

**Plimmerton Residents' Association Response to Waka Kotahi: Wellington Network Operational Readiness Programme - Transmission Gully Post Opening Consultation on NZTA3.B - Future of SH59 post opening of Te Aranui o Te Rangihaeata (January 2023)**

Plimmerton Residents' Association (PRA) is pleased to present this formal response to Waka Kotahi (WK)'s proposal for the future of SH59 as part of the formal consultation required by NZTA3.B following the opening of the Transmission Gully motorway (TGM) in 2022.

Our response has been guided by written and informal feedback from our community reporting their own experiences of the road and their reaction to WK's proposal.

We can report that our Plimmerton and Camborne communities have welcomed the opening of TGM and have commented favourably on the significant reduction in traffic volumes and noise levels along the SH59 route.

The feedback from our community suggests in general that there is strong support for WK's proposal.

### Focus

The PRA advocates on behalf of the residents of Plimmerton and Camborne on matters affecting their interest and the amenities of the district.

Our main focus for the SH59 consultation has been primarily on the urban section of St Andrews Rd/SH59 between Goat Point (the northern end of Mana Esplanade) and Plimmerton Roundabout (intersect on with James St and Ulric St), while noting a broader interest in the whole SH59 corridor between Porirua and Pukerua Bay.

We further note that the Mana Esplanade section (Goat Point to Paremata Bridge) is extensively used by our community for access to local shops and services and for travel to Porirua and beyond.

### Formal Consultation & Community Feedback

- Representatives of PRA met with Waka Kotahi (WK), their consultants and Out of scope (PCC) on 25 January. WK presented their proposal to us at that meeting.
- PRA received the WK proposal document on 27 January. PRA actively solicited feedback on the WK proposal through our newsletter email group and via Facebook on 28 January with response deadline to our Gmail address by 19 February. Reminders were posted in the newsletter and on Facebook on 5 February. Facebook posts were posted on both the PRA page and the Plimmerton Camborne Community page.
- As at 26 February, a total of 41 emailed responses had been received to our request for feedback. Of these 37 responses expressed support for the Waka Kotahi proposal, i.e. 90% support. We note that those supporting the proposal often emphasised their support with comments such as "total support", "full support", "absolutely supports".

- Of the four responses not expressing clear support for the WK proposal, two called for the removal of clearways and a return to two lanes on Mana Esplanade, and a further response asked that clearway hours be reduced. One response calls for interim treatments to “secure usable space for sustainable travel between Paremata and Plimmerton” through re-allocation of the outer lanes to non-car traffic.
- Three respondents identified themselves as being residents or occupiers of properties on Mana Esplanade. Two were in full support of Waka Kotahi’s proposals and one was opposed.
- Our Facebook posts linking to the WK proposal were “liked” by 10 and comments were made by 4 individuals.
- Many respondents and residents have made suggestions to improve safety and efficiency along the route. We have included many of those ideas in this document and substantive responses are provided in Appendix A to this response.

### PRA Response to WK Proposal

Our comments on the specific points for consultation follow.

#### *Condition NZTA3.B*

We note the requirements of NZTA3.B regarding consultation with Plimmerton Residents’ Association along with PCC, GWRC, Paremata Residents’ Association and Ngāti Toa Rangatira.

#### *Consultation*

We note and accept the consultation process and timeline as stated.

#### *Decision Making Process*

- *How roads will be used in the future (their function). A network operating framework has been developed to confirm how the transport network will be used in future, by whom, and to identify gaps in the existing network (function).*  
PRA welcomes this forward-looking approach. Our community faces real challenges from the significant housing growth planned between Plimmerton and Pukerua Bay which could see a further 6,000 households added, along with planned intensification of the area surrounding Plimmerton and Mana railway stations. We also have the uncertainty of seismic hazards and climate change, with the likelihood of more extreme weather events in our coastal and hilly environment. We have already seen the impact of the Covid pandemic and fuel prices on commuter habits. GWRC and Metlink are planning more frequent commuter rail services through Plimmerton, which will further influence commuter behaviour. Modes of transport are also changing and some are calling for a move to active transport such as walking, cycling, e-bike and scooter. These factors suggest the network operating framework needs to incorporate flexibility and resilience so it can meet changing needs in future.  
SH59 is also St Andrews Rd. It is the backbone that links our Plimmerton and Camborne communities. PRA suggests that WK and PCC continue to engage with ourselves and perhaps establish a community focus group to ensure they understand the needs of our community when adapting the network operating framework.
- *What the transport network impacts are likely to be from increased land development, changes in population and the future movement of people*  
As noted in preceding point.

