

Community Consultation and Feedback Report

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Executive Summary

This report provides an overview of the community consultation for the proposed concept design of the Arthur Highway – Eaglehawk Neck Road Widening project. The report summarises the issues raised by community members and stakeholders during the consultation activities for this phase.

When constructed, the project will improve the safety of the Arthur Highway at Eaglehawk Neck. The existing lanes of the Arthur Highway between Old Jetty Road and Blowhole Road will be widened to include standard road widths and shoulders, improving the road surface, and provide improved turning facilities in and out of Blowhole Road.

In addition to improving safety, the project considered provision of an on or off road pathway to aid pedestrian safety between the Dog Line Memorial and Blowhole Road. Another off-road pathway option that would take pedestrians away from road verge was investigated. The off-road option was originally considered to accommodate a community group-led project for a pathway between the Tessellated Pavement car park and the Tasman Arch. This option has been removed from the project based on consideration of feedback received from key stakeholders, residents, road users, and community groups.

A range of consultation activities have been carried out for the project to date including stakeholder meetings, an options analysis workshop with key stakeholders, a public display at the Eaglehawk Neck Community Hall on 11 January 2020, and an online project webpage summarising the project activities.

Key themes that emerged during the consultation activities include:

- The speed limit should be reduced along Eaglehawk Neck in relation to pedestrian and cyclist safety, roadkill, and noise from heavy vehicle engine braking.
- Illegal parking adjacent the Dog Line Memorial.
- Pedestrian safety and access along this section of the highway including crossing the highway at Old Jetty Road.
- Impact on access to Eaglehawk Neck Bay.
- Flooding around the Eaglehawk Neck Community Hall area.
- Access into and out of the Eaglehawk Neck Community Hall.
- New road width will not meet highway standards.
- Potential impacts to visual amenity and noise levels.
- Impacts on Black Swan habitat in Eaglehawk Neck Bay.
- Space next to the Community Hall for helicopters to land at “the Neck” for Tasmanian Parks & Wildlife staff during firefighting/water-bombing activities.

The feedback obtained will be used to inform aspects of the Preliminary and Detailed Design. The tender documentation for the construction of the project will be issued in June 2020 and construction work is expected to start in late 2020.

A project update outlining the option chosen and future project timing has been sent to all stakeholders who were advised of the Public Display and Field Investigations, as well as those who registered their interest at the Public Display session on 11 January 2020.

Project overview

In the lead up to the March 2018 state election, the Tasmanian Liberal Party announced the Visitor Economy Roads Package, a \$72 million package to improve iconic Tasmanian tourism roads.

When constructed, the project aims to improve the safety of the Arthur Highway at Eaglehawk Neck by widening the existing lanes of the Arthur Highway between Old Jetty Road and Blowhole Road, improving the road surface, and providing improved turning facilities in and out of Blowhole Road.

In addition to the safety considerations, the project considered provision of an on or off road pathway to aid pedestrian safety between the Dog Line Memorial and Blowhole Road. Another off-road pathway option that would take pedestrians away from road verge was investigated, however after assessing this option against a wider range of criteria including constructability, value for money, potential for impact on heritage values, and consideration of feedback received from key stakeholders, residents, road users, and community groups it has now been considered unsuitable.

This pathway is part of a larger community-led project being completed in stages from the Tessellated Pavement car park to the Tasman Arch. The Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Services are working with the Tasman Council and community on a number of reserve upgrades and access improvements including this community project.

The final road width will comply with the Department of State Growth's State Road Hierarchy Category 3 road, which has a lane width of 6.0 m (one lane each way, 3.0 m width) and 1.0 m sealed shoulders (total road width of 8.0 m).

Key benefits and features of the project include:

- Improvement in the safety for all road users and pedestrians.
- Provision for the construction of a shared access path between Blowhole Road, Community Hall and Dog Line Memorial.

This project is expected to go to tender in June 2020, with works expected to be completed in December 2020.

The project area outlined in Figure 1 includes the section of the Arthur Highway between Old Jetty Road and Blowhole Road at Eaglehawk Neck.

