

Thank you Sir and members of the board.

I am here today representing the members of the cycling community at Fisher & Paykel Healthcare in the matter of the East West Link project. Fisher & Paykel Healthcare is a large employer in the Highbrook business park with around 2,500 staff on site. Among that number we are many cyclists who regularly commute by bike, as well as enjoy recreational cycling, and many more who would do so given safe and connected cycleway infrastructure.

Personally, I am an Onehunga resident and as such I also have a direct interest in the outcome of this project. A number of groups and individuals have lodged submissions in opposition to this project. There is a general feeling by many in the Onehunga community that there has been a lack of consultation, and a lack of consideration for alternative solutions to the transportation needs in the area and for the impact the project will have on the local community. It would appear that NZTA have decided the outcome despite alternative options presented.

So, in that light, to reiterate the context of our submission – given NZTA's desire to push this option through, we would ask that NZTA be required to implement best practice world-class cycle infrastructure along this arterial route, suitable for all types of cycle users. We'd like to acknowledge that NZTA have clearly made an effort to include cycle facilities. However, we feel the standard is below where it should be for a new major arterial project, with the opportunity of significant connections as this has.

Auckland Transport's recently released Cycling Programme Business Case¹ (10 July 2017) indicates some significant changes in relation to cycling activities in Auckland over the recent years. These changes include vast increases in the number of journeys made by bike, an increase in the number of people who would cycle if it was 'safe' to do so, and a positive change in public attitude toward cycling in general.

The latest edition of Auckland Cycling Account for 2016², also recently published by Auckland Transport echoes this sentiment.

In these reports it is clear that Auckland Transport recognise the benefits of investing in good quality cycle infrastructure, and the notion of 'build it and they will come'.

With statistics like "Bikes make up 9.4% of inbound morning peak traffic via Upper Queen Street", it cannot be denied that there is a renaissance in cycling as a valid, accepted transport mode. People are cycling for all sorts of reasons, including: recreation, sport, health & fitness, and general A to B transport benefits like environmental friendliness, saving fuel costs, not being stuck in traffic and eliminating parking costs and hassles. Many A to B journeys are workplace commutes. Encouraging alternative transport modes like cycling also benefits motorists and freight operators as there are fewer vehicles on the road and hence less congestion.

¹ <https://at.govt.nz/media/1974191/item114-auckland-cycling-programme-for-investmentfinal.pdf>

² <https://at.govt.nz/media/1973770/at-cycling-account-book-2017.pdf>

With the e-bike revolution cycling will only become more accessible, where people who would cycle for transport convenience but perhaps lack the fitness will now be empowered to get on a bike. Numbers of cyclists will only increase over the coming years. It's all about creating a cohesive seamless network of cycleways. And the more connected the segmented cycleways become, the more people will use them. One only needs to look at Auckland Transport's publicly available cycling data, and success stories like the North Western cycle path, to see the growth already to date, in order to imagine what numbers might be like by the time the East West Link is completed around 8 years from now. And the numbers will only continue growing from there.

Considering a macro view of the Auckland cycling network, the East West Link will become an important arterial route connecting to the existing SH20 cycleway to the west, and across to Silvia Park in the east, further linking with routes to the Glen Innes cycle path and AMETI project to east Auckland. Also to Otahuhu in the south and the existing (but currently incomplete) Highbrook cycle path. Given its arterial status as an important network connection the East West Link deserves to have best practice cycle infrastructure and connections to and from it. Of course, as well as an arterial for A to B cyclists it will also continue to be a location for sport and recreational cycling as is currently the case along the shores of the Manukau harbour.

Fisher & Paykel Healthcare cyclists would like to see these multiple cycling mode use-cases reflected in the design of the route. We have outlined in our written submission a number of areas where best practice has not been applied as well as it could be. I'll talk about a couple of examples here.

