**Minutes for Warkworth Area Liaison Group**

**Date:** 5th February 2020

**Meeting Opened:** 7:30 pm

**Chairperson:** Hueline Massey

**Attendees:**  34 People

**Apologies:** Terry Nuthall, Marja Lubeck, Beth Houlbrooke, Richard Papworth

**Guest speakers; Glenn Nelson, Pavements Manager, and Fiona Mayo, Communications Manager, from NX2**

* Fiona and Glenn told the meeting that the project was going very well at the moment, thanks largely to the fantastic earthworks weather that we’d had recently. They are on track with all their targets for the earthworks and will shortly be starting a night-shift to keep the momentum going. Now that the ground levels are flattening larger trucks can be employed to cart away spoil faster. These can carry 40 cubic metres of spoil which is about 5 times the amount that one of the earth-moving trucks you’ll see on the road can carry. Five football fields of earth, one metre deep, is shifted every day. All the major earthworks are scheduled to finish this season, and when they’re completed between 7 and 8 million cubic metres of earth will have been shifted.
* TNX2 have been very pleased with the quality of a lot of the material that they have encountered during excavation. They have been able to reuse much more of this as fill than they’d expected. They even crush their own rock on site. All this has had the benefit of there being less material required to be brought in from off-site, which in turn means less truck movements on the public roads. Metal that needs to be brought in is mainly coming from the Whangaripo Quarry which means trucks enter the site to the north of Warkworth and miss the Hill St intersection. This was a major concern when the project was first mooted.
* The route has been sufficiently formed to allow vehicles to drive along its whole length (apart from the viaduct portions). Preparations are now being made on some sections of the route for formation of the pavement. The pavement is the term used for the road itself. It comprises compacted hardfill of about 600mm deep with a top layer of asphalt about 150mm thick. This innovative design has been developed by the project’s engineers specifically taking into consideration the materials and ground conditions they have found during construction. Compaction methods of the materials they have been able to use have proved to be very successful and a very good base for the pavement has been formed. This means that the final surface of the road will be of a very high standard. The road needs to be able to stand very heavy usage, for a very long time, with very little maintenance. Overall 420,000 square metres of pavement will be laid once the project is completed. This will need a very large amount of asphalt so an asphalt plant is being purpose-built on-site to remove the need for trucks to bring it all in from asphalt plants in the city.
* The big concrete piers that support the viaducts at the southern end of the project have now almost all been formed and from now on the steel girders that carry the road will start appearing.
* Work on the junction with the current road near Johnstones Hill has started and the line this will be taking will start to become apparent soon.
* Landscaping along the route has also been progressing. By the end of the project a million plants will have been planted and 12 new wetland areas will have been formed.
* Glenn and Fiona finished their presentation with some spectacular video footage of some of the blasting that the engineers have been doing to loosen earth for removal.
* NX2 plan on filming more drone footage for release on their website soon. This is always worth a look. There will also be another open day soon so keep an eye out for dates.
* Glenn and Fiona were thanked by all present for a very informative presentation.

