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Rt Hon Helen Clark
Prime Minister
PO Box 18888
Parliament Buildings
Wellington

Dear Ms Clark

Onehunga is currently undergoing some major changes and has been highlighted as a key growth area for Auckland. This area currently accommodates a corridor of all essential services such as power, gas and water for Northland and North/West Auckland. The current expansion of SH20 has exposed serious concerns that if not dealt with urgently could potentially result in the vulnerability of delivery to Northland and Greater Auckland of power and these other vital services.

During meetings to highlight our concerns we have been made aware of the absence of Infrastructure development coordination in Onehunga provided by Auckland Regional Council, Auckland City Council, Transpower, Watercare and other infrastructural service providers.

Background

Government infrastructure projects have significantly damaged Onehunga Bay over the last 50 years. Onehunga Bay is the only natural south to north route through Auckland for network utility services. Past development has been ad hoc, uncoordinated and lacking a master plan. Central, regional and local government have worked without overall coordination. Contributing to the problem is the narrow focus of government infrastructure agencies on only their core business, rather than coordinating with other agencies in a 'whole of government' approach. As a consequence of this ad hoc infrastructure service development, the now congested Onehunga corridor represents a significant weak link in the Auckland infrastructure chain in a disaster event, and a potential danger to local residents. Onehunga Bay is essentially symptomatic of a wider problem around the governance of planning and implementing major infrastructure projects in Auckland. Due to the need and the lack of leadership, The Onehunga Enhancement Society (TOES) was formed by concerned Onehunga residents and businesses to provide advocacy, support and direction.

The Future

This process is likely to continue for our community. At present the following organisation propose new infrastructure through the narrow Onehunga Bay corridor.

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| • Transit New Zealand | New Manukau Harbour bridge |
| • Transit New Zealand | Expanded motorway network |
| • Transit New Zealand | Gloucester Park interchange upgrade |
| • Transpower | Upgrade 3 overhead transmission lines and network |
| • ARTA | Double railway track along side motorway/across new bridge |
| • ARTA | New Onehunga railway bus station |
| • Vector Limited | Designation of gas pipeline corridor |
| • Water Care Limited | New 1.5 meter water pipe |
| • Auckland City Council | Redevelopment of Neilson Street |

TOES Proposal

The proposed Transit SH 20 motorway redevelopment through Onehunga represents a once in a lifetime opportunity to construct an underground utilities corridor through the area. An initial starting point for this is preparing, in consultation with the community, an Onehunga Bay master plan. All government infrastructure agencies would be required to participate in the process and follow the plan. Central to such a plan is construction of a utilities corridor funded jointly by these agencies.

All infrastructure services would ultimately run through the corridor, including the present overhead electricity lines across Onehunga Bay. This would reinforce the electricity supply through Auckland and provide a series of strategic energy exit points along the route as the electricity demand increases to avoid legal challenges. It would appear that the conditions Transpower operates under and the requirements of the Electricity Commission do not allow Transpower to consider such utility corridors. TOES believe their operating conditions should change to reflect the type of society we live in today and be structured to avoid the adversarial process they currently operate under.

Summary

TOES believe past government infrastructure projects have significantly damaged the Onehunga Bay. Today the utility services present a significant weak link in the Auckland infrastructure chain and potential danger to local residents. The proposed infrastructure work presently planned is a continuation of these past practices, which is unacceptable for our community. To overcome this situation, TOES believes a paradigm shift is required by government infrastructure agencies. These agencies should be required to work together in a whole of government approach, to investigate cost sharing arrangements for developing infrastructure, and jointly contribute to funding infrastructure, rather than focus on only their core business interests. Central to this paradigm shift is working more closely with communities in a non adversarial way with constructive outcomes such as occurred with the recent Eden Park redevelopment decision.

Moreover, we ask that these government agencies accept their environmental and social responsibilities to the people of Onehunga. The natural outcome of such an approach would be acceptance of the recent Commissioners' decisions and recommendations on the proposed SH20 Manukau Harbour Crossing. These in part recommended the construction, in conjunction with SH20 redevelopment, of an underground utilities network corridor across the Onehunga Bay in which current and future infrastructure could be located. TOES propose that the present overhead electricity lines are relocated to the proposed utilities corridor. An essential starting point in this process is preparing an Onehunga Bay master plan, and working in partnership with our community. We would appreciate an opportunity to meet with you to discuss these ideas.

Yours sincerely



Jim Jackson
Chairman,
The Onehunga Enhancement Society