My first example relates to Section 4.2 of our submission, the Orpheus Dr section of shared path. Given the proximity to Taumanu Reserve, the future wharf development, and connections to Onehunga township and Old Mangere bridge this will likely be a very busy section for pedestrians and cyclists alike. And as stated in our submission, cycling and walking modes do not deserve to be 'conveniently' lumped together – especially for busier sections of cycleways. Cycle and walking modes are quite different, just like walking and motoring modes are different and so deserve to be treated separately. Combining walking and cycling modes can, and does, lead to cyclists using alternative means such as cycling on the road instead of using the cycleway, thereby negating any safety enhancement intended by the project design. Tamaki Dr is a good example of this. Many cyclists use the road in spite of the presence of the shoreline cycle path. In our submission, we have requested that the Sector 1 Orpheus Dr shared path be upgraded to include safe and separated cycle lanes instead of a shared path.

A second example relates to Section 4.6 of our submission, the Captain Springs Rd section (sheet 15A) of the Road Alignment plan. The planned shared path from East West Link ends part-way along the western side of Captain Springs Rd at the Waikaraka sports fields. This is great for those wishing to cycle to or from the sports fields via East West Link, but also a missed opportunity for providing alternative transport options to those working in the heart of the Onehunga industrial zone. For a cyclist heading north on Captain Springs Rd to their workplace, they are forced to re-join two lanes of industrial traffic where the cycleway ends. For those heading

south, there is no safe means provided to cross this four lane road to join the cycle path. In our opinion, the cycle path should be continued to the limit of works at the Neilson St intersection as a minimum. But preferably, as detailed in our submission, we'd like to see proper safe and separated cycle lanes provided on either side of Captain Springs Rd, with a future view of connecting to Te Papapa train station further north.

In our submission, we have highlighted the existing Highbrook Dr cycleway as a particularly bad example mirroring NZTA's Captain Springs Rd plan. Both roads share the similarities of being four lanes wide and carrying (or will carry, in the case of Captain Springs Rd) high volumes of large commercial vehicles. Both have a shared path that runs part way along and then ends. The type of cycle path NZTA have planned results in poor uptake of the facility by cyclists and introduces unnecessary risk to safety. There are fewer users of the Highbrook cycleway than there should be due to it not connecting the full length of the road, and the dangers of being forced to ride on such roads to complete one's journey. In fact, I personally have been hit by a vehicle when cycling on Highbrook Dr and it is not a pleasant experience.

We would challenge those making the final design decision on the Captain Springs Rd path to not only look at Highbrook Dr implementation, but also to get on a road bike and actually experience the Highbrook shared path, having to re-join and continue on the road, travelling by bike in both directions on a normal weekday.

Today I have talked about just a couple of examples from our submission to give you an idea of where improvements can be made to NZTA's plan from a cyclist's perspective. Our submission document also details a number of other areas for improvement.

We acknowledge that NZTA have engaged with Auckland Transport and Bike Auckland in response to their submissions to the East West Link plan. And, some of the matters discussed overlap to a degree with points raised in our submission. Although NZTA have made some changes in response, we believe there is still scope for further improvement to the cycling facilities NZTA are proposing.

A number of amendments we'd like to see involve permanent structures such as bridges, that once built will not be widened later, or would require considerable extra cost and interruption to do so. With each of our suggestions there could also be implications on limit of works boundaries and/or notices of requirement. For these reasons, we ask that the content of our submission document be carefully considered now prior to moving to the detailed design stage.

To conclude, I'd like to thank the board on behalf of the cyclists at Fisher & Paykel Healthcare, and the wider cycling community, for the opportunity to present our case at this hearing, and for your consideration of our written submission. Thank you.

Sheet 15A from East West Link Road Alignment plan.



Highbrook Shared Path:

- Example of an incomplete cycle path (similar to Captain Springs Rd plan).
- Indication of how the Princes St bridge and Otahuhu Creek sections of East West Link project will connect to the (currently incomplete) Highbrook cycle path via Frank Grey PI to form a network.

