**Minutes for Warkworth Area Liaison Group**

**Date:** 7th February 2019

**Meeting Opened:** 7:30 pm

**Chairperson:** Bruce Scoggins

**Attendees:**  28 People

**Apologies:** Richard Papworth, Murray Chapman

**Minutes of last meeting:**

Hueline Massey/Ox Wightman

**Guest speaker; Burnette O’Connor on updating the situation with Turnstone and the Stubbs Farm Development**

* Turnstone’s request for a plan change was debated by Auckland Council last week and they voted to accept the change rather than adopt it as their own. Consultation opens for the Structure Plan on the 25th February and runs for one month. At the end of the consultation period Auckland Council will advise Turnstone of the feedback. Turnstone will then apply for any changes that they want, but foresee these will only be minor changes. It is hoped that notification of the plan changes will then be done straight away and happen by early April. Submissions will then be called for over the next month. At this point Council procedure takes over and will probably take the rest of the year to complete. It is hoped that the plan change will become ’live’ at this stage, meaning that development can begin.
* Turnstone will have to get the appropriate resource consents before starting actual work, but they still hope to have things ready to go as soon as they get the go-ahead. All going well they’ll be able to make a start on the earthworks for the next earthworks season next summer.
* Turnstone will stage the development in bite-sized sectors. The proposed development features different housing styles ranging from reasonably intensive through to properties more similar to the adjacent Viv Davie Martin Drive subdivision.
* Turnstone intends to make the development as community-friendly as possible with good parks and cycleways. But Burnette commented that they are often frustrated by Council stymying their efforts to do this.
* Burnette was thanked for her presentation and will continue to update WALG as information becomes available

**Warkworth weir**

* The end of the public meeting at the Town Hall to discuss the proposed Warkworth weir removal saw an influx of people into our meeting. Some of these gave their impressions gained from the meeting.
* Three speakers presented to the Town Hall meeting; Matt Bloxham Senior Freshwater Ecologist at Auckland Council; Paul Decker, Head of Aquaculture Research at MTI; and Shane Hartley Principal Planner and Manager of Terra Nova Planning.
* There was a strong feeling of disappointment among those attending the Town Hall meeting that there was no public consultation at all before it was decided to remove the weir. The general consensus seemed to be that there should be no further work done until more statistical data and information was available to be considered so a properly informed decision is made.
* With regard to the issue of the weir restricting access of whitebait up the river, evidence was presented that the Mahurangi River had inherently a higher than ideal alkalinity for whitebait to flourish. More information is needed to establish what the natural level would be for whitebait in the river, and whether the removal of the weir would affect this much.
* Offers have been made to provide, or assist with making, a fish ladder if this would help.
* Beth Houlbrooke told the meeting that Shane Hartley had pointed out that there had been no effort made to schedule the weir as a historic item of importance that needed protection under law. This was an oversight by our community that meant there was no legal requirement for any public notification before work could start to demolish it. (This is also currently the situation for the ford on Falls Rd.)
* The question was raised at our meeting; ‘What happens next?’ Greg advised the meeting that he is to meet with Barry Potter Director Infrastructure and Environmental Services at Auckland Council at which Greg will ask that the removal of the weir continues to be on hold, and more information sought so a fully-informed decision can be made on its future. Greg suggested that Barry would benefit from a single point of contact with the Warkworth community. Maurie Hooper suggested that WALG could fulfil this role, which was generally accepted by the meeting. Greg will suggest this to Barry and, if agreed, will continue to keep WALG notified of developments through the secretary (me). We will assess what approach to take once we learn more. Warwick Massey suggested that it would be sensible to work in with the Warkworth Riverbank Enhancement Group, and it was agreed this would be a good idea.

**Councillor Greg Sayers**

* Greg advised that the Auckland Council’s Annual Budget for July 2019 – July 2020 will be coming out soon. The operational budget for Rodney will increase from $13.9million to $15million, and the capital expenditure budget will increase from $6.3million to $9.9million.
* Transport investment will be $38million and Watercare will be investing $35million.
* Greg showed the meeting a copy of the book he has just written on suggested ways for the Auckland Council to address affordability of housing in our area. He suggests that regulatory costs relating to house building can add up to $285,000 per property. He said that a more moral approach to housing is needed and that it is time that house ownership is made achievable for more members of society. He suggests that cutting council compliance costs would be a big step towards achieving this. He also says that infrastructure costs could be charged on a user-pays basis to help matters. The book can be bought through Greg for $20.

**Beth Houlbrooke, Chair of the Rodney Local Board**

* Beth started by thanking Greg for taking the initiative over the weir issue and getting Council to put a stop on the removal of the weir until the community can have a say on it. Beth suggested that this is not a Local Board issue and commended Greg for taking a lead on this matter.
* Beth commented that we can look at, and submit on, the Council’s Annual Budget by going to the Council Website online.
* The effects of the transport targeted rate are starting to become apparent.
* The Wellsford – Warkworth bus service is scheduled to start operation on the 24th February. Wellsford residents are especially pleased with at last being regularly connected to the rest of Auckland. Schedules have been arranged to connect with buses in Warkworth for trips down to Silverdale and beyond.
* The final touches are being done to the design of the Park and Ride at the Atlas site. There will be 80 parking spaces available initially, and if the buildings are removed there will be another 40 spaces available. Final positions for the bus stops are still being decided.
* Design work is proceeding on the design of the suspension bridge project linking Kowhai Park and the showgrounds.
* The designers of the Matakana Link Rd seem likely to be listening to suggestions that local input could achieve a lot more road for their money. Partial four-laning now seems very likely. We will hopefully hear more after the next Transport Forum on March 1st.

