

UNIVERSITY of TASMANIA

MENZIES 

Institute for Medical Research

Communities for Walkability

A citizen science project to
connect local spaces and places

Greater Snug Report

walkrural.com.au

Acknowledgment of Country

The University of Tasmania pays its respects to elders past and present and to the many Aboriginal people that did not make elder status and to the Tasmanian Aboriginal community that continues to care for Country.

We acknowledge the profound effect of climate change on this Country and seek to work alongside Tasmanian Aboriginal communities, with their deep wisdom and knowledge, to address climate change and its impacts.

The Palawa people belong to one of the world's oldest living cultures, continually resident on this Country for over 65,000 years. They have survived and adapted to significant climate changes over this time, such as sea-level rise and extreme rainfall variability, and as such embody thousands of generations of intimate place-based knowledge.

We acknowledge with deep respect that this knowledge represents a range of cultural

practices, wisdom, traditions, and ways of knowing the world that provide accurate and useful climate change information, observations, and solutions.

The University of Tasmania likewise recognises a history of truth that acknowledges the impacts of invasion and colonisation upon Aboriginal people, resulting in forcible removal from their lands.

Our island is deeply unique, with cities and towns surrounded by spectacular landscapes of bushland, waterways, mountain ranges, and beaches.

The University of Tasmania stands for a future that profoundly respects and acknowledges Aboriginal perspectives, culture, language, and history, and a continued effort to fight for Aboriginal justice and rights paving the way for a strong future.

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- Public Health Services, Tasmanian Government Department of Health
- Local Government Association Tasmania
- Institute for Physical Activity and Nutrition, Deakin University
- Centre for Urban Research, RMIT
- Prevention Research Collaboration, School of Public Health, University of Sydney
- Menzies Centre for Health Policy, University of Sydney

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Project Investigators:

- Associate Professor Verity Cleland
Menzies Institute for Medical Research
University of Tasmania
verity.cleland@utas.edu.au
- Professor Anna Timperio
Institute for Physical Activity and Nutrition
Deakin University

- Dr Kim Jose
Menzies Institute for Medical Research
University of Tasmania
- Associate Professor Melanie Davern
Australian Urban Observatory
RMIT University
- Dion Lester
Local Government Association of Tasmania
- Dr Lynden Leppard
Local Government Association of Tasmania
- Kate Garvey
Public Health Services
Tasmanian Department of Health
- Dr Yvonne Laird
Prevention Research Collaboration
The University of Sydney
- Dr Samantha Rowbotham
Menzies Centre for Health Policy
and Economics
The University of Sydney

Greater Snug Community Members:

We would like to thank the Snug, Lower Snug and Coningham community members involved in collecting data and information for the audits (including the many photographs used throughout this report), attended the workshops to discuss the findings and provided feedback on the report. Your input has been invaluable and critical to the development of this report.



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Roads

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NATURE 

Speed

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Executive Summary

The Communities for Walkability project aimed to identify features of the greater Snug area that make it easier or harder for community members to be active and walk around their town ('walkability'). This project examined the coastal area of greater Snug, referring to the township of Snug as well as the adjoining residential localities of Lower Snug and Coningham. The Snug township is of sufficient size to have some community facilities including a primary school, businesses, sportsground, and services (including residential aged care facility, primary school and supermarket) whereas Lower Snug and Coningham are residential localities with limited community facilities and can be regarded as suburbs of the Snug township. The area is well-known for the beaches, reserves and parklands surrounding the localities.

This report summarises the information collected through spatial walkability assessments, audits (town wide, program/policy and street segments) and discussions at the community workshop. This report brings together the findings from the three project phases to provide a summary of the key issues impacting walkability in the area.

Key Findings

When assessed spatially, greater Snug's walkability was rated high overall, however the spatial maps and audits suggest there is significant variance in walkability throughout the area. The Snug township was found to be much more walkable in comparison to the localities of Coningham and Lower Snug. Greater Snug has a range of assets that support walking and active recreation in the area as identified in the town wide audit. The program and policy audit suggests there is a range of council programs and policies addressing walking and active recreation. However, community members were less aware of policies requiring bikeways or pedestrian walkways in new public infrastructure projects.

The area of greater Snug has some key assets recognised by community members as supporting walkability. The natural reserves (Coningham Nature Recreation Area and Snug Tiers Nature Recreation Area) and beaches are important spaces for recreation. Other facilities, such as the supermarket, medical clinic and primary school, are in walking distance for most Snug residents. However, walking access is restricted for the approximately 600 people living in Lower Snug and Coningham. The township of Snug is bisected by the Channel Highway with the primary school situated on the western side of the highway and most other facilities situated on the eastern side of the highway creating some traffic and crossing concerns.

Priorities

Throughout the project, two priorities were identified as impacting negatively on walkability throughout the greater Snug area. These priorities were:

Connectivity

A lack of connectivity throughout greater Snug was considered a priority to overcome physical and social disconnections in the area. This includes ensuring existing paths and trails are linked and that sections are upgraded to enable pedestrians to walk on formed paths rather than on roads or road verges. There are a range of walking paths, but these could be better connected within the town. Currently, some paths do not link up resulting in pedestrians needing to walk on a road or road verge or cross to an alternative footpath. The lack of pedestrian connection on the bridge between the Snug township and Lower Snug and Coningham was one of the key broken linkages discussed. The distances between these locales are within distances people are known to regularly walk for transport.

Pedestrian Safety

Improving infrastructure to support pedestrian safety moving around the community. The Channel Highway was a key concern due to volume of traffic, areas of high speeds and limited pedestrian crossings. This creates safety issues for some populations, such as school students who need to cross the highway twice to get to and from school. Key areas of concern include crossings and intersections (particularly across the Channel Highway in the Snug township), pedestrian access on the Channel Highway bridge south of the Snug township, and footpaths and trails. Other considerations raised included:

- Lack of signage of walking paths, particularly in Lower Snug and Coningham.
- Walking tracks that cross private land.
- Personal safety concerns and reports of anti-social behaviour at the end of the Old Channel Highway.

Potential Solutions

During the community workshop, a range of solutions to address these priorities were identified to support walkability in the greater Snug area. This included options such as reducing the speed limit through the town centre, development of a local 'walk map', and improving pedestrian crossings or islands to support pedestrian access to key facilities in the town. In addition, there was strong support for investment in the physical infrastructure to improve pedestrian access towards Lower Snug and Coningham as this was considered important for building social cohesion in the greater Snug community. More specifically, solutions included:

- ▶ Addressing the Channel Highway/Davies Road intersection to improve safety for both pedestrians and vehicles. This included pruning vegetation to improve sightlines, which is also needed on a number of other sharp corners in the study area.
- ▶ Extension of the shared walking/biking pathway from the Snug township to Lower Snug and Coningham.
- ▶ Reducing the speed limit through Snug and Lower Snug along the Channel Highway to maintain a consistent speed through all small towns along the Channel Highway.
- ▶ The need for safe pedestrian crossing(s) and formed paths to facilitate movement across the Channel Highway, particularly to the primary school.
- ▶ Improving safety for pedestrians along Old Station Road, particularly along the seawall and the sharp corners at each end.

