

IN THE MATTER of the Resource Management Act 1991

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 roading proposal in Auckland.

JOINT PRESENTATION BY

Julie Carr, Submission No. 126252; Linda Hubbard, Submission No. 126730; Christina Robertson, Submission No. 126305, and Don Wackrow Submission No. 126234

INTRODUCTION

Presented by our elected spokesperson

- 1.1 We thank the Board and the hearing convenors for giving us the chance to speak today.
- 1.2 Our names are Julie Carr, BSC (AK), MSc Honours (AK) PHD (Sydney) TTC, NZTC.
Linda Hubbard DFA (Diploma of fine arts) BA
Christina Robertson MA
and Don Wackrow LLB.
- 1.3 We were approached by Michael Campbell of Campbell Brown Planning as a Friend of Submitters to present a joint submission to this board. We have agreed to present a joint submission.
- 1.4 The reason given to us by Mr Campbell for making a joint submission was that our submissions were very similar.
- 1.5 Three of us are residents who live locally and our ties to the area include two generations buried in the Waikaraka Cemetery.
- 1.6 We all use the Mangere inlet shared path/cycleway, the Taumanu Reserve and the facilities on the southern side of Onehunga mall.
- 1.7 We greatly value the historical, recreational and cultural features of our harbour, port, coast and foreshore and we are concerned about the project's effects on these features.
- 1.8 We are also concerned about the decision-making process and the uncertainty about the project's benefits in the context of the Auckland transport network. We believe better alternatives exist.
- 1.9 We all agree that upgrades to the Neilson St-Church St route would best achieve the desired outcomes, while addressing our objections.

2 OUR VIEWS ON THE PROPOSAL

Presented by our elected spokesperson.

- 2.1 Use of Neilson St. We all agree that Neilson St should be used as the East West Link. The Neilson St route would address all the objections to:
- 2.2 The cutting off of access from Onehunga to the coast and its re-development by Panuku Development Auckland.
- 2.3 The negative impacts on Gloucester Park.
- 2.4 The loss of the present Aotea Scouts premises.
- 2.5 The loss of access to old Auckland historical features; the Tavern, the cemetery at Waikaraka, the destruction of the basalt sea walls and steps to the sea.
- 2.6 The potential loss of access for a route for heavy rail to the airport.
- 2.7 The visual impact/height of the off-ramp.
- 2.8 The noise, air pollution and water run-off pollution and their effects on the human users of the cycling and walking facilities.
- 2.9 The removal of established plant habitats and niches in the salt marshes and on the scoria outcrops.
- 2.10 The loss of a peaceful and serene and pleasant place to enjoy the amenity, the plants, the birds and the water.
- 2.11 The destruction of the historical Ann's Creek and its unique salt marsh.
- 2.12 The cost of the project in comparison with simply redesigning Neilson and Church Streets.

3. Our summaries presented by each of us separately

Summary by Julie Carr

- 3.1. We are regular users of the shared pathway along the foreshore of the Mangere inlet.
- 3.2. The whole existing pathway is presently a serene and pleasant place to enjoy the amenity, the plants, the birds and the water.
- 3.3. We maintain that the proposed arterial road will destroy naturally established salt marsh niches for animals and plants.
- 3.4. The proposed arterial road will destroy historical features of the area that should be valued and preserved, such as the basalt walls, the cemetery's views to the water and the steps to the water.
- 3.5. The proposed arterial road running along the foreshore and over the basalt islands will be noisy and polluting. Even though there is a proposed cycleway alongside the road, it will be much too close and dangerous for safe cycling so close to trucks, and the air that will be breathed in will be full of truck exhaust fumes. The birds will be frightened away. The water will be polluted from run-off from the road.
- 3.6. We see no reason why the foreshore should be destroyed when the option along the existing Neilson St and Church St roads exists and could be used with improvements to intersections and carriageways.
- 3.7. We regard this proposed arterial road as yet another unnecessary 'land grab' denying the local residents access to an historical and important recreational area and destroying a valuable and historical foreshore and backshore amenity area for the residents of Onehunga, Waikaraka, Te Papapa and surrounds.

