

BOARD OF INQUIRY

EAST WEST LINK PROPOSAL

IN THE MATTER

of the Resource Management Act 1991

AND

IN THE MATTER OF

of a Board of Inquiry appointed under s149J of the Resource Management Act 1991, to consider notices of requirement and applications for resource consent made by the New Zealand Transport Agency in relation to the East West Link roading proposal in Auckland

**EVIDENCE OF JIM JACKSON ON BEHALF OF
THE ONEHUNGA ENHANCEMENT SOCIETY INC**

22 May 2017

INTRODUCTION

1. My full name is James William Jackson, but prefer to be called Jim Jackson.
2. I am chairman of The Onehunga Enhancement Society (**TOES**), which was responsible for delivering the award winning \$28m Taumanu Bay (Onehunga Bay) project.
3. I am also chairman of the Manukau Harbour Restoration Society (**MHRS**), whose main objective is to drive an education and implementation program to address serious environmental issues affecting New Zealand's 2nd largest harbour, the Manukau, that has been subject to serious mismanagement and consequential environmental impacts over the past 100 years.
4. I grew up in Seacliffe Rd Onehunga, attending Onehunga High School. As a 12 year old I learnt to sail at the Manukau Yacht and Motorboat Club which today is the Aotea Sea Scouts building. In 2008, I was invited to become a member of the Onehunga High School of Fame, which I accepted.
5. I am also the Managing Director of Jackson Electrical Industries Ltd, which commenced operation in 1976 and in April of this year has successfully completed 40 years of continuous operation in Onehunga.

**THE ONEHUNGA ENHANCEMENT SOCIETY INC AND
THE MANUKAU HARBOUR RESTORATION SOCIETY INC**

The Onehunga Enhancement Society Inc

6. I am chairman of The Onehunga Enhancement Society Inc (**TOES**).
7. TOES was established in 2007 to represent the Onehunga community and ensure transport, utilities and council plans delivered true value to the local community, businesses and residents.
8. Since its formation, TOES has advocated for its community on major issues, such as:
 - Port of Onehunga Re-development;
 - the Watercare Central Interceptor;
 - the New Old Mangere Bridge;
 - Onehunga Transformation
 - undergrounding of Transpower Transmission Lines; and most recently
 - the East West Link. (which I first personally became involved with in 2007 when TRANSIT still existed)
9. TOES has championed a number of fantastic outcomes for the community in the Onehunga area. These include playing a leading role in the award winning Onehunga Foreshore Restoration.

The Manukau Harbour Restoration Society

10. I am also chairman of the Manukau Harbour Restoration Society (**MHRS**), whose main objective is to drive education and implement programs to address serious environmental issues affecting New Zealand's 2nd largest harbour, the Manukau, which has been subject to serious mismanagement and consequential environmental impacts over the past 100 years.
11. MHRS was formed in 2011 by Auckland residents living around the harbour committed to improving the condition of the harbour and its environs. The broad aims of the society are to represent all communities and organizations that border on or are influenced by the Manukau Harbour; to restore the Harbour back to its original water quality and environmental state; and in so doing, enhance the harbour as a recreational, transportation and well managed asset, loved by residents of the city of Auckland.
12. The objectives of MHRS are:
 - to lobby for the restoration of the Manukau Harbour wherever possible back to its original water quality, and environmental state.
 - To represent all communities and organisations that border on or are influenced by the Manukau Harbour.
 - To recognise the sensitivities and aspirations of the Manu Whenua
 - To prevent pollution and abuse of the Harbour as a natural resource
 - To reinstate water borne passenger transport on the Harbour
 - To establish navigational aids on the Harbour
 - To re-establish a Manukau Harbour Authority with responsibility for maintaining the Harbour and its facilities
 - To enable the Harbour to become a recreational asset to the City of Auckland

13. Since 2011, MHRS has advocated for the Manukau Harbour on a number of issues, such as:

- Port of Onehunga Re-development;
- the Watercare Central Interceptor;
- the Watercare South-West Wastewater Servicing Project;
- the Unitary Plan
- the New Old Mangere Bridge;
- the Onehunga Foreshore Restoration Project
- Recreation and Tourism Potential of the Manukau Harbour
- Onehunga Transformation
- undergrounding of Transpower Transmission Lines; and most recently
- the East West Link.

