

Macquarie Point Northern Access Road – Concept Design Assessment

City of Hobart Submission

February 2026

Contents

1. Introduction	3
2. Key Issues	4
2.1 Transport Network Integration and protection of the NSTC	4
2.2 Place, Heritage and Landscape Impacts	5
2.3 Intercity Cycleway	5
2.4 Waterfront and Community Access.....	6
2.5 Residential Development and Public Foreshore Zone	6
2.6 Event Management and Traffic Impacts	7
2.7 The Cenotaph and Regatta Grounds	7
2.8 Governance, Process and Ongoing Engagement.....	9
2.9 Asset Ownership, Management and Maintenance Responsibilities.....	9
2.10 MacPoint Precinct Underground Parking	10
2.11 Tasmanian Planning Policies (TPPs).....	10
3. Recommendations.....	12
4. Conclusion	13

1. Introduction

The City of Hobart (the City) welcomes the opportunity to make a submission on the Macquarie Point Northern Access Road (NAR) Concept Design Assessment. This submission is made in the City's role as the capital city council, planning authority, asset manager and advocate for a liveable, connected and sustainable Hobart.

The City recognises that the NAR is a State-led project intended to support access to the Port of Hobart, the Macquarie Point Stadium Precinct, the proposed Antarctic and stadium-related uses, and broader transport network performance. The City also notes that consultation on the draft concept designs is currently being undertaken by the Tasmanian Government, with feedback to inform the detailed design phase.

This submission is informed by the City's strategic planning framework, the Southern Tasmania Regional Land Use Strategy, the City's Transport Strategy, and previous City submissions in relation to Macquarie Point and associated infrastructure.

Macquarie Point is one of the most significant urban renewal sites in Tasmania, located at the interface of the Hobart CBD, the Derwent River, the Port of Hobart and the Queens Domain. The City has consistently emphasised that infrastructure within and adjoining the precinct must:

- Support high-quality place outcomes and waterfront access,
- Integrate with existing and future public and active transport networks,
- Minimise severance impacts on the Domain, Cenotaph and river foreshore, and
- Be consistent with long-term strategic land use and transport objectives for Greater Hobart.

The City acknowledges the State Government's stated objectives for the NAR. However, while the provision of effective mass transit infrastructure to the stadium was considered as part of the Project of State Significance process, the NAR was not included in the Order authorising the stadium's construction. Accordingly, the NAR should be subject to separate justification through robust cost-benefit analysis, with appropriate consideration given to the interests of surrounding landowners and the broader community.

Further to this, assertions have been made that TasPorts requires an additional access point to the Port; however, the basis for this requirement has not been clearly articulated and it is unclear to what extent this asserted need has influenced the design outcomes or constrained potential community benefits for adjoining land.

In addition, the removal of this critical section of the Northern Suburbs Transit Corridor (NSTC) warrants explicit acknowledgment and justification. The City opposes any permanent loss or severance of this corridor and considers it essential that the detailed design clearly demonstrates how future public transport options will be protected or accommodated.

2. Key Issues

2.1 Transport Network Integration and protection of the NSTC

The City supports measures that reduce heavy vehicle movements through the Hobart CBD and improve safety and efficiency across the broader transport network. However, the City is concerned that the concept design documentation does not yet adequately demonstrate how the Northern Access Road (NAR) will integrate with:

- Existing and planned active transport routes along the waterfront and through the Queens Domain;
- City-serving public transport services outside of major event scenarios; and
- Future strategic transit options, including potential use of the Northern Suburbs Transit Corridor (NSTC).

Of particular concern to the City is that the proposed alignment of the NAR overlaps with and effectively occupies a critical section of the NSTC. The City considers that this outcome would significantly constrain, and potentially preclude, future passenger or heritage rail opportunities into Hobart via the NSTC. The City wishes to clearly state its opposition to the permanent loss or severance of this strategically important corridor.

