

**BEFORE A BOARD OF INQUIRY
EAST WEST LINK PROJECT**

IN THE MATTER of the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA)

AND

IN THE MATTER Of A Board Of Inquiry Appointed Under S149j Of The
Resource Management Act 1991 To Consider *Notice Of
Requirements And Applications For Resource Consent
Made By The New Zealand Transport Agency In Relation
To The East West Link (EWL) Roading Project In
Auckland*

**STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF STEPHEN KENNETH BROWN ON
BEHALF OF AUCKLAND COUNCIL (LANDSCAPE & URBAN DESIGN)**

Dated: 25 July 2017

SUMMARY STATEMENT OF STEPHEN KENNETH BROWN FOR AUCKLAND COUNCIL

Overview of Key Conclusions In My Evidence

1. My EWL assessment was wide-ranging, and assessed the project in relation to the following locations and features:
 - Onehunga town centre;
 - The Mangere Inlet coastline;
 - Anns Creek;
 - Hamlins Hill;
 - Otahuhu Creek; and the margins of the Southern Motorway and the Otahuhu Interchange.
2. In relation to most of these 'sectors', it is my assessment that the proposal would have a quite limited to very low range of effects, while the proposed naturalising of much of Mangere Inlet's northern shoreline would greatly enhance both the character of that coastline and community interaction with it. Strategically, it would enhance connectivity across the southern Auckland Isthmus, as well as to and from both Onehunga and Penrose via the new road network.
3. More specifically, it would achieve more effective walkway and cycleway links between the small peninsula of eastern Otahuhu and those parts of Otahuhu and Mt Wellington to the north – across the Otahuhu Creek system. It would also help to articulate the Te Karetu Portage Trail that follows part of the Otahuhu creek corridor, and it would physically enhance the margins of the creek's margins near the Southern Motorway. Although the EWL would pass close to Hamlins Hill and over the Southern Motorway, thus becoming very prominent in terms of its public profile, it would have a quite limited effect on the core values associated with Mutukaroa Regional Park.
4. Even so, a number of matters associated with the EWL proposal remain unresolved from my point of view:
 - Firstly, it would exacerbate the existing physical and perceived 'severance' of the town centre from its waterfront area – including the existing port and old Mangere Bridge. The EWL would compound both this 'dissection' of Onehunga and the separation of its harbour area from its town centre.

- In a related vein, much of the area around the existing port is also blighted by a haphazard array of light to heavy industrial development and the port's own, rather dilapidated state, together with the infrastructure of SH20 and the (new) Mangere Bridge. The EWL, as currently proposed, would compound this incursion and related aesthetic degradation – within and near the Onehunga Wharf area, in particular.
 - Thirdly, the EWL would further isolate Onehunga's three key natural (or, at least, mostly natural) features: Te Hopua Crater, the recently redeveloped Onehunga Bay foreshore (Taumanu Reserve) and the Onehunga lagoon – on the opposite, inland, side of SH20.
 - Fourthly, it would reinforce the isolation of some of Onehunga's key heritage features, notably the Aotea Sea Scouts Hall (on Orpheus Drive next to the Waikaraka Walkway), The Landing (on Onehunga Harbour Road), Shaldrick House (abutting Onehunga Mall) and the original 1924 Onehunga Wharf (within the port area).
 - Lastly, the proposal would hinder connection and future development of the coastline between Taumanu Reserve and Onehunga Wharf, including the development of effective and enduring walkway / cycleway links that build on the existing, rather tenuous, connection offered by the Waikaraka Walkway.
5. I accept that stretching the proposed land bridge out to 110m or so would help to 'cover over' much of the trench and its traffic, and would also help to connect the town centre with both the port area and old Mangere Bridge, but I have doubts about its ability to negate all of the severance issues that I have identified. Moreover, even though a new Onehunga Harbour Road would help to maintain physical access to Onehunga Wharf, its alignment would exacerbate the concentration of transport related infrastructure within the immediate coastal hinterland and amenity effects in relation to The Landing and the Airport Harbour View Motel.
6. Turning to Mangere Inlet, while clear benefits would be derived from the proposed naturalisation of the Inlet's coastline, I remain concerned that it would:
- Adversely affect the physical connectivity between Mangere Inlet and Onehunga's hinterland;
 - Erode the ambience, character and values of Waikaraka Cemetery and, to a lesser degree, the future Waikaraka South Park; and

- Compromise some of the current recreational use of the Inlet's margins – especially in relation to the current 'shared path' that extends from old Mangere Bridge through to Hugo Johnston Drive.
7. Of particular note, the EWL would be appreciably elevated above Waikaraka Cemetery, thus severing the symbolic connection between the existing cemetery grounds and Mangere Inlet, together with the wider Manukau Harbour and Mangere Mountain. The EWL would inevitably compromise the tranquil, contemplative, environment currently enjoyed by those visiting the cemetery and its historic plots.
 8. Yet, any buffering of the Waikaraka Cemetery and future Waikaraka Park South from the EWL remains problematic. Bunding next to the road corridor would compound the isolation of the cemetery from Mangere Inlet, while planting – possibly in conjunction with additional stone walling – would help to 'soften' the profile of the EWL without necessarily resolving the amenity issues that I have identified.
 9. Indeed, even the issue of where to place a pedestrian / cycleway overpass on that bund, stretching over to Landform 1, remains vexed because of concerns about the potential for such a structure to create additional visual encroachment in relation to the cemetery. More pragmatically, I also remain of the view that the proposed coastal path fails to compensate for the loss of the current walkway / cycleway along Mangere Inlet. At the same time, I agree with Mr McIndoe that universal public access to Landforms 1 and 2 should be facilitated as much as possible through the provision of parking bays or areas to help open up public access to the 'new' coastline.
 10. In concluding, therefore, it is my opinion that the EWL would generate a range of effects, both positive and adverse. NZTA has tried to offset and mitigate the adverse effects. In my assessment, this has been successful for parts of the EWL corridor, but others remain of concern in relation to central Onehunga and Mangere Inlet. Having said this, I support the inclusion of proposed Resource Consent Conditions LV.5A to LV.5H, which should provide the platform for further exploration of methods that could help to address many of the concerns that I have highlighted.



Stephen Brown

25 July 2017