**Surgical Centre**

* Richard Papworth has been in contact with Duncan Bliss, the General Manager Surgical Services and Perioperative Services at Auckland District Health Board about getting more services up in the Warkworth area. Richard reported that Mr Bliss was very receptive to hearing our case. He has agreed to come up and address WALG and we are hopeful of having him at our next meeting on March 6th. Richard will be following this up.
* Hueline Massey advised that she has had contact with the NZ First MP Jenny Marcroft who lives locally. She is keen to advocate for Warkworth to get better health services. She said that there is a major assessment being undertaken of health services and their placement around Auckland. Results of this assessment are due out early this year. Jenny will be inviting the Honorable Dr. David Clark, Minister on Health up to this area soon to lobby him about the issues we have. Hueline will follow up on this.

**General Business**

* Terry Nuthall is Chairman of Warkworth Lions/Rotary Food Rescue. They distribute locally collected food that would otherwise be dumped to needy people around the Warkworth area. This operation has been working out of the old Courthouse building in Warkworth but this building is no longer available. They are looking to find new premises quickly as they have to move out very soon. They need a space about the size of a double garage, which is clean and has facilities for washing hands. If you know of such a space please contact me on 0274963711 and I will get hold of Terry.
* Hueline Massey was concerned by some of the information on the proposed sewerage system upgrade given to us by Brent Evans from Watercare at the last meeting in December. Here is a copy of the questions she asked on behalf of WALG, and his answers;

Hello Brent,

You and your assistant, very kindly came to the December 5th 2018 meeting of the Warkworth Area Liason Group [WALG] and gave us an update on the water and wastewater situation for the Warkworth township.  We all found this a fascinating delivery with the information you gave us.

I am happy to say that as a user of the new water system there does not appear to be any issues that I have heard about with the new supply and the fresher taste of the water is welcome!

Having thought about the wastewater disposal information you delivered to us though we have some questions.

As the new pipeline going from the existing pumping station within Lucy Moore Park is serving the existing and future development on the south side of the Mahurangi River why is it necessary to take the new pipeline so far west towards the Warkworth Town Centre before it needs to cross the river to the northern side then up the very steep heavily vegetated bank before reaching the new pumping station to be built on Mahurangi East Road?

A couple of reasons for this:

1. Facilitating Growth Zones

The new Pump Station on Sandspit Road will eventually receive wastewater flows from the future developments in North-West Warkworth in addition to the existing catchment and Southern developments. The location of this Pump Station was strategically chosen to enable connection from both catchment zones and eliminates the need for a second pump station nearby.

1. Pressure  and Pump Station Size

The  embankment on the Northern side of Mahurangi River is steep and gradually rises towards the East along Sandspit Road. As the elevation difference increases between the Pump Station in Lucy Moore Memorial Park and Sandspit Road Pump Station, the hydraulic head increases and it becomes increasingly difficult for the pumps to overcome, and would require a large pump station in the park. A key objective was to minimise the size of the pump station in Lucy Moore Memorial Park, and as such the alignment was moved towards the West where the elevation difference is reduced.

The disruption to Lucy Moore Park, and the river waterfront close to the busiest part of this park, will be huge even if most of the line is to be thrust.  As indicated at the meeting the community is currently discussing improvements to just this area of our riverfront and the last thing we need is any new structures/formations to be interfered with at a later stage.

The intention is to limit the size of the trenchless site near the waterfront and park as much as possible, and maintain public access where this can be safely and practically achieved. There is flexibility in terms of site location, shape and size which the Contractor will adapt to minimise disruption. Once completed, the only permanent assets to remain will be the buried pipelines and a buried valve chamber near the edge of river. When more detail is available regarding the proposed waterfront upgrades we can coordinate to prevent interference.

I am not an engineer but while looking at this situation on the ground I did wonder why the new pipeline is not using the short, shallow and clogged section of the small estuary adjacent to the pumping station then across the river (obliquely) at this juncture and up the hill on the northern side of the river where there is no where near the substantial beautiful native vegetation that is on the proposed route.  I do understand that having reached the top of the hill (on the north side of the river) there would need to be pipes laid across private farm land to join up with the pipeline along Mahurangi East Road, but surely that would be easier than the rock strata you have indicated will be encountered if the proposal presented to our December meeting is followed.

Geotechnical investigations undertaken in Lucy Moore Park next to the pump station site found that there was a high water table (with evidence of artesian aquifers in some areas) and un-engineered fill from the historic formation of the park near the small estuary. Also, the length of the trenchless drive required from this starting point is longer and also aligns underneath a private residence. In order to reduce risk on the trenchless installation it was decided to relocate the drill site.

Furthermore, the rock strata mentioned is highly likely to be present along the entire Northern extent of the river embankment. This was determined by geotechnical investigations along the proposed alignment, and will be confirmed with additional investigations over the next 2 months. This means that any alignment underneath the Mahurangi River will likely encounter this material.

Vegetation along the Mahurangi River embankment will not be impacted by the trenchless installation. The trenchless pipeline will range from 10 to 40m below ground level, with potential to be deeper depending on the Contractor’s methodology.

The Warkworth Area Liaison Group is concerned that the next time you deliver further information to us (as you said you would do at the beginning of 2019) that this will be set even more firmly in place and any reconsideration will be very difficult to change.  From this base WALG asks that more background on the decision indicated to us at the 5th December 2018 meeting be shown to us so we can better understand why the chosen route is the most advantageous for the new wastewater route.

**Meeting Closed:** 9.00 pm. Next meeting is on March 6th at 7-30pm