**Guest speaker; Marianne Davidson, CEO, Rodney Surgical Centre**

* Coast to Coast Health will be providing more facilities at the Rodney Surgical Centre in March/ April this year. This will include a pharmacy, fracture clinic, xray rooms, etc. The pharmacy will not be a general chemist but will focus on prescription medicine supply. There is also the intent to provide a service taking samples for blood testing. It is expected that this will be attractive to those wanting to avoid long waits at the current servers.
* The RSC is constantly lobbying to get more medical services located in its building but the Health Board is very conservative and it takes a lot of effort to make it acknowledge the benefits to all concerned if more medical procedures are done locally. Health Board decisions are usually made on narrow financial grounds that often doesn’t consider the full cost/benefit picture.
* Procedures that can now be done up here include; some skin, eye and general (hernias, etc) surgery, some private endoscopy surgery, and gynecological work is growing. Patients need to request that their GP to refer them to local available services at the RSC so the critical mass of required patient numbers is reached and maintained. This would make it worthwhile for specialists to practice up here. Often GPs will refer patients to specialists they already have a relationship with, and this can mean the patient must go down to Auckland for treatment. If the same service can be provided in Warkworth people should request it so they aren’t forced to travel.
* Surgical instruments are inevitably extremely expensive and while the RSC would like to be able to provide availability to a lot more procedures itself, it needs to be judicious in its purchases.
* A hospital bed costs $3000 per day to provide, before staff and ancillary costs are accounted for. This amount rises to $5700 when these are considered. Thus there needs to be a good consistent demand before this service can be offered.
* A 24 hour service would mean having a doctor and nurses available throughout the night. Research shows that they will be largely un-needed for long periods of time over-night as people mainly come to hospitals between 8am and 8pm. In a small catchment area like ours there may only be two or three people presenting for treatment during night-time hours. There needs to be a large local population base before this sort of service is viable.
* The RSC does not employ specialists itself. The RSC hires rooms to specialists to come up here to do procedures for a day each week, or a day each fortnight, or whatever. There needs to be enough local demand to make it profitable before a specialist will agree to come up here. If the figures stack up then specialists will come.
* The provision of chemotherapy up here would be a big help to the locals who need it. There is a lot of local support for the provision of this service, including from Hospice so it is hoped that it can be brought up here.
* Marianne said that the current government is more philosophically inclined to encourage public health services over the private health sector, but the overall demand for health services is too big for the public sector to cope alone. Private health care centres are needed and initiatives such as those the RSC are proposing should be fostered. Unfortunately the Health Board is slow to acknowledge this. This situation needs to change and everyone should be pushing all the local MPs to lobby on our behalf to get more services provided locally.
* Eventually a hospital will be built north of Auckland but a site hasn’t been decided on yet. The RSC has room to expand if it needs to. The adjacent land is a large holding and the owner has no plans to sell anytime soon. If the RSC does need more land a portion can be made available then.
* Marianne was thanked for her persistence in trying to get more local medical services and praised for her patience when dealing with frustrating Health Board intransigence.

**Auckland Councillor Greg Sayers**

* Greg started by acknowledging Marianne’s efforts and thanking her. He also acknowledged Local Board members present; Tim Holdgate and Colin Smith.
* Greg was pleased to advise the meeting that progress has been made with the Hill St intersection. He said that he had met with Mayor Phil Goff straight after the mayor had been re-elected. Phil Goff had also invited NZTA and AT representatives to the meeting. The outcome of the meeting was a decision to commit to the next stage of the Hill St intersection project which is to finalise the design and proceed with the consent process and property acquisition. Greg advised that this means that the complete reconstruction of the Hill St intersection will almost certainly now proceed. Costs will be split 75% - 25% between NZTA and Auckland Transport. Greg emphasised that there is always a chance that a political decision could still derail the process, but this is unlikely. Greg told the meeting that the reason Phil Goff at last pushed for the Hill St project to go ahead was due to the voting pattern of the mayoral election. Goff’s voting share in the Rodney district put him as only the third choice and he is keen to turn this around for the next election.
* The completion of the Matakana Link road was identified as being imperative before the Hill St project is started so there is an alternative route while construction at Hill St is undertaken.
* Greg advised that decisions will be made on the 10 year plan and the annual budget for CCO’s soon. There will be a drop-in centre set-up at the Warkworth New World between 2 pm and 4pm on Saturday 7th March to give out information on this and encourage feedback. Roger Williams compiled a list of items to be considered, added to, and discussed at the next meeting on the 4th March

