR - And how that would have impact on that Tasman Highway area along there?

Mr BOURNE - Yes, I understand the question. I guess the relative volumes coming into McVilly Drive are quite small compared to the through traffic of the Tasman Highway. It's a much,

¹⁵ Transcript of Evidence, 12 February 2026, Department of State Growth, p. 8

¹⁶ Transcript of Evidence, 12 February 2026, Department of State Growth, p. 22

much wider, city-wide problem in terms of accurately modelling the behaviour of the highway along that section. Yes, we can provide some information but I'm not sure -

CHAIR - You will see what you can come up with for us?

Mr BOURNE - I'm not sure it's necessarily going to answer your question and give you that confidence.

Ms BURNET - Does your Department look at, once the stadium is built, the modal shift? Or is that some other area of the Department? So, getting people out of cars?

Mr BOURNE - I guess that's part of a wider modelling in other sections of the Department.

Mr MOLONEY - Would it be correct to say, Kevin, that the focus of our traffic modelling is more determining whether or not the particular alignments and shapes of our proposed intersection alterations could potentially create challenges or more heavy traffic? So, if we're adopting a design that involves the merging of traffic at an earlier point along the Tasman Highway, what implications that may have in peak hour as to whether or not that would increase or decrease congestion?

The types of modelling that were undertaken for this project are probably not from the concept of the broader, whole-of-Hobart, changes in demographics, changes in mixed-use between public transport and others, because that's a much bigger matter. What we're looking at are changes of behaviour and changes of operation that would be specifically influenced by the design that we're proposing for the merging of traffic at those intersections. I think that is probably the greater emphasis.

We have undertaken sufficient modelling to give us confidence that what we're proceeding with is workable and should have relatively minor impacts.

However, I also understand that that modelling is still being concluded and we have yet to complete it for the developed design stage, so it's something we're constantly monitoring. But we do have enough analysis that we have a high degree of confidence in our design and we're going through the additional analysis as due diligence to make sure that we're satisfied with it before we commence construction.¹⁷

...

Ms BURNET - ... If there is the housing that's promised - I think, I don't know, was it \$42 million of housing in that area near where the ferry terminal may be, or where the slippery pole is presently? What sort of traffic modelling have you done to think about that?

Mr BOURNE - Part of our analysis of the traffic volumes on that road considers volumes generated from that development. They're fairly low by road design standards, so we don't expect that those volumes in themselves will create any issues. Even the heavy vehicle and bus traffic is relatively low as a traffic volume.

Ms BURNET - It's all very low, isn't it, really? Until you have a match day.

Mr BOURNE - Well, even at match day, the number of buses - there's a lot of them, but they will space that over time. At any one point in time, it's a relatively low volume of traffic.¹⁸

4.15 The Department of State Growth subsequently provided the Committee with additional information on the traffic modelling used:

Previous traffic modelling reports and studies have been reviewed and have informed the project development.

¹⁷ Transcript of Evidence, 12 February 2026, Department of State Growth, pp. 21-23

¹⁸ Transcript of Evidence, 12 February 2026, Department of State Growth, p. 23

In particular, the Macquarie Point Multipurpose Stadium Transport Study (WSP 2024) informed the understanding of the transport strategy and objectives for the broader precinct. Key information taken from this report include:

- Transport mode share targets to inform the required bus plaza capacity
- Typical port freight and cruise ship volumes
- The high-level strategy for the wider transport plan during event times
- Understanding of greater Hobart traffic impacts during event times
- Expected access restrictions along the Northern Access Road during events
- Fundamental bus plaza requirements to support mode share
- Expected operation of the event bus service to provide 8, 50 seater buses leaving every 5 minutes.
- The proposed event bus routes

The Proposed Mixed-Use Development Traffic Impact Assessment (SALT 2024) has also been drawn upon. The traffic generation section of this report has been relied upon heavily in forecasting expected traffic on the Northern Access Road in non-event times.

Existing traffic modelling developed by the Department of State Growth for the analysis of the Greater Hobart Rapid Bus Network project was used in the development of traffic modelling for this project.

...

WSP 2024 undertook strategic modelling using the Greater Hobart Urban Travel Demand Model (GHUTDM). The modelling examined superimposing event-day demands on typical weekday PM vehicle demands in 2030 across the broader network. It was found that the event demands add traffic in the inbound direction inducing congestion in key corridors, particularly the Tasman Highway, Brooker Highway and Macquarie Street. Although the event-day demands create constraints on the network, the results indicated that congestion on the inbound routes during event ingress are better or comparable to the typical weekday AM peak period.

SALT 2024 used analytical modelling in the SIDRA9 Intersection software to test key intersection performance as a result of the traffic generated on the Northern Access Road. During the AM peak period, the analysis indicates that the McVilly Drive interchange will perform at a similar level under post-development traffic volumes. During the PM peak period, the analysis indicates there will be a considerable increase in delay to both through movements on the northbound Tasman Highway carriageway, and

vehicles merging onto the northbound Tasman Highway carriageway from Davies Avenue.

Further modelling for the Northern Access Road project was completed in late 2025 using microsimulation software Aimsun. This modelling used the existing State Growth Northern Suburbs Transit Corridor Model and included confirmed amendments to a reduced sub-area model desirable to State Growth. Aimsun modelling was preferred to assess the Tasman Highway corridor as it captures the variability in traffic behaviour (weaving, merging and diverging), signal coordination and queuing behaviour that influence corridor performance.

The purpose of this modelling was to assess the conditions of the road network around the redeveloped Macquarie Point precinct as a result of the new Northern Access Road and associated traffic. In particular, the modelling aimed to test various design solutions for modifications to the Tasman Highway interface to help ensure that the project will not adversely affect traffic flow on the Tasman Highway.

The modelling only considered a 'business as usual' scenario to better understand the traffic impacts associated with the Northern Access Road that coincides with the typical AM and PM commuter peak. An 'event day' stadium scenario has not been considered at this stage given that the expected traffic generated from the Northern Access Road is higher during a non-event scenario.

There is a moderate amount of additional traffic associated with the 'business as usual' scenario attributed to the redevelopment of Macquarie Point and addition of the Northern Access Road relative to the Tasman Highway volumes. Anticipated trip numbers are as follows:

Location	AM Peak Volume (vehicles)	PM Peak Volume (vehicle)
Northern Access Road Inbound	291	127
Northern Access Road Outbound	155	251
Tasman Highway Inbound	3920	2257
Tasman Highway Outbound	1463	2982

The modelling that has been undertaken thus far shows that higher levels of northbound morning peak congestion under the preferred design solution are expected due to the reduced northbound capacity in contraflow conditions. Additional delays are forecast but generally recover by 09:00am. In the morning peak, the Liverpool Street intersections with the Tasman Highway and Brooker Avenue are forecast to also have higher delays.

The Davies Avenue/ McVilly Drive interchange is modelled to operate within capacity. No turn at either intersection with the Northern Access Road is operating with a delay greater than 10 seconds in either peak indicating the intersections are operating at a Level of Service A.

In general, the modelling does show isolated areas of congestion, however these are mainly within the Hobart CBD and is an indication of how sensitive the CBD area is to future growth. Further updates to the modelling are underway to ensure that the traffic model accurately matches observed travel times in current conditions. This will help to refine the results and clarify the expected impacts.¹⁹

Tasman Highway Modifications

4.16 The Committee asked the Department of State Growth to provide further information about the modifications that were planned for access to and from the Tasman Highway:

Ms BURNET - In relation to the southbound acceleration lane joining onto the third lane - so there's that addition and then there's a modification to create a short northbound acceleration lane - the third point is the relocated shared use path which is impacted by the southbound acceleration lane. Can you describe how you intend to change that? Is that the footpath currently you're talking about that will be impacted?

Mr BOURNE - In that section there's already a slight widening for the entry ramp coming out of McVilly Drive because we are putting more heavy vehicles along there. There's a proposal to widen that to make it a full lane farther south.

The intention is we move the kerb or reconstruct the kerb farther out to provide that lane and then build the similar footpath farther beyond that kerb. Both of those go underneath the Bridge of Remembrance, so that is probably the main constraint to making that wider, moving away from the road farther.

Ms BURNET - I don't understand why that would be a constraint, but perhaps you can explain that. Also, that is a two-way bike lane; it's usually used for bikes, but sometimes for pedestrians. It's very narrow, right next to a busy road. What sort of improvements are you likely to do as part of this such as widening and the works, because you would be cutting into the embankment along there as well, wouldn't you?

Mr BOURNE -Yes. First of all, to your first comment about the Bridge of Remembrance. The Bridge of Remembrance slopes down once it goes over the highway and it has clearance there, then continues to slope down away from it. The farther away from the current alignment of

¹⁹ Department of State Growth Response to Questions on Notice - Macquarie Point Northern Access Road - dated 2 March 2026, pp. 2-3

the road, the clearance under the bridge reduces. At some point you get to the point where it's just too low to fit a clearance envelope for pedestrians and cyclists through that area.

Ms BURNET - Oh I see what you mean, yes.

Mr BOURNE - Secondly, how would we do that?

Ms BURNET - Would you be looking at widening the footpath, because it's not very wide at all and you'd have to cut into the embankment south of the Bridge of Remembrance?

Mr BOURNE - I think the intention is we would make the pathway as wide as we can physically fit within that vertical clearance envelope I was mentioning, under the bridge. It is potentially a narrow section and would require some excavation into the embankment along that section, yes.

Ms BURNET - Quite a lot of people come off the Bridge of Remembrance and double back, so wouldn't need to be necessarily going underneath the bridge. If you're going to make improvements as that area is quite narrow - and bikes go fast down there because there's a bit of a decline - so it would be good if that improvement were made.

Mr BOURNE - One comment that needs to be made is that's the current route for a lot of cyclists. It's because the Intercity Cycleway goes to that point at McVilly Drive and then I understand people climb and go that way - the majority of people go that way.

With the proposed Northern Access Road, that will provide an alternative route which we believe will become the primary route for people coming from the Intercity Cycleway towards the city and would go along the Northern Access Road around the bus plaza, past the stadium and link back to Davey Street that way. It should mean a lot of cyclists that are currently using that route move away from that route.

There might be exceptions, people going different directions; they can make those decisions themselves, but that's our expectation.

CHAIR - Subsequent to that, from looking at the proposed plans, that cycleway goes straight through where all the people will be exiting and entering the buses, is that correct? There's not a dedicated bike area there, because it's a shared space they have to go through where all the buses are dropping people off don't they? It's not really an optimum design.

...