Beautiful

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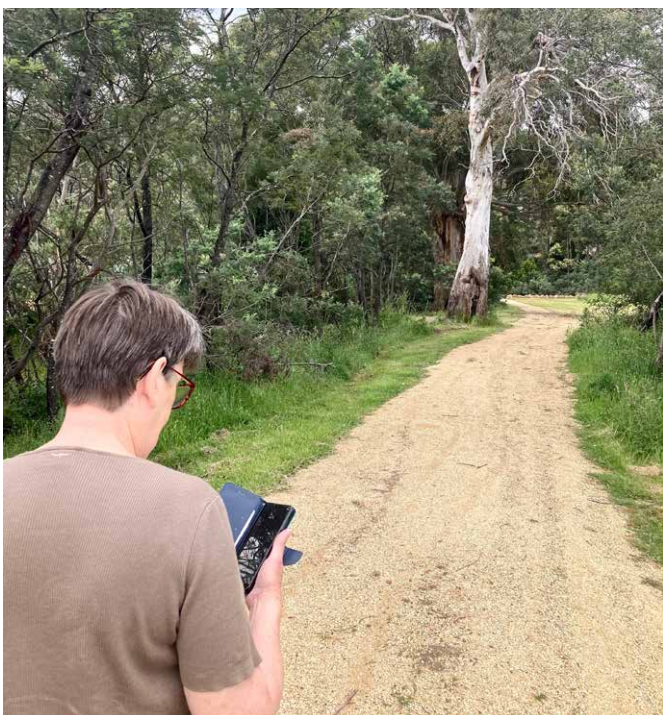
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What is the Communities for Walkability Project?

Communities for Walkability is a citizen science project to identify environmental characteristics that influence walkability and physical activity in rural Tasmania. This is important because the environments where people live, learn, work, play and age influence health and physical activity. The project involved three key phases:

1. A spatial assessment of walkability.
2. Audits of the towns walkability using a townwide assessment tool, policy and program assessment tool and street segment walkability audits.
3. A community workshop.



Phase 1 — Spatial Walkability Assessments

To inform the selection of the 10 towns involved in the Communities for Walkability project, phase 1 involved conducting a spatial analysis of walkability for transport in 92 small rural towns across Tasmania with populations less than 6,000 people. This work was completed by project team members at RMIT University in Melbourne who are world-leaders in spatial assessments of walkability. They have developed the Australian Urban Observatory (auo.org.au), which includes liveability and walkability assessments across the 21 largest cities in Australia, including Hobart and Launceston in Tasmania. Spatial walkability assessments use Geographic Information Systems to understand the walkability of an area based on three key components: daily destinations (something to walk to), street connectivity (a way to get there) and dwelling density (people to service the destinations and shops). These three factors were summed to produce a final walkability score for towns resulting in an overall walkability rating of high (top third of walkability scores), medium (middle third of walkability scores) or low walkability (bottom third of walkability scores).

It is also important to note that factors like footpaths, roundabouts or signalled pedestrian lights are not included in these spatial walkability assessments. Previous research suggests that these urban design factors have a big influence on the willingness of residents to walk for transport which has a direct effect on physical activity levels and overall health. However, most of this previous research has been conducted in big cities and less is known about how valuable spatial walkability assessments are for understanding walkability in smaller rural towns. Thus, while spatial map scores are suggestive of walkability, this study aims to better understand how applicable they are within a rural context.

Phase 2 — Town Audits

Building on the spatial walkability assessments, the second phase involved a Citizen Science approach in 10 towns across Tasmania. Citizen Science is valuable within health-related research projects for many reasons, including:

1. Gaining new perspectives on problems and solutions
2. Monitoring policy and program implementation
3. Obtaining difficult to access data
4. Mobilising support for action to improve health
5. Gathering locally relevant data to inform policy and practice

In each town, local leaders ('Community Champions') contributed to the project by identifying which parts ('segments') of the town to audit, recruiting 'Citizen Scientists' and completing town audits (including the town wide assessment and policy and programs assessment). Next, the Citizen Scientists completed street segment audits of the physical environment using the online walkability audit tool with the purpose of providing greater understanding of specific features within the town. As part of the segment audits, community members took photos of town features that supported or hindered walkability. These images have been used throughout this report. It is important to note that the findings are general in nature as not all sections of the town have been audited. Instead, the findings highlight the broader features supporting and hindering walkability throughout the town.

Phase 3 — Community Workshops

Once each town had completed the audits and taken photos, a summary of the audit data was shared with community members at a community workshop. The workshop discussion enabled a greater understanding about the features impacting on walkability in the towns, identified priority areas for action and potential solutions. In each town, researchers facilitated a community workshop which was attended by Community Champion/s, Citizen Scientists and other interested community members.



Images.

- ▲ Documents to aid discussion at the workshop
- ◀ Citizen Scientist completing an audit segment using the online audit tool

Introduction

Being active is good for our health – it can prevent us from getting diseases like heart disease, diabetes, breast and colon cancers, and osteoporosis. It is also great for managing our weight, blood pressure and cholesterol, and for keeping us mentally healthy and well. Research has shown that people living in rural parts of Australia are less active than those who live in urban areas. It is also known that rates of preventable health conditions such as heart disease, type 2 diabetes and high blood pressure tend to be higher in rural Australia than in urban Australia.

It is well known that walkable neighbourhoods provide health, environmental, social and economic benefits. A neighbourhood's walkability is the degree to which it has safe, designated areas for people to walk or bike to work, school, dining, shopping, medical services, recreation and entertainment. Walkable communities are easier to get around, they support everyday connections and foster a greater sense of community through increased informal and spontaneous social interactions. In cities research shows that the physical environment where people live, work, study and play can affect physical activity levels.

However, there is minimal research showing what 'walkability' looks like in rural areas. Small towns and some rural council areas may have access to fewer resources to develop the infrastructure to support walkability and active lifestyles. This project was designed to help find out more about walkability in rural areas and what might be needed to support this.

Most of the research studies looking at walkability focus on cities and large towns and not much is known about how our environment helps or stops communities from being active in rural and regional areas.

The report includes quotes from people who attended the workshop or from comments they made using the online audit tool. Photos have been included to provide local examples of features that hindered or supported walkability. It is hoped the findings included here will support further discussions in the town as well as support local action to encourage walking in the area.

Image.