- *Review the safe system assessment in conjunction with the changes in traffic volumes and traffic speeds since the opening of Transmission Gully - Te Aranui o Te Rangihaeata*

We have not yet had the opportunity to view the safe system assessment but would welcome the opportunity to do so and to provide feedback on it.

Please note safety for all road users is a key issue for us. Areas of particular concern include:

- red light running at both Grays Rd and Steyne Avenue intersections, with residents reporting frequent observations at Grays Rd intersection. A red light camera could be an option, else ensuring the efficient phasing of traffic lights with shorter wait times might encourage drivers to stop and wait.
  - excessive speed, especially north of Steyne Avenue. Again, residents report daily observations of infringements. A permanent speed camera or better signage to remind drivers of the speed limit might be useful here
  - improved safety for pedestrians. This could include clearly visible safe crossing points that align with where people wish to cross (e.g. at Pope Street and the dropped kerb just south of Plimmerton Roundabout)); improved visibility for drivers and pedestrians at Plimmerton Roundabout; a dedicated pedestrian phase at Grays Rd lights; better signage to alert drivers of the presence of pedestrians and children; and some future changes to improve footpaths.
  - improved safety for cyclists.
  - deterrents for heavy traffic, and improved measures to encourage them to use the right hand lane through to Plimmerton Roundabout.
- *What each corridor may look like and what features may be included (form)*  
We present various ideas raised by our community in this response. These include beautification through planting cycle routes, footpaths, and pedestrian crossing points.
  - *Issues/ideas raised during consultation will be considered before a final decision is made on the future of SH59*  
Noted. We believe it is very important for local communities to be involved in the decision-making process on the future of SH59 on an ongoing basis. PRA is happy to continue discussions, participate in a community focus group and clarify ideas and suggestions beyond the formal consultation period.

#### *What we know*

##### *Traffic Data*

Noted.

##### *Traffic Signals*

We welcome the optimisation of traffic signals to (a) encourage through traffic to use Transmission Gully and (b) reduce wait times on side roads and for pedestrians.

However the phasing of traffic signals appears to have changed over time and the signals at Steyne Avenue and Grays Rd could be better optimised to provide shorter wait times and free turns where it is practicable and safe to do so, plus provide better safety for pedestrians.

We would specifically like to see the following:

- a further review of the phasing at Grays Rd and Steyne Avenue intersections to reduce wait times, including free turns where practicable.
- consideration of the impact of the rail level crossing on traffic flows at Steyne Avenue, and how the traffic signal phasing works in with this to prevent blockages

on SH59. With more rail movements planned, the barrier arms will be down more regularly, preventing traffic from exiting SH59.

- a dedicated pedestrian phase at the Grays Road intersection for pedestrians crossing SH59. Pedestrians currently run the risk of being hit by traffic turning south out of Grays Rd as this is a shared light phase. This is exacerbated by orange/red light running as drivers trying to beat the light will be looking for southbound traffic from their right and will not see a pedestrian on the crossing round the corner. We appreciate that there may need to be a balancing act between the safety of pedestrians and the desire from drivers for a free turn. This may well be covered in the safe system assessment, but we have not yet seen this document.

### *Future Growth*

Agree.

Refer to points made above under *Decision Making Process*.

#### *(a) Ownership and control of the Work Paremata Road, Mana Esplanade and St Andrews Road*

We support the retention of SH status for SH59.