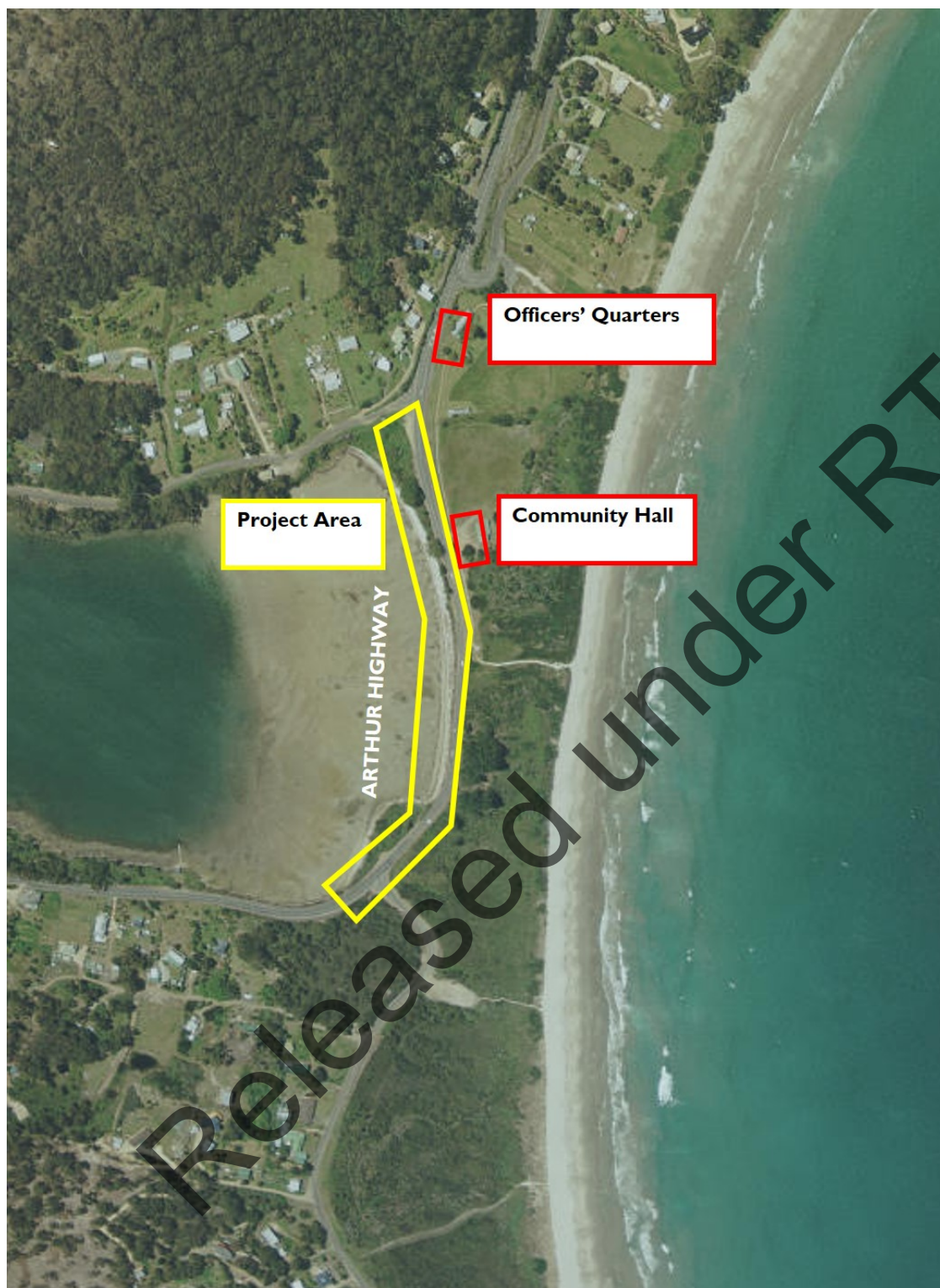


Figure 1 Location map

Consultation objectives

The Tasmanian Government is committed to engaging with local communities and providing opportunities for feedback on road upgrade projects. The objectives of the consultation were to include stakeholder issues into the decision making process and ensure a broad range of the local community and stakeholders are informed about the project and given the opportunity to provide feedback. The level of engagement for the project focused on informing, consulting, and involving key stakeholders and the community.

Consultation summary

Stakeholder and community consultation was undertaken between January 2019 and February 2020. The opportunity for the community to attend a Public Display or visit the Tasman Council offices to view the concept designs was advertised in The Tasman Gazette, The Mercury and on the Department of State Growth's social media pages.