► [Beach path to Coningham Beach](#)



Overview of Greater Snug

This project explored walkability in the coastal area of greater Snug, referring to the township of Snug as well as the localities of Lower Snug and Coningham. All main community facilities are in the township of Snug, whereas Lower Snug and Coningham are primarily residential and thus residents use the facilities in Snug. Greater Snug is located approximately 25km south of Hobart and is home to approximately 2228¹ people in the Kingborough Council. The area has a population density of 56.9 residents per square kilometre (compared to Inner Hobart which covers an area of 62.22 square kilometres and has a density of 1 356 people per square kilometre).²

In recent years, the population of greater Snug has increased, and the changing demographics have also impacted upon the needs of community members.

'Coningham was more of a getaway, kind of shabby kind of place, and now [there has been a] demographic transition. There are more people – there's more young people and there's more people going to town [Hobart] and back to town. I think it's colliding with the level of the infrastructure in the area. It's really causing some problems.'

'This is a fairly suburban area but has been rural in the past - the pedestrian infrastructure has not kept up with the population density.'

Most community facilities are situated in Snug. These include a primary school, petrol station, supermarket, chemist, pub, post office, medical clinic, restaurants and cafes, residential aged care, churches, football oval, parks and caravan

park. The Channel Highway bisects the town. The residential localities of Lower Snug and Coningham are within walking distance about 1-2km south of the main township and east of the Channel Highway, nestled along the coastline. The natural bushland in the area, including the Coningham Nature Recreation Reserve and Snug Tiers Nature Recreation Area, are important spaces for walking and other recreation. There have been some recent developments in the area including the addition of a walking/biking path from Snug to Margate via Electrona, a new children's playground and an upgrade to the Snug River pedestrian bridge at Snug Beach.

There are active community groups in greater Snug including the Tasmanian Landcare Association (through Snug Landcare) and the Coningham and Lower Snug Community Association (CALSCA) who are key advocates for improving the local community. CALSCA have also conducted community-wide surveys and consultation on the walkability of the area, with discussion papers available online.³

- 1 Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) population data from the 2021 census states that there are 1140 people living in Snug, 460 people living in Lower Snug and 328 people living in Coningham.
- 2 Population density has been calculated using the ABS 2021 data and includes Snug, Lower Snug and Coningham as well as Margate, Baretta and Electrona.
- 3 CALSCA webpage is www.coninghamlowersnug.wordpress.com.

Image.

- Beach shacks along the Coningham coastline



Findings From the Project

Spatial Walkability Assessment Findings

The spatial analysis completed in the first phase of the project examined the local neighbourhood attributes of street connectivity, dwelling density and an index of access to services of daily living. These three attributes were used to indicate overall walkability and then given a rank to represent its position in relation to the other 91 small towns in Tasmania. Each attribute, as well as the overall walkability score, is classified as low, medium or high walkability.

The spatial analysis resulted in the creation of a Spatial Map (Figure 1) that helps to show the walkability around the greater Snug area. Overall the spatial walkability assessment ranked greater Snug as having high walkability compared with the 91 other towns analysed in phase 1. The map shows walkability across greater Snug – from areas that are most walkable (dark green), to least walkable (dark pink). The maps indicate that the Snug town centre is generally very walkable whereas Lower Snug and Coningham are less walkable.

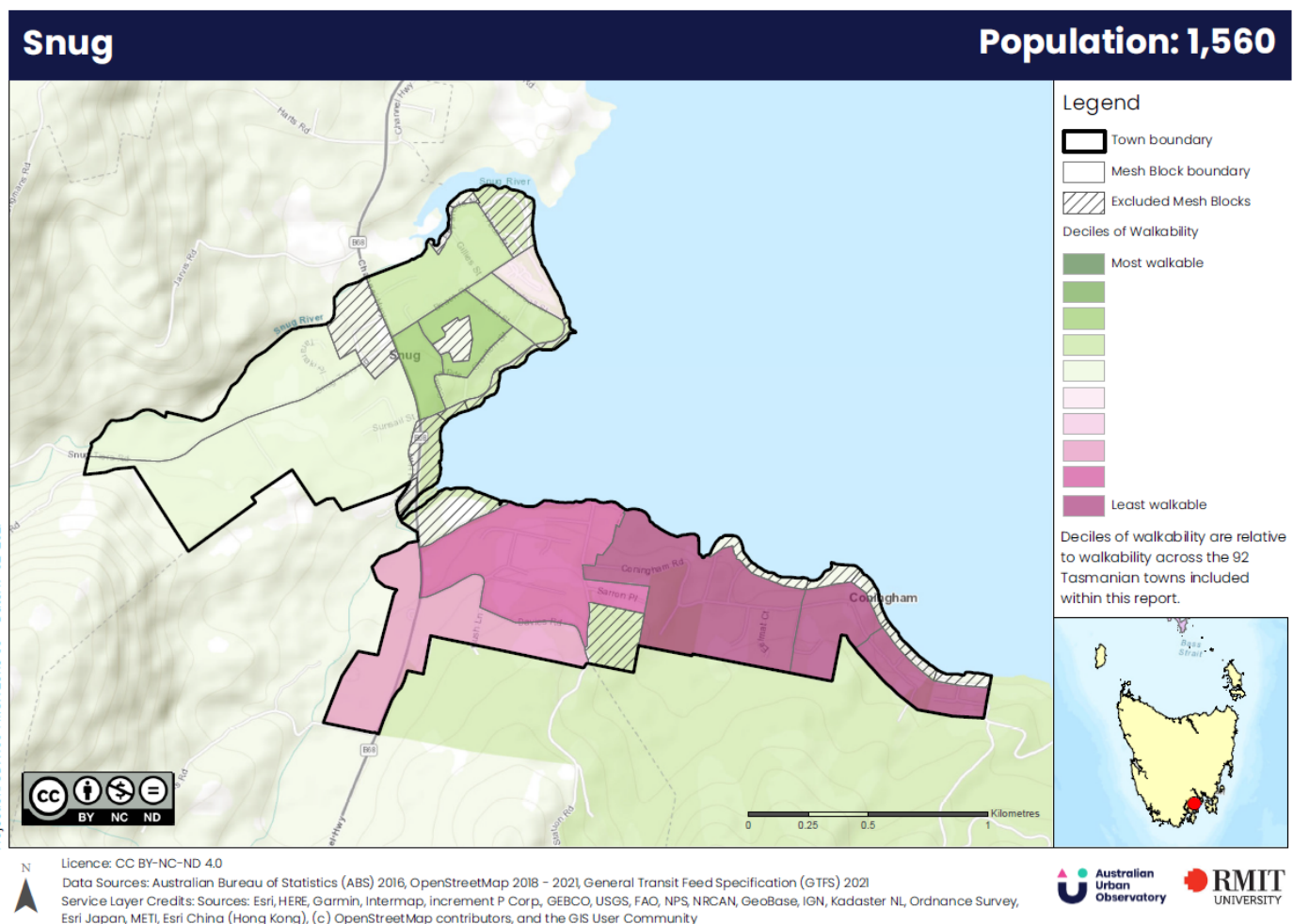


Figure 1. Spatial Map for greater Snug

(Spatial map data sources: ABS 2016, OpenStreetMap 2018-2021 and General Transit Feed Specification 2021)