Mr BOURNE - Well, events represent a small proportion of the total time out of 24 hours a day, seven days a week. For the most part, that will be a viable route for cyclists and pedestrians to find a way away from the road, as in Davey Street. During event times, those short periods of a week where there's an event on there would be, potentially, a short period of time where there's a lot of people in that area - may impact the ability of riding a bike through there. That would need to be a decision by the cyclist as to whether they wanted to do that or not.

CHAIR - It's not really an optimum design because my understanding from the Premier that there are going to be events at that site. Actually, we might get that on notice. Do you know how many events are meant to be at that site annually?

Mr MOLONEY - It's important to note that there are large events and then there are other events. There are various numbers mentioned in terms of how often the stadium will be used, but in terms of major events, if you were running a major event that had a sellout crowd, people congregating around the stadium, we're talking about in excess of 10,000 people congregating through there. People won't be riding their bicycles at high speed through a crowd of 10,000 people. It would be unsafe regardless.

CHAIR - But they're being cut off from doing it the other way because of what you're saying with the restriction of the bridge being low.

Mr MOLONEY - There won't be a restriction. I should probably add to complement Kevin's comments. It's important to note the Bridge of Remembrance when it was designed, took into consideration the long-term intention to widen this section. The location of the support pier

and also the height through that area specifically took into consideration vehicles going along the alignment of the road that we've designed and the retention of a sufficiently wide shared user path between that road and the pier and the support. The reason why I think that alignment is chosen is a combination of the fact that is probably the alignment that minimises your vertical alignment. When you're riding a cycle going up and down hills, it is less preferable and it is also likely to be the most cost-effective outcome. In terms of cost-benefit -

...That is to say, we're currently going through a process of public consultation and consultation with council. If there was a superior route that had cyclists on the not-road side of the pier there at the bridge, then that's certainly something we could consider. It would be something we would work through to see whether or not the benefits warranted any additional costs and whether or not the extra climbing up and down would dissuade people or otherwise.²⁰

Bus Plaza and Public Transport

4.25 The Committee questioned the Department of State Growth about the proposed bus plaza and how potential bus movements would be managed on stadium event days:

CHAIR - Some of the evidence that was provided to us which came from a planning report - and I'm not sure which planning report - estimated that it's going to be 80 buses to move 6000 people. When you're designing that space for the buses, I don't know what that would look like - ...

...You wouldn't have all 23,000 people catching a bus. There would be people on foot and there'd be people coming from other places, of course. That's an incredible number of buses. Is it accurate? Have you factored that into your designs?...

Mr MOLONEY - I think that that number probably is in the right order of magnitude in terms of the quantity of patrons that we would like to use public transport. I mean, to be honest, it would be a fantastic problem to have, if we had more and more people using buses that we needed more buses.

In terms of the design scope of this project, we haven't sought to accommodate the queuing of buses for this project. So, as part of that mode of operation for public transport in terms of post-events, what we would expect to happen is marshalling areas to be identified, so that a number of buses could be basically in close proximity to the precinct and come and arrive at the same time the other buses are leaving. If I had to give an example of what I think might be one scenario, you could imagine a number of buses being marshalled in the broader Domain area where there are a number of streets there where they could be marshalled and could be in close proximity and come in and feed into, pick up patrons and move on in an efficient manner. If their destination is close enough, you could anticipate that those vehicles would be used more than once in terms of distributing people to their final destination. Although it might be 80 bus movements, it might be that there's a combination of 60 buses that 20 have time to go out, drop off and come back in.

CHAIR - It's only for 6000 people. We'd be doubling that, wouldn't we, potentially? That'd be 160 buses that could potentially be going through where you only have eight bays in your design. I think that would all be within an hour, wouldn't it? An hour to get there, then an hour when they're leaving. Is the space that you've designed big enough, and where are we going to find 160 buses as well?

Mr MOLONEY - In terms of buses, I think the number was 80. I've seen numbers like 100 buses. I haven't seen a number of 160 buses in terms of -

²⁰ Transcript of Evidence, 12 February 2026, Department of State Growth, pp. 17-20

CHAIR - Well, that'd be doubling for 12,000 people, which would be probably realistic, if you're thinking about attendance at a 23,000 sitting down stadium.

Mr MOLONEY - I think if you assume, say 50 or 60 people per bus. You calculate - I don't have a calculator in front of myself, but that would broadly - if you thought of the number, divide it by 50 or 60 -

CHAIR - You'd have to be filling a bus about every two minutes, or a minute and a half. Is that physically possible to put 50 people on a bus - or take 50 people off a bus, put 50 people on a bus and then move them on within a minute and a half, to cater to that?

Mr MOLONEY - There are a total of eight bus bays, each of them being loaded. There has been preliminary analysis around potential loading times, transfer times. But, really, the detailed analysis of that does form into more of the mode of operation plan that needs to be developed.

CHAIR - Could we have access to that detailed analysis of that movement?

Mr MOLONEY - I wouldn't classify it as a detailed analysis. We do have some analysis of numbers and timeframes.

CHAIR - That'd be really helpful. Just about whether or not the area is going to be big enough to cater for that, if it does end up being with a bus model.

Mr MOLONEY - In determining that, we have obtained a lot of that information from the Macquarie Point Development Corporation, in terms of some of their early planning, and then undertaken some of our own basic analysis.

Ms BURNET - There was a point raised about the confluence of the three main routes through that area. How do you feel that could be - do you feel that that's going to be, like the peaks that were referred to - When you're delivering those buses and patrons to the stadium and going, it's all at a peak. What sort of strain would there be on the network?

Mr MOLONEY - Are we referring to congestion at peak business times?

Ms BURNET - When the stadium is filling and emptying. Those times.

Mr MOLONEY - Again, it would come back to that broader plan. I think that there will be a number of buses exiting here. Certainly, we're trying to make this bus plaza as efficient as possible to get as many patrons as possible to be using public transport. If they're using public transport, they're not using private vehicles. If they're not using private vehicles, they're not increasing the congestion. I'm not suggesting that there won't be traffic congestion post event, but I would argue that this project is specifically targeted at utilising an existing intention to provide a northern access to the port and the precinct and combining that with a bus plaza, which will encourage people to use public transport and reduce the number of people using private vehicles.²¹

4.26 The Committee questioned the Department of State Growth on the interaction between the bus plaza and the proposed rapid transit bus network to service the Greater Hobart area:

CHAIR - ...it's my understanding from our walk-through...that the rapid buses which are meant to complement the stadium from a public transport perspective will not be used in this actual site. This is not their hub. These will just be normal buses. Is that correct?

Mr BOURNE - Yes, that's the intention. This project is providing the infrastructure for the buses to operate. The operation of those buses is to be determined by others within the Department and, I guess, the operator and developer of the stadium. Exactly how those buses will work is yet to be fully defined. We're providing the infrastructure to allow that flexibility.

²¹ Transcript of Evidence, 12 February 2026, Department of State Growth, pp. 42-44

That doesn't include a connection to a possible future northern suburbs transit corridor, which will involve the rapid buses. The exact connection to the rapid bus buses is as yet to be determined by others.

CHAIR - So the interface for the rapid buses is in a different location to where those buses would be departing and exiting from? It's a different location from this site that we're looking at today?

Mr MOLONEY - At this stage, we are still at the stages of undertaking the preparation of a detailed business case for the rapid bus project, so we're not ruling in or out any particular solutions in relation to that project.

In relation to transport into major events and after major events, again, we wouldn't rule out that the particular infrastructure, such as the rapid buses themselves, may or may not be deployed in order to support movement of public to and from major events.

At this stage, what we've designed is a bus mall that can accommodate a range of different public transport means: regular buses, other forms of transport as well, so rapid buses and things like that. I don't think we're ruling anything in or out. What the project has sought to do is adopt an anticipated operating model where we can safely get the quantity of passengers onto public buses via the bus plaza.²²

...

Ms BURNET - I also have some questions about the rapid transit buses. I believe the report was going to be released in January. There's a report to the Infrastructure Australia Chair. When are we likely to get that?

Mr MOLONEY - The provision of that report is through a different area of our Department. I'm unable to provide specific data as to when that will be released. It is my understanding that the intention is to release it in the near future.

Ms BURNET - Okay. To the point of Ms Butler in relation to where the rapid transit buses might terminate or whether they'd be coming into the Northern Access Road, if they were coming into the Northern Access Road, or wherever they might land in relation to the stadium, would that not have significant implications on any further design?

Mr MOLONEY - In terms of the route's potential use by rapid buses, our understanding is that the strategic business case analyses a number of routes. One of those routes is potentially using the old rail corridor on the river side of the Domain. In terms of that route, if it were to be utilised for rapid bus transport, we believe that there are fairly efficient ways of connecting it into the design that we have on the table. Effectively, we believe that it would be able to be accommodated without significant wasted cost.

Ms BURNET - I might save the question in relation to the design because of where they might come off that site.

Mr MOLONEY - I would probably make the distinction that there would be certain routes that the rapid buses would make if they are servicing the community in terms of day-to-day usage of travelling public trying to get to the CBD or other central locations. Then there may, as I mentioned before, on event days be different procedures put in place. That's a body of work that is yet to be undertaken by the various stakeholders. My understanding is that a commitment has been made that a detailed mode of operation for the transport on event days is something that will be worked up in the coming year or two to produce a detailed plan for how that will operate on major event days.

²² Transcript of Evidence, 12 February 2026, Department of State Growth, p. 4

Ms BURNET - Presumably that would need more federal funding to deliver that project?

Mr MOLONEY - I'm not aware of federal funding being sought for that particular project. I guess what is involved in that project are the key stakeholders, such as the Department of State Growth's transport area, working with Stadiums Tasmania, the Macquarie Point Development Corporation and other parties such as Hobart City Council, to ensure that on event days there is appropriate planning to ensure safe and efficient access to the precinct.

Ms BURNET - ... I was of the understanding that there was a project request to Infrastructure Australia. Could we take that on notice, please?

Mr MOLONEY - If you could. Sorry, as I mentioned before, it is an element of - I guess it's a commitment that's being fulfilled by a different area of our Department and other stakeholders, so I'm unfamiliar with the funding.²³

4.27 The Department subsequently confirmed the likelihood of seeking federal funding for the rapid transit bus network:

Yes, it is likely that the Department of State Growth will seek Australian Government funding for the procurement and construction of the proposed Rapid Bus Network.

A Strategic Business case for a rapid bus network across Greater Hobart has been recently released and a detailed business case is now being prepared.²⁴

4.28 The Committee also asked why rail was not being considered instead of a rapid transit bus network:

CHAIR - ... Why was the concept of having rail right up to that stage of that existing rail corridor excluded? There is a PWC report saying it was expensive to have rail or a light rail going to that point on Macquarie Point. Why was that excluded when it is such a long-term efficient way of moving people?

