**Minutes for Warkworth Area Liaison Group**

**Date:** 6th March 2019

**Meeting Opened:** 7:30 pm

**Chairperson:** Bruce Scoggins

**Attendees:**  26 People

**Apologies:** Richard Papworth, Brendan Chaffe, Dave Parker, Hueline Massey, Warwick Massey

**Minutes of last meeting:**

Peter Buckton/Ox Wightman

**Guest speaker; Ian Kennedy General Manager Operations Waste Management**

* Ian has been involved in the waste industry since arriving in New Zealand from Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) in 1993. He was involved in the development of the Whitford landfill, which, along with the Redvale landfill was developed using then state-of-the-art ideas from USA on waste treatment. This revolutionized the way waste was treated in New Zealand which was at that time just dumping waste with no thoughts of consequences on the environment.
* Auckland currently has about 1.6 million people and this is expected to rise to about 2 million by 2033, with an expected 2%-3% annual population increase in the region north of the bridge. At present we average one tonne of waste per person per year being sent to landfills (this includes residential and commercial). We need to have somewhere to put this. Even with efforts to minimize waste and an ambitious aim of zero waste by 2040 we still need to plan for landfills. Currently we have three landfills taking Auckland’s waste; Whitford, Redvale and Hampton Downs. Redvale is due to fill up in 2026. The ideal scenario is at least one in the north and one in the south so there is a need for a replacement for Redvale.
* Waste Management is constantly working on ways to divert waste away from landfills. They own 100% of Living Earth. They have a plant that chips used tyres for reuse. They divert concrete waste for reuse. Waste Management takes seriously the need to securely deal with any waste that can’t be diverted, and has to be stored in landfills.
* Waste Management is constantly looking for alternatives to landfills. Many that are used overseas, such as incinerating waste to create energy, are not commercially viable in Auckland. The population is not high enough to create the volume of waste needed to justify the $400million investment needed to build an incineration plant. Waste incineration is also used overseas to heat homes but our climate means that this is not viable here, and the high carbon footprint would be unacceptable too. Anaerobic digestive systems that are used overseas have not proved reliable enough yet to be considered, as many have failed.
* Ten years are needed to locate, acquire, design, consent and build a landfill. Waste management started to look for a replacement for Redvale in 2014. There are certain considerations that need to be taken for an ideal site. It should be; 2 – 5kms from a highway; close to Auckland; of a suitable size; far enough away from neighbours; not compromising any ecologically sensitive areas. The area can have any sort of soil as the whole landfill is lined. Waste Management learnt from the development of Redvale that the recommended 250 metre buffer zone between the landfill and any neighbours is not a big enough gap so the buffer zone around the next landfill will be at least one kilometre.
* Land around Auckland that meets all these standards is not common. Forestry areas were targeted as being the best opportunity to achieve all the requirements, and a block of forestry land was acquired in the Dome Valley. The Springhill property adjacent to this block then came up for sale and was purchased at auction by Waste Management. A valley within the forestry block will house the landfill and Springhill will provide the necessary 1km buffer zone between it and the neighbours. The actual landfill will not be seen from anywhere outside its boundaries. A special intersection will be formed on the highway to allow safe turning for traffic going into the landfill. This will also be helpful for forestry traffic.
* The landfill will be sited at the top of the valley with no rivers running into it. Tree planting will be done on the Springhill property to balance the trees removed to form the landfill to retain a carbon balance. The cleared land will have clay soils which will first be lined with a specially compacted geo-synthetic clay containing dentonite, and then high density polyethylene sheeting will be spread and fully welded to create an impervious layer. This will be required to be fully checked and certified by Auckland Council. A protective cushion of geo-fabric is then put over this sheeting and a layer of drainage metal is spread out with a network of pipes within it.
* Leachate that drains from the waste dumped in the landfill gathers in these pipes and will be collected for transport to Redvale for processing. No leachate will be allowed to pass into the Hoteo River. If there is a leachate spill there are safeguards that would contain it to ensure that it doesn’t enter the surrounding waterways. At Redvale the leachate is collected and water evaporated off. The concentrated leachate that is left after evaporation is dug out and securely stored in the Redvale landfill.
* Landfill protocol has it that the dumped waste is covered with soil at the end of each day. This means any overnight rain will not enter the waste but will run off the soil and will pass through a series of dams where solids settle and water drawn-off from the top. Outflow is constantly monitored.
* There would be benefits to the local area from having the landfill there. As well as initial construction of the landfill there would be ongoing work for about 20 contractors, as well as 30-40 fulltime staff on site. There will also be spin-off work for local mechanics, lunchbars, etc. Waste Management also plan to open walking trails across the land not directly required for the actual landfill.
* Landfills produce methane gas, and once the landfill has been around for a while (estimated to be about 2 years in this case) the volume of gas produced will reach a level (about 500 cubic metres per day) that would support an electricity generation plant. This power can then be fed into the local grid. As the landfill grows then more generators can be installed. Redvale now produces a lot of power from its generators.
* Waste Management hope to apply for consent later this month and hopefully will be fully notified about June/July with a hearing later this year. There would be another year or year and a half for appeals, and all going well they would start construction of the landfill in 2023 and open in 2026.

