

Arthur Highway Eaglehawk Neck Road Widening

Update
May 2020



About the project

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

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

In addition to the safety upgrades, the project considered the provision of an on-road or off-road pathway to aid pedestrian safety between the Dog Line Memorial and Blowhole Road.

This update summarises feedback received during consultation on the project and outlines the current situation and next steps for this project.

Consultation on concept design

Stakeholder and community consultation was undertaken between January 2019 and February 2020. The community were invited to attend a public display at the Eaglehawk Neck Community Hall on 11 January 2020. The public display Concept Plans were also displayed at the Tasman Council from 13 January until 7 February 2020. Feedback was predominately received via face to face interaction at the public display, feedback forms, and emails. The public display was advertised in The Mercury and the Tasman Gazette newspapers as well as on the Department of State Growth's social media pages.

Who participated?

There was a high level of interest from the community and residents in the Eaglehawk Neck area. Feedback received comprised of 11 submissions received via email or post, 25 comments forms completed at the public display, and 38 comments made on Facebook.

What did we hear?	Our response?
Improvements to the Blowhole Road junction	
Generally, the community is very supportive of the road widening project and of the 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.
Provision for an off-road path	
An off-road pathway option would allow the community and visitors to enjoy the natural environment.	<p>At the Public Display for the Arthur Highway Eaglehawk Neck – Road Widening Project, 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> <p>All of the design and investigation work undertaken by State Growth to obtain any potential approvals for the off-road pathway will be provided to Tasmania Parks and Wildlife Service for their future use if and when they are required</p>

Speed limit reduction



Vehicles speeding in the Eaglehawk Neck area on the Arthur Highway is a concern to community members particularly in relation to pedestrian and cyclist safety, roadkill, heavy vehicles, and noise from heavy vehicle engine braking.

The existing speed limit is to be retained as it is consistent with the surrounding road environment and relevant national standards.

On-road shared path



Desire from the community to have a pedestrian pathway

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.

Physical separation between the on-road pathway and the southbound lane.



The community 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.

A safety barrier system will be installed between the shared path and highway.

Parking adjacent to the Dog Line Memorial



The community are concerned about illegal parking by visitors to the Dog Line Memorial area which makes it unsafe for other road users and pedestrians and would like measures to be implemented to discourage and/or police illegal parking.

'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



The community said the guard rail shown on the concept design plans should not prevent access to Eaglehawk Neck Bay.

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



The community expressed a desire for a pedestrian crossing facility across the Arthur Highway at Old Jetty Road that would enable children and dog walkers to cross the road safely.

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



The community 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.

Additional drainage infrastructure will be installed to assist with the local flooding issue.

Access into and out of the Community Hall



The access into the Eaglehawk Neck Community Hall was inadequate to accommodate tour buses, school buses and the like.

The design includes a turn treatment to allow vehicles to drive around right turning turning vehicles. The small number of vehicles turning in to the Community Hall does not warrant the investment in a dedicated turn-in facility.

Highway standard widths



The community had concerns that 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.

The existing road width is approximately 5.2 metres. The new cross section will comply with State road requirements. This will include approximately 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



The community are concerned about noise levels from construction once construction begins.

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 community are concerned about the aesthetic appearance of the proposed sea wall and guard rail shown in the concept design.

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 at Eaglehawk Neck Bay beach



The community is concerned about what would happen to the brick fragments in the bay during construction.

The Department has worked with Heritage Tasmania and qualified archeologists to investigate these brick fragments to determine the most appropriate management strategy for the brick fragments.

Black Swan habitat



The community is concerned about impacts on Black Swan habitat in Eaglehawk Neck Bay.

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 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



The community feels that the existing bus stop infrastructure is inadequate.

Disability compliant bus stops will be provided.

Current status

The feedback obtained from stakeholders and the community was used to inform aspects of the Preliminary Design.

What's Next?

Following the Preliminary and Detailed Design phase, the project is expected to go to tender in June 2020. Construction works are expected to start in September 2020 and be completed by the end of December 2020

During Construction

To keep our workers and road users safe, there will be lane closures and reduced speed limits in place during the works. Road users will need to allow extra travel time for the duration of works.

Further information

Please email info@stategrowth.tas.gov.au if you have any further queries.