The NSTC has long been identified as a key piece of transport infrastructure with the capacity to support sustainable growth, mode shift and improved access between Hobart and the northern suburbs. The *PwC NSTC Transport Mode Study: Options Assessment Report (July 2020)*, prepared under the Hobart City Deal, found with a high degree of confidence that a light rail option delivered the strongest city-shaping outcomes of all modes assessed. In particular, the study concluded that light rail would act as a significant catalyst for urban renewal, generate the largest land use response, and produce the most substantial land value uplift across the corridor. These findings underscore the strategic importance of preserving the NSTC in a form that enables future high-capacity transit outcomes.

The City is concerned that the current NAR concept design prioritises short-term road infrastructure outcomes at the expense of long-term, evidence-based transport and land use objectives that have been jointly explored and endorsed through previous intergovernmental work. Once compromised or built over, the opportunity to reinstate or adapt the corridor for future rail or rapid transit use would be extremely difficult, costly, or impossible to recover.

Accordingly, the City considers it essential that the detailed design phase clearly and transparently demonstrates how future transport options associated with the NSTC will be protected or meaningfully accommodated. This should include explicit consideration of corridor preservation, design solutions that avoid permanent encroachment, and a clear justification where any departure from long-established strategic transport objectives is proposed.

2.2 Place, Heritage and Landscape Impacts

The proposed road alignment around the north-eastern edge of the Cenotaph and Queens Domain raises significant place-making, heritage and landscape considerations. The Cenotaph and Domain are places of state and national significance, and form part of Hobart's cultural identity and tourism appeal.

The City is concerned that the concept designs do not yet provide sufficient detail regarding:

- Visual and landscape impacts when viewed from the Domain, Regatta Grounds, river and CBD,
- The treatment of road infrastructure, earthworks, barriers and lighting in a highly sensitive setting, and
- The cumulative impact of the road in combination with other Macquarie Point and stadium-related infrastructure.

The City strongly recommends that a comprehensive urban design and landscape framework be developed and publicly exhibited as part of the detailed design process.

2.3 Intercity Cycleway

The City emphasises the strategic importance of the Intercity Cycleway as a key piece of active transport infrastructure serving Greater Hobart. The cycleway provides a safe, legible and continuous north-south connection linking residential areas, employment precincts, the Hobart CBD, Macquarie Point and the waterfront, and is a critical component of the City's active transport network.

The Intercity Cycleway supports a wide range of users, including commuters, students, recreational cyclists and pedestrians, and plays an important role in encouraging mode shift away from private vehicle use. The City has made sustained investment in promoting walking and cycling as integral to a liveable, healthy and low-emissions city, and the ongoing functionality of the Intercity Cycleway is central to achieving these objectives.

In particular, the City seeks clarity regarding:

- How the continuity and directness of the Intercity Cycleway will be maintained, without unnecessary detours, level changes or reduced legibility,
- How conflicts between cyclists, pedestrians, vehicles and event-related traffic will be minimised, particularly during peak periods and major events,
- Whether the design prioritises safe, high-quality crossings or grade separation where appropriate, consistent with best-practice active transport principles,
- How construction staging and traffic management will avoid prolonged disruption to the operation of the cycleway, and

- How future increases in cycling demand associated with Macquarie Point redevelopment will be accommodated.
- Pedestrian and cyclist access across and along the road corridor will be safe, legible and attractive,

The City considers that any degradation of the Intercity Cycleway's functionality, safety or attractiveness would undermine established transport and land use objectives and could discourage active transport at precisely the time when demand is expected to increase. The City strongly recommends that the detailed design phase explicitly demonstrate how the NAR will protect and enhance the function of the Intercity Cycleway, ensuring that it remains a safe, continuous and high-quality active transport corridor for current and future users.

Intercity cycleway connection through MacPoint Precinct

The City wishes to note that it's been envisaged that a cycleway through the precinct has been earmarked from the commencement of the project and wish to ensure that this connection along the NAR is not overlooked.