A Public Display was held at the Eaglehawk Neck Community Hall on 11 January 2020 and the concept plans up at the Tasman Council from 13 January until 7 February 2020. The concept plans displayed at the Public Display and Tasman Council offices have been included in Appendix A. Feedback was predominately received via face to face interaction at the public display, feedback forms, and emails.

The consultation activities are described in Table 1 below.

Table 1 Consultation activities

Date	Details of consultation
January 2019 - January 2020	Meetings with key stakeholders - Tasman Council, Tasmanian Parks & Wildlife Service, Aboriginal Heritage Tasmania, Aboriginal Heritage Council, Heritage Tasmania, Port Arthur Historic Site Management Authority, Eaglehawk Neck - Action Community Taskforce (ENACT)
May 2019	Options analysis workshop with key stakeholders – Tasman Council, Tasmanian Parks & Wildlife Service
20 December 2019	Public Display and Field Investigations notification letter by email and mail to residents and businesses in the vicinity of Eaglehawk Neck, and key stakeholders
11 January 2020	Public Display held at the Eaglehawk Neck Market Day. Promoted on website, Facebook, advertised in Tasman Gazette and The Mercury newspapers.
13 January – 7 February 2020	Project display at Tasman Council office in Nubeena.
May 2020	Consultation Summary sent by email or mail to nearby residents, businesses, key stakeholders and posted on the State Roads website and Facebook page.

Feedback summary

Following a review of all of the feedback and submissions received at the public display session at the Eaglehawk Neck Market, and received in the post and via the project email address, the community told us:

- Generally, they are very supportive of the road widening project and of the improvements to the Blowhole Road junction.
- An off-road pathway option would allow the community and visitors to enjoy the natural environment
- Vehicles speeding in the Eaglehawk Neck area on the Arthur Highway is a concern particularly in relation to pedestrian and cyclist safety, roadkill, heavy vehicles, and noise from heavy vehicle engine braking and that once the road is widened that this will encourage motorists to drive even faster through this area.
- They would like some sort of physical separation between the pathway and the road for the on-road pathway option. The kerb and channel design presented in the concept design option for consideration was seen as inadequate in terms of a safe separation between pedestrians and vehicles.
- They are concerned about illegal parking by visitors to the Dog Line Memorial area which makes it unsafe for other road users and pedestrians. They would also like measures to be implemented to discourage and/or police illegal parking.
- There is concern about pedestrian safety between Eaglehawk Neck Bay and Blowhole Road.
- A pedestrian crossing facility across the Arthur Highway at Old Jetty Road would enable children and dog walkers to cross the road more safely.
- The guard rail shown on the concept design plans should not prevent access to Eaglehawk Neck Bay.
- They would like the flooding issue around the community hall area to be addressed and remedied as the walkway from the Officers Mess to the Community Hall floods in winter or heavy rain events and is sometimes impassable.
- That the access into the Eaglehawk Neck Community Hall was inadequate to accommodate tour buses, school buses and the like.
- The new road width will not meet highway standards and will therefore remain unsafe with the high volume of traffic and size of vehicles that uses it.
- They were concerned about the aesthetic appearance of the proposed sea wall and guard rail shown in the concept design.
- They were concerned about what would happen to the brick fragments in the bay during construction.
- They were concerned about noise levels from construction once construction begins.
- Concerned about impacts on Black Swan habitat in Eaglehawk Neck Bay.

Feedback submissions

As expected, there was a high level of interest and feedback received from residents in the Eaglehawk Neck area. A breakdown of the feedback received via the various methods is shown below.

Type of Feedback Received	Number of submissions
Submissions via email	10
Submissions via post	1
Comments forms at Public Display	25
Comment forms at Tasman Council Offices	0
Comments on Facebook posts	38
Total	74

State Growth response to feedback

Feedback	State Growth response
Support for improvements to the Blowhole Road junction	State Growth has included a left and right turn facility into Blowhole Road from Arthur Highway, to improve safety at this junction.
Support for provision of an off-road path	<p>At the Public Display for the <i>Arthur Highway Eaglehawk Neck – Road Widening Project</i>, two pathway options between the Dog Line Memorial and Blowhole Road were presented. The first option included the provision of a roadside pathway alongside the Arthur Highway, while the second option included the provision of an off-road pathway through the dunes.</p> <p>Although the off-road option was originally considered to better align with the community group-led project for a pathway between the Tessellated Pavements and Tasman Arch, following consideration of feedback received from key stakeholders, residents, road users, and community groups, this option has been removed from the project</p>
On-road pathway provision	State Growth will construct an on-road shared path between the Dog Line Memorial and Blowhole Road. The pathway element of the project is part of a larger community-led project being completed in stages from the Tessellated Pavement car park to the Tasman Arch.

