



Engagement Report Geeveston Outfall Relocation project

May 2024

Executive summary

This report provides a summary of the community consultation undertaken for the Geeveston Outfall Relocation project.

The treated effluent outfall from the Geeveston Sewage Treatment Plant is currently situated in the Kermandie River. Due to poor dilution and dispersion in the Kermandie River the outfall needs to be relocated to deeper water with better dilution and dispersion and ultimately, better environmental outcomes.

Investigations to relocate the Geeveston outfall commenced in 2011, where a location off Shipwrights Point in the Huon River was selected as the preferred location.

Community and stakeholder consultation took place in 2019 and 2020, however this was only with a small percentage of the community.

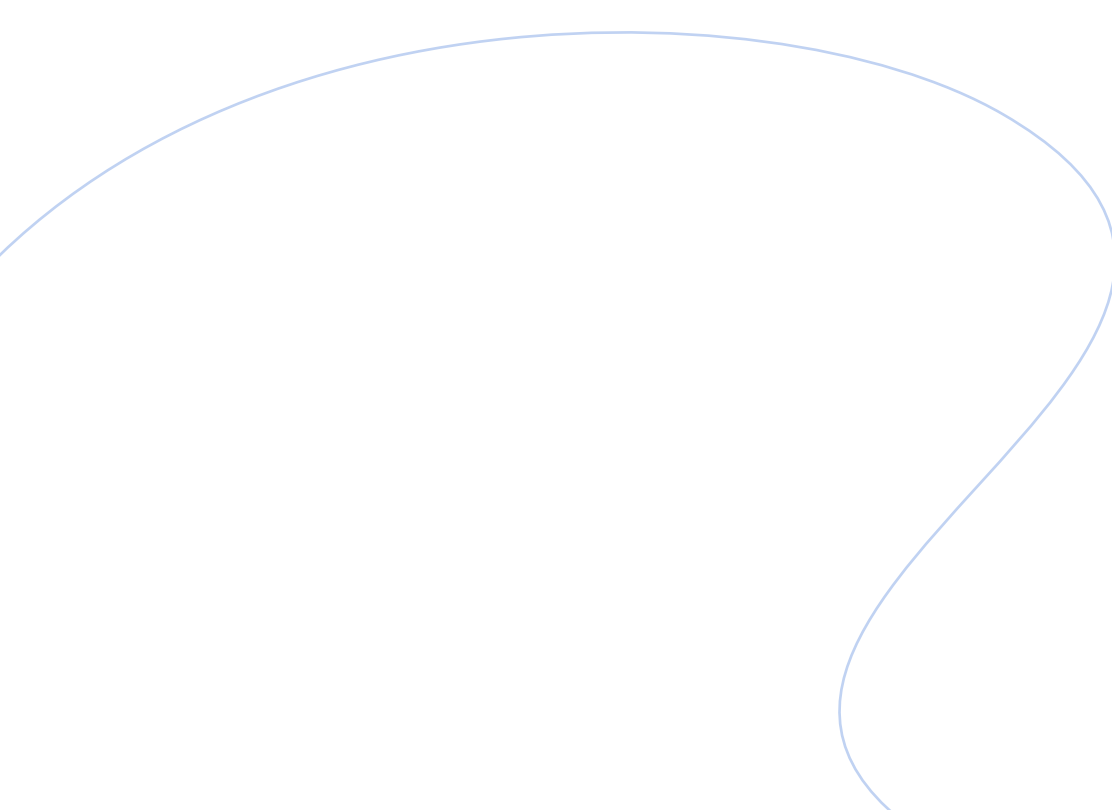
In 2022 we re-engaged with the community to inform them of the upcoming project. At this time concerns were raised by the Port Huon Progress Association and other members of the community.

Feedback from the community in 2022 resulted in a commitment to investigate alternate locations for the outfall.

Our commitment to the community was to investigate alternate sites that could provide equal to or better environmental outcomes.

Over the past 18 months we have regularly engaged with key stakeholders and the community about our alternate investigations.