Audit and Workshop Findings

In greater Snug, two Community Champions completed the town wide facilities and programs/policies audits that examined the features in the area that supported walking and physical activity. The Community Champions then selected the segments of the area to be audited by the Citizen Scientists between February and April 2022. Eight Citizen Scientists conducted detailed walkability audits to examine specific segments of the area. While they walked a segment, Citizen Scientists used the audit tool to respond to questions about the segment including the presence of features such as paved footpaths, unpaved footpaths, crossing, signage, roads and other safety features.

Initial findings from the audits were presented to the community at the community workshop. The community workshop was held in Snug on 16 May 2022 with five community members present to discuss the findings. Following the workshop, this report was produced for the greater Snug community. Community Champions and Citizen Scientists provided feedback on this report and can use the report to bring about change in their community.



Image.

▲ The Workshop was held at the Snug Community Hall

Town Wide and Policy/Program Audit Findings

The range of community facilities in Snug was reflected in the town wide audit. The assessment captured the availability of amenities and physical features including the primary school, walking tracks and trails, parks/playgrounds, mountain bike trails, playing fields (junior football at Snug Oval), sea scouting and community facilities (Snug Community Hall) as well as the swimming beaches and nature reserves. Most facilities were rated as good/excellent with the Community Hall rated as poor/fair. As recognised in the spatial map, the majority of community facilities in the area are in the Snug township.

The town programs/policies assessment examined the availability of health and physical activity related programs and/or policies in the area, including those run at the local school. The program and policy audit suggests some structured activities were present, such as the North West Bay Sea Scout Group or junior football at the Snug Oval, however these were generally limited to programs for youth and children. As discussed, residents in the greater Snug area are in proximity to other larger localities (such as Kingston and Hobart) where additional programs may be available. Once a year, school students participate in 'Walk to School Day' though it was recognised that:

'There could be many more incentives to get people walking; e.g., assistance to set up a 'walking bus' [or] routes with safety identifiers on the pavements.'

It was noted in the program/policy audit that community knowledge sharing, and proactive planning would be beneficial:

'It would be great if information could be shared across the community.'

'It would be excellent if there was a requirement to build the bike and pedestrian infrastructure at the time of new developments as it's hard to retro fit such things.'

Facilities in Greater Snug as Captured in the Town Wide Audit

Facilities Rated Good/Excellent

- Hiking/walking trails (Snug-Margate path, Snug Falls and Coningham Recreation Reserve)
- Biking trails (Snug-Margate path, single track in Coningham Recreation Reserve)
- Public parks (Snug Beach and Snug River)
- Public toilets (Snug Beach Park and Coningham Beach)
- Swimming beach (Snug Beach, Little Coningham Beach, Clarks Beach, Coningham Beach, Legacy Beach)
- Skate park
- Playground
- Playing fields
- Other: reserves (Snug Falls, Coningham Recreation Reserve)

Facilities Rated Fair/Poor

- Town recreational facility (Community Hall)

Facilities not Present

- Swimming pool
- Lake
- River
- Private gym
- Indoor or outdoor courts

Street Segment Audits: Overview of Facilities

Eight segments of the Greater Snug area were audited by the Citizen Scientists (Figure 2). While they walked a segment, Citizen Scientists used the audit tool to respond to questions about the segment including the presence of features such as paved footpaths, unpaved footpaths, crossing, signage, roads and other safety features. In greater Snug the street segment audits revealed the following findings:

- Two of the segments were reported to have good quality paved footpaths available on one side of the street (segments 1 and 3) and four segments had unpaved or intermittent footpaths (segments 1, 2, 3 and 5). These segments were all located in the Snug

township. Four segments (all located in Lower Snug and Coningham) did not have paved footpaths available (segments 4, 6, 7 and 8).

- Five of the segments were reported to have footpaths or trails linking the segment to other locations in the town. However, connectivity was reported as poor in all five segments.
- Only half the segments were considered to be easily walkable (segments 1, 2, 3 and 6).
- Accessibility of the segments was reported as poor with only three segments considered appropriate for an older person, someone with limited mobility or with a pram (segments 1, 2 and 3). Only two of the segments were reported to be walkable for a child (aged 10) to walk on their own (segments 1 and 2).

