

Minutes of Southern Links Waikato District Community Liaison Group Meeting, 29 November 2017

Venue: Tamahere Community Centre

Hosts: Barry Dowsett (NZTA), Simon Brandon (NZTA), Adrian Bathgate (NZTA), Peter Simcock (NZTA), Nathanael Savage (HCC), Alastair Black (Gray Matter), Lyndsey Smith (AECOM), Grant Eccles (AECOM)

Number of attendees: 31

Meeting opened: 5.09pm

Introductory remarks: Simon Brandon (NZTA)

Presentation delivered by: Barry Dowsett (NZTA) and Lyndsey Smith (AECOM)

Hamilton Southern Links

Community Liaison Group Meeting, November 2017



Today's Agenda

- Introductions
- Project background
- Project programming
- Achievements to date
- Property
- Update on ecological surveys
- What are we planning next
- Questions

Introductions

Please sign the attendance register

- NZ Transport Agency
 - Barry Dowsett
 - Simon Brandon
 - Adrian Bathgate
- Hamilton City Council (as Project Partner) Nathanael Savage
- Consultants
 - Alastair Black (Gray Matter Ltd)
 - Lyndsey Smith (AECOM)
 - Grant Eccles (AECOM)



Project Background

Purpose and Benefits

- Joint HCC and NZ Transport Agency Project
- Develop 32km of state highway and urban arterials to support planned residential growth
- Key benefits:
 - Reduce congestion, improve safety on SH1 and SH3 in the Hillcrest and Melville suburbs of Hamilton
 - Improve freight flows
 - Be a key part of the city's urban arterial network integrated into the HCC Access Hamilton Strategy

Southern Links Network



Project programming

- Both partners are programming funding together, but have different drivers and constraints.
- Hamilton City Council is driven by City growth and need for Housing in Peacocke's growth cell, but funding is very constrained. HCC is currently considering its programming as part of the 10 Year Plan review process.
- NZ Transport Agency funding comes from the National Land Transport Fund – derived primarily from fuel taxes, road user charges and limits are set by Government in a Policy Statement. This is being developed currently and will be published as a draft in late December 2017.
- The Transport Agency has published a draft 'State Highway Investment Proposal' and this includes design in 2018 and potentially construction starting in 2021 for Southern Links – this is being reviewed by the Waikato Regional Transport Committee for the 2018 Regional Land Transport Plan – to be consulted on in early next year.

Achievements to date

- Appointed Communications, Consultation and Property Liaison Managers
- Provided Councils with;
 - Pre-Construction, Communications & Consultation Plan
 - Property Acquisition and Management Engagement Practice
- Completed initial ecological monitoring and surveys
 - Vegetation and habitat surveys
 - In-stream aquatic surveys
 - Bat monitoring
- Initial stakeholder engagement, e.g. DoC and Tangata Whenua
- Property purchase ongoing, as required
- Worked collaboratively with Hamilton CC on Peacocke's Housing Infrastructure Funding bid – utilises Southern Links designations.

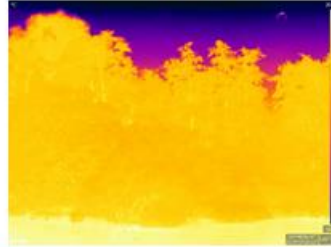
Property

- NZTA and HCC acquiring property as required.
- The Designation conditions require that *"we provide clarity for directly affected landowners on how they can engage with the NZ Transport Agency (as Requiring Authority) on matters regarding property acquisition and management"*.
- This is documented in the 'Property Acquisition and Management Engagement Practice' (PAMEP) – *available on the project website*
- Over the last 3 years, the NZ Transport Agency has acquired 37 properties (out of 85 required) – about 44%. By the end of the current 2017/18 financial year, we expect this to be close to 50%.

2017 Ecological Surveys

Focussed within HCC

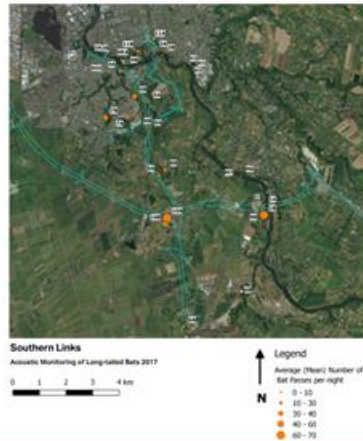
- Bat monitoring
 - Acoustic monitoring – detect bat activity
 - Thermal imaging of bats
 - Determine behaviour
 - Detect crossing height
- Aquatic monitoring
 - Fish surveys
 - Water quality assessment
- Vegetation and habitat surveys



2017 Ecological Survey Results

Southern Links

- Bats were recorded at all monitoring sites.
- Bat activity was variable at each of the sites.
- Bats were recorded travelling above tree canopy height and within the Waikato River gully by the thermal imaging cameras.
- Data from the aquatic surveys is still being processed.