In January 2024 we presented a recommendation of the new outfall alignment to the Huon Valley Council, local members for Franklin and the broader community, and in April 2024 this recommendation was approved for construction. This report outlines our consultation with key stakeholder and the community.



Purpose

To provide detail of the community consultation undertaken for the Geeveston Outfall Relocation project.

Background

TasWater has made a commitment to reduce our environmental risk at sites across the state. The treated effluent outfall from the Geeveston Sewage Treatment Plant is currently situated in the Kermadie River. Due to poor dilution and dispersion in the Kermadie River the outfall needs to be relocated to deeper water with better dilution and dispersion and ultimately, better environmental outcomes.

Investigations to relocate the Geeveston outfall commenced in 2011, where a location 100 metres off Shipwrights Point in the Huon River was selected as the preferred location. The location was directly opposite the Huon Yacht Club.

Community and stakeholder consultation took place in 2019 and 2020, however this was only with a small percentage of the community.

In 2022 TasWater was contacted by the Port Huon Progress Association about the project and the plan to construct an outfall off Shipwrights Point. We presented the project to the association who then raised concerns about the project.

Feedback from the community in 2022 resulted in a commitment to investigate alternate locations for the outfall.

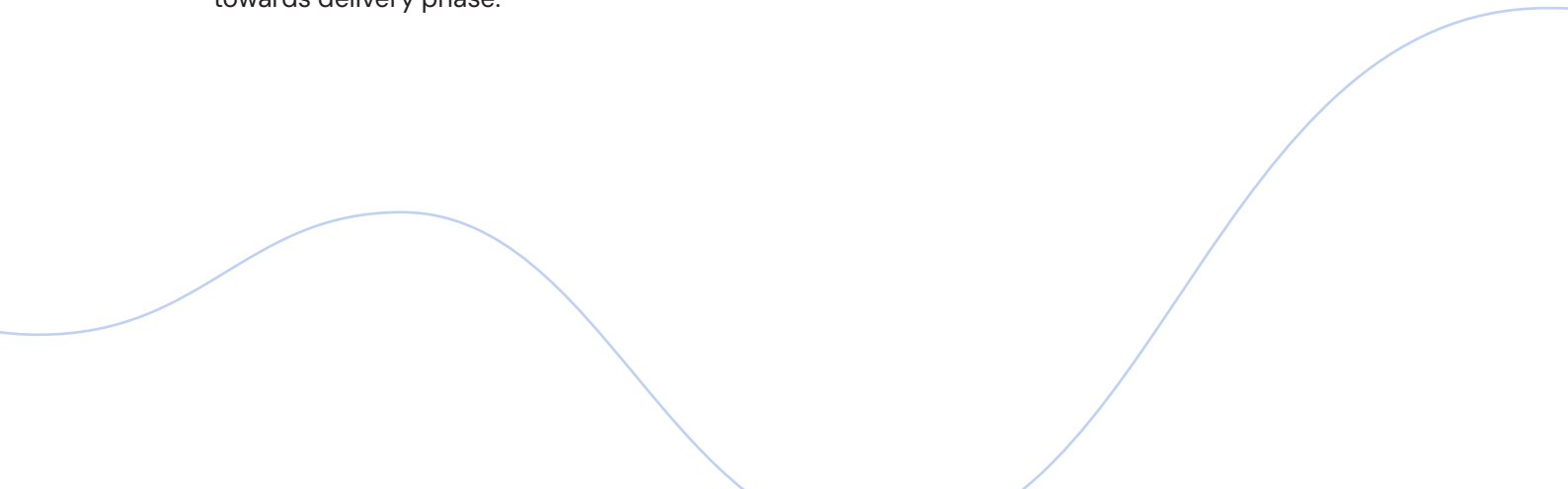
Our commitment to the community was to investigate alternate sites that could provide equal to or better environmental outcomes and to consult with them throughout our investigations.

Marine and land-based investigations were carried out over a twelve-month period and an alternate outfall location in the Huon River, off Shipwrights Point was determined as providing the best environmental outcome.

During our investigations regular meetings were held with key stakeholders and community groups. Our journey was also shared to the broader community via written notifications and media.