2.4 Waterfront and Community Access

The City has consistently advocated for enhanced public access to the Derwent River and the delivery of continuous, high-quality waterfront connections. The City is concerned that, if not carefully designed, the NAR has the potential to create both a physical and visual barrier between the city, the Domain and the river.

The current design does not demonstrate a clear connection to the waterfront and remains unresolved. A driveway appears to be shown on Council land; however, it does not extend to the foreshore, and a final segment required to safely connect the NAR to the waterfront has been omitted.

Accordingly, the City seeks assurance that:

- Opportunities for foreshore activation and public open space will not be compromised,
- The road design will not preclude future enhancements to the waterfront or the Regatta Grounds, and
- The Government commits to working collaboratively with the City to resolve public access to the foreshore.

2.5 Residential Development and Public Foreshore Zone

The City notes that the Macquarie Point Precinct Plan identifies a 'public foreshore zone' and accompanying residential development along Regatta Point, including the potential for

medium to higher density housing adjacent to the NAR corridor.

The City is concerned that the current concept design documentation does not clearly articulate how the NAR will connect with, service, or coexist alongside this proposed residential area and public foreshore zone. In particular, there is a lack of clarity regarding:

- The location and function of local street connections, access points and interfaces between the road and future housing precinct,
- How pedestrian, cyclist and local vehicle permeability will be achieved between the waterfront, residential area and the broader Macquarie Point precinct,
- The management of potential land use conflicts arising from noise, air quality, visual impacts and traffic associated with a primary access road adjoining future housing, and
- The staging and sequencing of road delivery relative to residential development, and whether the road design allows sufficient flexibility to respond to future land use outcomes.

The City considers that without a clear and coordinated approach, there is a risk that the NAR could undermine the liveability, accessibility and urban design quality of future waterfront housing, contrary to the objectives of the Macquarie Point Precinct Plan and broader regional land use strategies.

The City strongly recommends that the detailed design phase explicitly address the interface between the NAR and proposed waterfront housing, including through integrated land use and transport planning, noise and amenity mitigation measures, and urban design solutions that prioritise safe, attractive and connected neighbourhood outcomes.

2.6 Event Management and Traffic Impacts

While the inclusion of a dedicated event bus plaza is noted, the City considers that further work is required to demonstrate how event-related traffic will be managed without unacceptable impacts on:

- Davey Street, the Brooker Highway and other key arterial roads,
- Residential areas and local streets within the City of Hobart, and
- Public transport reliability and active transport safety during peak event periods.

The City requests that detailed traffic modelling assumptions, scenarios and mitigation measures be shared with Council as part of ongoing stakeholder engagement.

2.7 The Cenotaph and Regatta Grounds

In addition to the Regatta Ground and Cenotaph Car Park which we understand will be retained, the City wishes to emphasise the importance of the land surrounding the Cenotaph, known as the Regatta Grounds, as a highly valued, multi-purpose public open

space that supports a wide range of civic, cultural, sporting and community activities throughout the year.

The Regatta Grounds are a key City-managed asset and are regularly used to host significant events and activities, including but not limited to:

- The Royal Hobart Regatta and associated events,
- Cenotaph Memorial events including Anzac Day,
- Large-scale community festivals, public celebrations and temporary events,
- Sporting activities and competitions,
- Ongoing overflow parking for Doone Kennedy Hobart Aquatic Centre
- Park and Ride periods
- Community gatherings and recreational use, and
- Event infrastructure, parking, staging, temporary structures and operational support areas associated with major waterfront and city events.

Many of these uses rely on the ability to maintain safe, reliable and flexible vehicular access to the Regatta Grounds for event setup and dismantling, emergency services, service vehicles, event participants, and operational staff. Access requirements vary depending on event scale and function and often involve temporary traffic management arrangements and coordination across multiple agencies.

