



# Priority Projects



September 2023

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# Flinders Council



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The following priority projects have been established in order to ensure that our community has a long-term, prosperous future. These aims can only be achieved with the cooperation of the State and Federal Governments, working in collaboration with Flinders Council on behalf of our Island communities.

All these projects provide options for the efficient use of Council's resources and provide widespread benefits to our local community.

## VISION & MISSION

A vibrant, welcoming, and sustainable community, full of opportunity, celebrating and preserving our unique way of life and natural environment.

Working collaboratively with the communities of the Furneaux Group of islands to preserve the 'island way' whilst embracing future opportunities.

## OUR FOCUS AREAS

1

### LIVEABILITY

To protect and build upon our islands' way of life.

2

### ACCESSIBILITY / INFRASTRUCTURE

Quality infrastructure and services for community benefit.

3

### ECONOMY / BUSINESS

An environment where a variety of businesses can thrive and integrate.

4

### GOOD GOVERNANCE

Effective, efficient and transparent management and operations.

# Priority Projects



Develop long-term residential accommodation for rental and purchase.



Construct a Hybrid Veterinary Clinic and Wildlife Facility on Flinders Island.



Upgrade the Airport Runways and associated infrastructure.



Advocate for the provision of reliable childcare and early childhood education facility and services.



Implement an island-based, integrated, waste management solution.



Reconstruct and seal Palana Road.  
Transfer ownership to State Government.



Collaborate with TasWater to establish a wastewater solution for Flinders Island.

# Develop long-term residential accommodation for rental and purchase.

## BACKGROUND

A current lack of housing on Flinders Island presents significant challenges for the Community's development and sustainability.

The shortage of housing makes it challenging to attract professionals and skilled workers to the Island to support its industries. Without adequate housing options, people have been reluctant to move to Flinders Island or have chosen to leave after a short period, leading to a transient workforce and a lack of continuity in essential services.

The lack of housing options has also contributed to population decline, hindering the growth and development of local industries. This demographic shift will have long-term implications for the Island's social and economic stability.

Given the significant rise in building costs and challenges of finding available tradespeople, vacant land purchases by those wishing to settle on the Island are slow to develop. High housing costs, relative to income levels, can further deter people from settling on the Island.

## THE PROJECT

Develop a comprehensive Housing Strategy that aligns with Council's Structure Plan (strategic planning) to promote suitable development that considers the Island's unique challenges and opportunities.

Invest in infrastructure, such as roads and utilities to support new housing developments.

Implement affordable housing initiatives, that are accessible to a wide range of income levels.

Involve local communities in decision-making processes related to housing development so that the solutions align with their needs and aspirations.



## ADVOCACY

**Council contribution: Council land and strategic planning**

Addressing housing issues on Flinders Island will require a multi-faceted approach that involves collaboration between the Federal and State Government, Council, our local community and stakeholders.

## BENEFITS

- Increased housing availability leads to more people settling on the Island, which stimulates economic activity.
- Enhanced population growth sustains provision of critical services to the Island.
- A viable population that enables the necessary services and activities required for the Community to prosper.
- Development and land use planning guidelines that promote a balance between our built and natural environments.

# Construct a Hybrid Veterinary Clinic and Wildlife Facility.

## BACKGROUND

The Vet Clinic project, which originated in 2020, was conceived to address the urgent need for a veterinary facility and veterinarian for our island communities.

Having accessible veterinary services is a fundamental aspect of a thriving rural community and plays a significant role in enhancing the quality of life for both residents and their beloved pets.

The project's scope was recently expanded to include a wildlife rehabilitation facility, which addresses a significant gap in community infrastructure on Flinders Island.

## THE PROJECT

Building a dedicated veterinary facility on Flinders will enhance the prospects of attracting a veterinarian to the Island. By offering comprehensive veterinary services and excellent animal care, the clinic will play a pivotal role in encouraging the Island's population to stay and thrive.