4. Summary by Linda Hubbard.

- 4.1. We are against the proposed Gloucester Park interchange as it will have a negative impact on the beautiful new beaches recently built at Taumanu Bay. It will be noisy and pollute the air by the beaches and it will obstruct views of the historic site of Te Hopua/Gloucester Park.
- 4.2. At the moment if you come off the Southwest motorway you drive around Orpheus Drive beside Te Hopua with a view of the sea which is beautiful on a clear day at high tide. You then cycle or drive up Onehunga Mall towards Neilson Street and you can look onto Te Hopua, as the road runs alongside the park which is used for sport and has a car park. In the proposed Gloucester Park interchange the pleasant views will be lost because of the height of the structure.
- 4.3. Gloucester Park (Te Hopua) will be endangered by earthworks when they build the Gloucester Park interchange. This will obstruct recreational use of the park, which has cultural and aesthetic value to Onehunga, as Gloucester Park is a historic volcanic feature.
- 4.4. We want to make the sea by Gloucester Park into a beach. This would mean the Aotea Sea Scouts can remain where they are by the sea and will also provide further connectivity between the port of Onehunga and the beaches of Taumanu Bay.
- 4.5. We want to develop the port with cafés, shops and a ferry to Mangere Bridge. The proposed regional road along Orpheus Drive will further cut off the port from the people of Onehunga. Instead we want to make the port more accessible for future generations.
- 4.6. We want to make the port more connected and friendly towards walkers, cyclists and runners. The proposed overbridge over the proposed regional road which runs between the Onehunga Historic Tavern and the port is inadequate for cyclists, walkers and runners. Cyclists and walkers on the overbridge need to be protected from large trucks and cars.

5. Summary by Christina Robertson

- 5.1. We would like to discuss the decision-making process and the project's implications for transport policy.

- 5.2. One aspect which concerns us is that the New Zealand Transport Agency's (NZTA's) modelling and analysis take no account of the phenomenon of latent or induced demand. Expanding road networks leads to more driving, causing the newly expanded network to become just as congested as the old network. In light of this phenomenon, it is of particular concern that NZTA's economic analysis assumes that the congestion-relieving benefits of the East West Link (EWL) will continue at a similar level over 30 years; in practice, this benefit is likely to prove illusory. A more effective approach would have been to consider improvements less vulnerable to the latent-demand phenomenon, such as freight lanes on existing roads.
- 5.3. This brings us to our second and larger point, which is our concern over the decision-making process. In the case of such an expensive and environmentally costly project, it is especially important to be certain that the East West Link is the most effective way of achieving the desired outcomes; unfortunately, NZTA's evidence leaves us with no such certainty.
- 5.4. None of the other options presented early in the process have received a detailed analysis with substantial economic evaluation. This makes it impossible to be certain that the East West Link as proposed outperforms all of these alternatives.
- 5.5. Furthermore, the analysis of the East West Link's costs and benefits fails to provide certainty that these benefits make the project worthwhile. As we mentioned earlier, induced demand is likely to erode the projected travel-time savings; since the project's economic benefits rest almost entirely on these time savings, its economic benefits will be just as illusory.
- 5.6. Another matter not taken into account is the effect of the Waterview Connection on cross-town freight movements. As the final link in Auckland's motorway network, Waterview provides for cross-town motorway travel, and the effect on movements between State Highway 1 and State Highway 20 should be measured and taken into account when considering the need for and potential benefits of other cross-town projects.
- 5.7. Land use changes over the life of the project have also not been taken into account. Development in Onehunga under the Unitary Plan is likely to alter the present balance between residential, commercial and industrial use, and will therefore affect the area's transport needs. That is, in thirty years, will Onehunga residents think that a four-lane highway is the most appropriate infrastructure for the area, or will they wish NZTA had chosen a less invasive option which allowed for better foreshore access?
- 5.8. Finally, given the substantial increase in projected costs since the analysis was undertaken, we can no longer be sure that the benefits outweigh the costs.
- 5.9. NZTA cannot state with any certainty that a \$600m increase in costs will be matched by an equal or greater increase in benefits. The economic analysis is not only incomplete (as shown particularly by the Campaign for Better Transport's evidence), but also out of date. It is therefore impossible to determine whether the East West Link as proposed is the best of all options, or even whether its benefits will outweigh its substantial financial and environmental costs.

6. Summary by Don Wackrow.

- 6.1 The Auckland Council Unitary plan has identified Onehunga as an area for intensification of housing and thus an increase in population density. The population increase is likely to be substantial. It needs to be borne in mind that population increased is not only coming from the intensification of existing residential uses. There is a current trend where former commercial property is now being re-used for intensive residential use e.g. the "Fabric" blocks of apartments by Spring Street and the "Beachcroft" apartments currently being marketed between Beachcroft Avenue and George Street. Not only will existing residents require recreation space but the increased number of new residents will also. It increases the need for residential access to the coastal area and elsewhere.