Mr MOLONEY - I can't comment on the investigation of, basically, the production of the business case around different modes of transport, be it light rail, buses and the likes. That is something which you'd probably be best referring to other parties within government, and within the Department, who have undertaken the strategic business case, which has concluded that rapid buses are a more efficient solution. I understand that the associated strategic business case is intended to be released sometime in the near future.²⁵

Intercity Cycleway

4.17 The Committee asked the Department of State Growth to expand on how the development would link with the Innercity Cycleway

Ms BURNET - Related to the capital works, on our site visit this morning, you talked about the new bridge and some changes for pedestrians and coming up the Intercity Cycleway. Could you describe that, please?

Mr BOURNE - I think you're referring to the underpass for the Intercity Cycleway. On our submission, we've shown a fairly long underpass on the basis that we had examined some alternative options to an underpass. Underpasses come with a level of difficulty to ensure safety via passive surveillance, so they would typically be avoided, especially longer ones. We looked at the alternative options. One of the ones that we considered was to widen the underpass bridge to the Domain slipyards to provide space for the cycleway to be diverted through there. That was eliminated at that earlier stage on the basis that it was seen to be

²³ Transcript of Evidence, 12 February 2026, Department of State Growth, pp. 6-7

²⁴ Department of State Growth Response to Questions on Notice - Macquarie Point Northern Access Road - dated 2 March 2026, p. 1

²⁵ Transcript of Evidence, 12 February 2026, Department of State Growth, p. 12

quite an expensive solution for that. Hence, we went to the underpass with the intent to consider that further during the design development.

That's exactly what we're doing now. We've looked at other options and, number one, have done some more estimating of the alternative to having a wider bridge that will allow the Intercity Cycleway to be diverted under that bridge. It serves the same function as an underpass, but it improves the safety and passive surveillance of that. It will also provide further opportunities for other community facilities like benches, water stations, landscaping areas, artworks potentially, to be included in that area along the cycleway. So, that's the option we're pursuing at the moment - to change from the plans that were shown in the submission to develop that wider bridge.

Ms BURNET - Was that in consultation with interested parties?

Mr BOURNE - Yes. We've had active transport groups within the Department and the cycling representative groups we've spoken to and I think some comments on the current public consultation period that we have open for public comment.²⁶

Port Access and the Interaction between Buses, Cyclists and Pedestrians

4.18 The Committee recognised a significant change in the transport mix in the Macquarie Point area with the construction of the Northern Access Road and the stadium, with heavy vehicle, bus and active transport numbers all likely to increase, especially on event days. The Committee sought to understand how the interaction between these modes would be handled to ensure safety:

CHAIR - As a follow on to Ms Burnet's question, can you talk us through, as a committee, so we can get a visualisation of what this would look like. It's my understanding that the entry/exit point for heavy vehicles runs from the bottom of the proposed Northern Access Road and that exit and entry point is very close to where the buses will be coming into that depot area. Can you run through what that would look like with five heavy vehicles an hour on days when the stadium will be active and will be used?

Mr BOURNE - First of all, the five vehicles an hour is not -

CHAIR - But they're heavy vehicles; they're not normal cars.

Mr BOURNE - Heavy vehicles, yes, but it's not a constant flow, five vehicles an hour, every hour. It peaks when certain freight off-loading activities at the port happen. We are expecting that there would be not a common situation where there would be freight trucks leaving the port via that access at the same time as buses operating at event times.

CHAIR - Do you think that the concept design is appropriate in having all the entry and exits so close to where the main congestion points would be on that road? If you have a whole series of buses entering and exiting, and this morning down at the port, we could see a large number of logs that were sitting on the port, obviously brought there by heavy vehicles, or, sorry, large trucks. Is there a more improved design where you could separate pedestrians, people on buses and buses from entry and exit points for those heavy vehicles?

Mr BOURNE - Within the site constraints that we've looked at - we've looked at various options and we're not finding any significant opportunity to improve the arrangement that's been proposed.

CHAIR - So, it's the best out of a bad situation style. Is that what we're looking?

Mr BOURNE - I was about to say that the volumes coming out of that port are quite low, so the proposed design is considered appropriate for the volumes of traffic coming out of the port.

²⁶ Transcript of Evidence, 12 February 2026, Department of State Growth, p. 16

CHAIR - Have you consulted with truck drivers? Have you consulted the main users of that site in the design?

Mr BOURNE - Not at this stage, no.

CHAIR - When will you undertake that consulting, do you think? That would really help inform us as a committee whether or not it's an appropriate spend.

Mr MOLONEY - I have a comment that, in terms of the consultation regarding the safety and efficiency of the access to the port, we have undertaken detailed liaison with TasPorts as the owner and operator of the facility to get their feedback and input into this design. As Kevin mentioned, we're trying to come up with an efficient method to provide access to both locations. We do anticipate that, when the stadium is at its peak usage - so when we have the need for thousands of people to exit the stadium and use public transport to get home - during those periods the quantity of traffic out of the port would be minimised. It's something that would be worked through as part of the mode of operation of post-event traffic management to be examined.

CHAIR - Is that lawful for a port to be blocked - a national, a federal - is that lawful?

Mr MOLONEY - I'm not suggesting that it's blocked or completely cut off. What I'm suggesting is that the operation of the port would take into consideration other uses at that time so that we can get the best outcome for Tasmania.

CHAIR - It is the best out of a bad situation.

Mr SHELTON - Just for clarification. It's my understanding the port - and I really don't have much of an understanding of the port - but to me it's an exit port, as in, the logs come in by truck and exit by boat. Anything being loaded on the Antarctic vessels is coming into the port, not being loaded and carted out of the port. So, primarily it's about loads coming into the port and the road that goes into the port off this northern outlet road is an exit from the road which is 30 or 40 metres before the turning circle of the buses. All the loaded trucks are actually in the port drive before buses do a U-turn and all passengers exit the buses on the other side of the road - the Macquarie Point side of the road - and therefore go to the stadium. There shouldn't be any mixing of large volumes of traffic and the pedestrians.

...

Mr MOLONEY - I think everyone would appreciate on major event days, where we would have heavy usage of the bus plaza by buses, there will be appropriate traffic management at that stage. If you've ever been to these major events, clearly the safety of the public is important and, typically, you do have appropriate traffic management active at those sites.

CHAIR - It's not optimum though, is it? To have an exit and entry point for heavy vehicles near where you're putting thousands of people. It's not optimum. I don't think you'd see that at some of the other stadiums across the country in their capital cities. I know we are very limited in geography and there does need to be significant exit and entry points for our ships, especially also with cruise ships, also with the icebreaker and so forth in that region. We completely understand that. But a design where you have a lot of public transport and pedestrians really close to heavy vehicles is not optimum.

Mr MOLONEY - The counter argument, in terms of value for money, could be made that multiple uses of this access road means we get more benefit - more bang for buck, as it were. I think what's important to note is, currently, the port's access is only via Evans Street. Through this project they have an opportunity for a second entrance. It is something that improves the efficiency of the port and they have the benefit of that improved operation for a vast majority of the time. We recognise there will potentially be some constraints during the short periods post-events and that's still to be worked through with them.

But, if this was a road only to serve the stadium, one would argue that it may not be returning value for money. If it's a project that's only to support the port, again, the cost-benefit would be beneficial, but wouldn't be as much as if it was using those dual purposes. It's important to

note this project is providing a second access to a port that currently only has one and also providing the improved access to Macquarie Point.

CHAIR - It is my understanding on stadium sitting days, Evans Street will be mainly cut off, would it not, for heavy vehicles to the port. So, this would provide the ability to still access the port even on those stadium days. Is that correct?

Mr MOLONEY - That's correct. I think there's a body of work to be undertaken with all the stakeholders in planning what is safe and efficient and the best for all parties.²⁷

Port Access for Over Size Over Mass Vehicles

- 4.19 TasPorts indicated the primary route for heavy vehicle access to the port would be via the Northern Access Road, while over size over mass vehicles (OSOM) would need to use Evans Street:

*Northern Access Road will be the main route utilised for heavy vehicle truck movements to and from the Port for day-to-day operations. However, it will be necessary for OSOM vehicles to utilise Evans Street due to the height restrictions of the underpass structures on the Northern Access Road.*²⁸

- 4.20 Noting that Evans Street is likely to be closed during events, the Committee asked TasPorts to provide further information on the impact on OSOM vehicle movements and how such vehicle movements would be managed, particularly during events:

TasPorts anticipates no impact on Port operations because OSOM movements have low volumes and are highly scheduled, allowing coordinated access, and so long as OSOM vehicles continue to use the Evans Street route, the height restriction on the Northern Access Road at McVilly Drive will not create any limitation.

...

*Due to low volumes and highly scheduled nature of OSOM operations, TasPorts is confident that OSOM operations can be scheduled around events where Evans Street is closed to vehicular traffic. The majority of OSOM movements are specifically scheduled at night when there is reduced traffic on the road network. As such, the additional restriction associated with avoiding key events at the stadium (when Evans St was closed) would have a very limited impact on OSOM operations.*²⁹

- 4.21 The Department of State Growth also confirmed there would be a limited, but easily manageable, impact on OSOM vehicle movements:

It is expected that OSOM vehicles would most likely need to be restricted from accessing the Port during the peak event times (i.e. period immediately before and after events). However, OSOM access is managed through a permitting system and is as such planned in advance. They are also not frequent occurrences and often require time restrictions on operation. As such,

²⁷ Transcript of Evidence, 12 February 2026, Department of State Growth, pp. 8-10

²⁸ TasPorts - Response to Request for Additional Information - Macquarie Point Northern Access Road - dated 30 March 2026, p. 2

²⁹ TasPorts Response to Request for Additional Information - Macquarie Point Northern Access Road - dated 8 May 2026, pp. 2-3

we consider that closure/restrictions can be planned for in advance without significantly affecting operations.³⁰

Impacts on the Royal Hobart Regatta

4.22 The Committee was interested to understand the impacts, if any, on the Royal Hobart Regatta, and what consultation had the Department of State Growth had undertaken:

CHAIR - ...Can you talk about the consultation you've had with the Regatta Association and any ways you might be able to work with them to find some form of solution for that regatta...

Ms MIDDLETON - We initially met with... the head of the Regatta Association, late last year. We presented the concepts, which are largely the same as the concepts you're seeing today, and we talked through those. I think the general feeling was there wasn't opposition to our works. The view of the Regatta Association is they prefer to be farther down towards the water, but there would be a number of projects that would facilitate that, that aren't necessarily anything that we're delivering, but we did talk to them about the fact that they would have, potentially, a split event once the road is built. Kevin might be able to talk to that.