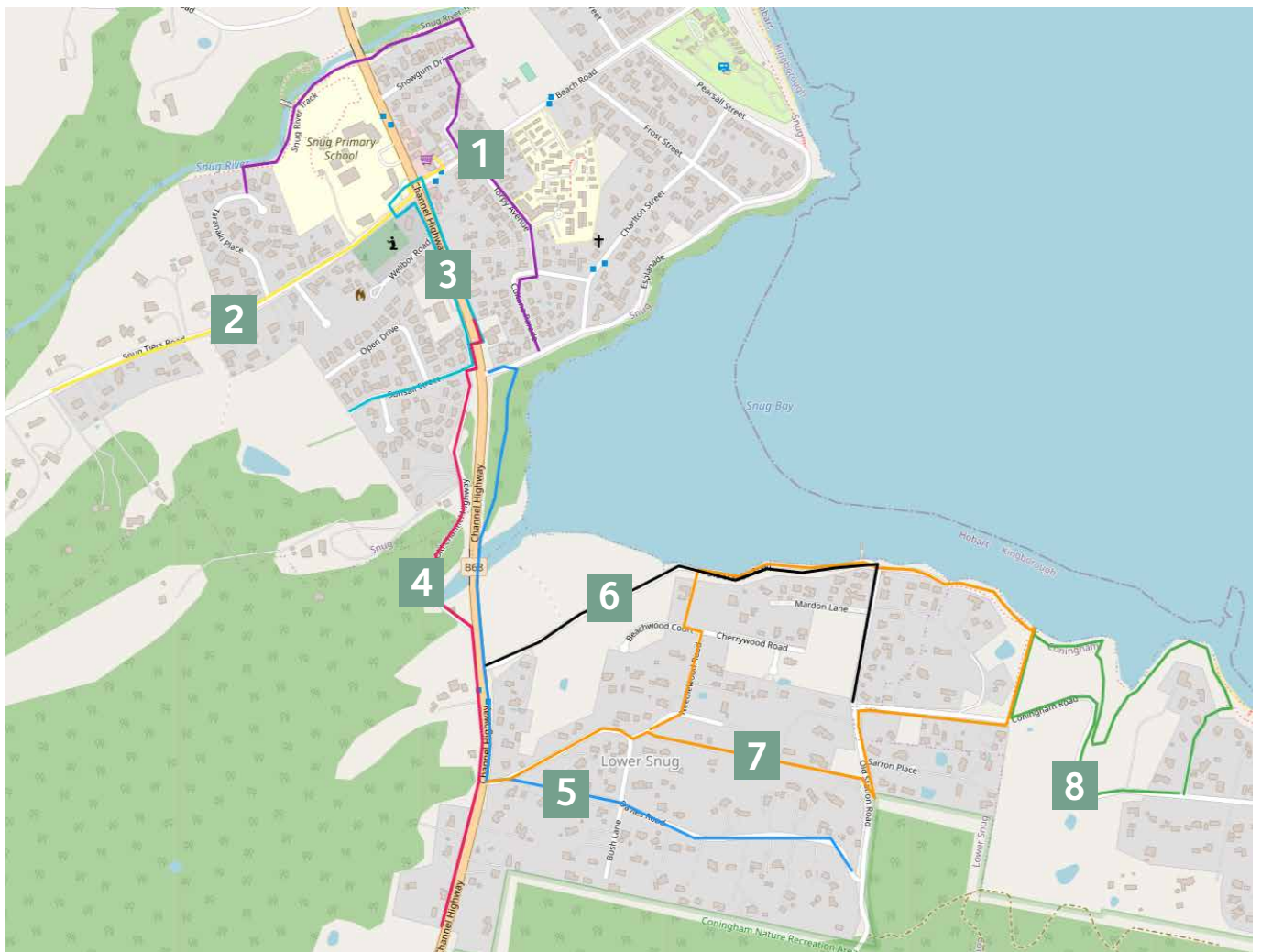


Figure 2. Audited segments completed in Greater Snug

In general, greater Snug was considered by the Citizen Scientists to have a range of different sporting and recreational facilities that were well maintained by the council and used by the local community. While it was reported facilities were well maintained, the range of recreational facilities and activities was limited (limited sporting clubs and no indoor gym). This may be due to the proximity of Snug to larger localities (such as Kingston and Hobart) with these facilities.

Features that Support Walking and Being Active (Facilitators)

The natural environment around greater Snug is a key factor in supporting community members to engage in walking and other physical activities. The nature reserves, beaches and bushland provide important and aesthetic spaces for many people in the area.

'The natural setting is delightful with the sea on one side looking up to Mount Wellington and, on the other side, the forest.'

'I love walking on the tracks - it's a beautiful environment and it's great being by the water.'

These natural spaces were also linked to the identity of the greater Snug area and provided a strong sense of community pride.

There are a range of walking options throughout the greater Snug area including footpaths through the Snug township, walking trails along the coastline and tracks through the nature reserves. The topography of Snug township is flat with good quality footpaths and there are many well-spaced public seats, such as along the road between the residential aged care facility and the beach. This aligns with the spatial walkability findings (see p. 12) that showed the Snug town centre was more walkable than the rest of the area. Paths and seating were reported to be well maintained and supported access to the main amenities and facilities for those who lived in the central part of Snug.

'Snug's a good place for older people... It appeals to people, they like a nice flat walk.'

In the workshops, community members said there is also some bench seating in Coningham overlooking Clarks Beach and along the Snug River path. Greater Snug has some new facilities that support physical activity including



Images.

- ▲ Playground at the end of Beach Road in Snug
- ▼ Football Oval in Snug

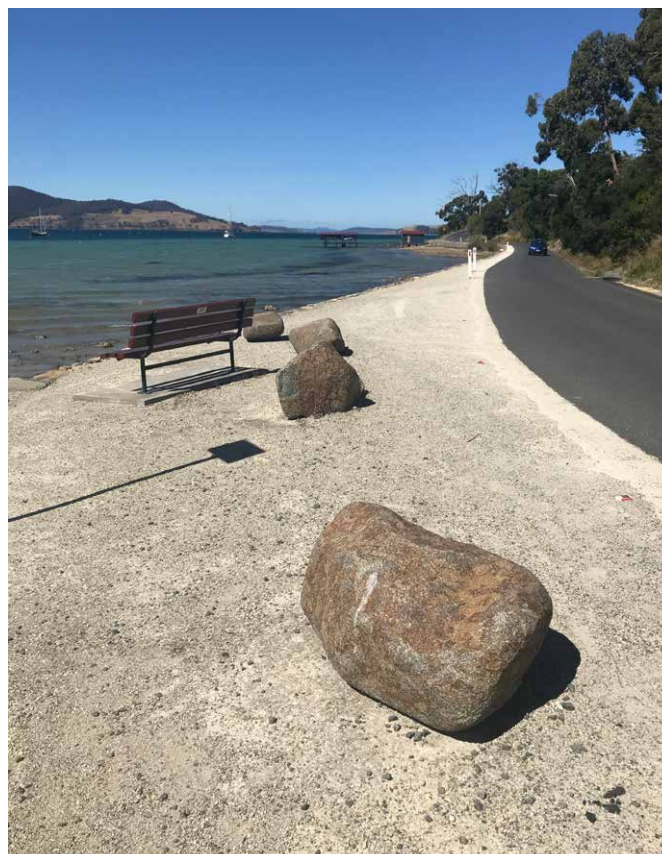
an upgraded children's playground and a shared bike/walk pathway from Snug to Electrona (2 km away) and Margate (5 km away).

'The public park along the Snug Beach and up the side of the Snug River are in good condition with a recent upgrade of the children's playground. We also have the Coningham Recreation Reserve and Coningham Beach within 2 km of the town centre.'

'We have the wonderful relatively new shared pathway to Margate — it is at an excellent standard.'

There are plans to extend this bike path to Kingston, and community members would also like to see this path extended to Coningham.

'If we were able to connect to the shared pathway here in Snug, we are suddenly connected all the way through to Margate ... So suddenly, down here will be connected, all the way through to there, massive connectivity, if you like.'



Images.

- ▲ Beachside seating along Old Station Road in Lower Snug
- ▼ Snug beach

Features That Make it Difficult to Walk and be Active (Barriers)

Connections and Linkages

The Channel Highway crosses Snug Creek to the south of the Snug township. The bridge on the Channel Highway is in an 80km speed zone and does not have any footpaths or safe road verge access. The segment audits suggested that traffic congestion on the Channel Highway is variable depending on the time of day and is busy during peak commuting times, when the Bruny Island ferry departs/arrives or in warmer weather.