'The Furneaux Ark', a hybrid Veterinary Clinic and Wildlife Facility will offer comprehensive veterinary and boarding provisions for domestic pets, agricultural animal care, and a special area for rehabilitating native wildlife.

By offering accessible and high-quality veterinary care and boarding facilities, the project aims to uplift the overall well-being of pets, livestock, and working animals on Flinders Island. This approach will directly benefit the local pet-owning and agricultural community.

A core pillar of the 'Furneaux Ark' is its dedicated unit for rehabilitating injured and orphaned native wildlife. In collaboration with Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife and local volunteers, this specialised unit will provide dedicated care to various native species, with the goal of releasing them back into their natural habitats.



## COST

Seeking \$1.8 million

- Infrastructure build.
- Specialised vet equipment.
- Wildlife rehabilitation enclosures.

Council contribution \$460k

- Engineered building designs.
- Development Application approved.
- Shovel ready project.

## BENEFITS

- Improved liveability and population growth. A vet clinic is a primary consideration for families moving to the Island.
- Improved well-being of domestic, farm, and native animals.
- Employment opportunities that stimulate the local economy and foster long-term economic prosperity.
- Establishment of a specialised unit for native wildlife rehabilitation and research will have a positive impact on the conservation of the Island's unique biodiversity.
- Diversification of revenue streams will bring in additional economic benefits.
- Attract eco-tourists interested in wildlife and conservation with a regenerative tourism focus.

# Upgrade the Airport Runways and associated infrastructure.

## BACKGROUND

The Flinders Island Airport operates with multiple longstanding exemptions which trace back to the late 1990s. Although these exempt systems currently fall short of the standards mandated by CASA, Council has been granted qualified leniency over the years to bring the facilities up to the required standards. The timeframe for these upgrades is coming to an end and improvements need to be delivered in the short term.

In May 2022, The Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) conducted an inspection of the runways, resulting in a Safety Finding for the main runway (32/14). This necessitates a reconstruction of the transverse gradient along with runway resurfacing.

Given the critical access provision associated with the Airport, it's crucial for Council to devise and implement the essential upgrades to be CASA compliant. Failure to address these concerns could lead to the eventual closure of the runway.

## THE PROJECT

A staged approach has been developed to ensure the airport aligns with all regulations.

**Stage 1** - Full electrical upgrade to existing airport areas to meet required standards,

- Complete upgrade to all runway lighting.
- Precision Approach Path Indicators (PAPI).
- New standby generator.
- New switchboard.
- New operations office.
- Main apron flood lighting upgrade.

**Stage 2** - Full asphalt grooved overlay to re-shape the main runway surface, and full main apron and main taxiway to meet the required transverse gradient standard. Construct a turning node at the northern end of the main runway.



## COST

Seeking \$9.3 million

Stage 1 - costed at \$1.3 million.

Stage 2 - preliminary costing \$8 million.

## BENEFITS

- Address exemptions of runway lighting.
- Modernise airport systems to remain viable, relevant, and attractive to aircraft operators.
- Provide improved approaches in bad weather through a new PAPI system.
- Updated standby generator and switchboard will provide maintenance free, energy efficient service to the standby runway lighting and increased safety for all aircraft, and in airport emergencies.
- Safe, compliant, reliable, lower maintenance costs and allows for larger aircraft usage without pavement concessions (special landing conditions due to weight of certain aircraft).

# Advocate for the provision of reliable childcare and early childhood education facility and services.

## BACKGROUND

In the past two years, 19 tiny new islanders have joined our community, filling it with joy but also stretching our resources. This demographic shift has presented challenges for our childcare centre, as it finds itself operating beyond its designed capacity.

Affectionately known as "Duckpond", our only childcare centre is under the stewardship of Thrive Group Tas Inc. and caters to children aged 0-5 years. Originally constructed in the early 1960's as a Health Care Centre, there is no option of expansion. The current infrastructure hampers the addition of extra services, such as before and after-school care.