Mr BOURNE - Okay, as we discussed on the site visit today, currently my understanding of the way the regatta operates is that there are existing roads - very lightly trafficked roads, but there are existing roads throughout the site and those roads are shut off for normal vehicle use during the time of the regatta event, so the area is available for foot traffic around the event.

With the construction of the Northern Access Road, that could still occur. Just like other events that require permits on state roads, a permit application could be developed outlining the proposed traffic management during those events such that they can run the event as it currently does. I'm not pre-empting an approval of a permit, but there's a permit application process and they would consider those issues. That could include foreclosure of the road, potentially.

CHAIR - People may be using that northern road, though, to catch buses to and from the regatta, so you probably can't close it, if you're thinking about it from that level as well. Anyway, I'm probably jumping ahead in time, which is part of our role.

Mr BOURNE - That's something that the regatta, as an event organiser, would need to work through - the details for the new situation of having a new road through the area.³¹

Impact on Soldiers Memorial Avenue and the Cenotaph

4.23 The Committee asked the Department of State Growth witnesses what impact the proposed works would have on Soldier's Memorial Avenue and the Cenotaph, and how the project had been received during consultation with the relevant stakeholders:

Ms BURNET - ...On the Cenotaph and the Soldiers Memorial Avenue, what sort of impact will there be with this proposal?

Mr BOURNE - The Soldiers Memorial Avenue, we have identified that it runs a long way along there and just touches on the side of the footprint. Our expectation is that the extent of works

³⁰ Department of State Growth Response to Request for Additional Information - Macquarie Point Northern Access Road - dated 7 May 2026, pp. 1-2

³¹ Transcript of Evidence, 12 February 2026, Department of State Growth, pp. 23-24

will not impact on any of the trees along the Soldiers Memorial Avenue. And we will continue to work through with specialists, maybe arborists, as part of the detailed design to ensure that whatever works are required to make sure that that happens continue to be pursued.³²

...

CHAIR - The Friends of Soldiers Memorial Avenue,... where are you at with that consultation?

Ms MIDDLETON - We met with them onsite late last year and we did a site walk up the avenue. We then briefed them in our offices after that. Again, the same briefings that we gave others. I think Kevin had spoken earlier to our commitment not to impact the trees, where possible. The consultation with the Friends of the Soldiers Memorial is ongoing.³³

...

CHAIR - Can you talk us through your consultation with RSL in relation to the Cenotaph access and amenity in relation to the sightlines from the Cenotaph to the Northern Access Road? And where you're at with that consultation, because I believe that's not resolved either; there's still more consultation that needs to happen there?

Ms MIDDLETON - Again, they were a group that we met with late last year and we presented our designs. They saw us very much as a separate project to the stadium and noted that as long as we don't have sightlines that impact the Cenotaph, which we don't, they were comfortable. They were largely focused on maintaining access to the car park and the toilet facilities, and we reassured them that we will maintain that. In terms of sightlines and general support, they were positive.³⁴

Impact on Disused Rail Infrastructure

4.24 The Committee understood that some disused rail network infrastructure would need to be removed to facilitate the current design. The Committee asked the Department of State Growth to provide further detail:

Mr MOLONEY - The impact that we have on the disused rail line is limited to the footprint of our project. Once you go beyond that, then that is where those potentials start to exist. Previously, there was a discussion of a rapid bus transport and whether or not that would utilise the corridor. As mentioned previously, the detailed business case to determine the route for rapid buses has yet to be undertaken. If that corridor was to be utilised for rapid buses, then that would preclude the use for trams or trains, but that is a completely separate project.

...In the overall broad context of the length of rail going from Macquarie Point through Glenorchy and northwards, our project occupies a small footprint.³⁵

...

Ms BURNET - In relation to the proposed road, what impact will that have on the rail corridor in that area from the Tasman Highway through? Or not from the Tasman Highway through, but from the Intercity Cycleway through?

Mr BOURNE - The project has proposed a footprint for the road that partially occupies the current rail corridor. That rail corridor is a disused part of the rail network. As Mr Moloney said earlier, it's one small proportion of the overall length of rail between the city and Granton, I

³² Transcript of Evidence, 12 February 2026, Department of State Growth, pp. 13-14

³³ Transcript of Evidence, 12 February 2026, Department of State Growth, pp. 24-25

³⁴ Transcript of Evidence, 12 February 2026, Department of State Growth, p. 24

³⁵ Transcript of Evidence, 12 February 2026, Department of State Growth, pp. 11-12

guess. The proposal to government has been that the rail corridor in this location be taken out of the rail network so that it can be used for other purposes in that area.³⁶

Issues Raised in Public Submissions

4.29 The Committee received a number of submissions from the public and interested parties. The concurrent themes through the majority of these submissions were:

- rail was a more efficient form of passenger transport than buses, including rapid transit bus services;
- support for maintaining rail access on the disused rail corridor to cater for future passenger or light rail to service the Macquarie Point Multipurpose Stadium and the Hobart CBD; and
- opposition to the Northern Access Road on the grounds it would destroy any future potential use of the rail corridor for passenger rail services from the Northern Suburbs to the Macquarie Point Multipurpose Stadium and to the Hobart CBD.

4.30 The following excerpts from some of the public submissions show examples of these concurrent themes:

... Please reconsider this proposed road which will effectively destroy the future of rail travel to Hobart.

Rail is well-known as the best option for moving large groups of people around efficiently, effectively and with no continuing issue for parking or pollution from the ICE vehicles.

... By building this access road and taking away the rails, you are destroying what could be a wonderful future of efficient and economic travel options for our people.³⁷

I do not support the Macquarie Point access road as it cuts access to the railway line which is shortsighted and precludes the option of rail or light rail at a later time. These are far better at moving crowds than cars and buses.

Rail is very efficient and reduces city traffic, and has the capacity to reduce movement of goods trucks on our roads ... the fast bus proposal proposed to support movement of people from the stadium is ill conceived and just moves people a little up the road to create more traffic issues elsewhere.³⁸

I am writing to express my concern at the proposed removal of railway infrastructure in the Macquarie Point area. Rail access to the proposed stadium makes so much sense and should be encouraged. Recently I attended an event in Adelaide at their entertainment centre which

³⁶ Transcript of Evidence, 12 February 2026, Department of State Growth, p. 13

³⁷ *Submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works in Relation to the Proposed Northern Access Road*, Jodi Harrison, 30 January 2026, p. 1

³⁸ *Submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works in Relation to the Proposed Northern Access Road*, Lynn Pitt, 30 January 2026, p. 1

is just out of the city. Access could be via bus, train or tram and it made me realise how limited public transport is in Hobart. Re-establishing a rail network is a step to improve this.³⁹

...I am writing to you to strongly oppose the building of the Northern Access Road.

This road will destroy the railway line and corridor access into Hobart. Once you take this action it will never be reinstated. This will be disastrous for Hobart's future.

Moving large crowds by rail is the only way the stadium will work. Rail is far more efficient to move crowds and can be equally cost effective. The line is already there and must be utilised. Hobart is an always will be a bottleneck for traffic. The chaos the stadium traffic will cause is unimaginable.⁴⁰

I am writing to express my concern that the Macquarie Point Northern Access Road will fringe upon dormant rail infrastructure in Hobart. While Hobart has not had a running rail service for decades, the growing population and need to mitigate traffic and climate change will change the calculus back to public transport. The rail access corridor is fundamental to maintaining the opportunity to offer Hobartians and visitors rail public transportation in the future. Trains are the much preferred public transport option by all and will be key to the city's future. The rail corridor must be kept intact and the government must invest in restarting rail in the corridor. Failure to do so will impact other city projects and continue to hobble our great city. Rail access to Hobart will unlock so much potential but it will never come back if the corridor is destroyed.⁴¹

...I'm writing to raise my concerns regarding the State Government's plan to construct a "Northern Access Road" to Macquarie Point wharf on the northern side of the Hobart cenotaph. Of major concern is that the current planned location of the road is directly in place of the existing rail corridor into Macquarie Point, completely blocking any future rail access to Macquarie Point, the planned stadium, and the Hobart CBD.

The railway corridor from Macquarie Point extends 18km through Hobart's northern suburbs, representing enormous untapped economic opportunity for these areas and Hobart more generally... Hobart's transit corridor is ready made, and the Government is sleeping on its potential.

...After a decade of reports and business cases the government announced in 2024 that it would progress the establishment of "Bus Rapid Transit" system along the corridor. This is despite a Transport Mode Study conducted by firm PwC showing that buses have the least ability to stimulate economic development. The report found that rail has the greatest potential, estimated to stimulate the construction of 4,657 new dwellings, and 1,082 new jobs – that's 4 times that of the estimate for rapid buses. 1 To be clear, this is not an argument against a rapid bus network – not at all. We need an integrated public transport network involving different modes; However, we needn't destroy the rail corridor to achieve this end.

The economic potential of rail on the transit corridor only increase when one considers that the above-mentioned study was undertaken before the conception of the Macquarie Point Stadium, a 23,000-seat facility which has been roundly recognised as needing greater public transport links in-order to be successful...

³⁹ *Submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works in Relation to the Proposed Northern Access Road*, Janet Gavlek, 30 January 2026, p. 1

⁴⁰ *Submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works in Relation to the Proposed Northern Access Road*, Anne Elston, 31 January 2026, p. 1

⁴¹ *Submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works in Relation to the Proposed Northern Access Road*, Sam Kininmonth, 2 February 2026, p. 1

... I ask that in doing its work to assess the “present and prospective public value of the work” the committee consider the opportunity cost of the Northern Access Road. Specifically, not just what it would cost to build, but also what it would cost Tasmania in terms of the projects and associated economic development that would be precluded because of it. And consider if there are any alternative plans that would preserve the rail corridor into Macquarie Point, thereby allowing this project to achieve its goals without jeopardising the future economic potential of the entire rail corridor.⁴²

... I am writing this letter to oppose the construction of a Northern Access Road or Busway to access the Macquarie Point stadium and precinct. In place of the proposed Northern Access Road / Busway, I would like to see the existing rail corridor re-instated and developed to provide a light-rail system that can efficiently transport people to and from the city and Macquarie Point area.

... In summary, I feel a light-rail option should be provided to use the existing rail-corridor in preference to a Northern Access Road for Macquarie Point as it provides more opportunities for attracting tourists, encouraging development in northern suburbs and mostly to provide a more-efficient means of accessing the Macquarie Point precinct than adding significant bus and car traffic to an already congested road system Hobart city.⁴³

The Hobart Northern Suburbs Rail Action Group (HNSRAG) categorically rejects the Northern Access Road as it is currently planned. The publicly-available plan shows that the road will completely destroy the railway line and railway corridor entry into Macquarie Point and Hobart. This will prevent any future rail access to the planned stadium or into Hobart, and both are vital for Hobart's future.

