

May 2025



Freycinet Visitor Gateway Project Update

Overview

The Tasmania Parks and Wildlife Service (PWS) is delivering a number of exciting new projects in and adjacent to the Freycinet National Park so that the park remains a much-loved destination by locals and visitors to Tasmania.

This update relates to the Freycinet Visitor Gateway Project.

Freycinet Visitor Gateway Project

The Freycinet National Park is one of Tasmania's most iconic tourism destinations and is an important place for local residents, the Aboriginal community and all Tasmanians.

The Freycinet Peninsula Master Plan (2019) recognised the importance of the natural, cultural, environmental and social values of the area and of protecting these values.

The Master Plan identified the challenges of balancing the protection of these unique values, alongside existing and predicted growth in levels of visitation, increased vehicle traffic congestion, and the need to preserve a high-quality, visitor experience. Given the proximity of small townships to the park, maintaining the liveability of the local area for the community who live and recreate across the Peninsula is important.

The Freycinet Visitor Gateway (Gateway) is a key initiative of the overall strategy developed through the Freycinet Peninsula Master Plan to address the issues identified. It aims to reduce vehicle impacts from visitors travelling to and from the park and the impact to adjacent residential areas by relocating key visitor infrastructure outside of the National Park.

Crown land, including an area commonly referred to as the "Horse Paddock", is the site identified for the Gateway and it is located to the north west of the Coles Bay township on Coles Bay Road (see Figure 1).

The project is supported through a \$14 million commitment by the State Government and \$5.7 million from the Australian Government under its National Tourism Icons Program.

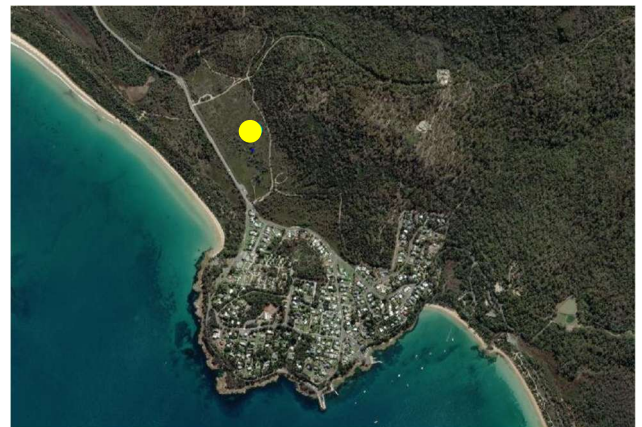


Figure 1: Approximate site location of the Freycinet Visitor Gateway

Preliminary Site Concept Plan

A preliminary site concept plan has been developed and sets out the key components of the design and their locations within the project site. It has been informed by extensive input from specialists and comprehensive site surveys and investigations undertaken over a number of years, and feedback from consultation during the Master Plan process.

Refer to the Freycinet Visitor Gateway preliminary site concept plan on the last page of this update.

The concept plan seeks to create a sense of arrival for visitors with new wayfinding and signage providing clear direction from the Tasman Highway to a Gateway visitor information facility with information, ticketing, amenities, vehicle parking and a transit shuttle service during peak periods.

This preliminary plan incorporates a dedicated access point and roundabout off Coles Bay Road approximately 175 metres west of the Esplanade intersection.

Carparking, anticipated to be delivered as two stages, will ultimately accommodate 350 – 400 standard and large vehicles. It will provide disability access parking, electric vehicle charging facilities, parking for caravans, RVs and towing vehicles for visitors accessing the park.

A shuttle drop-off and collection point, turning circle and forecourt, which includes landscaping and interpretations, are shown. The notional building footprint, which may also be staged over time, would include amenities, visitor information and services and a sheltered shuttle waiting area.

The location on the lower portion of the site, and setback from Coles Bay Road, will minimise visibility of the Gateway. A connecting pathway will link the Gateway to the corner of Coles Bay Road and the Esplanade.

Visitors will still be able to park in dedicated carparking spaces when they are available at Wineglass Bay, along Freycinet Drive and other key experiences, or park at the Gateway and use a shuttle service during peak demand periods.

Visitors with long or larger vehicles (caravans, RVs and towing vehicles) will be encouraged to use the Gateway to avoid congestion. Other mobility options such as cycling will be encouraged through bike parking at the Gateway and connection pathways to the shared use corridor and walkway constructed over the last three years between Coles Bay and Wineglass Bay.

The preliminary site concept plan has been released for public comment and will be subject to further amendment, incorporating feedback from the community as appropriate and as investigations and the design process progress.

Values and Design Approach

The Freycinet Visitor Gateway site will be located outside of the Freycinet National Park. The site is a public reserve, adjacent to conservation area, and has been subject to previous disturbance through historic uses, including as a horse paddock and refuse site.