The bridge over Snug Creek joins Snug to Lower Snug and Coningham and was identified as a significant physical barrier impeding connection throughout the area. This means for the many community members living in Lower Snug or Coningham, there is no safe way to connect to the Snug town centre on foot or by bike. Of the eight segments audited, six were reported to have footpath buffers or road shoulders available for pedestrians, however five of these were rated as poor/fair. Along the Channel Highway, it was said that:

'There are some areas where you can step off onto a grass shoulder but there are other areas where this is not an option like when crossing the bridge. It is very narrow and needs to be well timed.'

Safety for pedestrians is the key concern here.

'The most dangerous place between Snug, Coningham and Lower Snug is that bridge.'

'We're all in Coningham and kind of complaining about how bad it is to get to Snug, but Snug people do come to us as well, it's not like it's all one-way traffic...it is actually both ways.'

The distance between Lower Snug or Coningham to the Snug town centre is around 2km and community members felt the lack of suitable footpaths created a 'broken linkage' that causes significant physical and social disconnections.

'I think the future is richer if we're more connected as well, so making opportunities for people to connect. That commuter business of being in your bubble, going to work, coming home, not really getting out of the bubble, it's really good to pop that bubble somehow so people can actually talk to each other.'

While some people do attempt to walk alongside the bridge, this was deemed highly unsafe due to traffic and speed. In the audit segment, it was stated that:

'The bush track portion of this segment is a welcome and needed relief from continuing along the highway to and from Snug. It's a great start to linking the communities and sets a pleasant tone to what might be achieved, but currently it doesn't safely connect to Coningham/Lower Snug.'

Although there is a potential alternate walking route along the Old Channel Highway, community members say this too is currently a barrier for pedestrians due to unsafe crossings and a lack of pedestrian infrastructure. This route has additional dangers associated with crossing the highway, firstly in Snug to access the old highway and then again in the 80kph speed zone to access Lower Snug and Coningham. Whilst community members were aware of the *2021 Lower Snug Track Alignment Feasibility Study* by Kingborough Council, they were unsure of how this process was progressing.

Image.

- Highway disconnecting Lower Snug and Coningham from the Snug township





Images.

- ▲ Blind corners and gravel verge along Old Station Road
- ▼ End of pathway towards school along the western side of the Channel Hwy

Community members also felt there were many other walking paths in the area not well connected as paths are not continuous and not always in practical locations which makes it difficult for community members to easily walk around the area. In addition, some walking paths require local knowledge for direction, such as on Old Station Road and other locations along the Coningham foreshore:

'You can walk the whole way along that coast, except for that bit [section that crosses private land].'

The audit segments suggests that walking around Coningham can be difficult.

'The road here has two sharp bends and blind corners and has no formed foot path, the alternative foreshore route includes walking over private property to avoid a high cliff and the track is steep and eroding in parts.'

Other roads did not have any pedestrian infrastructure. Old Station Road runs along the waterfront and is aesthetically pleasing but currently pedestrians and motor vehicles are required to share the narrow road that also has uneven surfaces and bends with unclear vision.

'It's also really dangerous walking from the bus if you're commuting from town all through the winter when it gets dark and you're walking along that road in the dark, there are potholes on the side of the road.'

The audit segment states that the crossing at the stairs on Old Station Road is very dangerous as pedestrians cannot see the traffic coming from the Channel Highway. While the paths along the foreshore in Coningham are deemed unsafe by community members, the aesthetic value of the area is what attracts people.

'It would feel amazing to be able to walk this segment without having to worry about

traffic. As a walker, you're constantly on alert when you're walking the road sections. It would also be great to be able to continue around the foreshore without having to go on private property.'

Traffic and Safety

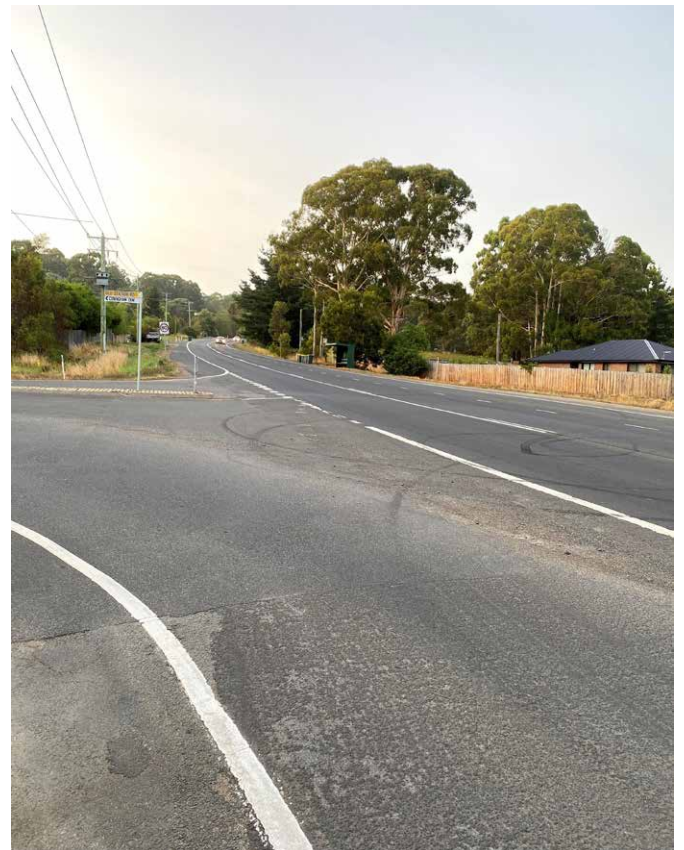
Safety was a consideration discussed in both the segment audits and community workshop, particularly regarding Highway traffic and key roads. Two of the eight segments were reported to have high traffic (those segments along the Channel Highway), with the other segments reported as medium to low traffic.

In the segment audits, safety was of particular concern in the segments in the Snug township along the busy Channel Highway, as well as the main intersections towards Lower Snug and Coningham. Traffic along the Channel Highway is high as it is the primary route for commuters into Hobart from towns south of Snug, for tourists travelling south to Bruny Island as well as for commercial traffic from local industries (including log trucks and salmon farming trucks).

The intersection of Davies Road and the Channel Highway was another area identified during the community workshop deemed unsafe for pedestrians. For pedestrians, there is no clear crossing point, and the intersection has significant vegetation that blocks the vision of both pedestrians and motorists.

'There's just ditches and there's nowhere to walk all the way up Davies Road and the corner of the highway is a disaster. There's not even a pull over lane for the cars to get around from the highway.'

There was particular concern from community members about dangers caused by the speed and traffic along Channel Highway, particularly



Images.

- ▲ Channel Highway intersection with Old Station Road
- ▼ Locally made signage on Coningham Road

at the start and end of day when students were walking to or from school. There are two main crossings over the Channel Highway, one outside the school (with a crossing guard at school times) and a pedestrian island in front of the petrol station.