... HNSRAG supports the idea of rapid bus transit to other parts of Hobart's suburbs, like the Eastern Shore and Kingston areas, as well as improving bus services overall. However, the destruction of the railway is completely unjustified, and whatever the parameters of the Government's busway plan are, it is certain that the busway will not be able to achieve anything comparable to rail.

... Even if the busway itself is not using this part of the corridor (near the Domain and Macquarie Point), the railway line must be retained. If the State Government is unwilling to see sense, the railway should still be kept so that a future government has the opportunity to restore rail services as easily as possible.

There is definitely space in the area discussed for the railway corridor to be retained and road access for buses and service vehicles to Macquarie Point and the wharf area to be possible...⁴⁴

I am writing to express my concern regarding the proposed construction of the Northern Access Road to the Macquarie Point precinct as it is currently planned.

Of most concern is that the current plan shows the new road will completely occupy the rail corridor from the Domain Slipway access road through to the Macquarie Point site, blocking any connection from the existing rail corridor. This will preclude the possible future introduction of light-rail from the Northern Suburbs through to the new Stadium and onward to the Hobart CBD.

⁴² *Submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works in Relation to the Proposed Northern Access Road*, Owen Andrews, 2 February 2026, pp. 1-2

⁴³ *Submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works in Relation to the Proposed Northern Access Road*, Mark Elliot, 2 February 2026, pp. 1-2

⁴⁴ *Submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works in Relation to the Proposed Northern Access Road*, the Hobart Northern Suburbs Rail Action Group, 2 February 2026, pp. 1-2

Transportation studies have repeatedly shown that rail transport, including light-rail, is superior to bus-based modes of transportation not only in environmental aspects of their operation but in its ability to attract investment and development along the transport corridor...

...Instead, the current proposal risks cutting off this opportunity, condemning the city's transport development along with the stadium proposal to a sub-standard future of increasing congestion and subdued investment...

... The cost of any proposal needs to not only weigh up the costs and benefits of what it is trying to achieve but also the opportunity costs of precluding other alternative uses of the site. The section of the rail corridor set to be occupied by the proposed Northern Access Road is key in that it represents a vital link from the transport corridor to the north through a site that is highly constrained by the Derwent River and former HMAS Huon development on one side and the Hobart Cenotaph and Regatta Ground on the other. The nature of the terrain is such that the gradients and existing infrastructure are prohibitive for any alternative alignment of any future rail-based transportation proposal and I urge the Committee to reject the Northern Access Road proposal in its current form and suggest a solution that enables the possible future activation of a rail-based transport option to be preserved.⁴⁵

I urge members of the committee to not support the Northern Access Road, and in turn the busway proposal, but rather to pursue the re-establishment of an operating rail system to Macquarie Point. It should be clear that with the Macquarie Point stadium now approved and progressed, rail along the existing northern corridor is going to be essential. The idea of believing that buses will be sufficient to move large numbers of people to and from Macquarie Point is fanciful. I find it perplexing that the Government has maintained this as its preference. The Northern Suburbs Transit Corridor in its busway form is a plan doomed to fail. And a ridiculous one, given the existence of a rail corridor.

... As to events, it would be useful to consider the case of the Queensland Tennis Centre (Pat Rafter Arena) in Brisbane's southern suburb of Tennyson. I worked at the Brisbane International for four years (2011- 2014), so am very familiar with the transport system. Pat Rafter Arena seats around 5,500 people, and at a busy day of the Brisbane International, around a further 10,000 people attend the precinct – a total of over 15,000. The Queensland Tennis Centre has no public car parking on event days. Around 90% of spectators at the Brisbane International travel to and from the event by train. The nearest railway station is around 600 metres from the venue. Macquarie Point, by comparison, is very lucky, with the ability to build a railway station right at the venue. This Brisbane model for moving event patrons in large numbers should be applied to Macquarie Point. It is the obvious solution for people living along the entire northern corridor. Over and above Macquarie Point, a light rail corridor should then continue through to the city.⁴⁶

- 4.31 Toby Rowallan, President, and Stephen Zvillis, Vice-President, of the Hobart Northern Suburbs Rail Action Group, gave evidence at the hearing on 12 February 2026 and detailed their opposition to the Northern Access Road and the importance of keeping the existing rail corridor:

Mr ROWALLAN - ... As far as we're concerned, the Northern Access Road, because it destroys the railway line - even though it has been stated earlier that it's a short section of the line, it's the key section of the line because it's the access into Hobart. For us this plan is not a future plan, but a plan to fail...

⁴⁵ Submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works in Relation to the Proposed Northern Access Road, Brett Spaulding, 2 February 2026, pp. 1-2

⁴⁶ Submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works in Relation to the Proposed Northern Access Road, Shaun Lennard, 2 February 2026, p. 1

The Tasmanian Planning Commission reported approximately 80 buses would be required to move just 6000 people, so the first sold-out event at the stadium could well be the last. We really feel it's very important that we have rail as an option in the future, even though this government is obviously vehemently anti-rail, despite the evidence. That option must be retained for the future.

...

Mr ZVILLIS - ... I'd just like to state that we've had a look at the site prior to appearing today and we do see that the provision of rail does not severely interfere with the provision of the road. I think there is sufficient space, with minor modifications, that the rail throughway could still be included as part.

We feel that the provision of a future application of rail, even though it may not be a current priority for the government at this stage, it should not be barricaded for a future government that may decide that they feel that rail is a better option. The throughway should be kept at least open so a future government can make that decision and not be prevented from making that decision in the future.

We also feel that the provision of rail opens up usage of the site for multiple stakeholders, not just for a potential future metro rail, but also for tourist and heritage access to the site for potentially connecting with cruise ships or conferences held at the site. Our priority is to make access to the site as multiuser and as a multifaceted as possible and not lock out certain sectors of the of the Tasmanian economy from the site who should be able to have access as well.

CHAIR - ... Technically, the rail corridor is not part of our scope, however the point you have raised around cutting off the rail in that key point really cuts off the future of a potential rail corridor along that - is it 17 kilometres for the rest of it?

Mr ROWALLAN - It's roughly that but yes, it is only a short distance, and it wouldn't prohibit it from coming back. Because that site is going to be filled in with the road going over the top it would then have to be dug up again. It just makes it all more expensive. The funny thing is all the reports which claim that rail is too expensive - every action that's been taken by the government has made rail more expensive. They've actually created that situation to justify something that they said earlier.

CHAIR - Can you clarify your understanding of the decision to use the rapid buses as opposed to the light rail, which I believe was a promise? But that's changed because of a report. What's your understanding of the difference in cost between?

Mr ROWALLAN - The cost has been deliberately exaggerated and skewed. The government made a decision - they have made a number of statements why they made that decision. We don't agree with those statements. We have tried to meet with the Minister; we have not been able to do so.

The last cost for rail that was identified in the PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) report, which you may have mentioned earlier as well, said the cost was \$596 million and bus was over \$400 million. That included a 56 per cent increase due to perceived risk. That perceived risk was neither justified nor explained in the report. In other words, the cost was doubled for no readily known reason. That's the first thing; the cost is not nearly as high.

However, the cost of rail was assessed as using a wider gauge in that report. It's not actually a real cost if we were to keep the gauge we have, because we need to if we are going to use rail because then heritage rail can use the track as well and can't if you change the gauge. The report seems to have been a deliberate sabotage of what rail is going to cost. The Northern Access Road appears to be a deliberate sabotage as well because there is room in that area to continue the road to go down into Macquarie Point to go across to the port and keep a corridor for rail. They have chosen not to do that. The reason for that has not been adequately justified.⁴⁷

⁴⁷ Transcript of Evidence, 12 February 2026, Hobart Northern Suburbs Rail Action Group, pp. 30-31

...

Ms BURNET - ... Future thinking governments would give their right arm to have an intact rail corridor. What do you say to the potential of delivering people by rail to events or indeed as commuter rail into the future?

Mr ROWALLAN - The Australasian Railway Association has done a study. They identified that rail can move over 20,000 people per hour. Buses cannot do that unless you simply have way more buses, which we are not going to have. As I said, the Planning Commission said that we'd need about 80 extra buses to move 6000 people. Not 20,000 - 6000. We're not going to have 80 extra buses to move 6000 people from the stadium. It's not going to work. The numbers do not add up. I have contacted people who have advised the government and they could not answer because they did not know what the government's plan was. They said, 'Oh, on the basis of what is happening in Brisbane, you might be able to do it', but we don't know that what's going to be happening here is going to be the same. In fact, the evidence suggests it's not, especially given it's not going to have its own dedicated corridor.⁴⁸

...

Mr ROWALLAN - ... The situation is that around the rest of the country we have had cities all switched to new rail lines and new light rail lines. Canberra, Gold Coast, extensions in Adelaide, Perth has built new lines, and in Sydney. They've all done this because they've realised that the existing transport road networks are not coping. Sydney has brought their trams back into the city because the network wasn't coping. All these places had to build a new line, and they've had to pay lots and lots of money to do so. The Gold Coast did not have an existing corridor -... They've had to move lanes, remove parking. They had to build a new bridge. There was no grass verge that they could choose to then just put track on. Even Canberra, where they did have a central grass verge that they could use for the light rail, they still had to dig up every intersection, of course. All that costs money. We don't have to do any of that because we have an existing rail line. All these cities would have loved to have what we have because it's so much easier to just simply put that back into use. It only needs upgrading rather than starting from scratch.

CHAIR - Is it more expensive in the short term to utilise rail or a light rail as opposed to buses? Are buses a cheaper short-term fix than rail? Is that one of the reasons behind this?

Mr ROWALLAN - You'd have to ask the government because - as I said, firstly, we don't have the exact costing of using the existing gauge and doing it that way and doing it the cheapest way. We don't actually know. We only know that it's not actually that much more than it was for their busway. However, according to this PwC report, the rail was going to develop four times more jobs, four times more residential and commercial development. If the busway was going to be equal to rail in terms of cost, it would have to cost a quarter of rail, but it doesn't. Even according to this report, it's only slightly less, about 23 per cent, so it would have to cost one quarter of the amount of rail, but it's not even close, and that's just to equal rail but it doesn't, and it doesn't generate the jobs.

Whilst this government may choose to not go with rail, that's their choice and we have been unable to influence that, they should not limit the options for the future. This is going to be critical. We need to plan for the future. We need to plan for a bigger city. We need to plan for more people coming here and, at the moment, we're planning to fail.⁴⁹

...

