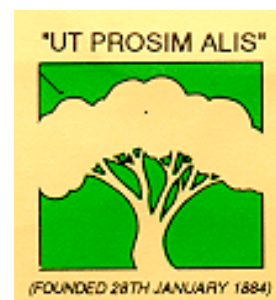


Kilbirnie School
72 Hamilton Road
Hataitai
PO Box 14 543
Kilbirnie



Stewart McKenzie
Project Manager
Mt Victoria Tunnel Duplication Project
NZ Transport Agency
via email

25 February 2014

Dear Stewart

Thank you for the invitation to document Kilbirnie School's concerns about the Mount Victoria Duplication Project.

The Principal and Board of Trustees met with representatives of NZTA twice during 2013, and a community meeting was held on 25 November 2013, providing an opportunity for our wider school community to find out more about the project and to have questions answered.

We have sent you a list of the questions asked, and look forward to receiving the written answers, which we will pass on to our school community.

Despite all of the information, the Board of Trustees still has some major concerns about the project. We do not believe that your plans to date have given enough consideration to the safety of children and families of the school both during and after the project construction. Our key concerns are:

- Rooding around the school
- Safe crossing of Wellington Road

ROADING AROUND THE SCHOOL

Despite asking for more detail about traffic plans, we were disappointed that at the November meeting, no more substantial designs were provided to ensure safe travel to the school, including how pick up/drop off zones would work and where they would be placed.

While we understand that Moxham Avenue, Hamilton Road and Raupo Street are not strictly on SH1, your proposed changes will have a significant knock-on effect for these streets, which we believe needs serious consideration. We were also advised that your team meets regularly with the WCC Transport team, and that

any enquiries should be addressed to your project, so we were under the understanding that you had a mandate to look at these issues.

- Moxham Ave school frontage

With Hataitai traffic entering SH1 westbound via Goa Street, we have concerns that there will be additional traffic build-up outside the school. As well as noise, pollution and safety aspects, we believe more cars on this section of Moxham Ave will have a severe impact on parking for school pick-up and drop-off.

- Hamilton Road school frontage

We were not convinced by your traffic expert that Hamilton Road it is not likely to become a 'rat run'. We believe that more drivers will use Hamilton Road to get to Goa Street, rather than going through Hataitai Village (and the new lights at Taurima Street). Hamilton Road is in many places, a one-lane road, and is used by many families and walking school busses as a safe way to get to school. We believe that there needs to be thought given to a safe crossing near the school, a means of slowing traffic who use the road, and again, designated pick up and drop off zones.

We are also concerned about increased congestion in Hamilton Road due to:

- The only access to Hataitai from Newtown will be via Hamilton Road because of the plan to remove right hand-turn from Ruahine Street into Goa Street.
- The plan to limit car parks around Goa Street and Moxham Ave will force commuters who currently park in Moxham Ave and catch the bus to the city to seek day-long parking in nearby streets surrounding the school.
- Vehicles moving from Hataitai to Kilbirnie/Miramar will avoid Moxham Ave altogether and use the already congested Hamilton Road.

SAFE CROSSING OF WELLINGTON ROAD

Wellington Road is the mid-point of Kilbirnie School's catchment zone. Currently 84 children (42% of the roll) come to school from the Kilbirnie side of the zone, and even now many people opt to drive their children to and from school rather than letting children walk and cross Wellington Road in its current configuration with a controlled crossing.

During the school day, classes make heavy use of the recreational facilities in Kilbirnie. In a usual week there will be two classes of 20-30 children walking to the Kilbirnie Swimming pool, and two class trips to the library, and many more children have after-school activities in Kilbirnie.

Current safety concerns will be further exacerbated when the road is widened to include another lane each way for cars, and also possible additional bus lanes as this intersection will be where the buses turn as part of the core spine corridor of the proposed bus rapid transport system.

We do not believe that a controlled crossing will be sufficient, and while there was discussion about a teacher aide being put on the road crossing before and after school, this is not foolproof. It would not allow for safe crossing during weekends and after hours, and it was unclear who would pay the person. We believe it is just too easy to stop that employment, just as it is easy to re-programme the phasing of traffic lights.

It is also important to note that a significant number of children and young people from Hataitai and Roseneath attend Evans Bay Intermediate, St Patrick's College, St Catherine's College, and Rongotai College, and use this crossing to walk to and from school.

CONCLUSION

“We don't want to just improve the road, we want to improve how people connect with the city around them.” Rod James, NZTA, Dominion Post, 15/1/14

We are concerned that your plans have been so focussed on speedier access from the eastern suburbs to the city, that you have forgotten about the community that the road dissects. There is a community that lies on both sides of the road, connected strongly by our school, and we are worried that your plans will erode this community if it is not easy to cross the road.

While your project does deliver significant pedestrian and cyclist benefits, it is also important that Hataitai/Roseneath residents are able to be connected to Kilbirnie/Lyall Bay to take advantage of the amazing range of recreational resources that are available in the Eastern suburbs, and vice versa.

We believe serious consideration must be given to installing a pedestrian overbridge over Wellington Road.

At an initial meeting with NZTA representatives, an overbridge was dismissed as too expensive, but we believe that this is short-sighted. This could be a great opportunity to either continue the wind sculpture series with the bridge integrated into a sculpture design, or to make it a feature that will frame the view upward to the town belt.

There are many examples of feature bridges done well. A large public sculpture in this area lends itself to a depiction of Ngake and Whataitai, or as a link to Te Akatarewa pa. An overbridge would also mitigate traffic and bus disruption and provide a safer route for pedestrians during the road construction process.

In summary, as we feel that the school is a significant stakeholder in this project, we would like more, regular, active engagement with NZTA and WCC traffic representatives to discuss:

- safe access to the Kilbirnie School entrances and surrounding roads; and
- design feasibility for a pedestrian overbridge across Wellington Road.

As many of the points raised above are relevant to others outside the school's direct community, we will also be making contact with principals of local schools, community organisations, Eastern Zone Councillors, and our local MP, Annette King, to discuss these issues with them.

Yours sincerely

Chris Montgomerie
Chair, Board of Trustees
Kilbirnie School