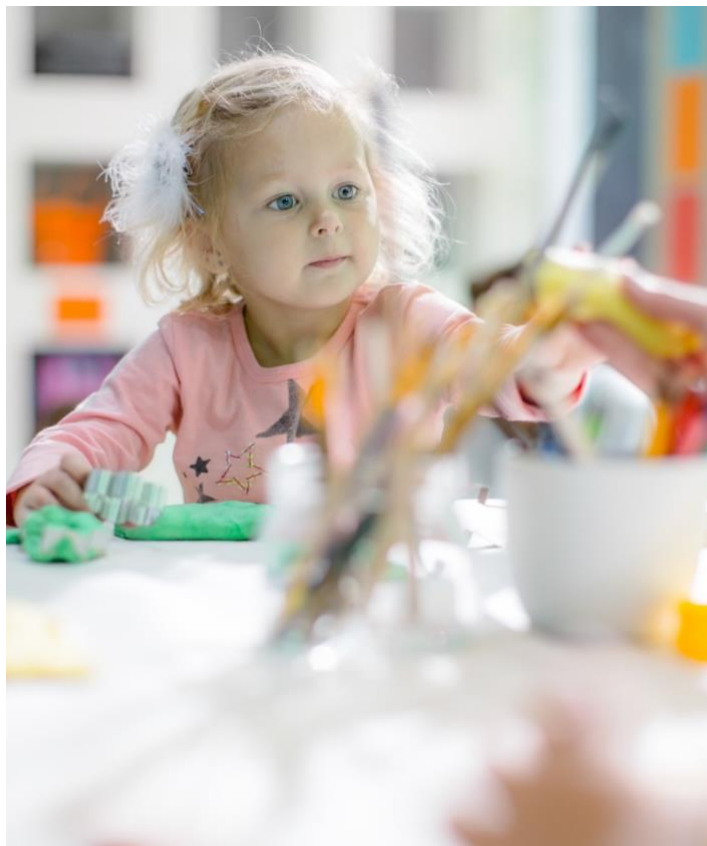
Given the surge in the number of infants, a lengthy waiting list for childcare services has emerged, significantly impacting the professional endeavours of parents. Local businesses have encountered challenges in recruiting staff due to the limited availability of workers, while some parents, mainly women, are unable to resume work post-parental leave or can only return on a part-time basis.

## THE PROJECT

A new, fully equipped early childhood education facility, located next to our existing school.

This integrated 'education' precinct will allow children to attend the same location from infancy to age 18, simplifying life for parents with convenient drop-offs and seamless transitions between different school stages, operating from 8 am to 5 pm.

In collaboration with the Department of Education, we're also exploring creative solutions, such as reallocating Teacher's Aides during illnesses to avoid centre closures and using specialised teachers to develop unique learning packages for the Centre staff.



## ADVOCACY

**Flinders Council fully supports this vital initiative, understanding its importance in nurturing our thriving community, and ensuring a supportive environment for our families and workforce.**

Addressing childcare issues on Flinders Island will require a multi-faceted approach that involves collaboration between Council, State Government, Education Department, our local community and stakeholders.

## BENEFITS

- Improved liveability and population growth. Childcare is a primary consideration for families moving to the Island.
- Job creation - improved employment opportunities.
- Collaboration with specialised teachers enriches the quality of early childhood education.
- A unified learning journey from infancy to age 18, centralising education in one location.



# Implement an island-based, integrated waste management solution.

## BACKGROUND

The Whitemark Waste Facility is the only currently active landfill on Flinders Island. The site has been operational since 1988.

In 2007, the Tasmanian Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) updated the permit requirements for the facility. Addressing these requirements using best practice approaches has been outside of Council's financial capacity.

Environmental compliance audits have revealed that Council's current management of the site does not meet the EPA requirements. The landfill is nearing its capacity, posing additional challenges in waste disposal and management.

