

Submission in respect of: Wynyard Crossing Bridge

Application number: BUN60340404

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

- This is a submission on an application by Panuku Development, Auckland for resource consents for the establishment of a new Wynyard Crossing Bridge along the same alignment as, and to replace the existing temporary bridge. The proposal intends to establish a new Te Wero Crossing in the Wynyard Basin along Auckland's waterfront.
- The TMA is not a trade competitor for the purposes of section 308B of the Resource Management Act 1991.
- The TMA supports the concept of constructing a new bridge in Wynyard Quarter.

1. WQ TMA observations

The existing bridge was a temporary construction put in place for the Rugby World cup in 2010. A decade on and the whole area is undergoing one of the biggest urban regeneration projects in New Zealand. The existing bridge has a resource consent that expires on 2 August 2020 and a building consent that lapses on 2 October 2020. The existing bridge was constructed to have an operational life of six years and is now well over that six-year period.

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, Sanford and has a reputation as the innovation hub for Auckland.

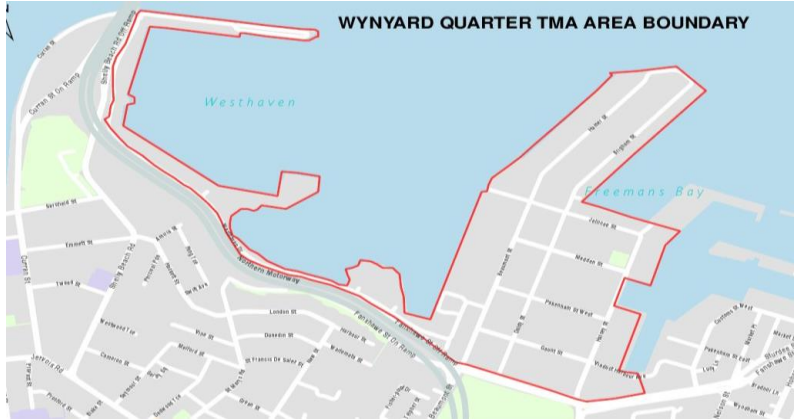
The Resource Consent for Wynyard Quarter set a target of a 30:70 mode split by 2020. With 70% of all journeys being by sustainable modes. However, this figure has been anecdotally revised over time to a 20:80 or even a 10:90 split, in order to keep the whole area moving. The vehicle ceiling targets set for the area in the District Plan aim to reduce the number of single occupancy vehicles at peak times. These targets will be easier to achieve if accessibility and connectivity is enhanced. WQ TMA support programmes that take advantage of emerging technologies to manage congestion, improve safety, collect data and influence travel demand. WQ TMA believe that they have a critical role to play in changing travel behaviour and reducing congestion in and around Wynyard Quarter.

The current bridge has had a very positive impact on increasing connections around the waterfront. Cycling and walking numbers have increased and more recently electric scooters and electric bikes have become the preferred mode of transport for many. The bridge is no longer able to cope with the current or future demands the area will place on it. The new SkyPath on the Harbour Bridge will connect Westhaven to Northcote Point, enabling far more people to cycle and walk into and through the area, for both their commute and leisure purposes.

It is beyond the scope of the TMA to comment on the design of the new bridge from an engineering perspective. WQ TMA see the new bridge as an opportunity to futureproof the connectivity of the area, and would urge consideration of the recommendations outlined in section 4.

2. Wynyard Quarter Transport Management Association - background

2.1 Wynyard Quarter Transport Management Association (WQ TMA) is an independent group representing developers, landowners, employers, the marine and fishing industries, and the hospitality and entertainment sector which collectively have, and continue to develop an environment to work, live and play. TMA membership represents the majority of the affected parties located within the Wynyard Quarter in relation to transportation. The map below shows the TMA area boundary.



- 2.2 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 WQ.
- 2.3 The objectives of the TMA as outlined in its 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.
- 2.4 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.
- 2.5 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 understand 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.

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).

3. Comments and recommendations

3.1 Assessment of Environmental Effects

3.1.1 10.4.2 (page 70) AUP Objectives and Policies

I214 Wynyard Precinct & Chapter I211 Viaduct Harbour Precinct states:

Encourage a high level of pedestrian amenity along identified existing and future routes, including Te Wero Bridge, which reinforces the ease, comfort and safety of the pedestrian environment (I214.3(22)).

Comment: the key point noted here is safety of the pedestrian environment. WQ TMA are unsure how that will be achieved without some sort of separation of modes on the bridge or a requirement for those on wheeled modes (with the exception of wheelchairs and mobility aids) to slow down.

Recommendation: Safety for all users of the bridge is paramount therefore WQ TMA would like to see some form of separation between pedestrians and other modes. This doesn't need to be a physical barrier; it could be as simple as areas on the bridge demarked by different surfaces- people on wheels prefer smooth surfaces and can be encouraged to slow down by certain surfaces.

3.1.2 11.3 (page 77) Positive effects states:

"The proposed bridge will result in a number of positive effects to the immediate and wider environment. The striking architecture of the bridge and its proposed dynamic opening movement will provide a destination attraction. This will result in positive character and amenity outcomes. It will also attract the public to this locality, which in turn will improve socio economic outcomes for the neighbourhood.

The continuation of the public space network between Te Wero Island and Wynyard Precinct will also improve connectivity along the water's edge and enhance recreational opportunities for the public. The permanent long-term bridge solution will also improve reliability of the connection and will facilitate efficient shared pedestrian and cyclist/scooter movements".