Critically this space also operates daily as an overflow parking area for the Doone Kennedy Hobart Aquatic Centre so unfettered access is paramount.

The City is concerned that changes to road infrastructure in close proximity to the Regatta Grounds, including the NAR, could adversely affect the City's ability to continue hosting these events if access arrangements are constrained, altered or not sufficiently integrated into the detailed design.

In particular, the City considers it critical that:

- Existing and future access points to the Regatta Grounds are clearly identified, protected and maintained,
- The detailed design of the NAR does not reduce operational flexibility for event access, servicing and emergency response,
- Event-related access requirements are explicitly considered alongside stadium and port operations, rather than as a secondary or residual function; and
- Ongoing engagement with the City occurs to ensure that the design and operation of the road supports the continued use of the Regatta Grounds for civic and community purposes.

The City notes that the Regatta Grounds play an important role in Hobart's cultural life, tourism economy and community wellbeing. Maintaining functional access to this space is therefore critical to ensuring that the NAR supports, rather than undermines, established and valued City activities.

2.8 Governance, Process and Ongoing Engagement

The City acknowledges the State Government's commitment to stakeholder engagement during the concept design phase. However, given the scale, sensitivity and long-term implications of the NAR, the City considers that:

- Ongoing, structured engagement with the City of Hobart is essential throughout detailed design, approvals and construction,
- Clear governance arrangements should be established to address interface issues with City-managed land, assets and services, and
- The City's statutory role as planning authority and asset owner must be appropriately recognised.

2.9 Asset Ownership, Management and Maintenance Responsibilities

The City is concerned that the current concept design documentation does not provide sufficient clarity regarding the ownership, management and long-term maintenance responsibilities for the NAR and associated infrastructure once constructed.

In particular, it is unclear:

- Which entity will ultimately own and be responsible for the road corridor, intersections and structures, including any bridges, retaining walls or grade separations,
- How responsibility for associated public realm assets—such as shared pedestrian and cyclist paths, landscaping, lighting, drainage, signage and street furniture—will be allocated,
- Whether any assets are intended to be transferred to the City of Hobart following construction, and if so, under what standards, conditions and funding arrangements, and
- How lifecycle costs, renewal liabilities and operational impacts will be addressed to ensure that ongoing financial and resource burdens are not inappropriately transferred to local government.

The City notes that clarity around asset ownership and maintenance responsibilities is critical to informed decision-making at the concept and detailed design stages. Early resolution of these matters will reduce the risk of future disputes, unplanned costs, or outcomes that are inconsistent with the City's asset management standards and service delivery expectations.

The City strongly recommends that asset ownership, handover arrangements, and long-term management responsibilities be clearly defined and agreed with the City of Hobart prior to finalisation of the detailed design and before any construction commitments are made.

2.10 MacPoint Precinct Underground Parking

The City notes recent advice that the previously proposed car parking facility beneath the stadium is no longer proceeding as part of the current project scope.

Notwithstanding this, it is the City's understanding that the NAR concept design has been developed in a manner that is intended to be future-proofed to allow for potential access to an underground or structured car parking facility beneath the precinct, should such a facility be progressed at a later date.

The City considers it important that this future-proofing intent is clearly documented and retained through the detailed design process, including clarity regarding:

- The location and protection of any future access points or structural allowances,
- The implications for traffic operations, safety and capacity on the NAR if such access were to be activated in the future, and
- How any future car parking access would integrate with public transport, active transport and event management arrangements.

The City seeks assurance that the detailed design of the NAR does not preclude future options and that any assumptions relating to the absence of stadium car parking are transparent and clearly articulated.

2.11 Tasmanian Planning Policies (TPPs)

The City notes that the Tasmanian Planning Policies (TPPs) may be in effect by the time a planning application is lodged for the NAP. As such, the City considers it essential that the concept design and subsequent detailed design clearly demonstrate alignment with, and responsiveness to, the relevant policies.