In January 2024 we presented a recommendation of the new outfall alignment to the Huon Valley Council, local members for Franklin and the broader community. The new location is 260 metres offshore and south of the recreational area, addressing community concerns of the impact to recreational use of Shipwrights Point.

The recommendation and a summary of community feedback was presented to the TasWater Board in April 2024. The recommendation was approved, and the project will now move towards delivery phase.



Community engagement snapshot

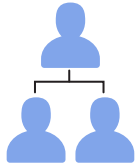
Throughout the investigations into an alternate location, we have regularly consulted with key stakeholders and community groups via face-to-face meetings, written updates, proactive media and a community drop-in information session.



The numbers



**Written
notifications**
195



**Stakeholder
meetings**
9



**Community
group meetings**
4



**Community
information
sessions**
1



**Media articles
(Huon News)**
3



**Public notices
(Huon News)**
2



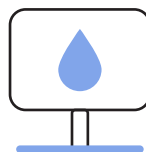
**Community
session feedback
forms**
7



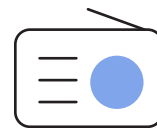
**Online feedback
forms**
12



**Direct engagement with
Capital Engagement Team**
136



**Project page
website visits**
384

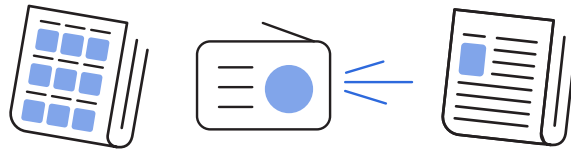


**Radio Interview (ABC Radio
& Kingston and Huon FM)**
2

Community drop-in information session



A community drop-in information session was held on
3rd Feb 2024



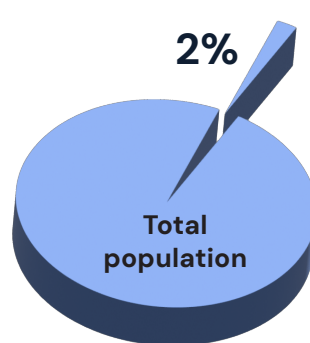
This was **promoted to the community** via Public Notices in the Huon News, during an interview on ABC radio and Kingston Huon FM radio and also in an article published in the Huon News. Details of the **community drop-in session** were available on the project webpage and shared via the Port Huon Progress Associations Facebook page.



The Huon News was selected as the most **appropriate channel** to reach the **local community** following feedback from community members. We estimate that details of the community drop-in session would have **reached** over **2,500** local community members **via print** and over **30,000** **via radio**.



A total of **30** community members attended the community drop-in session.



Attendees therefore represented approximately **2 percent** of the **total population**.



The **population** of Geeveston is **1431** (ABS Census 2021) with **443 properties** connected to water and sewerage **services**.