Ms BURNET - ... There's a lot riding on delivering a modal shift to buses for match days or big events at the stadium -... What's your understanding of people wanting to get onto buses versus catching trains?

Mr ROWALLAN - That's a great question. Canberra did a survey of people using their new metro light rail, and it's very important to note that 43 per cent of people who responded to

⁴⁸ Transcript of Evidence, 12 February 2026, Hobart Northern Suburbs Rail Action Group, p. 32

⁴⁹ Transcript of Evidence, 12 February 2026, Hobart Northern Suburbs Rail Action Group, p. 33

the survey were new to public transport. Canberra already had buses, as I said in my submission. Those people weren't using the buses and Canberra has a very good road network as well, it's three lanes each way all the way through the city. It's very easy to drive around, I was there in October. It's not hard. It's not particularly congested and yet the rail has persuaded people to switch.

That doesn't happen with buses. We already have really low confidence in our bus services, which is unfortunate and we would like to see that better, but it means that we're in an environment where people aren't wanting to switch and they're not going to be persuaded to switch to buses. They're going to have to do a lot of advertising for this bus rapid proposal just to make people think twice about it and consider it because the perception is already very negative.

When you have a completely different transport system, when you have rail, you don't need to even advertise to say this is something different because it's obvious. Half of that work is done.

Mr ZVILLIS - I was just advancing on what Toby said in regard to the attraction of buses versus rail. The statistics from Australian capital cities is that the public transport usage in Hobart is at 4 per cent, which is the lowest of the entire country. Yet, when you rate our congestion levels, even though we're the 13th largest city, we're the fourth most congested city in the country, after Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane and then Hobart. Even though we're the 13th, we're more congested than Perth and Adelaide, yet our public transit usage is at a miserable 4 per cent. You can dress up buses all your like, if you're not going to raise it, you'd be lucky to get usage of the bus, with rapid schemes and all this sort of thing, maybe you might get to 8 per cent, you might, if you're really, really lucky, might get to 10 per cent, but that's about it, you pretty much floor out at that.

Whereas, with rail - it's not just rail alone, you integrate it as part of a wider network with rapid ferry services because, obviously, rail doesn't go everywhere - ferries service areas that rail can't. You build up an integrated network with on-call minibuses and things to connect stations. You have to have an integrated network, but you shouldn't go cutting off your options because if you want to raise the state's public transport usage from its absolutely abysmal 4 per cent to a substantial increase, especially to service things like the stadium, which have that situation where you not have got have people feeding in and out on a regular basis, it's everyone in at one time; everyone out at one time.

That's where you're going to find your transit networks are going to completely fall over because it's that mass demand in very, very short periods of time. That's going to be a significant aspect of the stadium and that's going to be a significant aspect where metro rail could make a far more effective solution for moving people rapidly in and out of the stadium than a network of buses could. The basics are that a metro rail service would be able to move that mass amount of people very quickly and very efficiently in and out.⁵⁰

...

Mr ROWALLAN - If we're going to have 23,000 people or, for a standing event, 30,000 people, trying to leave the stadium, we can't rely on the road network alone. At the moment, the plan is to rely on the road network alone. That doesn't make sense.⁵¹

- 4.32 Other issues raised by submitters included impacts on cyclists using the intercity cycleway and the importance of the area north of Macquarie Point for active transport, pedestrians and cyclists:

⁵⁰ Transcript of Evidence, 12 February 2026, Hobart Northern Suburbs Rail Action Group, pp. 34-35

⁵¹ Transcript of Evidence, 12 February 2026, Hobart Northern Suburbs Rail Action Group, p. 36

The intercity cycleway commences near HMAS Huon, and other cycling paths lead to the city and the Bridge of Remembrance. There is potential conflict between cycling routes and any new roadway (unless they are adequately separated).⁵²

- 4.33 The Streets People Love Hobart community group made several comments and suggestions on the proposed design, focusing on how elements of the project could be designed to facilitate safe and efficient access for pedestrians and cyclists and promote the uptake of active transport. These included:

...Incorporating intersections that are safer for people walking and riding... by...

- Prioritising walking and cycling when crossing side streets using designs like continuous footpaths and raised pedestrian crossings*
- Narrowing intersections and tightening corners to slow vehicles⁵³*

...Providing separated paths for people walking and people riding... Shared paths are not appropriate for high volumes — Australian guidelines suggest separation at more than 100 pedestrians per peak hour, which these paths will easily exceed.⁵⁴

...Ensuring cycle paths are at an appropriate incline and curvature, and that they intersect with roads and other paths at appropriate angles for cyclists to travel safely and efficiently, with clear line-of-sight⁵⁵

...Ensuring paths are wide enough to meet peak volumes during crowd dispersal after stadium events.... This is important to avoid people spilling onto the access road and minimise the risk of collisions between pedestrians and event buses.⁵⁶

...Ensuring walking and riding paths go where people want to go, not just where it is easiest to build If the paths are not direct enough, and there are no physical barriers, pedestrians are likely to ignore the paved infrastructure and create new desire-lines, intersecting roads and mixing with cars and buses in a dangerous manner, especially in high-volume times such as during stadium events⁵⁷

...Ensuring the project scope includes improvements to the movement of people walking and riding throughout the area⁵⁸

- 4.34 Mark Donnellon, President of Streets People Love Hobart, also gave evidence at the hearing on 12 February 2026, providing further context to the group's written submission:

Mr DONNELLON - ... Streets People Love Hobart is a community organisation that advocates for streets that prioritise people safety and sustainability. There are a number of benefits to

⁵² *Submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works in Relation to the Proposed Northern Access Road*, Brendan Lennard, 30 January 2026, p. 1

⁵³ *Submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works in Relation to the Proposed Northern Access Road*, Streets People Love Hobart, 31 January 2026, p. 2

⁵⁴ *Submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works in Relation to the Proposed Northern Access Road*, Streets People Love Hobart, 31 January 2026, p. 2

⁵⁵ *Submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works in Relation to the Proposed Northern Access Road*, Streets People Love Hobart, 31 January 2026, p. 2

⁵⁶ *Submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works in Relation to the Proposed Northern Access Road*, Streets People Love Hobart, 31 January 2026, p. 3

⁵⁷ *Submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works in Relation to the Proposed Northern Access Road*, Streets People Love Hobart, 31 January 2026, p. 3

⁵⁸ *Submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works in Relation to the Proposed Northern Access Road*, Streets People Love Hobart, 31 January 2026, p. 4

streets that prioritise people safety and sustainability. I'm going to borrow the Department of State Growth's cycling infrastructure design guidelines:

Some of the benefits for walking, wheeling and riding include: improved physical and mental health for individuals, which saves costs for the health system; supporting tourism and the visitor economy; reduced traffic congestion and road maintenance costs; improved social connections; integration with other modes to reduce car dependence; and avoiding environmental impacts of motor vehicles through noise, air pollution and emissions.

This document also includes some tips for thinking about what things are important when choosing designs for footpaths and cycle paths: they should be designed for a 12-year-old to be able to ride without supervision; don't give up at the intersection - interacting with vehicles at intersections feels the most dangerous; and people riding generally travel faster than others who are walking and wheeling, so separate where possible.

I want to talk about how that relates to the plans that we've had submitted. In our submission we identified that we believe the paths on those plans, according to the scale, the shared paths around the road are three metres wide. We would expect that once the Macquarie Point development gets to a more completed stage that we would see a lot of pedestrian and cyclist movements on these paths at all times of the day; not just at events but especially at events, as you can imagine.

The Austroads and Department of State Growth guidelines for paths and cycle paths recommend that bikes and pedestrians be separated at movement volumes over 110, 150 per hour.

CHAIR - It's 150 people per hour, 150 bikes per hour, or both?

Mr DONNELLON - It depends on what you look at. In these guidelines it will say 150 combined movements per hour, at which you should separate pedestrians and cyclists. It also mentions that a bi-directional cycling path should be four metres wide - two metres for each direction, compared to these shared paths that are going in which are three metres.

We would recommend that the Department of State Growth, if they're interested in promoting cycling and reducing conflict between faster moving cyclists and pedestrians, that the path be wider. Looking at the cross-sections in the plans, there is certainly room available to widen the footpaths.

Another thing we looked at were the intersections. For pedestrian and cyclist safety on roads, and to make the paths better to use for pedestrians and cyclists, we can prioritise pedestrians and cyclists at the crossings.

... Page 47 of the Cycling Infrastructure Design Book for off-road path-crossing segments depicts both a shared cycleway and pedestrian path separated and crossing a T-junction - the terminating road is being crossed by the shared path. In this way, the shared path and the footpath both continue and those users are given priority over motor vehicles turning in and out of the terminating street. This improves safety and amenity for pedestrians and cyclists.

... I might add that on this road you could possibly fit single direction bike lanes on each side separated from the walking path. It wouldn't have to be two directional on both sides...

...

CHAIR - I can't see on the proposed road plan where pedestrians might be able to just cross the road from one side to the other. Is that just me missing something? Say you're a pedestrian who's got off the bus, but you want to walk over to the ferry terminal down at Regatta Point, is there a crossing or is it here?

Mr DONNELLON - There is not.

CHAIR - There's an island divider in the middle of the road, but there's not really anywhere for pedestrians to cross the road is there? Like a dedicated crossing of sorts?

Mr DONNELLON - I imagine that's being discouraged, but that does look like a refuge below the grandstand there.

CHAIR - Do you know many people who cycle along there and along that site? Have you got any through your own consultation you can share with the Committee?

Mr DONNELLON - The Bicycle Network conducts bike counts every year. I brought with me the data for the 2025 commuter morning cycling counts. They counted 238 movements on the Intercity Cycleway here between 7 a.m. and 9 a.m. on a Tuesday, 160 of which continue round to the Davey Street side. We did, however, hear earlier today that it's expected that many cyclists would continue through Macquarie Point once that's built. That would become the main way to get into the city.

Mr SHELTON - You agree with that? As a flatter ride?

Mr DONNELLON - Thinking it over briefly, I would certainly much prefer to ride through Macquarie Point than next to a busy highway. Also, riding around between the current port entrance is troublesome. It is also the road down the highway has pedestrians on it a lot. Being as narrow as it is, it does create a lot of conflict between cyclists and pedestrians.

CHAIR - Do you think there should be a dedicated bike area that goes through Macquarie Point, the new road where it's not shared with pedestrians? How important is that?

Mr DONNELLON - It would help reduce that conflict I'm talking about. That would be the recommendation. If you're considering the design guidelines and greater than 150 movements, then yes, separation would be important to reduce that conflict.

...

Ms BURNET - I've mentioned it before, but that is a route down to Davey Street along the side of the Tasman Highway. You do pick up quite a lot of speed going down there, don't you? What would you suggest would be a safe treatment for that area?