## THE PROJECT

A fully integrated waste management system, featuring a new landfill cell, leachate management system, composting system and infrastructure to segregate waste streams to facilitate recycling. This will prioritise resource recovery and minimise landfill usage, while ensuring full compliance with EPA regulations.

### Project components include:

**New enviro-cell construction** - Finalise the design and construction plan.

**Rehabilitation of existing site** - Develop a rehabilitation plan and implement necessary infrastructure upgrades.

**Composting System** - Implement a closed-circuit heat digesting composter to divert approximately 50% of current putrescent landfill material.

**Circular Economy Lab** - An outcome of The Islander Way project. A community driven circular economy initiative, aimed at fostering innovation, improved waste repurposing, local manufacturing, and community engagement.



## COST

### Seeking \$10.5 million

- New cell construction: \$2.8 million.
- Leachate management system: \$1 million.
- Operational plants: \$1.5 million.
- Sorting Shed: \$500k.
- Rehabilitation and associated works: \$2.5 million.
- Composter: \$1.25 million.
- Circular Economy Lab: \$1 million.

**Council contribution \$175k** - Cell engineering design, Environmental Effects Report, earth and drain works.

**Recycling Modernisation Fund contribution \$424k** - Sorting Shed, Sorting Line, Shipping Containers for storage and shipping recyclables.

## BENEFITS

- A sustainable and compliant integrated waste management system minimises adverse impacts on the Island's environment.
- Alleviates pressure on landfill capacity, extending the life of the new cell.
- Composting material suitable for Council's use on gardens, reducing the need for importing external materials.
- Potential commercial returns from resource recovery operations.
- Innovative waste management system / circular economy lab that can be used as a blueprint for other communities.

# Reconstruct and seal Palana Road. Transfer ownership to State Government as the main transport backbone for Flinders Island.

## BACKGROUND

Council considers the upgrading of Palana Road to be an important objective to improve road safety and to add to the economic development of Flinders Island.

For many years, Flinders Council has been advocating for the entire stretch of Palana Rd to be sealed and transferred to state ownership. The goal is to complete the connection between Palana and Lady Barron Rd, similar to King Island's state road.

In 2021, the Federal Government funded the sealing of 6km of Palana Rd, from Fairhaven Rd to Five Mile Jim Rd, which was completed in March 2022. The ownership of the road between the Airport and Five Mile Jim Rd has since been transferred to the State Government.

The sealing and transfer of ownership of the remaining 22.4km of unsealed Palana Rd will enable redirection of limited Council revenue to other areas of development within the Municipality.

The ability for Council to start a proactive sealed road extension program largely unseen for the past 25 years would become possible.

## THE PROJECT

Upgrade 22.4 km of unsealed Palana Road to significantly improve safety, in compliance with standards for this type of road improvement.

Transfer of road ownership to the State Government.



## COST

Seeking \$13.5 million (costed)  
Council contribution \$664k.

A detailed budget, project plan and risk assessment have been completed.

## BENEFITS

- Offers a well-formed and compliant road network that provides a safe passage for all road users.
- Encourages residential housing in the north of the Island.
- Improves accessibility to the northern area of the island, for freight vehicles serving the island's agricultural sector.
- Affords safe visitor access to the Island's unique scenery and offers further development of visitor accommodation.
- Encourages business development that will boost the local economy.
- Re-allocate limited Council revenue to other areas of development within the Municipality.

# Collaborate with TasWater to identify and establish a wastewater solution for Flinders Island.

## BACKGROUND

Flinders Island is currently un-serviced by any compliant sewage disposal method.

Environmental issues have occurred in the form of effluent overflow and flooding of wastewater systems.

Council is concerned that an adverse health situation will occur before any action is taken.