THE MANUKAU HARBOUR - A HISTORY OF NEGLECT

14. A thousand years ago the Manukau harbour was utilised by mana whenua as a great source of food, and the “gateway” by waka to the north via numerous portages and via Waiuku to the Waikato and the south.
15. The arrival of the European settlers heralded an even more intensive use of the harbour. Onehunga was a major port linking Auckland to the rest of New Zealand and the world. Passenger ferries from Onehunga plied the Harbour as did merchant vessels. As well as Waiuku there were wharves at Whatipu, Huia, Cornwallis, French Bay, Orua Bay and many more connecting the outlying communities.
16. In more modern times, the Manukau Harbour became the rubbish dump and receptacle for effluent for Auckland. Industrial waste, animal waste from abattoirs, human sewage, chemical waste, stormwater and rubbish were all tipped into the harbour. I am embarrassed to say that I remember as a child helping my father tip our rubbish directly into the sea at Pikes Point. Rubbish tips were then turned into substandard reclamations.
17. In the 1950's road and vehicles replaced ferry services. Many of the wharves and jetties fell into disrepair and were demolished. In the 1960's Auckland's main wastewater treatment oxidation ponds were built at Mangere and while industrial waste then was treated and raw discharges to the harbour substantially reduced, large volumes of treated human sewage entered the harbour instead. New treatment facilities at Mangere are discharging ever-increasing volumes of Auckland's stormwater and wastewater to the Manukau harbour.
18. We observe sedimentation of streams and bays, declining fish stocks, invasive species including Pacific oysters and Asian date mussels and wide spread mangrove colonisation.

CHANGE IS BEGINNING

19. The Manukau Harbour has been abused and neglected, its water polluted and its estuaries clogged with mangroves and silt. There are virtually no shore-based facilities such as boat ramps, wharves and jetties, few navigational aids, no passenger transport and little interest from central government.
20. The bulk of Auckland's treated sewage is discharged into the harbour and with forecasts for Auckland's future growth, existing and new sewage treatment systems will need to cope with much greater volumes of waste. Where will it be discharged? Is it still acceptable to continue to discharge some 20,000 'ten ton truck loads' of treated human and industrial waste (fresh water?) at a shallow upper harbour location that some 50 years ago was enjoyed as a strong salt water environment? The contents of stormwater are becoming a serious concern to water quality in our harbour.
21. The Ports of Auckland facilities at Onehunga are in a deplorable state of disrepair. It is an extremely important facility for the national fishing fleet. Yet the Port facilities need upgrading; dredging is required to reopen wharves; and new facilities built to provide for the future passenger and tourist services, and all-tide boat access for the public. If there is a disaster on the Harbour right now there are no emergency services based at Onehunga Wharf to respond, no safe shore access even for the Coast Guard to land an injured person at the Port of Onehunga as well as very limited safe access around the harbour.
22. But it's special natural character and recent events are bringing hope for the Manukau harbour and changing people's vision of what the harbour could become.

23. The views west from Onehunga to the Manukau Heads, especially as the sun sets, are just about one of the most panoramic harbour views you can have in Auckland. The sense of openness to the west is stunning.
24. Thanks in large part to the efforts of TOES, the Onehunga Business Association, MHRS and the Maungakiekie-Tamaki Local Board (and its predecessor Community Board), the foreshore at Onehunga – Taumanu Reserve - was restored and opened in November 2015. It has been met with widespread public support. The new beaches, picnic areas, boat ramps, cycle and walking paths are heavily used and people can now envision how the harbour can be restored and enjoyed for recreation. The community cherishes this new found foreshore environment, especially in summer with its sand beaches.
25. Now our eyes have been opened, we can see that there is also a natural connection between Taumanu to the Onehunga Wharf that could be enhanced for coastal recreation, walking and cycling. There is just enough separation at present from the existing SH20 motorway and with limited reclamation, this could add another jewel to the Crown.
26. Moreover, there are links between the foreshore area and Gloucester Park through the existing roads that could be opened further. The preservation of some of our earliest heritage buildings (such as The Landing and Sea Scouts) is something we wish to hang onto and something we value.
27. Turning to some more basic needs, as we all know, the lack of housing in Auckland has become a major issue.

28. In response, there has been real energy to promote town centres, such as Onehunga, with good public transport connections for housing intensification. We are already seeing the transformation of the Onehunga Town centre through apartment developments, mixed use zoning in the Unitary Plan and the promotion of Onehunga as a 'transformative' area by Panuku, Auckland Council's urban development authority. This is all supported by TOES, but we do need to get the detail right.
29. Residents in the transforming Onehunga Town centre are already demanding more green space and open areas, as well as better access to their foreshore.
30. TOEs, together with other community organisations in Onehunga, have also been promoting the Onehunga Wharf and surrounds as another 'Viaduct Harbour' or 'Wynyard Quarter' opportunity. Again, this has recently been picked up by Panuku. They have desires to create a unique regional destination that builds on the history, marine and fishing industries and delivers mixed-use development. Panuku's timeframe for delivering this is 8-10 years. But for the wharf development to be a success there needs to be a strong connection back to the Onehunga Town centre.
31. The creation of Auckland Council means the entire foreshore of the harbour is now within one local government body. This provides hope for improved overall management. The Manukau Harbour Forum, comprised of representatives of the 9 local boards bordering on the harbour is focusing Auckland Council on the harbour's condition and potential.