Mr DONNELLON - We did hear that the width is constrained under the bridge there and so not likely to see a wide bike path. It's also important to separate both bikes and pedestrians with a median. Simply making a path wider with paint, dividing it up that way would not do a great job of keeping pedestrians and cyclists separated, so I would expect that a more optimal solution would be to direct the cycle traffic from the Intercity Cycleway through Macquarie Point where I imagine in the precinct plan we expect to see quite large, wide boulevards - open spaces for people - when it's not busy, there's plenty of room for a cyclist to move through there.

Ms BURNET - So you're saying that through a busy match day, which probably would hinder some of that cyclist movement through Macquarie Point - I would have thought that you don't have any concern about the footpath along the Tasman Highway.

Mr DONNELLON - I would certainly have concern about the footpath and the Tasman Highway. It is already, without a stadium there, the conflict between pedestrians and cyclists is great. As you said, cyclists can move quite quickly down that path down the decline and that does not work well with pedestrians. If you've ever been jumpscared by a cyclist approaching you from behind, it's not great.

Ms BURNET - You can ride around the entrance, the Cenotaph side of the Remembrance Bridge so you could ride through there, so you don't have to go underneath any widened path. You wouldn't have to necessarily widen the path under the bridge; you could divert people around and widen the path down the side of the embankment.

Mr DONNELLON - Yes.⁵⁹

⁵⁹ Transcript of Evidence, 12 February 2026, Streets People Love Hobart, pp. 36-39.

- 4.35 The Department of State Growth was asked to respond to the matters raised by the public witnesses. In relation to pedestrian and cyclist safety and infrastructure for active transport, the following discussion ensued:

Ms BURNET - Mr Donnellon suggested there might be priority for pedestrians at those road junctions. Is that a possibility to consider, like raised walkways, so there is that priority?

Mr BOURNE - I believe there has been some suggestion in some of the consultation we've done with the cycling groups. The designers are considering the ability to do that.

There are challenges with that. For example, having cycling crossing the road if it's a steep road such as the one into the Domain means that you already have a steep road and then if you're going up over a raised platform, it's going to be steeper coming back down again, so there are some challenges, but I'm not saying they're insurmountable.

Mr SHELTON - Going along with that and my interpretation of the plans, the drive coming down from the car park on the southern side of the road, given that I would consider that's the predominant pedestrian one of the two versus the one on the riverside zebra crossing. It's only car parking and access to the bottom area that you're actually controlling the traffic on, so I would consider that a compromise on that one might be possible, whereas you're not crossing the main road for pedestrians.

What I didn't ask Mr Donnellon, and I think it was mentioned this morning, has a direct link off the Intercity Cycleway under the road to the Domain side been discussed as a possibility?

Mr BOURNE - To the Domain side under the existing McVilly Drive underpass, do you mean?

Mr SHELTON - Yes, if you look at Mr Donnellon's -

Mr BOURNE - Oh, yes. That is something that, again, has been raised by the cycling groups we've spoken to. We believe that there's a lot of merit in doing that. Yes, we're looking into that.

Mr SHELTON - I've walked that a number of times out to the bridge and back. It's exactly five kilometres from parliament, so over lunchtime, it is used quite frequently by walkers and cyclists, so it is important to make sure that everybody who's using the road is kept as safe as possible. You don't want to put cyclists and/or pedestrians across a busy road either. That's the other thing.

There also seems to be some islands in the middle of the road. My knowledge of local government and traffic islands to slow traffic down and give pedestrians walking across the road some means of safety in the middle of the road, if that's needed - and that's in the design, as I understand it. If you can just clarify that, that'd be great.

Mr BOURNE - I guess one of the things we also are looking at is the speed this road is designed for. The need for a pedestrian refuge in the middle of a road may be affected by that that decision. Certainly, we're trying to limit the number of crossings, but there is a bit of a balance between following some of these desired lines and fitting in not having crossings of the existing roads. We're weighing up the alternatives for the best overall outcomes.

Ms BURNET - When you met with cycling groups, did you meet with Streets People Love as well as part of that exercise?

Mr BOURNE - We did, yes. We had a site visit with them. We met with Cycling South and Bicycle Network Tasmania a few weeks earlier. We made the offer that we would meet them on-site during this public consultation period. We conducted that yesterday, and Streets People Love were represented there.

Ms BURNET - There are small children who learn to ride on the bike track, and walking along there as well with their parents. What sort of mitigation would you do during construction of any sort of risk associated with pedestrians and vulnerable road users?

Mr BOURNE - The contractor we engage will be required to develop a traffic management plan. That will consider how all types of vehicles would be catered for to continue operating on the road through construction. That includes pedestrians, cyclists and all sorts. Yeah, there would be appropriate protective measures during construction in accordance with the Australian standards.⁶⁰

4.36 The Department of State Growth was also questioned further on the disused rail infrastructure that would be removed for the project, and the evidence from some witnesses that rail was the most appropriate means to transport patrons to and from events:

Ms RATTRAY - You obviously heard the strong evidence presented by the train group prior. Do you want to give us a comment or provide some feedback on the suggestion of not taking that significant piece of the rail network, but still being able to proceed with the northern access? Or does the northern road access rely solely on that piece of rail network?

Mr BOURNE - I think there is obviously a lot of the comments related to the appropriate mode choice along the corridor, which is beyond the scope of what we're here to talk about of this project, so I won't engage with that, unless Mr Moloney wanted to. But in terms of the ability to have the design of the Northern Access Road avoiding any impact on the rail corridor, I'd consider that really difficult.

...

...as I said earlier, any amendments to that would still need to fit within the site constraints. The reality is some of the site constraints, as we've heard today, would probably make that extremely difficult to avoid any impact on.

Ms RATTRAY - But it's not impossible?

Mr BOURNE - I don't like to use the word 'impossible', but I can't see a way that that would work at the moment.

Mr MOLONEY - It's important that we consider that, I guess, what's being presented at the hearing today is really a project about the northern access corridor. It is not about the debate around buses versus trains. Whilst we might be very passionate about that, and there's lots of arguments for and against, I think it's very important to focus on what this project means in terms of that.

The reality is that the existing proposals to develop Macquarie Point, as they stand, mean that there is no corridor that goes through that site. There is no existing rail corridor through to the CBD so the reality is, if rail was to be introduced, as best I can tell, it would be terminating effectively at the location of the Cenotaph. I guess what would be considered at this hearing is whether or not being able to get a couple of 100 metres closer to the Cenotaph, rather than terminating before, is such a significant impact that it would warrant not having a northern access corridor to Macquarie Point. Because, as far as Kevin was quite generous in explaining that it's not physically impossible, it would be close to impossible to maintain a northern access road or rail there unless you were talking about a subway.

I guess what we need to be careful is not to conflate all the various issues and challenges around the broader Hobart movement. What I would say is that the rapid bus network, which is being proposed by the state government in lieu of a dedicated rail to the northern corridor, is a rapid bus network that serves us as all of Greater Hobart. So it seeks to address the southern corridor, it seeks to address the northern corridor and also the eastern corridor.

⁶⁰ Transcript of Evidence, 12 February 2026, Department of State Growth, pp. 40-41

If this location, if basically we were to go down the path of rail - and the suggestion is that that is the best form of transport to get people away from major events, that would be suitable for patrons at major events that live in the City of Glenorchy. It would not be a suitable form of transport for patrons that go to Kingborough; it would not be a suitable form of transport for patrons that need to go to Clarence. The bus plaza proposition that we have as part of this project enables buses to arrive, pick up patrons and take them to all of those north, south and eastern corridors. A dedicated rail line cannot do that.

I think it's very important to consider those broader aspects, as the debate on whether or not rail or buses is the best form of transport to the northern suburbs is something that is separate to this. As I said, I don't think it's material to the considerations that we're talking about on this particular project.⁶¹

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

4.37 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 - ...Do 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 - Are the proposed works a good use of public funds?

WITNESSES - Yes.⁶²

⁶¹ Transcript of Evidence, 12 February 2026, Department of State Growth, pp. 41-42

⁶² Transcript of Evidence, 12 February 2026, Department of State Growth, p. 44

5 DOCUMENTS TAKEN INTO EVIDENCE

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

- *Macquarie Point Northern Access Road Project*, Submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, State Roads, Department of State Growth, 28 January 2026;
- *Submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works in Relation to the Proposed Northern Access Road*, Jodi Harrison, 30 January 2026;
- *Submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works in Relation to the Proposed Northern Access Road*, Janet Butler, 30 January 2026;
- *Submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works in Relation to the Proposed Northern Access Road*, Scott Ellis, 30 January 2026;
- *Submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works in Relation to the Proposed Northern Access Road*, Andrew Jenner, 30 January 2026;
- *Submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works in Relation to the Proposed Northern Access Road*, Brendan Lennard, 30 January 2026;
- *Submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works in Relation to the Proposed Northern Access Road*, Lynn Pitt, 30 January 2026;
- *Submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works in Relation to the Proposed Northern Access Road*, Gillian Doniz, 30 January 2026;
- *Submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works in Relation to the Proposed Northern Access Road*, Janet Gavlek, 30 January 2026;
- *Submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works in Relation to the Proposed Northern Access Road*, Anne Elston, 31 January 2026;
- *Submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works in Relation to the Proposed Northern Access Road*, Streets People Love Hobart, 31 January 2026;
- *Submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works in Relation to the Proposed Northern Access Road*, Rachel Tenni, 1 February 2026;
- *Submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works in Relation to the Proposed Northern Access Road*, Ziggy Schulz, 2 February 2026;
- *Submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works in Relation to the Proposed Northern Access Road*, Sam Kininmonth, 2 February 2026;
- *Submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works in Relation to the Proposed Northern Access Road*, Owen Andrews, 2 February 2026;
- *Submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works in Relation to the Proposed Northern Access Road*, Mark Elliot, 2 February 2026;
- *Submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works in Relation to the Proposed Northern Access Road*, Christine Farmer, 2 February 2026;
- *Submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works in Relation to the Proposed Northern Access Road*, the Hobart Northern Suburbs Rail Action Group, 2 February 2026;
- *Submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works in Relation to the Proposed Northern Access Road*, Brett Spaulding, 2 February 2026;