Feedback	State Growth response
Physical separation between the on-road path and the southbound lane.	A safety barrier system will be installed between the shared path and highway.
Parking adjacent the Dog Line Memorial is unsafe for road users and pedestrians	'No stopping' signage has been included in the design. The enforcement of traffic rules is the responsibility of Tasmania Police.
Pedestrian, vehicular access and parking at Eaglehawk Neck Bay beach	A safety barrier will be erected along the length of the road widening works for safety reasons. Pedestrian traffic access to the beach can be obtained via the existing pathway behind the bus stop to the beach, or via the existing unformed vehicle access opposite Blowhole Road.
No pedestrian crossing facilities across Arthur Highway from Old Jetty Road.	A pedestrian crossing in the form of a traffic island will be provided across Arthur Highway from Old Jetty Road.
Flooding around the community hall	Additional drainage infrastructure will be installed to assist with the local flooding issue.
Inadequacy of access into and out of the Community Hall	The design includes a turn treatment to allow vehicles to drive around right turning vehicles. The small number of vehicles turning in to the Community Hall does not warrant the investment in a dedicated turn-in facility.
The new road width will not meet highway standards	The existing road width is approximately 5.2 metres. The new cross section will comply with State Road requirements. This will include 1 metre wide sealed shoulders and 3 metres wide traffic lanes (8 metres wide) and a 1 metre wide verge on the Eaglehawk Neck Bay side of the road.
Noise impacts	As there are no residential properties adjacent to the section of road to be widened, noise impacts are not expected to be encountered.
Visual amenity impacts	The safety barrier provided adjacent to the road on the bay side will be a mixture of W-beam and flexible barrier to ensure visual amenity to Eaglehawk Neck Bay is maintained. The rock that will be used for the sea wall construction will be the type of rock that is found in the local area.
Brick fragments from Eaglehawk Neck Bay beach	The Department has worked with Heritage Tasmania and qualified archaeologists to investigate these brick fragments to determine the most appropriate management strategy for the brick fragments.
Black Swan habitat	The project is not expected to impact Black Swans. No Black Swan nests have been found within the project area. They are usually found in areas

Feedback	State Growth response
	of shallow, vegetated foreshore. Black Swans may periodically feed from the salt marsh, however this area will not be impacted by the project.
Existing bus stops are not Disability Discrimination Act compliant	Disability compliant bus stops will be provided.

Two further issues were raised during the consultation and identified as not being addressed by the project. Broadly these are:

- On the Arthur Highway heading towards Sorell there is an overtaking lane adjacent to the right hand turn into Pirates Bay Drive at the top of the hill. Vehicles turning right at this junction block the outer lane of the passing lane making it dangerous for vehicles who are overtaking another vehicle to find themselves suddenly behind a stationary vehicle waiting to turn right into Pirates Bay Drive.
- Lack of toilet and visitor infrastructure at Eaglehawk Neck.

Lessons learned

Overall, the engagement activities went well with good engagement levels achieved across a broad range of community members and stakeholders. This reach was improved by holding the Public Display session at the Eaglehawk Neck Market day on the 11th of January 2020 which was well attended by residents and visitors alike.

Outcome and recommendations

The feedback obtained from stakeholders and the community was used to inform aspects of the Preliminary Design. The off-road option was originally considered to accommodate a community group-led project for a pathway between the Tessellated Pavement car park and the Tasman Arch (refer to Appendix A, Option 2). This option was removed based on consideration of feedback received from key stakeholders, residents, road users, and community groups.

The Preliminary Design layout has been included in Appendix B. This shows how some of the stakeholder and community feedback was incorporated into the design, for example, the inclusion of a pedestrian crossing point at Old Jetty Road and DDA complaint bus stops.