Planned Activities

Focus on ecology and archaeology

- In 2017/18 the focus is on:
 - Bat monitoring
 - Survey of birds (avifauna)
 - Survey of reptiles
- On-going stakeholder engagement
- Identify potential sites for ecological enhancement and restoration
- Develop Ecological Management and Monitoring Plan (EMMP)



Further Information

- Newsletters with updates of key activity
- Annual community liaison group meetings
- www.nzta.govt.nz/southern-links
- Communications, Consultation and Property Liaison Manager
 - NZTA: Simon Brandon, southernlinks@nzta.govt.nz

Thank you

Any questions?



Question and Answer session (all answers provided by NZTA unless indicated):

- *Is NZTA giving consideration to the workforce that will become available when the Waikato Expressway Hamilton Section is complete in 2021?*
 - Some thought has been given to work continuity and the availability of resources for the construction of Southern Links
 - The next major project is an extension to the Waikato Expressway, known as Cambridge to Piarere (C2P) which will likely absorb some of this resource
- *Will Southern Links be built in stages?*
 - Construction would likely start building in many places along the designation
 - NZTA sees Southern Links as one network
 - An issue to be considered will be the likely pace of development within the Hamilton City part of Southern Links
- *How long will it take to build?*
 - About 5 years, however this could be accelerated if necessary
 - Will depend on many factors including the availability of resources such as contractors and materials
- *Where would construction at the Tamahere end fit into a likely plan?*
 - This will depend on the contractor and how they programme it
 - It's likely that initial focus would be on the western end as there are geotechnical issues there with the peat swamp and drainage
- *Could the small piece around the Cobham Drive Bridge (known as the east-west link) be built separately?*
 - This needs to work in with the wide network
 - This piece of a work has a low value-for-money rating if done by itself
- *How will Southern Links align with the Government Policy Statement*
 - The Regional Transport Committee has made Southern Links a priority for the region
 - The new Government has indicated that housing and infrastructure are important, along with modes such as walking, cycling and passenger transport. Southern Links supports all of these
- *If Southern Links is viewed as one network how much does the outcome of HCC's Housing Infrastructure Fund application drive the project? And will HCC take up the loan offered by the Government?*

- HCC: That is a decision for the elected members to take into account as they undertake the review of the 10 year plan. If they do take up the loan, this will become an important feature of the plan
- There are a number of steps to go through before any final decisions are made
- *Why are the Tamahere interchange southbound ramps not showing on the large scale Southern Links maps, will they be removed as part of this project?*
 - This is a mapping oversight
- *Why has the proposed construction date changed from 2041 to 2021?*
 - The initial 2041 date was based on traffic modelling data at the time and was an estimate only
 - The model has been updated using 2013 census data and agreed upon with the Councils. The updated model will inform decision making on construction timing
 - What has changed is the strong growth in and around Hamilton creating pressure on the transport networks
- *The 37 properties acquired by the Transport Agency, where are they?*
 - All along the designation
 - Some surplus land is being held until final design in case it is required for ecological management and mitigation
- *Why were properties purchased prior to the designation being confirmed?*
 - Once the Notice of Requirement has been issued property acquisition can be begin
 - Landowners can apply for NZTA to purchase their property due to financial hardship, this occurred in some cases
- *Will it take 10 years to finish the Cobham/Wairere intersection?*
 - We will get a better understanding of the timeframe for this soon
- *What is going to happen with the north end of Newell Road?*
 - No decision has been made on this yet
 - A study has been done and we will sit down with Hamilton City and Waikato District Councils to work through this. We will make more information public in due course.
- *If the Peacocke development is included in the 10-year plan when will land purchase begin and what will the value of this be?*
 - Land purchase is done on an agreed market value using valuations from the landowner and the purchaser
 - The original land valuations for Southern Links were done in 2012, these are in the process of being updated.
 - HCC: If Council chooses to take up the Housing Infrastructure Fund, this funding will not become available until 1 July 2018

Closing comments and thanks: Barry Dowsett.

Meeting closed: 5.55pm