**Stuart Windross from MERRA spoke on a rail option for waste disposal**

* Stuart started by advising us that more information on the rail option can be found on MERRA’s website
* MERRA are concerned that if the proposed landfill in the Dome Valley goes ahead a predicted 450 return traffic movements will be added daily to the local roading network (20% - 40% of these will be at night). Currently the Dome Valley has 1000 truck movements per day. The extra trucks will create even more noise, vibration, congestion and road damage, plus will add road soiling, similar to that which currently occurs at Redvale.
* Stuart suggested that rail offers an obvious alternative as the northern rail line passes only 2km from the proposed landfill site. The northern rail line is currently hugely under-utilised. Stuart pointed out that the government has earmarked $600million for rail upgrades for the track from Whangarei to Auckland and there is a golden opportunity here to make the most of this money to add a spur to the landfill (estimated to cost $30million). Rail is seen as an environmentally sound, comparatively safe option that would take huge traffic volumes off the highway. Each train-load would be equivalent to 50 trucks of waste. What is needed is a business case to show that it could work. There would be drop-off points along the train line for local waste to be loaded on to railway trucks, probably compacted into containers.
* Waste Management is open to this option and Stuart has been in discussions with them.
* Kiwirail are strangely luke-warm to this option but efforts will continue to engage them.
* MERRA intend to push Council to make rail use a condition of the consent for the landfill. Greg Sayers offered his assistance in getting the resource consent documentation presented correctly. It was also suggested that the local MPs need to be brought on board. Dave Stott will be taking the matter to One Warkworth and will convene a meeting with Greg to see what can be done.

**Rodney Local Board Chair Beth Houlbrooke**

* Beth advised that there are currently a number of public consultations open on the Auckland Council and Auckland Transport websites that affect our area and urges people to submit on them;

1)      Draft Warkworth Structure Plan (including two public information days this Thursday and Saturday), open till 25 March

https://www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/have-your-say/topics-you-can-have-your-say-on/warkworth-structure-plan/Pages/default.aspx

2)      Auckland Transport Safer Speeds Bylaw, open till 31 March

https://at.govt.nz/about-us/news-events/safer-speeds-bylaw-consultation-open-thursday-28-february/

3)      Council and Local Board annual budget, open till 17 March

<https://www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/have-your-say/topics-you-can-have-your-say-on/annual-budget-2019-2020/Pages/default.aspx>

* Consultation is also open for the Future of Water in Auckland which encompasses everything from stormwater and septic systems to sedimentation and coastal erosion. Links to this can also be found on the Council website.
* Beth advised that the Warkworth/Wellsford bus service is up and running. This has been very well received by many people including parents with children who need to get to after-school events and sports. It is important that people make full use of this to ensure it continues.
* Progress continues with the proposed temporary Park and Ride facility at the Atlas site. 80 - 120 parks will be formed and Auckland Transport have given permission for the formation of a bus stop on each side of the road on the highway outside the Warkworth Z station.

**Auckland Councillor Greg Sayers**

* Greg reemphasised the importance of submitting on the Warkworth Structure Plan. The next open day is on Saturday 9th March from 10am – 2pm at the Warkworth Town Hall.
* Greg told the meeting that the Mayor’s annual budget has been released which identifies how the mayor proposes council money is spent over the next year. This includes items such as a rate rise and price increases in many areas such as resource and building consent fees. This is not likely to be popular. Greg pointed out that what is not included in this document is an assessment of how the budget the mayor set last year worked out. It seems that last year’s budget blew out in several areas and the council debt has increased to $472million.

**Surgical Centre (Marianne Davidson-Beker)**

* Marianne advised that it is almost certain that public eye surgery procedures will be coming to the Rodney Surgical Centre about May this year. It is proposed that cataract operations and public consultations will be done on one day each month by a surgeon coming up from Auckland. More information will be released through the Mahurangi Matters. Once this service started it is hoped that the service will gradually develop further over the next couple of years and that other similar services such as oral surgery will follow suit.
* Marianne told the meeting that the downstairs area of the Rodney Surgical Centre had been let out and will soon house a doctor available for consultation without appointment, a pharmacy, a laboratory, a physiotherapist and a radiographer.

**Transport Forum (Dave Stott)**

* A preferred option has been settled on for the Hill St intersection but this has not been released to the public yet. There is not going to be any public consultation on this decision. The option will now go to AT and NZTA in June for approval but there is no funding for any further stages. Lobbying needs to continue with AT, NZTA and the local MPs to keep the process moving. But it seems increasingly unlikely that there will be enough time to go through all the processes required to have anything done before the motorway opening. There’s not even any money allowed in the current budget to continue the process, and the next opportunity to get in to the budget is in 2021. This is extremely disappointing and is not what was indicated would happen when the CAG meetings started.
* The Matakana Link Rd has had a sum of money budgeted to build it but the initial design from council was completely over the top and couldn’t be built for the budget. Advice from a local contractor indicated that they believed they could build a very workable link road within the proposed budget. There would not be enough in the budget to get the desired two lanes in each direction for the full length of the project, but the road will be four-laned from the new bridge to the highway. The final design has not yet been released. The timeline for getting the project done prior to the opening of the motorway is getting very tight.
* The feeling is that the proposed route for the Western Collector road is not suitable for heavy traffic as Mansell Drive is too narrow. It is suggested that another arterial route be adopted further to the west and closer to the motorway.
* The proposed pedestrian crossing and safety measures for the Hill St intersection that were meant to be built months ago have again been delayed and it is not known when they will be done. Surprise surprise!

**Town Hall Talk**

* Next week’s Town Hall Talk features Robert Brassey, a cultural heritage specialist from Auckland Council. He has prepared a presentation about Warkworth’s historic watermills, dams and weirs, including the topical weir beneath the town bridge. This is a great opportunity to learn more of our hidden history.

Warkworth Town Hall

Wednesday 13 March

Doors open at 5.00pm for 5.30pm start

**Meeting Closed:** 9.30 pm. Next meeting is on March 3rd at 7-30pm