We would however like to see some better integration of the route into our urban area, with acknowledgement of St Andrews Road as not just a main thoroughfare for those passing through, but also as a road people live on and use daily to access the various facilities and amenities in our community (the beach, the village schools, parks, railway station).

This means WK and PCC will need to work together to ensure SH59 fulfils the requirements of both a state highway and a local road that links the associated suburbs of Plimmerton and Camborne.

In the longer term we'd also like a review of the impact of the current highway design on flooding in the area, especially between James Street and Plimmerton Roundabout. The current highway camber and median strip acts as a dam, preventing water from flowing across the road, and thereby exacerbating the flooding issues for James St and St Andrews Road residents.

WK, PCC and Wellington Water will also need to work together to upgrade stormwater and wastewater infrastructure along SH59 from Paremata Bridge to Plimmerton roundabout to cater for the significant housing growth planned between Plimmerton and Pukerua Bay which could see a further 6,000 households added along with planned intensification of the area surrounding Plimmerton and Mana railway stations.

WK, PCC, GWRC and KiwiRail will need to consider the impact of more frequent train movements through the Steyne Avenue rail crossing and the potential for tail-backs of traffic trying to enter Plimmerton while the barrier arms are down.

#### *(b) Options relating to the future of the existing Paremata Bridge*

We agree that the original Paremata Bridge should be retained if it is structurally sound. None of the feedback received from our community calls for the removal of the bridge. One respondent queried whether the bridge alignment has any effect on silt build up in Porirua Harbour.

We support retaining the current alignment while a strategic plan is developed taking into account future growth.

We note that "No decision has been made on how the available corridor width may be shared by the various transport modes". In our view it seems sensible to retain the current corridor width and practice until the strategic plan is complete.

*(c) The continuation of four-laning of St Andrews Road between Acheron Road and James Street*

The majority of feedback received supports retention of four lanes through this area. While the majority of the feedback received showed support for four lanes for vehicles, others called for cycle lanes and a footpath between Pope St and Acheron Road. We expect these suggestions will be further considered in the strategic plan.

We note that “No decision has been made on how the available corridor width may be shared by the various transport modes”. In our view it seems sensible to retain the current corridor width and practice until the strategic plan is complete.

*(d) Measures (to the extent that they are legally available) to restrict or discourage heavy vehicle movements through the Work Paremata Road, Mana Esplanade and St Andrews Road;*

We acknowledge that heavy traffic movements have significantly decreased since TGM opened.

Heavy vehicles still travelling through should be encouraged to use TGM where appropriate through the optimisation of traffic signals on SH59.

Heavy vehicles traveling northbound should be made to use right hand lane from Paremata Bridge right through to Plimmerton roundabout. This requirement is currently just to Grays Rd, but many northbound HV drivers change lanes after Steyne Avenue, so heavy traffic is right next to the footpath from Steyne Ave to Plimmerton roundabout. This footpath is used by many to walk, scoot or cycle to school and it is unsafe to have heavy vehicles in the kerbside lane.

*(e) Other measures required to ensure an adequate level of service for the traffic volumes and traffic type expected to use the Work Paremata Road, Mana Esplanade and St Andrews Road;*

We have not had the opportunity to view the safe system assessment recommendations at this time, but hope that our specific suggestions to improve service levels and safety will be considered.

*(f) Provision of arrangements for cyclists;*

We received varying views from the community on provisions for cyclists (see Appendix A below).

One respondent commented that cyclists would be more likely to use the Te Araroa and Te Ara Harakeke paths to the west of the railway if they were sealed in their entirety.

Perhaps PCC could consider this point?

One respondent has called for the outer lanes to be dedicated to “non-general-traffic (i.e. anything other than cars)”.

We do not agree the Camborne Walkway is a viable alternative cycle path to SH59. It is unsealed, uneven and narrow. It is used as a recreational/leisure path by walkers and is a designated off-lead dog exercise area. It also requires cyclists to access it via Grays Rd at its northern entrance.