32. Beyond Onehunga, communities such as Waiuku, Mangere Bridge and Pahurehure are removing mangroves from their foreshores. The Puketapapa Local Board is constructing walkways around the northern foreshore from Onehunga and assisting with beach clean ups and Pacific Oyster shell removal. The Whau Local Board is building the walkway along the historic New Lynn portage and cleaning up its waterways. The Waitakere Ranges Local Board is assisting community-led beach clean ups.
33. Watercare has rebuilt the Mangere Waste Treatment Plant, removed the oxidation ponds and restored large sections of the foreshore as bird habitat. A heavily used walking/cycle path now goes from Onehunga across the inlet and around the foreshore to the Otataua Stonefields.
34. Local residents, including some visionary elected officials see the harbour as a gem to be restored, protected and enhanced. We have much work to do. The potential is great and the payoff enormous.
35. But this all needs leadership. strong leadership - focused on this exciting positive future vision for Onehunga and the Manukau Harbour, not the 'dumping ground' attitudes of the past.

EWL PROJECT – ONEHUNGA SECTOR

36. In the face of these efforts to ‘turn around’ the abuse and neglect of Onehunga and the Manukau Harbour, community organisations, such as TOES have been dismayed by NZTA’s proposal to add insult to injury by proposing that the East West Link rampage through the Onehunga coastal environment.
37. Fundamentally, NZTA’s proposal is to thrust a new, elevated, four-lane motorway into the Onehunga coastal environment, which at the same time is being regenerated and is earmarked for exciting future regeneration.
38. Let’s not be coy. We cannot have it both ways.
39. The EWL, as proposed, will be a highly retrograde step for the regeneration of Onehunga. It will ‘put paid’ to the efforts underway and kill the future vision for Onehunga and the wharf.
40. The East West Link will sever the Onehunga township from the coastal environment and the Onehunga wharf forever.
41. Nowhere else in Auckland would NZTA dare to propose such a monstrosity. Even a whisper that such a project was being proposed on the Waitemata Harbour would have killed it before it even started.
42. Just because the Onehunga environment and its coast facing the Manukau Harbour has already suffered from our mis-treatment is no reason to cause further massive degradation.

- 43. With increasing intensification of our city, coastal environments have become highly prized possessions. Long gone are the days when they were the 'back door'. They are now the 'front lawn'.
- 44. As we have seen from the transformation of Taumanu Reserve, people are drawn to coastal environments. They offer huge value in terms of recreation. Even just sitting on a beach, looking quietly out to sea is something we all recognise and value highly. Around the world, smart cities are removing motorways from coastal edges, not putting them in. They are enhancing coastal environments for people to enjoy. They are not turning them into concrete jungles.

The economics doesn't add up

- 45. Turning to some other issues.
- 46. The economic analysis around this project astounds me.
- 47. On the one hand NZTA say that if you can achieve some modest travel-time savings (that is, a few minutes here and there), then that translates into a significant economic benefit. Auckland Council's evidence repeats this mantra.
- 48. But neither even try to assess the economic costs.
- 49. While I am not an economist, in my mind, to properly assess whether the EWL Project will have an overall economic benefit to Auckland or New Zealand, it is necessary to quantify it's economic costs.
- 50. This exact point is made clearly in the evidence of Kieran Murray, an expert economist for Mercury NZ Limited.

1. The New Zealand Transport Agency's (NZTA's) economic evidence, presented by Mr Williamson,¹ does not assess the economic costs of the East West Link proposal, and does not quantify the economic benefits.
51. I am alarmed at Kieran Murray's conclusion that it is not certain that the East West Link proposal will result in a net economic benefit. That is, the proposal could actually have an adverse effect on the economic wellbeing of New Zealanders.

Transpower dispensation – get on with it

52. Despite assurances from NZTA that they have been working closely with Transpower for years to develop a solution for how modification and relocation of Transpower's towers and lines can be managed along the entire EWL Project, it all still looks very loose to me.
53. By way of example, it simply isn't clear from where I sit whether the EWL can be located as designed in the Neilson Street Interchange area without having to adjust the design to accommodate Transpower Tower 31, remove it or obtain (rarely given we are told) dispensations from Transpower.
54. Tower 31 on the Otahuhu Henderson 220kv line is one of a number of Transpower towers located in our community that suffer from clearance distances which are a concern to our community.
55. Even with the realignment noted in the evidence of Mr Nancekivell for NZTA, the distances from the base of Tower 31 to the EWL are just 5.30m and 6.55m, well inside the requirements of 12m in the New Zealand Electrical Code of Practice (NZECP 34: 2001).