- *Submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works in Relation to the Proposed Northern Access Road*, Shaun Lennard, 2 February 2026;
- *Submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works in Relation to the Proposed Northern Access Road*, City of Hobart, 2 February 2026;
- *Paper Regarding Off-Road Path Crossing Treatments* - Tabled by Mark Donnellon during Public Hearing on 12 February 2026;
- Department of State Growth Response to Questions on Notice - Macquarie Point Northern Access Road - dated 2 March 2026;
- *Submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works in Relation to the Proposed Northern Access Road*, TasPorts, 10 March 2026;
- TasPorts - Response to Request for Additional Information - Macquarie Point Northern Access Road - dated 30 March 2026;
- Department of State Growth Response to Request for Additional Information - Macquarie Point Northern Access Road - dated 7 May 2026;
- Department of State Growth Response to Request for Additional Information - Macquarie Point Northern Access Road - dated 7 May 2026 – Attachment A;
- TasPorts Response to Request for Additional Information - Macquarie Point Northern Access Road - dated 8 May 2026

6 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

- 6.1 The Committee is satisfied that the need for the proposed works has been established. Once completed, the Macquarie Point Northern Access Road will be the key driver in fully realising the benefits of the development of the broader Macquarie Point Precinct.
- 6.2 The proposed works will provide an additional entry point to the Port of Hobart and the Macquarie Point Multi-Purpose Stadium, including a bus plaza for stadium event days. It will also facilitate redevelopment of the Macquarie Point precinct including an Antarctic facilities zone, mixed-use development zone, and additional developments proposed for the existing foreshore area in the vicinity of the Domain and Regatta Grounds.
- 6.3 The Northern Access Road will also provide improved access to and from the Macquarie Point precinct from the Tasman Highway, and improved safety and connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists between the Intercity Cycleway and Hobart.
- 6.4 The Committee notes there is interest from some in the community in retaining the sections of disused railway infrastructure that will be removed for this project, and there is evidence that points to rail being an efficient means of public transport. Countering this is the fact that any potential future passenger rail service on this line could only service Greater Hobart's northern suburbs, not the southern and the eastern areas.
- 6.5 Accordingly, the Committee recommends the Macquarie Point Northern Access Road, at an estimated cost of \$78,242,699 million, in accordance with the documentation submitted.



**Parliament House
Hobart
4 August 2026**

**Jen Butler MP
Chair**

7 DIVISION

7.1 In accordance with section 8(2) of the Act, the following Divisions were recorded:

7.2 On the Question being proposed – That the Committee approves the Macquarie Point Northern Access Road reference in accordance with the plans and specifications submitted.

The Committee divided.

AYES - 3
Ms Butler
Ms Rattray
Mr Shelton

NOES - 1
Ms Burnet

7.3 On the Question being proposed – That Chapter 6, ‘Conclusion and Recommendation,’ stand part of the Report;

The Committee divided.

AYES - 4
Ms Butler
Mr Hiscutt
Ms Rattray
Mr Shelton

NOES - 1
Ms Burnet

8 DISSENTING STATEMENTS

8.1 The Honourable Member for Clark, Ms Burnet, voted against the inclusion of the 'Conclusion and Recommendation' in the Committee's report.

8.2 Ms Burnet provided the following Dissenting Statement:

Dissenting Report Macquarie Point Northern Access Road

Helen Burnet, MP

The Macquarie Point Northern Access Road was considered by the Public Works Committee (the Committee) on February 12, 2026. I attended the site visit with proponents, then the public hearing which also occurred on that date. Deliberations occurred at subsequent meetings, as did information that had been requested or taken on notice by the proponent and TasPorts.

I cannot support this project for several reasons.

Justification of Project

Fundamentally, this project is looking to solve a congestion problem that does not exist. The traffic movements into and leaving the Port of Hobart and other activities at Macquarie Point that currently use Evans St are low according to figures received by the Committee, when compared to the significant daily traffic along the Tasman Highway connecting McVilly Drive.

Building this second access road to the Port and other Macquarie Point proposed developments for that amount of traffic, requiring significant engineering treatments (including but not limited to retaining walls, clover leaf connections, underpass linking the InterCity Cycleway, bus plaza for stadium, linkage to proposed housing project) is not warranted.

According to information provided by the proponent on traffic modelling from reports in 2024 and 2025, it is regarded as unlikely that these traffic figures will dramatically change for the day-to-day function of the Port and other areas. And yet here we have a project valued at almost \$80m.

Whilst it may be desirable to have a second road to the Hobart Port, this price tag cannot be justified. The proposed Northern Access Road is being justified as a second road to the Port and other existing and proposed functions at Macquarie Point.

The proposal is not a through road but it appears instead that the main reason for this road is to enable the stadium. To suggest it is to fix a problem that does not exist makes for a grandiose proposal that is not value for public money, is too expensive and is unnecessary in this format.

Financial considerations

The project's estimated cost is \$78,242,699m. This is already greater than the budgeted \$74.3m. This estimate does not include associated costs to link the proposed road to the Tasman Highway. The Committee heard that this is not the end of funding requests related to

this project. The proponent will seek even more funding from the Australian Government for the interface of the Northern Access Road with the Tasman Highway.

According to the report, the “Northern Access Road will provide an alternative route for heavy vehicles to access the Port of Hobart and will support developments in the Macquarie Point Precinct and Regatta Point foreshore area.”

The report continues “A northern entry into the Port of Hobart will ease the pressure on the surrounding road network, enhance connectivity and provide more opportunity for land use and investment within Macquarie Point”

The Committee was presented with daily traffic movements for the Hobart Port and Antarctic Division operations that were insignificant. This table is from the report and looks at projected peak hour figures:

Location	AM Peak Volume (vehicles)	PM Peak Volume (vehicle)
Northern Access Road Inbound	291	127
Northern Access Road Outbound	155	251
Tasman Highway Inbound	3920	2257
Tasman Highway Outbound	1463	2982

Even if all of these movements were along the proposed Northern Access road, it is unjustifiable for that “business-as-usual” quantity of traffic.

I object to this project being funded from the government’s urban congestion fund. It is evident that there is a relatively insignificant number of traffic movements from the Hobart port. This cannot justify the expenditure on this basis.

Whilst I understand that there is currently one route into the Hobart Port, there is no validation for this significant expenditure with an effectively over-engineered proposal that was considered by the Committee. The proposal also obliterates part of the existing rail corridor. The popular active transport route junction with the project will also require re-engineering as a result.

The works proposed include significant upgrades to connect McVilly Drive with the Tasman Highway with various engineering technicalities with lane mergers and cutting into the Domain for these. Information was incredibly broad as to engineering requirements and impacts on the Queens Domain to build extra lanes to the Tasman Highway making assessment of the proposal very limited.

Limitations of providing Concept Plans at this early stage of the Proposal

The Committee’s responsibilities under the Act are to decide if the project is value for money. Disappointingly, the submission provided by the applicant was in an early “concept design stage” and did not have many of the design features expected when considering a proposal of this significance and value of state government.

From the proponent’s opening remarks on p9 of the report:

With several interfaces with other projects to be managed, the project decided the best approach was to undertake the detailed design first, then seek tenders for a construct only contract. The design

consultant is already developing the detailed design documentation to inform planning approvals and procurement documentation required later this year.

I contend that the Committee was not considering this project with enough information to make a properly informed decision. The timeline, possibly for delivery of the Northern Access Road meant that plans had not been developed for infrastructure to support the proposal.

This was abundantly clear with the 55% contingency for the project. This is equivalent to \$26,975,133m and does not include a relatively modest escalation figure of 4.7% (\$2,221,869m) as set out in the table on page 5 of the main report.

This suggestion is a wild prediction of the cost of the project. More detailed information on individual components of the project is not publicly available.

On that basis, it should be refused.

Stakeholder Concerns and Engagement

Public submissions raised various concerns about the project. I shall focus on just two of these concerns.

The submissions provided by Messers Rowallan and Zvillis from the **Hobart Northern Suburbs Rail Action Group** pointed out the disruption of the rail corridor and to the implications of that in future transport needs of Greater Hobart, such as light rail. In their presentations at the hearing, they provided examples of the benefits to cities with this existing transport corridor which is not seen in other cities.

The submission on behalf of community organisation **Streets People Love Hobart** by Mr Donnellon pointed out the confusing and incomplete changes proposed for the InterCity Cycleway at the junction with the proposed road infrastructure. The submission raised serious safety concerns for children and road users and crossing the proposed Northern Access Road. It is my view that if there is roadworks that may diminish safety of vulnerable road users overall, then this is an adverse outcome.

Additionally, the proposed intersection will require substantial upgrades with addition of an underpass.

There will be reduced amenity with removal of a protected footpath/bike path passing under the Remembrance Bridge with a bike path removed from that section heading south adjacent to the Tasman Highway.

The submission raised safety concerns both during construction and on completion. The mass movement of pedestrians during proposed works was of concern and raised during the hearing.

Whilst many safety and connectivity features can be mitigated by good design, the concern is that the public were making their submissions based on a dearth of information, as were the Committee.

Additionally, stakeholder consultation should be regarded as beneficial to project design, but this was not the impression that the proponent had meaningfully engaged stakeholders for their input at this early stage in the project.

Summary

I do not support the Macquarie Point Northern Access Road project considered by the Committee because:

1. The overall cost of close to \$80m cannot be justified.
2. When considered in February 2026, the proposal was in such an early conceptual design phase that too many of elements of the project were unclear.
3. Plans and likely costs felt like back-of-the-envelope projections, which was evident in the contingency estimate figure of 55%
4. Useful input from community groups – for example who utilise the InterCity Cycleway - was not fully taken into consideration.
5. Removal of the rail corridor is a significant risk to transport options into the future. This should be considered as a projected opportunity cost.
6. Other components of the project drive up costs in delivering what really should be regarded as a secondary road for what are small amounts of traffic.
7. No clear indication was provided by the proponent as to how the project interfaces with other significant projects. This approach appears *ad hoc* to design and project delivery. To this end, there are likely more expenses associated with poor coordination to deliver various pending infrastructure projects.
8. A project should not cause greater risk to vulnerable users. Introducing a new road into a space with heavy vehicles including trucks and buses inherently will provide conflict points, particularly if there are large numbers of pedestrians.
9. Safety concerns for pedestrians and bike riders, particularly children were not thoroughly addressed for both during construction phase then on completion. This would impact on normal days with various interfacing projects coming online for the area, and on days when the proposed stadium was being used.
10. Plans for any underpass for pedestrian and bike rider movement was not clearly formulated.
11. Connectivity for pedestrians and bike riders beyond the project was also not clearly defined.
12. Buses on days the stadium would be used would be arriving on the apron regularly with a quick drop off proposed. Whether that was a realistic timeframe was questioned by the Committee. Heavy vehicles such as B-Doubles and buses in a pedestrian zone is a source of conflict. While those risks can be mitigated, evidence supporting that was not provided.



Helen Burnet, MP

August 6, 2026