'The ramps on either side of Beach Road to cross over to the corner store are dangerously positioned. Not only are they on a very busy corner, but they are also angled so that wheelchairs/prams need to enter the road crossing at a 45-degree angle, making crossing inefficient and dangerous. This is a high traffic area and improvements need to be made to improve the safety of pedestrians.'

Students who live on the western side of the highway (the same side as the school) are required to cross the highway twice as there is no path or safe road verge on the school side of the road (between Sunsail Place and the school).

'For these people, getting across the road is a key barrier, if we think of a broken link. What [school students have] been told to do is cross the road in front of the service station and walk down, cross the road again, and cross with a 'lollipop' [crossing guard].'

Community members felt crossing the highway twice was unsafe and that the crossing at the petrol station did not provide adequate protection for pedestrians when crossing. Outside of school hours, community members said the school crossing could be unsafe as some motorists would sometimes stop for pedestrians, but not others.

'This can be dangerous if a potential motorist is travelling in the opposite direction does not stop. I warn my children of the risk of this happening as I have seen it before.'

Safety was also discussed in regard to walking routes alongside roads or on road verges and personal safety in some areas.

'I would like to feel safer walking along the waterfront on Old Station Road because it's gorgeous!'

In the community workshop, some community members mentioned that the area at the end of Old Channel Highway felt unsafe due to occasional anti-social behaviours. It was felt that this area was poorly lit, isolated and people often congregated which made some community members feel unsafe.

'My daughter's had some horrible interactions on that road and on the corner of [the Channel Highway and] Old Channel Highway.'

Footpaths and Walking Trails

As discussed above, footpaths were more common in the main Snug township and generally of good quality. However, in some location's footpaths were not present or the quality of paths was a key concern.

'As I continued along Old Station Road to the jetty, there is no footpath and only a thin gravel verge at the edge of the cliff. It is very dangerous and difficult to see oncoming traffic. Traffic would come across pedestrians at the last minute because it's a blind corner. Old Station Road along waterfront has no particular allowance for pedestrians, let alone a footpath.'

'The walkability is heavily conditional on the skills, knowledge, and attention of the walker. There are no footpaths at all, and close attention must be paid to passing traffic as

Image.

► Walking trail through Snug





there are very narrow road edges, deep gutters and drop offs and two sharp corners with limited visibility.'

As the spatial maps highlight, there are many locations in Coningham and Lower Snug where pedestrians were required to walk on the road or the road verge and navigate narrow roads and blind corners. Whilst the lack of footpaths was a safety concern in some locations, community members did not want structured cement footpaths.

'The residents want to retain the...character of Coningham and Lower Snug.'

Accessibility

Although the quality of walking paths and trails did not stop some community members from walking, it was acknowledged that this was a barrier for many individuals within the community. In the segment audits, only three segments were reported to be accessible for older people or prams. In line with the spatial map and community workshop data, these segments were all located in the Snug township.

'It's very difficult for someone in a wheelchair, they just can't get around in this place.'

'Although there are tracks to the beach, they are steep and uneven and as a whole, the loop is not easily walked.'

'The natural beauty and the recreational benefits hugely outweigh these difficulties, but as an aging adult I foresee a time where I will no longer be able to access much of my local area by foot. I already have elderly neighbours who will not exercise locally.'



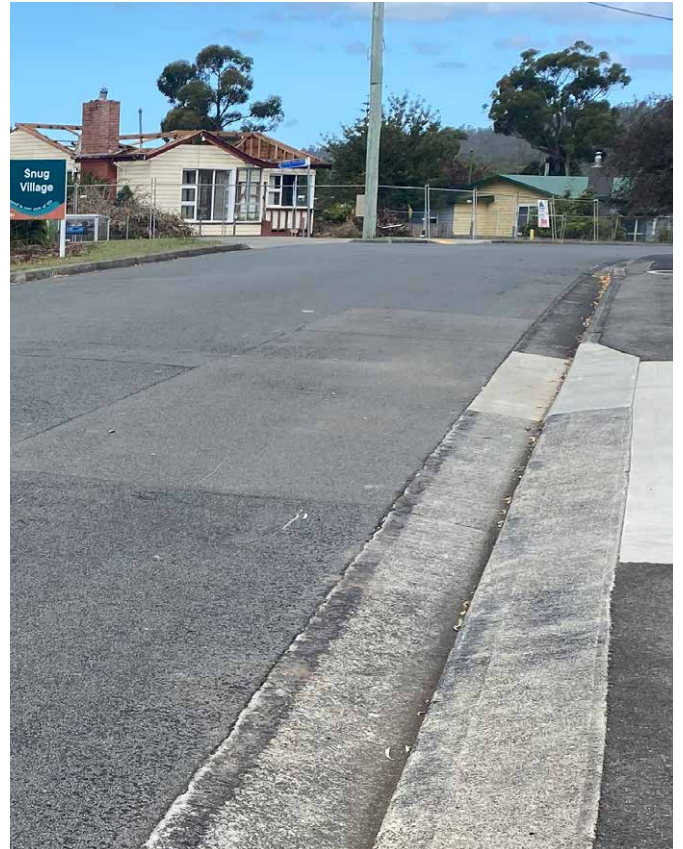
Images.

- ▲ Limited space for pedestrians along Old Station Road
- ▼ A steep, uneven path in Coningham

Furthermore, while community members felt Snug township was generally accessible for older residents, many indicated that they would be unable to continue living in Lower Snug or Coningham as they aged.

'Elderly people live here, but then they start to become more confined, because they can't get out.'

'To be honest, I don't intend to live here when I'm 80. I'll be in the city, I expect... It just makes more sense. I can't live on an acre plot land.'



Images.

- ▲ The Snug township has more infrastructure for pedestrians, however accessibility could be improved
- ▼ Overgrowth on a footpath in Snug

Priorities

During the community workshops, participants were asked which of the identified barriers they considered a priority for action. The key priorities were to improve connectivity throughout the area (particularly focusing on the need for a safe path on the bridge between Snug and Lower Snug and Coningham) and improving safety for pedestrians.

Priority 1: Improving Connectivity

Discussion suggested that a lack of connection from the Snug township to Coningham and Lower Snug was creating a physical division in the area. Improving the connection between Snug and Lower Snug and Coningham will help to ensure people living in these areas have access to the town's facilities (including the school, shops and bus services). In addition, there are many locations where a footpath will end, or paths do not link up resulting in pedestrian needing to walk on a road or road verge or cross to an alternative footpath. Improving connectivity in walking paths and trails will support better connections throughout greater Snug.

