

SUBMISSION BRIDGES OVER WAIKANAERIVER GROUP

To be presented to The Greater Wellington Regional Council on 17 May by the Bridges Over Waikanae River Group on behalf of its petitioners and supporters.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this submission ion requesting that priority is given to building two more bridges over the Waikanae River. A similar submission was presented to the Kapiti Coast District Council last month.

While we commend investigations and planning undertaken into providing a local route to connect the disparate Kapiti communities and relieve congestion on State Highway 1, we believe our proposals warrant consideration for their simplicity, relatively low cost, and most importantly, low impact on existing communities.

Introduction

There is probably general agreement that the two main reasons for upgrading internal roading on the Kapiti Coast are:

- **To ease the traffic pressure on the congested SH1.** - With a high proportion of traffic on this highway through the Kapiti Coast travelling locally, additional bridges across the Waikanae River would ease the pressure on the congested State Highway, and provide alternative routes in the event of closure of SH1.
- **To facilitate traffic flow between the communities that now comprise Kapiti Coast District -** Historically, these communities grew independently and as a result tend to have their own roading systems that frequently do not link directly with those in the adjacent community. This often necessitates circuitous travel between two adjacent areas, for example, between Raumati and Paraparaumu. Reasonably minor extensions to existing roads would save time and fuel and help to build a sense of community in the district..

The Bridges Over Waikanae River Group maintain that these objectives can be obtained relatively simply and effectively without the massive capital works required by say a WLR, which would have the potential to have enormous detrimental impact on our communities, potentially splitting the district in half. This is, we believe, quite opposite to what improved roading should be aiming for.

Main Components

Our proposals comprise two elements:

- Principally the construction of two additional bridges across the Waikanae River.
- As a secondary, but natural follow-on, we suggest the linking of some existing roads, particularly those between Raumati and Paraparaumu, similar to what was recently completed between Pekapeka and Waikanae.

The Bridges

There seems to be general public agreement that the single greatest inconvenienceto getting around within the Coast is the lack of access between Paraparaumu and Waikanae, with their respective beach communities being particularly disadvantaged.

We propose the construction of crossings at both Weggery Drive and Greenaway Road. These would enable immediate and simple linkages between the two communities. However, of the two, our first priority would be a bridge at Otaihanga from Makora Road, opposite Kakapo Street, to Weggery Drive, which already has 'notional road' status and has existing connecting roads.

Advantages

- These sites would not attract the opposition being experienced by the WLR proposal from the Takamore Trustees, the Historic Places Trust and the Christian Holiday Camp, which seem insoluble.
- The cost of our proposals is relatively small compared with alternatives.
- The ongoing repair, maintenance and landscaping costs for our proposal would be considerably less than those for the WLR.
- As well as providing a convenient, alternative and greatly shorter route to the existing ones, the bridges would take considerable pressure off the dangerous Otaihanga Road/SH1 intersection and the congested lights intersection at Kapiti Road/SH1.
- The bridges facilitate opportunities for more cycle journeys within the district.
- They give people, especially the elderly for whom SH1 can be rather daunting, an alternative low-speed route as well as easier and safer access to the Otaihanga Landfill.
- Reduced travel time between Paraparaumu and Waikanae beach communities, benefiting commuters, secondary school pupils, emergency and trade vehicles and those attending sporting venues.

Impact

Although additional bridges at any location will have an inevitable negative impact on some residents, particularly that created by increased traffic, these will be offset by the considerable benefits to them and the community in general.

The Roads

We also consider that along with the bridges, relatively low-impact extensions to existing roads would achieve all that the WLR can without the disadvantages. The recently completed connection between Rutherford Drive, Waikanae Beach and Paetawa Road, Pekapeka is a good example of what we think could be achieved in other areas of the district, making any additional WLR roading superfluous.

Although there are probably other examples, we have identified the following potential linkages that could achieve similar benefits:

- Matai Road [™] Arawhata Road
- Guildford Drive [™] Otaihanga Road
- Mazengarb Road. [™] Ventnor Drive, Lindale
- Joining up the two sections of Hillcrest Road.

In line with the Kapiti Coast District Council's policy of encouraging bicycle riding, these main connecting roads should be provided with cycle lanes for the safety of cyclists.

All these roading improvements could of course be used to provide alternative routes to SH1 in emergencies, with the advantage they are "likely to attract SH1 traffic seeking to avoid traffic lights or to take short cuts.

Conclusion

In summary we believe the two bridges option complimented by extensions to existing roads is easier, cheaper and has less negative impact on our community than alternatives, which cannot be achieved in the foreseeable future anyway. And while it may not totally solve Transit New Zealand's problems we believe it will meet the needs of locals for many years to come. It is on a scale in keeping with life on the Coast, does not present huge potential increases to Council rates, would require less land purchase and it avoids compromising contentious heritage and wetland values.

Importantly, in an age of increasing liquid fuel prices, and given New Zealand's responsibilities under the Kyoto protocol, efficient direct roading proposed by us under our Two Bridges scheme has never been more relevant.

The obtaining of 5000 signatures from residents of the Kapiti District indicates there is considerable local support for our Two Bridges proposal. We therefore expect that this petition will receive weight similar

to that given the 4500 submissions to the "Community Plan", which was given 'priority treatment' by the Council, as it should be considered of equal significance.

Two Bridges Over Waikanae River Group

PO Box 1604, Paraparaumu Beach
On behalf of 5000 petitioners