Further stakeholder and community consultation may be carried out between the Detailed Design phase and the start of construction.

Timing

Following the Preliminary and Detailed Design phase, the project is expected to go to tender in June 2020, with works expected to commence in September 2020 and be completed in December 2020.

Next steps

The project team will now start the Detailed Design phase of the project. Activities in this phase include designing the sea wall, finalisation of the coastal engineering report, assessment of the existing road surface condition and determining the new road surface specifications, carrying out a hydrological flood assessment, preparation of the Development Application, and preparation and issue of construction tender documentation in June 2020.

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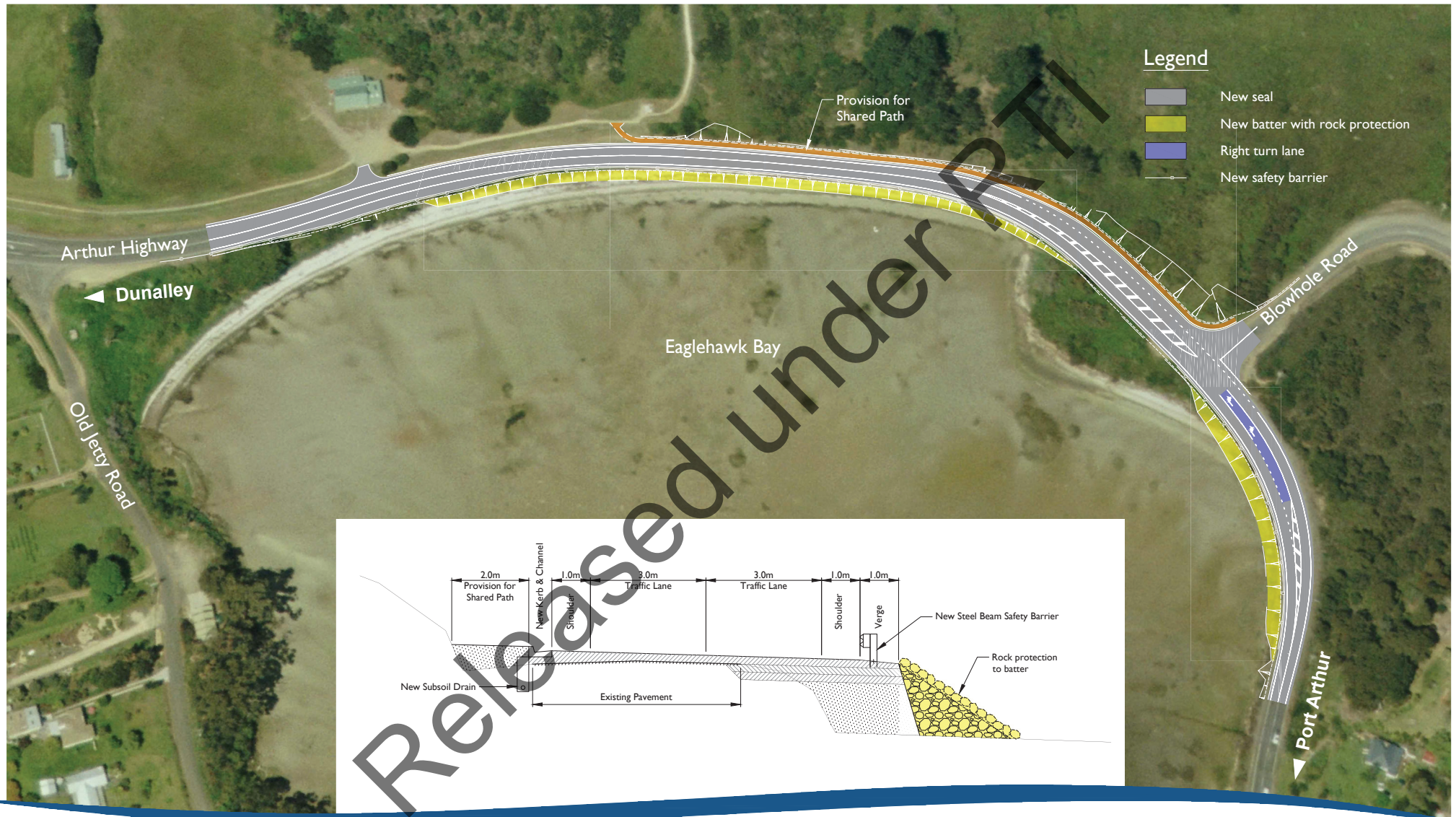
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Appendix A – Concept Plans