Best practice reserve management principles have informed an approach of the provision of infrastructure and services outside of national parks to support the future growth and management of visitor numbers and vehicle access.

The site selected for the new Gateway is acknowledged as having important values, with threatened flora species identified on the site as well as supporting habitat for threatened fauna species, and the cultural heritage of the entire Peninsula and East Coast is significant and very important to the Tasmanian Aboriginal community.

The protection of natural, cultural and social values is a key consideration for the design stages of the project with a strong focus on delivering the development in a way that limits the impact to the natural and cultural heritage values of the site and reduces visual impact. Avoiding or minimising impacts to these values has been a key driver in developing the design, including the site layout and the alignment of roads and carparking.

The Gateway site and all associated proposed works, including underground services, have been subject to specialist surveys, investigations and design as part of the early design stages of the project.

Key design considerations and aims include:

- Careful siting to minimise the overall site footprint to avoid sensitive flora species and to reduce environmental and visual impacts. The current siting of the infrastructure on the lower areas of the site and planned vegetation screening will support this aim.
- The ability to stage the development of this site and respond to growth over time.
- Carparking capacity to cater for peak demand periods now, but also future growth in visitation and changes to vehicle types, such as more electric vehicles and RVs or trailers.
- The ability to scale up and add more frequent shuttle services as required without impacting the Gateway or Coles Bay Road congestion.
- Building design will aim to allow for staged growth and deliver an arrival space for interpretations; ticketing and visitor information; Aboriginal storytelling and amenities.
- Design of the site will incorporate fire management considerations and the safety of visitors in the event of a bushfire and integrate with the overall emergency and response planning for the area.



Figure 2: View to the South across the Freycinet Visitor Gateway Site

Specialist Surveys and Reports

Specialist consultants have been engaged over the past several years to undertake investigations and design, provide reports, surveys, specific input and advice, which have informed the location of the Gateway components on the site concept plan and will continue to inform design development.

These specialist reports also provide critical inputs into scope options and budget considerations for the project as well as future statutory planning submissions and approvals processes. Investigations undertaken and reports prepared to inform the current stage of design include:

- Aboriginal Cultural Heritage (Cultural Heritage Management Australia)
- Access Consultant (DDEG)
- Acoustic Engineer (NVC)
- Architecture (Xsquared Architects)
- Building Services / Process Engineering (JMG)
- Building Surveying (Pitt and Sherry)
- Bushfire Hazard Management (ERA Planning and Environment)
- Civil and Structural Engineer (JMG)
- Fire Engineering (DDEG)
- Geotech and Soil (Pitt and Sherry)
- Hydraulic Design (JMG)
- Land Survey (UDM)
- Landscape Architect (Inspiring Place)
- Natural Values (NorthBarker and Ecosystem Services and Environmental Consulting Options Tasmania)
- Planning and Environmental Impact Assessment (ERA Planning and Environment)
- Quantity Surveying (WT Partnership)
- Structural Engineer (JMG)
- Traffic Engineer (Hubble Traffic)
- Track Route (Mountain Trails)
- Transport Strategy (PBA Transit Planning)
- Visual Impact (Inspiring Place)
- Wastewater and Stormwater (JMG)
- Wayfinding and Signage (Before Creative)
- Workplace Health and Safety (Aware 365)

Specialist Findings

A brief summary of the key findings of some of the specialist reports relating to values, potential impacts and recommendations to mitigate is provided below.

- Aboriginal Heritage Assessments for the Gateway site were undertaken in 2020 and 2024. No registered Aboriginal sites are located within the boundaries of the site. No suspected features or specific areas of elevated archaeological potential were identified during the field survey assessments and no artefacts were identified during oversight of geotechnical test pits undertaken across the site in 2024. The 2024 report is currently being finalised including incorporating outcomes of engagement with organisations representing the Tasmanian Aboriginal people.
- A series of natural values surveys, including specific targeted flora and fauna surveys, have been undertaken from 2020 through to 2025 identifying a number of threatened species, listed under the Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) and the Tasmanian *Threatened Species Protection Act 1995*, across the site. Ongoing advice and input from the natural values consultants has guided the location of the infrastructure on the site to avoid where possible, or minimise, impacts on these species. Mitigation measures where species may be impacted are currently being considered.
- Further information on the flora and fauna species identified at the site will be available at the community information session and as part of the statutory planning and approvals processes.
- Bushfire risk and management is being further investigated with outcomes to be incorporated into the design, including how visitor safety will be managed in the event of a bushfire and as part of the overall Freycinet Peninsula Emergency Response Planning.
- The dedicated vehicle access point from Coles Bay Road, through delivery of a roundabout, has been identified through a high-level Transport Strategy prepared in 2023 and investigations by specialist consultants as part of the current design stage. The construction of a roundabout provides a safe point of access and egress to the site whilst maintaining traffic flow along Coles Bay Road and will add an important element of traffic calming to this very long straight stretch of road corridor. The location of the roundabout, when combined with new wayfinding and signage, will encourage parking at the Gateway site.