Comment: WQ TMA agree that the construction of a new permanent bridge will have a positive impact. WQ TMA further endorse any enhancements to improve the connectivity between Wynyard Quarter and other areas. The concern is the reliability of new bridge structure in terms of predictable journey times.

Recommendation: In order to achieve reliable journey times, WQ TMA would like to see an app-based solution developed as part of this new bridge project. This app would alert users when the bridge is to be in use and users could then seek alternative routes and/or modes. This will mean more predictable journey times and less time waiting for the bridge activations.

3.2 Transport assessment report

3.2.1 2.1 (page 2) states:

"It is therefore important to maintain and a safe and reliable pedestrian and cycle connection and boat access to the Inner Viaduct Harbour".

Comment: It is disappointing that TPC, the independent consultants, did not determine which had priority, marine vessels or active modes (walkers, cyclists and others).

3.2.2 2.1 (page 3) states:

“The scheduled opening time for the bridge is every 20 minutes during the morning and evening peak pedestrian periods (Monday - Friday excluding statutory holidays: 7:30-9:00am and 4:00-5:30pm).”

Recommendation: Review existing afternoon peak hours as 4pm – 530pm may not be current. It is more likely to be 430pm – 630pm for commuters. However consideration also needs to be given to theatre patrons. Evening shows start between 7pm and 8pm. We would therefore ask that 6:30pm until 8pm are included as peak times and patrons given priority to ensure they do not miss the start of performances.

3.2.3 2.4 (page 7) states:

“Walking and cycling (including e-scooters) movements across the Wynyard Crossing are constantly being monitored by Panuku Development Auckland”

Comment: Panuku do not collect walking and cycling movement data across Wynyard Crossing. This is undertaken by Auckland Transport. Micro mobility in any form is not currently counted.

Recommendation: It is critical that the new bridge has modern counting methodologies built in that can count and monitor all forms of active modes accurately. Data that has been presented in earlier consultation appears to be under-reporting the mode share for cyclists and has not captured scooter numbers.

3.2.4 2.5 (page 8) Future walking & cycling demands

Comment: The exponential growth in micro mobility has had a huge impact on how people travel in/out and around Wynyard Quarter. This was not predicted, and as such future demands could be seen to be somewhat unreliable. It is essential growth is planned for even before we know what that growth might look like.

More accurate data could be obtained by undertaking annual staff travel surveys.

Recommendation: That infrastructure is put in place to service the needs of all forms of electric micro mobility. This includes charging stations as well as secure locking facilities.

It is not just staff that travel to the area- if numbers are to be understood, we need to capture residents, visitors and freight movements.

3.2.5 3.2 (page 13) Suitability of shared use

“Typically, where paths are shared with high volumes of users, and in this case pedestrians and cyclists, concerns primarily come from the perspective of safety. The concerns can include the speed of cyclists passing too close to pedestrians or pedestrians suddenly stepping into the path of cyclists and risking collision”.

Comment: no consideration is given to the newer forms of micro mobility such as electric scooters, electric skateboards etc.

Recommendation: Safety for all users of the bridge is paramount therefore WQ TMA would like to see some form of separation between pedestrians and other modes. This doesn't need to be a physical barrier; it could be as simple as areas on the bridge demarked by different colours or surfaces.

3.2.6 3.6 (page 20) Bridge opening / closing operation

Recommendation: WQ TMA requests that an app based alert system is developed and introduced, at the same time as the new bridge, to give advanced warning of openings and closing. Those who download the app would

have an advanced warning of when the activations are going to occur and can therefore plan their journeys to avoid delays and could utilise alternative routes and or modes.

3.2.7 4 (page 27) Construction related transport effects

h) Specify measures to reduce vehicle traffic and parking demands associated with construction staff;

Recommendation: WQ TMA assert that no parking should be available to construction staff and personalised journey planning be undertaken in advance of the construction, with the workers engaged to complete the project. A Construction Traffic Management Plan also needs to be in place and consultation with the TMA is critical.

4. Summary of recommendations

- 4.1 Safety for all users of the bridge is paramount therefore WQ TMA would like to see some form of separation between pedestrians and other modes. This could be as simple as areas on the bridge demarked by different colours or surfaces to seek to separate “heels from wheels”.
- 4.2 In order to achieve reliable journey times, WQ TMA would like to see an app-based solution developed as part of this new bridge project. This app would alert users when the bridge is to be in use and users could then seek alternative routes and/or modes. This will mean more predictable journey times and less time waiting for the bridge activations.
- 4.3 It is critical that the new bridge has modern methodologies built in that can count and monitor all forms of active modes accurately. This needs to be included as part of this project.
- 4.4 Now that the area is more developed, WQ TMA would like to see bridge priority given to land-based transport i.e. those crossing on foot, or other active modes. WQ TMA would advocate for an open discussion with the parties representing boats berthing in the inner harbour for a balanced approach for boats needing access to and from their berths and those needing to use the bridge at peak times. WQ TMA favour priority being swayed in favour of the high volume of people using active modes to move in and out of the area. It could be that the bridge has set activation times, say on the hour and half hour. This would give certainty to all parties.
- 4.5 WQ TMA assert that no parking should be available to construction staff connected with this project. Journey planning should be undertaken in advance of the construction, and sustainable commuting methods promoted. The TMA ask to be included in the consultation of the Construction Traffic Management Plan for the project.
- 4.6 WQ TMA would encourage the new bridge to provide some form of shelter from inclement weather on both sides to provide protection while people are waiting during bridge activations.

5. Conclusion

Wynyard Quarter Transport Management Association are supportive of a new bridge but would like the recommendations outlined above in section 4 to be included as part of the project.