



MEDIA RELEASE

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Alternate route to the North East Coast - A matter of urgency

Break O'Day Council has asked the State Government to consider an alternate route to the East Coast as a matter of urgency.

The Council has written to the Tasmanian Government asking that they visit the area and see first-hand the state of St Marys Pass and the Elephant Pass, both State owned roads. And, commit to holding a meeting as a matter of urgency, to start investigations to alternative access routes before 31 January 2023.

Mayor Mick Tucker said that with the recent closure of St Marys Pass and the condition of the Elephant Pass has only highlighted the urgency for the State Government to consider a new access route.

“With St Marys Pass closed and the Elephant Pass down to one lane in areas it has affected school buses, transport and freight services to the area as well as visitation.

“Businesses in St Marys are also struggling with losing both local and visitor traffic,” he said.

St Helens is the main township on the East Coast and is more than two hours from the closest major city, Launceston, and more than three hours away from the State’s capital, Hobart. This makes the town more isolated than townships like Queenstown on the North West Coast.

“We would like the State Government to recognise just how isolated our communities are and understand how important reliable access to the area is.

“Simply put, neither Pass is fit for purpose in modern times, St Marys Pass is 176 years old this year and the route has barely changed from the times of horse and cart.

The Mayor said that it was important the Government look at all potential options for an alternate route and emphasised that it was paramount the community were also involved in the decision making.

“Access routes are not all about getting from A to B and the needs of the community must be considered in any future plans.

“At the end of the day it is our communities who rely on and use these roads the most.

“We look forward to meeting with the Government to discuss this in greater detail,” Mayor Tucker said.

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For more information, please contact Break O'Day Council’s Communications Coordinator, Jayne Richardson on 0400 454 089 or call the office during work hours, 6376 7900.