*(g) Alteration of footpath widths;*

We have not had the opportunity to view the safe system assessment recommendations at this time, but hope that our specific suggestions to improve service levels and safety will be considered.

We continue to have concerns about the width of the footpath between Steyne Ave and Plimmerton roundabout on the west side of SH59. This is currently too narrow for cyclists and pedestrians to share and there have been instances where pedestrians have been hit by cyclists or skateboarders on the footpath. The footpath is further narrowed by overhanging vegetation (a maintenance issue) and by the dropped driveways into

properties along the route. More pedestrians are using this section of the footpath because of the changed access to the Plimmerton station platforms from the eastern side of the rail corridor as a result of the addition of a third platform.

Longer term we would also like to see a footpath round Goat Point on the east side of SH59 so Camborne residents can walk from Pope St to the lights at Acheron Rd to cross SH59 safely if going to the Mana commercial centre on the opposite side of SH59.

*(h) Removal of traffic lights;*

We agree with the retention of traffic lights.

We received only one response from the community asking for the removal of traffic lights but several respondents have commented on phasing.

As stated above, we would like a review of the operation of traffic signals (Steyne Avenue and Grays Road) and pedestrian crossing phasing to ensure safe access across the thoroughfare. This should include dedicated phases for pedestrians to cross safely.

We have not had the opportunity to view the safe system assessment recommendations at this time, but hope that our specific suggestions to improve service levels and safety will be considered.

*(i) Changes to the operation of the clearways or High Occupancy Vehicle lanes;*

We support retaining the current alignment while a strategic plan is developed taking into account future growth.

While the majority of the community feedback received showed support for four lanes for vehicles, four respondents called for removal of the clearways or changes to their use or hours of operation.

Three respondents identified themselves as being residents or occupiers of properties on Mana Esplanade. Two were in full support of Waka Kotahi's proposals including retention of the clearways and one was opposed.

We note that "No decision has been made on how the available corridor width may be shared by the various transport modes". In our view it seems sensible to retain the current corridor width and practice until the strategic plan is complete.

*(j) Alteration of arrangements in relation to capacity;*

PRA agrees with no alteration of arrangement in relation to capacity.

Significant housing growth is planned between Plimmerton and Pukerua Bay which could see a further 6,000 households added, along with planned intensification of the area surrounding Plimmerton and Mana railway stations.

Traffic volumes, access points, intersections and provision for pedestrians to cross safely will need to be considered.

We also observe that local traffic volumes on the Plimmerton Roundabout are already increasing. Traffic from Ulric St and Douglass Close has increased in recent years with an active commercial zone, rail commuter parking, a caravan park, Plimmerton Domain and the dog park. Traffic movements on James Street will also rise as the Plimmerton Farm development proceeds.

*(k) Any changes to be sought to the any NZTA designation in relation to those matters.*

We note that WK does not expect their proposal to trigger designation changes.

## Summary

The feedback received to date suggests a strong level of support from our community for WK's proposal to make no major changes to SH59 at this time pending the preparation of a strategic plan.

We do however hope that Waka Kotahi and PCC will engage with us to action minor changes in the short term such as:

- traffic signal phasing (and the opportunity to feedback the rationale for signal settings to our community)
- safety measures for pedestrians and cyclists
- measures to monitor and improve driver behaviour, e.g. speeding and red light running
- measures to deter heavy vehicles from using SH59
- some beautification through planting of the section between Steyne Avenue and Plimmerton Roundabout and better attention to maintenance (litter removal, tidying and maintenance of vegetation).

In the longer term we would like to see better integration of the SH59 route into our urban area, with acknowledgement of St Andrews Road as not just a main thoroughfare for those passing through, but also as a road people live on and use or cross daily to access the various facilities and amenities in our community (the beach, the village, schools, parks, railway station).

We would like a road that unites rather than divides our community, and we encourage WK and PCC to support us in this objective.

Plimmerton Residents' Association  
28 February 2023

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## Appendix A - Feedback from the Community

*Refer to separate document*