**One Warkworth Business Association (Murray Chapman**

* Murray told us that One Warkworth had assumed the facilitator role in raising money in the local community for Australian wild fire relief. This will be closing off very soon having raised approximately $20,000. This is a huge effort and everyone involved should be heartily congratulated and thanked.
* The Winter Festival will again be held from July onwards, and the Kowhai Festival in October with the Big Day Out to be on the 18th.
* Murray advised that the BID process is reaching a climax with voting to be carried out between the 16th of Feb and the 17th March. All affected businesses/business owners are strongly encouraged to support this initiative. Murray said that having a Business Investment District (BID) is essential for the health of businesses in the Warkworth area and the community generally. The current One Warkworth Business Association set-up is not viable long-term as it relies too heavily on only a few businesses sponsoring the association’s running costs.
* The previous attempt at establishing a BID in Warkworth did not achieve widespread local business support because the proposed rating system would not have been fair to a lot of the businesses in the light industrial area. The current effort to set up a BID proposes a flat rate of $500 per business premise which is fairer and a lot more palatable to all businesses and premise owners. Along with some sponsorship it will still raise enough to achieve the funding required.
* Our area needs a strong advocate for when Auckland Council decision makers try to foist their ideas on our community. An example of how this can be so important is when Council announced their plan to completely close the lower section of Neville St for quite a long time for resurfacing. This would have severely impacted all the businesses in this area. Fortunately the Business Association got wind of this early enough to contact Council and make them see reason. Instead of a total road closure commonsense was brought to bear and half the road was closed at a time. If a BID was in place it would never have got to this position in the first place as when Council is considering projects for a district the first thing it asks is whether the area has a BID. Murray urged everyone to support the establishment of a Warkworth BID.

**Transport issues (Roger Williams)**

* Keeping in mind that once the motorway is opened the whole nature of the old SH1 between Puhoi and Warkworth will change, Roger asked the meeting to consider what we would like it to look like and submitted these ideas for discussion at the next WALG meeting;

# SH1 suggested works to upgrade before return to AC

Item for discussion at WALG meeting 4th March 2020

With the soon imminent completion of the Puhoi to Warkworth Motorway it is time to consider works to remediate SH1. A few ideas for discussion follow.

The old SH1 will return to a local highway. It will still have significant traffic to and from South Warkworth until a Southern Interchange is built.

We need to consider a renewed role as a Tourist Highway suitable for cars, cyclists and even walkers. The route has been promoted in the past (and still is but Northland Tourist organisations) as the Twin Coast Discovery Tourist Route.

Currently road traffic on SH1 has made any suggestion of walking and cycle touring to Warkworth positively dangerous until the motorway is complete. Even road touring is uncomfortable. We now have an opportunity to do something about it.

**Measures that could be considered - Puhoi to Warkworth**

* **Overall**
1. Remove dangerous passing lanes and replace some of them with shorter slow vehicle lanes.
2. Remark roadway widths and establish 2m wide shoulders wherever possible as cycling walking lanes.
3. Reduce speed limit to a more leisurely 80kph.
4. Safety improvements at all intersections. Consider traffic islands to protect turning traffic. Some intersections need to be moved.
* **Specific Sites**
1. Hill Street Intersection Improvement.
2. Shoesmith Bridge reassess.
3. McKinney Road relocate to south.
4. Honey Centre and Satellite Station Road. Relocate?
5. Reopen the old highway at the Pohuehue viaduct for walkers and cyclists.
6. Cowan Bay Road protected turning.
7. Schedewys Hill remove passing lanes on negative camber corners.
8. Mahurangi West protected turning
9. Puhoi Intersection?
10. Provide off carriageway walkway for Te Araroa Trail Puhoi to Wenderholm.

**General Business**

* Dave Stott told the meeting that there had been a hold-up to the works on the renovation of the old hotel building while an amendment to the consent was considered by Council. This had taken a lot longer than expected (surprise, surprise…) and work had to stop until it was granted. Fortunately the consent came through early this week so work can at last continue. The proposed opening for this building is now planned for the end of June.
* Dave advised that the design for the next stage of the Oakes development, which will entail building on the old 4 Square site, is underway now, but actual construction will not proceed for some time yet.
* Hueline reminded us that the Mahu Wastebusters will be holding a catch-up forum on Wednesday 12th February between 7-30pm and 8-30pm at the Warkworth Town Hall.

**Meeting Closed:** 9.30 pm. Next meeting is on March 4th at 7-30pm