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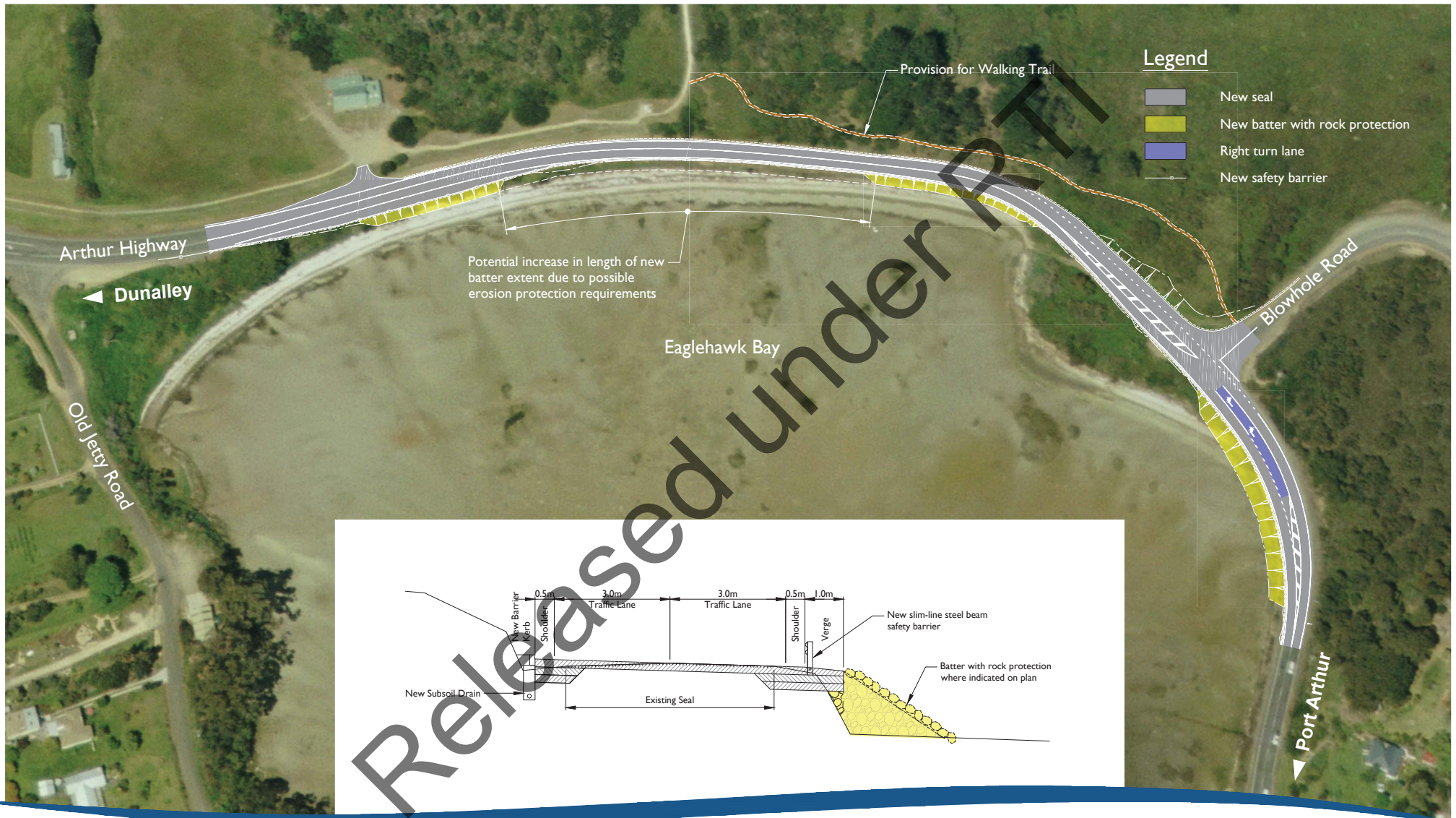
Arthur Highway - Eaglehawk Neck