- 6.2 The port area has been planned as a place to create a modern public space for the use of Onehunga residents both now and in the future. The Application before the Inquiry will increase the degree of severance between lower Onehunga and the port.
- 6.3 It must be remembered that earlier there was no severance between lower Onehunga and the port and for that matter, the harbour generally. My wife Theresa recalls as a child regularly going with her grandfather to the Onehunga wharf travelling by tram from either of their homes down Onehunga Mall (then called Queen Street) to quite close to the wharf itself. Then her grandfather would buy shellfish or fish from the fishermen at the wharf. It should also be remembered that there was at that time, a beach with white sand close by where the “new” bridge is situated. All of that was vandalised by the earlier versions of the Applicant as part of the state highway development. There was further damage to the connectivity between Onehunga residents and the water in the Gloucester Park area and by that area of the adjoining reserve which for obvious reasons many residents now call Pylon Park.
- 6.4 In short there has been a regrettable tendency for authorities to treat Onehunga as the tradesman’s entrance to Auckland and its environment has historically been abused and neglected by them accordingly.
- 6.5 We are pleased to see that some of the Auckland Council evidence including that of Graeme Robert McIndoe, Elise Natalie Calligan, Rod Marler and Steven Kenneth Brown recognises some part of the extent of and the harm caused by the Port severance and that it is unacceptable as proposed in the application. Our basic submission is that the application should be refused. However if the Inquiry decides that the application should be granted it should be on conditions which include every proposed condition and suggestion for mitigation contained in that evidence. Other Auckland Council evidence addresses areas covered elsewhere in our joint submissions and the same considerations apply to them.
- 6.6 For example at the Port there is a need for a land bridge which will make ready connection between the Port and lower Onehunga by vehicle, cycle and pedestrians. It will also mitigate some of the effects to do with the historic Manukau Tavern (“The Landing”). The application originally proposed a very limited connection. However, as a result of even the initial protest the applicant has re-thought matters enough to suggest a land bridge of 70 metres. A wider land bridge of 170 metres is referred to in the evidences of some of Council witnesses I just mentioned. 170 metres would be a minimum level of mitigation for the Port severance issue.
- 6.7 There was a facilitated meeting concerning the lower Onehunga and port areas conducted for the Inquiry on the 2nd of June 2017. At that meeting, various resolutions were passed with the support of a wide body of submitters present. One of the resolutions was to do with the width of the land bridge and the resolution was for 170 metres in width. The resolution allowed for possible interruptions in the 170 metre width (the intent being that it might reduce cost). That would be acceptable for that reason. However, if the applicant is not prepared to perform that degree of mitigation that is yet another reason why this application should be rejected in full. That would not prevent a further application from being filed which addressed all issues in a better manner.

- 6.8 The Inquiry will have copies of the minutes of the facilitated meeting but we note that further resolutions were passed yet again with wide support addressing the need for the historic Aotea Sea Scout Building and the sea scouts to be treated in a certain manner. Also, the resolutions were directed to ensuring that there was a continued need for connectivity for all modes of travel both present and in the future including potential for all modes between Onehunga and Mangere. We hope and trust the Inquiry will adopt those resolutions.
- 6.9 Linda Hubbard's portion of these submissions refers to the negative impacts on Gloucester park including the taking of the existing public space and the visual impact and height of the off ramp where we note the artist's impressions are taken from such a distance and angle so as not to provide an adequate impression of the height of the off ramp and its oppressive effect on the neighbourhood.
- 6.10 Our family represents six generations of Onehunga residents including our children and grandchildren. Three generations before us, starting with Theresa's great grandfather, are buried in Waikaraka cemetery. The application will have a multi-generational effect on the people of Onehunga. There are better plans available and far better choices available. We believe the application should be declined. If not, then full mitigation is required.

CONCLUSION

The New Zealand Transport Agency have not shown that they have fulfilled their obligation to consider alternatives which are less environmentally damaging, more cost effective, and more protective of the areas of built and natural heritage.

We therefore ask this Board to decline the New Zealand Transport Agency's application.

The project should not go ahead as planned.