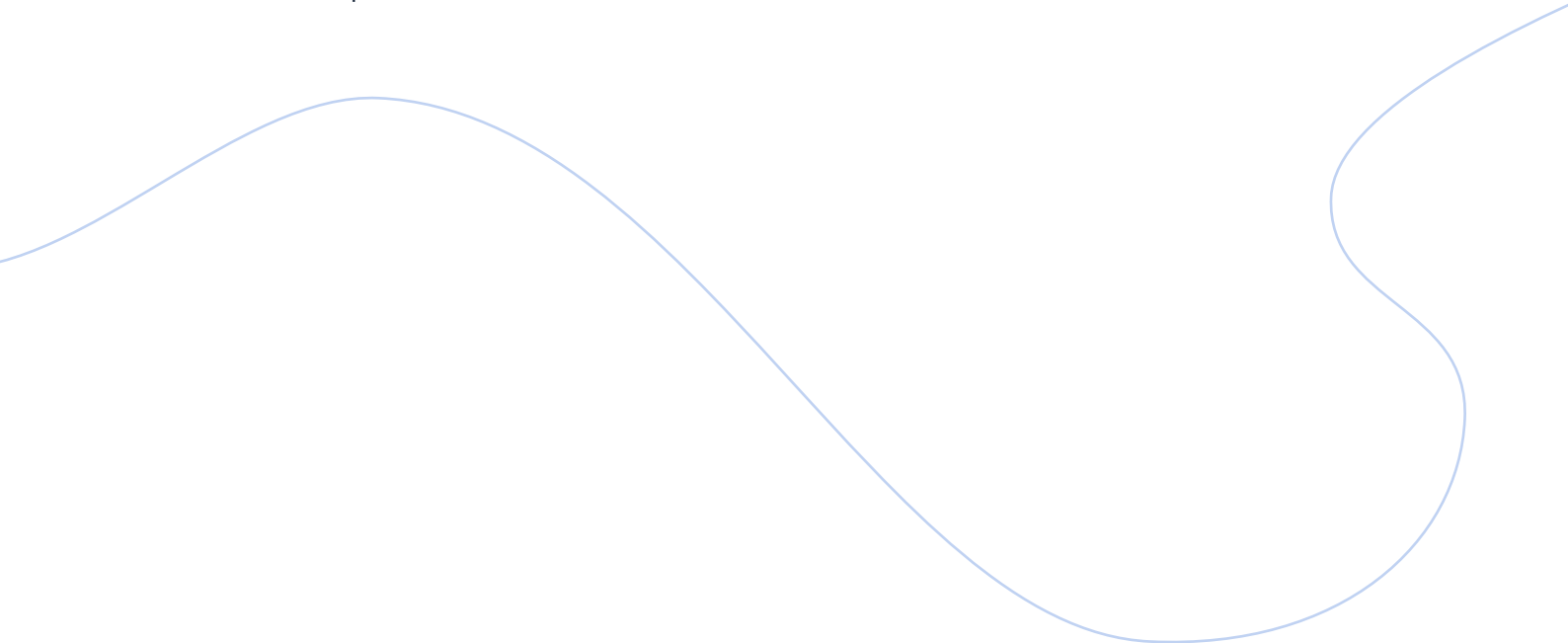
Some left the session well informed and supportive of the science that our recommendation is based on, whilst others left still opposed to the project.

Complaints

Throughout our consultation with the community and our investigations into alternate options a number of complaints have been received directly, addressed to the TasWater Board and via Minister's Offices.

Complaint type		Number of complaints
Direct engagement with Capital Engagement Team	>	1
Online feedback	>	12
Community session feedback form	>	7
Social media (comments on Facebook posts since Jan 25, 2024)	>	24
CEO or Board complaint	>	9
Complaint to a Ministers Office	>	8

Of the above **61** complaints received since November 2021, **24** are unique. **37** are complaints via various channels from the same individuals.



What we heard

The main concerns raised by community members at the session and via feedback forms included:

The desire for a treatment plant that can treat to a standard that would allow for discharge to the Kermadie River.

The desire for an upgraded treatment plant rather than an outfall that doesn't solve the root problem – what is perceived by respondents as a substandard treatment plant.

Concern around sewage overflows occurring into the Huon River during rain events, particularly noting the historical performance of the plant and regular overflow events.

Perceived negative impacts to the recreational area (swimming, kayaking, fishing) at Shipwrights Point and the community's strong connection to the area.

Impacts to residents and tourists due to traffic delays during construction.

Concerns around the need for an outfall sign at Shipwrights Point, discouraging community and visitors from using the recreation area.

Concerns that alternative options at Whale Point have not been investigated in detail, particularly the lack of detailed investigation into the aboriginal heritage and threatened species layers.