Priority 2: Improving Pedestrian Safety

Community members wanted to improve pedestrian safety across greater Snug, particularly along the Channel Highway where crossings, paths and speed limits were of concern. Improving crossings on the Channel Highway was a priority due to traffic and safety, particularly for children walking or cycling to school. There were also key places throughout the community where pedestrian safety could be improved, including the link between Snug and Lower Snug and Coningham, along the western side of the Channel Highway from Sunsail Place to the school, and along Old Station Road and the Davies Road intersection. The intersection between Davies Road and Channel Highway was considered a significant safety issue both for pedestrians as well as for vehicles.

Image.

- The bend along Old Station Road with reduced visibility



Possible Solutions

In order to address some of these barriers, workshop participants considered solutions to the key priority areas in greater Snug. The following presents the solutions discussed by community members to address the key challenges in the greater Snug area.

Bridge Connection

Discussion focused on major infrastructure works to improve the connectivity between Snug to Lower Snug and Coningham. Currently, there is no pedestrian access along the highway over the bridge. There was an understanding from community members that increasing connectivity to the Snug town centre would lead to increased walking and cycling traffic between these areas. This understanding is also reflected in the community surveys and meetings conducted by CALSCA.

'When the shared pathway went into Electrona, the school's bike area just was overflowing suddenly because lots of kids were riding in from Electrona...and it's a similar distance for lots of people this way. We know it could work if it was safe.'

This aligns with research about the typical distances people are willing to walk (Cerin, 2022; Chillón, 2015).¹

An alternative walking route over the creek via the Old Channel Highway existed but also needs significant infrastructure to support pedestrian access, address personal safety concerns and the subsequent need to develop another safe crossing of the Channel Highway in a high-speed traffic zone.

Crossings and Intersections

Improving the Channel Highway crossings in Snug and the Davies Road/Channel Highway intersection were considered a key priority. Again, it was acknowledged that these intersections may need significant infrastructure, such as a stop light crossing or changes to speed. In Snug, it was felt the two current crossings needed upgrading.

'Why there can't be a press button stop sign... because it's not like it will be being used all the time and stopping all the traffic.'

In addition, community members felt that reducing the speed along the highway as has been done in other towns locally could help to increase safety of pedestrians.

For the Davies Road intersection, a simple solution of pruning the vegetation for improved visibility was discussed and has been proposed by local group CALSCA. Community members felt this would also help to direct pedestrians to cross at the intersection on the southern side. Additional infrastructure could include improving the road verges and adding a turning lane on the Channel Highway into Davies Road.

1 Cerin, Sallis, Salvo, Hinckson, Conway, Owen et al. 2022. Determining thresholds for spatial urban design and transport features that support walking to create healthy and sustainable cities: findings from the IPEN Adult study. *The Lancet Global Health*, 10(6), 895-906.

Chillón, P., Panter, J., Corder, K., Jones, A. P. & Van Sluijs, E. M. F. 2015. A longitudinal study of the distance that young people walk to school. *Health & Place*, 31, 133-137.

Image.

- Snug township walking path and crossing along the Channel Highway



Walking Paths

Community members felt some new walking paths could ensure there is a connected network of paths across the area. In Snug, adding a footpath along the western side of the Channel Highway from Sunsail Place to Snug Tiers Road could help to link up current walking paths (and new residential areas) to the primary school. In Lower Snug, improvements to the walking path along Davies Road is important to ensure it is safe for both pedestrians and motorists. For Coningham, similar improvements and benefits are needed along Old Station Road. As discussed, developing a walking path along the bridge over Snug Creek towards Lower Snug and Coningham would also create stronger links throughout the community.

While the lack of footpaths was a safety concern, particularly in Lower Snug and Coningham, discussion suggested that community members would prefer gravel paths over structured cement footpaths.

The creation of a 'walk map' was suggested as a way for locals to know the walking trails and loops available in the area without needing to make significant infrastructure developments such as cement footpaths.

'I think where there are access ways to the different parts of the beach and there's no signage for that, nobody who didn't live here and even the people who do live here don't go down some of those access ways because they don't actually realise that they're public access ways.'

Signage

Adding signage and road markings was discussed during the community workshop as a safety measure to ensure vehicles are aware of pedestrians, as well as for directing locals

to tracks and paths. This includes upgrading older signs in need of replacement such as the 40km/h sign approaching the primary school. In addition, the segment audit suggested that more speed signage was needed along Snug Tiers Road, as motorists often would speed out of town from the Taranaki Place intersection. Community members were pleased when the council had added a 'Respect our Roads' sign in Coningham to make motorists aware of pedestrians, cyclists and wildlife. Unfortunately, this sign was vandalised and removed, however community members would like to see more signs like this throughout the area.

Discussions recognised that not all community members would be keen to have additional directional signage, particularly those who live in Lower Snug and Coningham. In the past, residents in these areas have removed signage to prevent tourists or visitors to the area from using the smaller locally known walking routes. Broad consultation with the community around this to gauge views may be required.

'They don't want to encourage people to park in Stubbins [Street] and then go for a walk along the track. If they don't know where the track is, they won't park there. There's actually a safe track down through here on an unbuilt subdivision road that's coming from the bottom of Davies Road, up to the corner of Davies Road [and Bush Lane]... It just looks like someone's driveway. There may have been a sign once, but it's quite likely been taken down. There are a few other places in Coningham that are like that as well.'

As discussed, the community 'walk map' and improved signage were also considered ways to ensure locals are aware of available walking paths and trails. The walk map could be presented as a sign in key locations.

Image.

► Beach path to Snug Beach



Conclusion

Greater Snug, consisting of the Snug township and the adjacent residential localities of Lower Snug and Coningham, is a coastal area surrounded by natural bushland. The area has a range of facilities that support walking and physical activity in the area including beaches, natural reserves, parks, an oval and walking trails. In addition, recent developments such as the Snug-Electrona-Margate shared walking/cycling path has enhanced pedestrian connectivity and were highly valued by the community. The audits completed by the Community Champions and Citizen Scientists highlight the valuable assets and walkability in greater Snug as well as areas that could be improved.

The audit process and workshop identified features in greater Snug considered a priority to increase walkability and physical activity participation in the area. Community members felt that the key priorities were:

- Improve connectivity and broken linkages focusing on development of a safe path between Snug township and Lower Snug and Coningham.
- Improve safety for pedestrians including upgrading pedestrian safety when walking along the Channel Highway and improving the Davies Road intersection with the Channel Highway.

A range of infrastructure measures including developing a walking path alongside the Channel Highway bridge over Snug Creek, changing the speed limit through town, creating a shared roadway along the seawall section of Old Station Road, wider gravelled verges, upgrading pedestrian crossings, creation of a 'walk map' and improved signage were identified as having potential to improve walkability and pedestrian safety around the town.

Image.

► Where Snug River meets the sea



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boards

beach

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