

WQTMA

Wynyard Quarter Transport Management Association

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Submission in respect of: **THE CONGESTION QUESTION (TCQ)**

Date: May 2021

Name of submitter: Wynyard Quarter Transport Management Association ('WQ TMA')

1. Wynyard Quarter Transport Management Association - background

1.1 Wynyard Quarter Transport Management Association (WQ TMA) is an independent group representing developers, landowners, employers, the marine and fishing industries, and the arts and hospitality sector which collectively have, and continue to develop an environment to work, live and play. The former industrial area is now booming with offices, housing, and a vibrant entertainment sector. The area is home to some major employers including Air New Zealand, ASB, Datacom, Fonterra, Kiwibank, Sanford, Southern Cross and has a reputation as the innovation hub for Auckland. The area currently is home to approx. 15,000 employees. The map below shows the TMA area boundary.



1.2 The TMA was established under Part 14.9.3.10 (Wynyard Quarter) of the Auckland District Plan 2004. It was made a condition of the Planning Consent and Environment Court Order 2012. Trip generation ceiling targets were specified in the District Plan (DP) and are linked to the extent and timing of development permitted in Wynyard Quarter. The Resource Consent for Wynyard Quarter set a target of a 30:70 mode split by 2020. With 70% of all journeys being by sustainable modes. However, this figure has been anecdotally revised to a 20:80 or even 10:90.

1.3 The objectives of the TMA as outlined in the Rules are as follows:

- a to advocate to the Government, local authorities and/or persons, corporations or associations for the improvement of transport services and transport infrastructure to benefit the Wynyard Quarter community;
- b to promote and share information with regard to access and transportation in and around Wynyard Quarter; and

- c to do all things as are, or may be incidental to, or conducive to, the attainment of these objectives.
- 1.4 There are constraints on access to Wynyard Quarter. This has resulted in a heavy reliance on trip generation management, and restrictions have been placed on office activity under the Auckland Unitary Plan¹ to ensure that vehicle traffic entering and exiting the Wynyard Quarter is not increased. The mission of WQ TMA is to be the voice of the Wynyard Quarter: creating a thriving safe environment for business and community and fostering economic vitality by building partnerships, and delivering targeted transport initiatives.
- 1.5 WQ TMA recognise that the Wynyard Quarter area is being developed to become a unique waterfront location embracing a thriving economic hub, as well as playing host to major events (for example the America's Cup). WQ TMA understands that the regeneration and development of the area is ongoing. WQ TMA are keen to ensure that the area gets the very best transport infrastructure to support the ongoing economic growth of the area. This means well connected, reliable, frequent sustainable transport options of high quality that ensure the safety and well-being of all users of the area.

2. Comments and observations

- 2.1 The objectives of any congestion charging need to be clearly stated. These need to be reframed and linked to other outcomes, such as reducing emissions. The public need to be clear on the purpose of this additional tax.
- 2.2 Congestion charging revenue needs to be ring fenced for transport related projects in Auckland. This could include helping to fund a second Waitemata Harbour crossing for active modes and public transport.
- 2.3 The introduction of congestion charging needs to be done in conjunction with significant improvements in public transport (infrastructure and services) and a comprehensive travel demand management programme i.e., one that includes travel behaviour change measures.
- 2.4 Areas with poor connectivity to public transport need to be identified and solutions put in place, before congestion charging is introduced.
- 2.5 TCQ predictions for reductions in trips and increases in public transport patronage need to be revised to reflect the post Covid environment.
- 2.6 WQ TMA supports the proposal to prevent financial hardship by funding congestion charging fees to those on low incomes.
- 2.7 WQ TMA does not believe that significant mode shift will be achieved by the \$7 capped daily fee alone. Increasing the levy may increase change, but because travel choices are often entrenched habits, we would recommend and endorse the development of a package of travel behaviour change interventions to 'flank' the introduction of the congestion charge, making best use of its power as a 'trigger' for change. This package should have its

¹ Auckland Unitary Plan, 1214.8.2(2)(a)(ii) requires that restricted discretionary office activities in the Wynyard Quarter have to demonstrate that the activity, along with any other existing, permitted or consented activities do not exceed the following trip generation targets: 3650 vehicles per hour two way; 2500 vehicles per hour one way inbound or outbound during the weekday morning peak (7am to 9am); and 2500 vehicles per hour one way outbound or inbound during the weekday afternoon peak (4pm to 6pm).

techniques grounded in behavioural economics and other models of change that recognise how people make travel decisions and how these can be influenced.

- 2.8 WQ TMA would urge caution on ring fencing areas as this may lead to “hide and ride” scenarios creating problems by displacing or encouraging car trips in local communities located on the boundaries.
- 2.9 WQ TMA would support moves to remove fringe benefit tax for employers who subsidise public transport, bicycle purchase as well as other sustainable transport initiatives for their employees. This should be encouraged and fiscally supported.
- 2.10 Public transport needs to be well connected, affordable, reliable from all areas of Auckland. Efficient journey times from the ‘Supporting Growth’ areas should be provided too. We need to be looking at the growth of Auckland and how that will be served by public transport over the next decades.

3. Conclusion

Congestion in Auckland is currently causing major issues. This is against a backdrop of minimal international tourists and many people still working partly from home.

No one is disputing that there is a congestion problem. What needs to be discussed is the suite of measures which could be rolled out to evoke behaviour change and move people away from cars, at peak times. There also needs to be a robust discussion about the long-term plans for sustainably moving people and freight around Auckland.

Nimbyism is not going to work. Everyone in Auckland needs to look at the bigger picture, including: reducing emissions, enabling more reliable (and liveable) journey times, moving to, and adopting sustainable modes of transport that are shared and active.

WQ TMA supports the concept of using travel demand management levers (which could include congestion charging) to reduce congestion in Auckland. A comprehensive travel demand programme needs to be activated and fully funded, to ensure long term permanent behaviour change. This programme will assist in reducing congestion and encouraging moves to sustainable transport options throughout Auckland.