Planning and Statutory Approvals

The Freycinet Visitor Gateway Project will be subject to four separate planning and approval processes:

- The PWS Reserve Activity Assessment (RAA) process is required for any developments on reserved land managed by the PWS. During the assessment stage of the RAA process, an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and supporting specialist reports will be made available to the public for review on the PWS 'Have your Say' website.
- PWS intends to refer the project to the Department of Climate Change, Energy, Environment and Water (DCCEEW) under the EPBC Act. This assessment process will have a public consultation element managed by DCCEEW and include details of specialist investigations, site surveys and reports as they relate to Matters of National Environmental Significance.
- A Development Application to be lodged through the Glamorgan Spring Bay Council (GSBC) will provide details of plans and drawings as well information drawn from specialist reports, through a public consultation process managed by Council.
- The project will be referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works for approval as part of the legislative process for reviewing major Government public works projects and which has a public consultation process incorporated.

Timing

Key milestones including timing of further public consultation opportunities will be developed as part of the next stage of the design development and stakeholders and community kept informed through the [project webpage](#) and further Infrastructure Updates.

The construction program for this project and timing for delivery are based on the timeframes for environmental assessment and planning approval processes and on completion of the detailed design.

Delivery of the Gateway site and infrastructure may be staged, subject to demand, budget and scope considerations. At this stage, and subject to more detailed cost estimates, construction is anticipated to commence in 2026 with the site operational in 2027.

Shuttle Service

Implementation of a shuttle service into the National Park is also being progressed and is planned to commence after the new Gateway is complete.

The Transport Strategy developed by specialist transport planners in 2023 will guide further details of the shuttle service, including the route, location of stops and frequency, infrastructure requirements, vehicle selection, including consideration of electric and hybrid vehicles.

Staging of the service will be considered as part of further analysis and subject to projected demand. For example, the shuttle service may not operate all-year-round in the early years of the project but should be capable of scaling up and down depending on seasonal variations in visitation and overall growth in visitation to the park.

Information on possible routes and stops will be available at the community information sessions at Coles Bay.

Consultation and Feedback

Members of the public are invited to view the preliminary site concept plan and additional information on the project at community information sessions to be held in Coles Bay on 30 and 31 May 2025 at the Coles Bay Community Hall.

Address: 60 Harold Street, Coles Bay TAS 7215

Date: Friday 30 May 2025

Time: 12pm – 2pm and 4pm – 7pm

Date: Saturday 31 May 2025

Time: 9am – 12 pm

Feedback on the preliminary site concept plan can be provided in person at the community information sessions or by email to: freycinetgatewayproject@parks.tas.gov.au by Friday 6 June 2025.

Further Information

Review the [Freycinet Peninsula Master Plan \(2019\)](#).

Further information and answers to [Frequently Asked Questions](#) can be found on the [Freycinet Visitor Gateway Project webpage](#) on the [PWS website](#).

For enquiries relating to Freycinet Visitor Gateway Project contact: FreycinetGatewayProject@parks.tas.gov.au

Mailing list

To join the Project Update email list to receive future communications relating to projects being delivered by the PWS in or for the Freycinet National Park, complete the subscription form on the [Freycinet Visitor Gateway Project webpage](#).



Figure 3: A view of Wineglass Bay in Freycinet National Park



- ### KEY
- ① NEW GATEWAY ENTRY ROUNDABOUT
 - ② TWO WAY SEALED ROAD
 - ③ SHARED USE PATHWAY
 - ④ SHUTTLE BUS DROP-OFF, PICK-UP ZONE & TURNING CIRCLE
 - ⑤ LANDSCAPED FORECOURT WITH VISITOR INFORMATION AND INTERPRETATION
 - ⑥ GATEWAY VISITOR BUILDING (NOTIONAL FOOTPRINT)
 - ⑦ STAFF AND SERVICES PARKING
 - ⑧ PEDESTRIAN PATHWAYS THROUGH CARPARK TO FORECOURT
 - ⑨ MAIN CARPARK
 - ⑩ LARGE VEHICLE PARKING
 - ⑪ OVERFLOW CARPARK
 - ⑫ OVERFLOW LARGE VEHICLE PARKING
 - SCREENING OR REVEGETATION
 - SITE BOUNDARY
- NOTE:
SOME WORKS MAYBE STAGED OVER TIME TO RESPOND TO GROWTH AND VISITOR DEMAND

FREYCINET VISITOR GATEWAY PROJECT
PRELIMINARY SITE CONCEPT DESIGN



Figure 4: Freycinet Visitor Gateway preliminary site concept plan