The City is concerned that the current concept design documentation does not sufficiently address a number of key policy matters that are likely to be relevant to assessment under the TPPs, including the following.

Minimising Social Impacts of Transport Infrastructure

TPP 5.3.3 (9) seeks to minimise social impacts associated with new transport infrastructure, including impacts on communities, access, amenity and the use of public spaces.

The City considers that further work is required to demonstrate how the NAR will minimise social impacts, particularly in relation to:

- Severance of public open space and community assets such as the Regatta Grounds,
- Impacts on pedestrian and cyclist movement, safety and comfort,
- Noise, visual and amenity impacts on nearby public spaces and future residential

areas, and

- The cumulative social effects of the road in combination with other Macquarie Point infrastructure and event-related activity.

Strategic Value of Non-Operational Rail Corridors

TPP 5.5.3 (12) requires recognition of the strategic value of non-operational rail corridors, particularly where they may have future transport, freight, tourism or community use.

The City notes concerns raised by stakeholders that the proposed alignment of the Northern Access Road overlaps with, or affects, the former South Line rail corridor. The City considers that the concept design should more clearly demonstrate how the strategic value of this corridor has been recognised, including how future transport or heritage rail opportunities could be preserved or accommodated, consistent with the intent of the TPPs.

Need for Integrated Structure Planning

The TPPs emphasise the importance of coordinated long-term planning through structure plans to guide land use, transport, infrastructure and place outcomes in complex or strategic locations.

Given the scale and significance of the Macquarie Point precinct, and the role of the NAR in shaping future land use, movement patterns and public realm outcomes, the City considers that the road should be clearly situated within an integrated structure planning framework. This is particularly important to ensure alignment between transport infrastructure, proposed waterfront housing, open space, event uses and future development staging.

The City is concerned that, at concept design stage, there is insufficient clarity as to how the NAR has been informed by, or will inform, a broader structure planning approach for Regatta Point and its interfaces. The City acknowledges its importance for MacPoint Precinct but the cumulative impacts on the adjoining Regatta Point Precinct area have been left highly unresolved.

The City strongly recommends that the detailed design phase explicitly address the relevant Tasmanian Planning Policies and clearly demonstrate how the NAR responds to policy requirements prior to the lodgement of any planning application.

3. Recommendations

The City recommends that the Tasmanian Government:

1. Undertake a cost benefit analysis for the project.
2. Further develop and publicly exhibit detailed design information addressing transport integration, active transport, and future transit options.
3. Prepare a comprehensive urban design, landscape and heritage impact framework for the NAR corridor.
4. Demonstrate how direct waterfront access, foreshore activation and community use of the Domain and Regatta Grounds will be protected and enhanced.
5. Clearly articulate how the NAR interfaces with, and supports, proposed waterfront housing identified in the Macquarie Point Precinct Plan
6. Provide transparent traffic and transport modelling, including event and non-event scenarios.
7. Establish clear governance and engagement mechanisms with the City of Hobart for all subsequent project stages.
8. Confirm and document agreed asset ownership, handover standards, and ongoing maintenance and lifecycle funding responsibilities for all NAR assets prior to finalisation of the detailed design.
9. Ensure that the detailed design and operation of the NAR maintains safe, flexible and functional access to the Regatta Grounds to support ongoing civic, community and event uses.
10. Demonstrate that the NAR is consistent with the TPPs, including minimising social impacts, recognising the strategic value of non-operational rail corridors, and supporting integrated structure planning outcomes prior to any planning application.

4. Conclusion

The City recognises the State's objectives in improving access to Macquarie Point and the Port of Hobart. However, the City considers that the NAR must be designed and delivered in a manner that safeguards Hobart's unique waterfront setting, heritage assets, and long-term transport and land use outcomes.

The City looks forward to continuing to work collaboratively with the Tasmanian Government to achieve infrastructure outcomes that support both state objectives and the best interests of the Hobart community.



(Michael Stretton)
Chief Executive Officer