- 56. No mention has been made of relocating this Tower and looking at the configuration of the lines. Actually I am not even sure you could.
- 57. It seems very clear to me that a dispensation is required for the EWL alignment being too close to Tower 31.
- 58. The facts and issues around whether a dispensation might be granted also seem very clear.
- 59. Before we all waste our time in this Hearing, shouldn't this be sorted out now between NZTA and Transpower. If a dispensation cannot be granted and Tower 31 cannot be relocated, then isn't the proposed EWL alignment at the Neilson Street Interchange a dead duck?

So-called Mitigation Measures for Onehunga

- 60. I don't really want to head down the path of mitigation or off-setting the damage that will be caused by the EWL in Onehunga, because I believe the damage is going to be just too great.
- 61. NZTA is proposing to carve an elevated, four-lane motorway across the heart of the Onehunga coastal environment.
- 62. Nothing can compensate for it.
- 63. Moreover, I don't believe the mitigation ideas being put forward by NZTA in Onehunga go anywhere near enough. In fact, they are an insult when you think hard about the true value of the coastal environment being ruined.

64. First, I want to point out that while NZTA has put a lot of thought into mitigation ideas for the Mangere inlet (such as restoring this area through positive reclamation), I cannot see anything like the same when it comes to the Onehunga part of the Project. I think that is because it is just too hard to find anything that could mitigate the harm.
65. One proposed mitigation measure has been to trench the EWL. While that idea goes some way towards the community's idea set out in the TOES/OBA plans of tunneling the EWL, it doesn't go anywhere far enough. The trench itself will create a huge physical and perceptual gully between the wharf/foreshore and the town centre. To mitigate the trench, NZTA initially proposed a 25m Land Bridge. This has been lengthened to 70m as set out in the Evidence of Mr Nancekivell. Experts for Auckland Council (Mr Brown and Mr McIndoe) recommend lengthening the Land Bridge. Multiple 75m wide land bridges, with gaps between for ventilation, might better assist with connectivity in this area. In essence, this is a return to something like the idea of tunneling proposed by the TOES/OBA plan.
66. With regard to Te Hopua, while NZTA state that more planting and LVA lighting around the rim will compensate for the impacts on the tuff ring, actually, the visual attributes of this natural feature will be reduced by the EWL and it will be further severed from its relationship to the coast. Both Mr Jamieson and Mr Brown for the Council believe these mitigation measures are very inadequate.
67. I understand that the Sea Scouts will be providing their own evidence, so I will not dwell on the negative effects there, least to say the EWL simply isolates this unique heritage building out on the edge of the coast.

68. Auckland Council's submission and evidence raises the potential for undergrounding of the Transpower 110kv 220kv lines and towers across Onehunga Bay, and while we would dearly like that as an outcome, it is not sufficient in my mind to overcome of negative effects of the EWL. In any case, the evidence of Mr Horne for Transpower shoots down any prospect for undergrounding in no uncertain terms. Our history with Transpower over many years is that we are not able to make a case for undergrounding because it is simply unaffordable.
69. Unless NZTA has very deep pockets, any thought of undergrounding the Transpower 110kv lines and towers across the Onehunga Bay as a mitigation measure is just wishful thinking.

CONCLUSIONS

70. Until recently, Onehunga and the Manukau Harbour have been used and abused as the 'back door' rubbish dump and receptacle for effluent of Auckland. We would suggest that not Auckland but all of New Zealand has prospered at the demise of New Zealand 2nd largest harbour.
71. But I thought we had turned a corner when the foreshore at Onehunga – Taumanu Reserve - was restored and opened in November 2015.
72. And then my hopes and our community's hopes were dashed when NZTA proposed that the East West Link would cut its way through the Onehunga coastal environment.
73. The EWL will be a highly retrograde step for the regeneration of Onehunga. It will 'put paid' to the efforts underway and kill the future vision for Onehunga and the Onehunga wharf. The East West Link will sever the Onehunga township from the coastal environment and the Onehunga wharf forever.
74. And the justification? It might have some modest travel-time savings. But overall, it might actually have an adverse effect on the economic wellbeing of all New Zealanders.
75. Then I see, on the eve of this hearing (after years of discussions), that NZTA hasn't nailed down a very important decision about whether it can get a dispensation from Transpower for Tower 31 that is smack-bang in the middle of the Neilson Street Interchange.

76. Finally, I don't believe any of the mitigation ideas being put forward by NZTA in Onehunga go anywhere near enough. In fact, they are an insult when you think hard about the true value of the coastal environment being ruined and the severing of the Onehunga town centre from the foreshore and the Onehunga wharf.
77. The EWL Project at the Onehunga/Neilson Street Interchange is ill-conceived and will be highly detrimental to the environment and communities of Onehunga.
78. I believe that the various proposed resource consents and designations sought by NZTA in this part of the East West Link be declined.

James William Jackson
The Onehunga Enhancement Society Inc (TOES)

22 May 2017