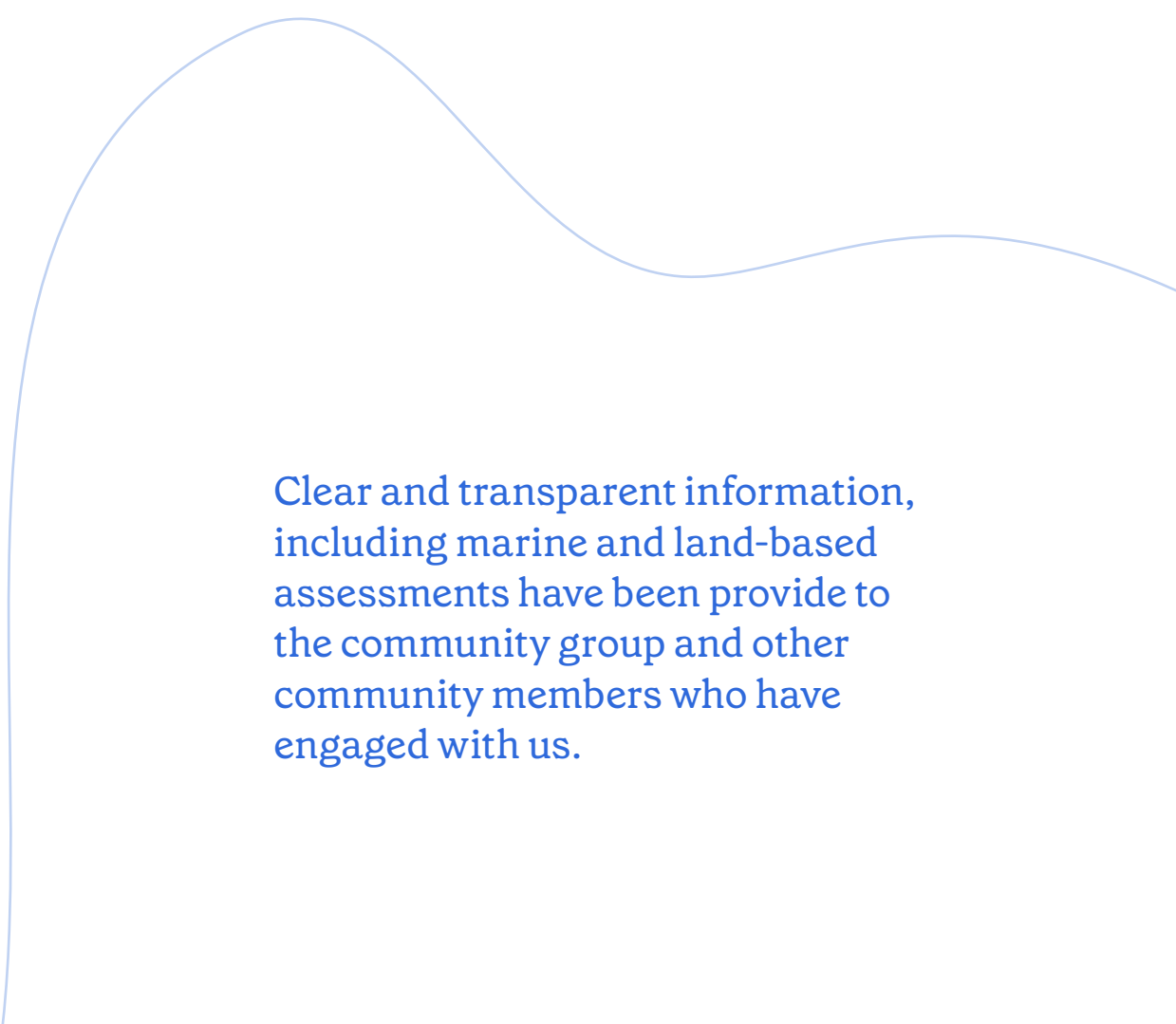
Summary

Community consultation was undertaken between November 2022 and March 2024 during our investigations into alternate options for the outfall location for the Geeveston Outfall Relocation project.

Throughout the investigations, we regularly consulted with key stakeholders and community groups via face-to-face meetings, written updates, proactive media and a community drop-in information session.

A local community group have been very active within the community and via their Facebook page. Clear and transparent information, including marine and land-based assessments have been provide to the community group and other community members who have engaged with us.

The small percentage of community who attended the community drop-in information session or that have engaged with us directly would indicate that only a small portion of the community are opposed to the project. However, a large percentage of the community have provided no feedback or shown interest in the project.



Clear and transparent information, including marine and land-based assessments have been provide to the community group and other community members who have engaged with us.