Road Widening - Option I



Arthur Highway - Eaglehawk Neck

Road Widening - Option 2

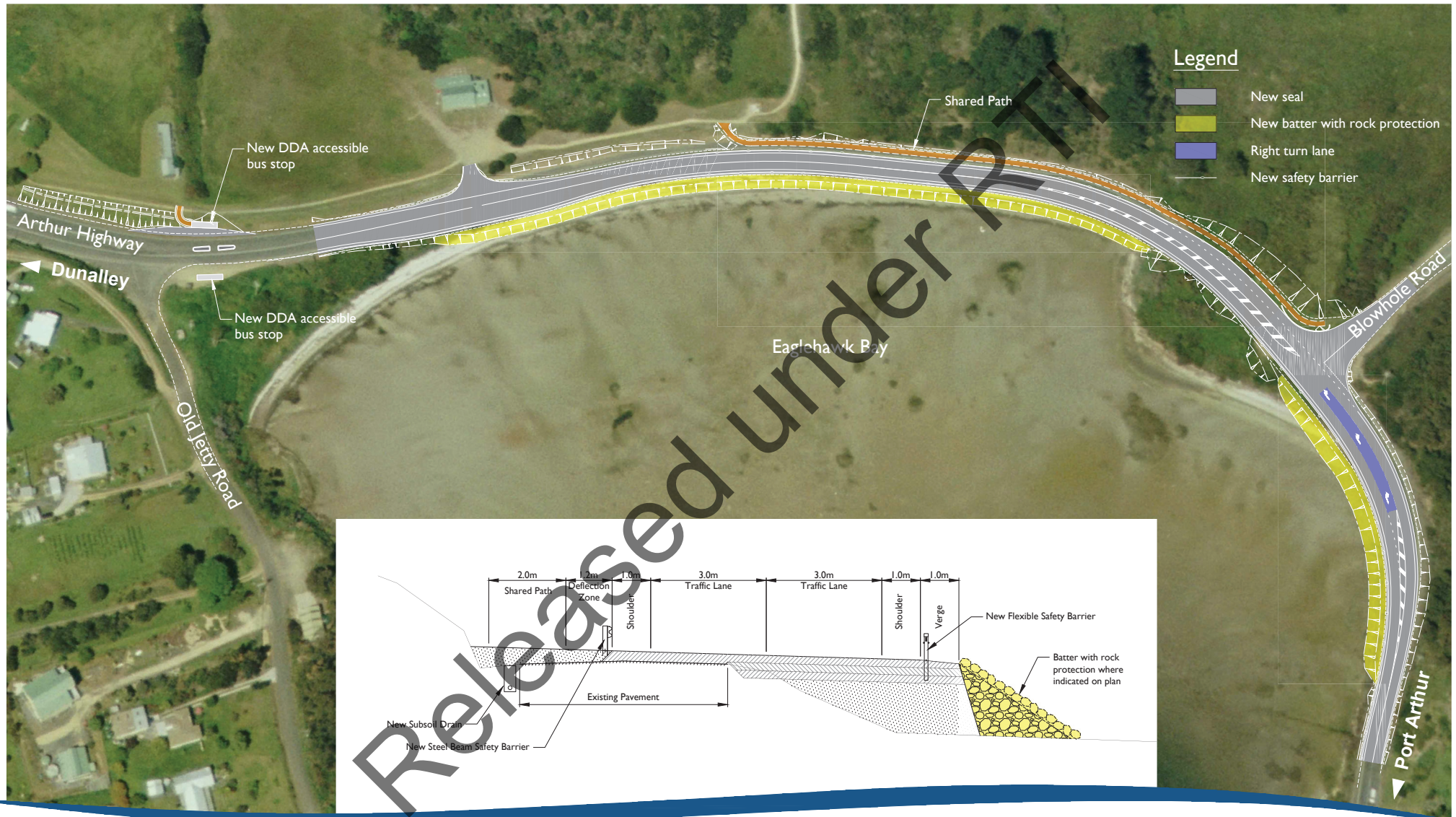


Appendix B – Preliminary Design Layout

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Arthur Highway - Eaglehawk Neck May 2020

Road Widening - Option I





Department of State Growth

Parliament Square

4 Salamanca Place

Hobart TAS 7000 Australia

Phone: 1800 030 688

Email: info@stategrowth.tas.gov.au

Web: www.transport.tas.gov.au

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