## THE PROJECT

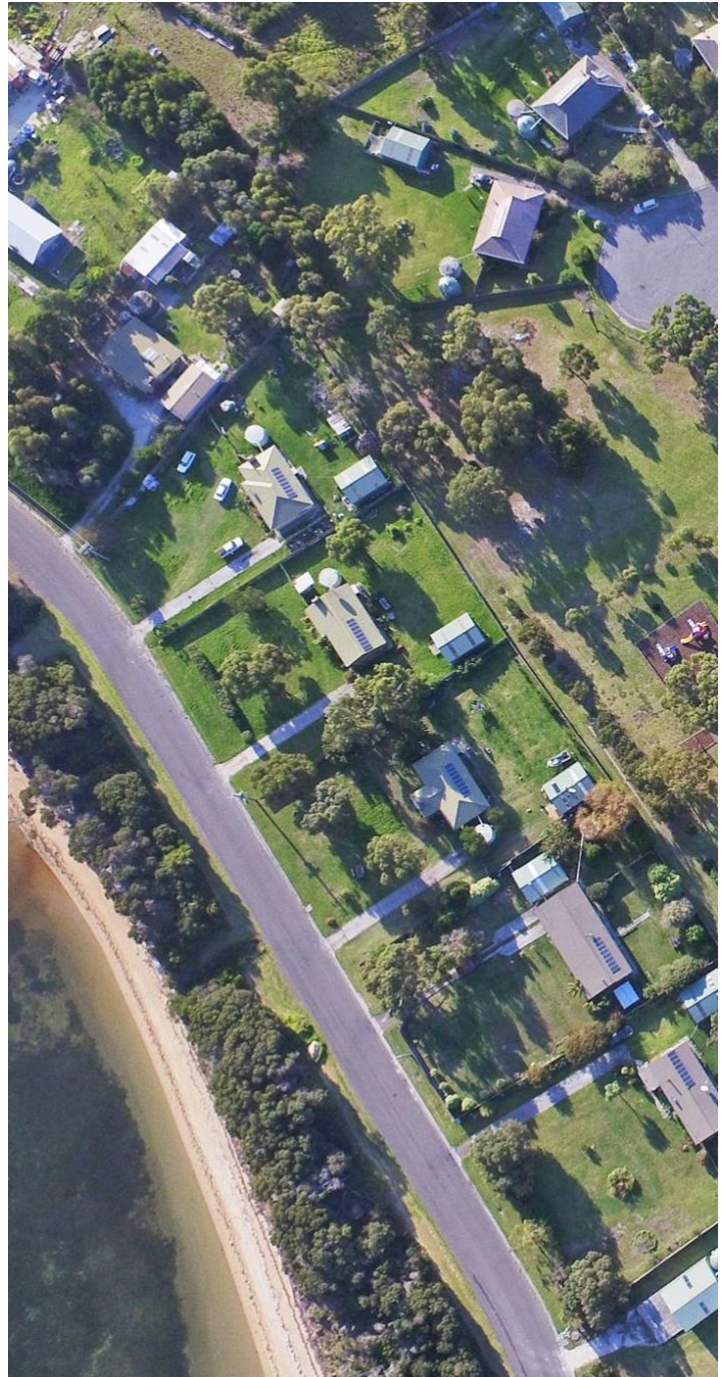
Upgrade the Islands wastewater solution from the current, to modern day standards.

TasWater is the only Regulated Entity who can establish a wastewater solution for the Island.

Council knowledge can assist TasWater in finding an appropriate solution that may suitably service all lots on the Island.

## BENEFITS

- Prevents infection or biological disease as a result of poor or failing wastewater systems and mitigates the risk of an adverse public health event.
- Reduces the effects on the environs from overflowing or poorly treated wastewater.
- Supports improved and much needed housing development, not inhibited by wastewater issues.
- Supports local business and promotes industry to the Island that can access suitable wastewater treatment options.



## ADVOCACY

**Council contribution** - Previous feasibility studies.

The request is that suitable funding be made available to TasWater to enable them to provide an appropriate solution for Flinders Island.



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