

Kenepuru & Central Sounds



Kenepuru & Central Sounds Residents Association Inc.

Annual Plan Submissions

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9 May 2022

Dear Sir/ Madam

Submission –Annual Plan 2022/2023

This submission concerns the MDC Consultation Document(s) re the Annual Plan 2022/2023 and is made on behalf of the Kenepuru and Central Sounds Residents' Association.

We are a voluntary community organization with scarce resources that has nevertheless, since 1991, endeavoured to represent the interests of our many members (currently around 280, mainly household members) on a variety of local issues. Among other things we look to identify areas where new infrastructure or upgrades of existing infrastructure in the Kenepuru and Central Sounds area is required. We are also alert to the possibility that delivery of safe, efficient road networks for the Sounds may require new operating methods or an assessment of the current contractual arrangements.

Today the Association is submitting on three roading infrastructure related matters. Namely:

- to ensure Council funds allocated for a vital piece of local infrastructure to reduce pressure on a stressed roading network continues to be ring fenced;
- seeking an update on the Council's obligations under the Marlborough Environment Plan to implement a plan of action to assess Climate Change risk on existing Council infrastructure such as the roading network; and
- what we see as the pressing need for Council to fund and recruit a suitably qualified and experienced in-house roading engineer to more effectively monitor and improve the outcomes from its current contractual arrangements, particularly in relation to rural roads.

Need for a Council Roding Engineer

Introduction: NZTA/Waka Kotahi is responsible for the State road network in Marlborough. Council has a statutory obligation as to the maintenance of the integrity of the balance of the roading network in Marlborough. Council has **outsourced** its operational role to NZTA/Waka Kotahi (Marlborough Roads).

NZTA, in turn, has outsourced its operational functions re both State and Council road networks to third party contractors. Council is not a party to those contractual arrangements. Currently Council has no in-house specialist roading engineer expertise. In light of the aftermath of the July storm event the Association increasingly sees this gap as a real impediment to Council securing timely, cost efficient and effective roading outcomes.

Discussion: Satisfactory maintenance outcomes for the Kenepuru road network have always been a core concern for the Association's Committee. About five years ago it became apparent to the then Committee that roading outcomes for the Sounds were sub standard. Over the last four years the Committee has taken a very "hands on" role in looking to improve roading outcomes.

We joined with other similarly concerned Sounds community organisations looking to improve roading outcomes. The introduction of the Cyclic road crew to regularly carry out small maintenance work (cleaning culverts, water tables) before it became a bigger job was one such outcome. Prior to the July storm event we were cautiously optimistic that the new NZTA arrangements with its contractors could result in better local roading outcomes.

The storm event has proved a real challenge for all concerned with the efficiency and availability of the Kenepuru road network. The community has suffered real stress as a result of the consequences of the storm event and disruption to the availability of the Kenepuru Road. The Committee has taken an active interest in the recovery work/programme over this stressful time. For the detail I **attach** as Schedule One the KCSRA roading report delivered to members at our recent 2022 AGM. I stress the author of that report is an experienced civil contractor with significant roading experience.

The completion of repairs to significantly damaged road networks both in the Kenepuru and elsewhere in the Marlborough district is likely to be with us until late 2023.

The Committee has become increasingly concerned that in the absence of an in-house roading engineer there is an excessive reliance on advice from NZTA. Roding outcomes would, in our view, benefit by Council having access to in-house advice as to both the design for and the quality of roading outcomes. This is particularly so given the scale and magnitude of the programme of recovery works ahead.

The absence of in-house professional and skilled roading expertise can be contrasted with the outsourcing arrangements by Council of another core function - waste management. Again operational control of this core function has ben outsourced by way of a long-term contract. However, for this core function, by our count, Council has retained two experienced and professionally skilled in-house staff - a waste management expert and a suitably qualified waste engineer. Both report to and provide expert advice to the Assets and Services Manager. This seems both a sensible and prudent outcome both operationally and from a governance point of view.

We respectfully request that funding be allocated for an in-house roading engineer, reporting to the Assets and Services manager. We are happy to discuss in more detail what we see as the key matters making up the job description of such a role and the range of desirable professional skills and experience such a person should have.

Climate Change risk to existing Council Infrastructure

A few years back the talk of the impact of Climate Change from rising sea levels became a more personal thing for the Association. We were required to work closely with NZTA/Waka Kotahi to get a section of a threatened local unsealed road better protected and upgraded.

With this practical experience behind us we paid special attention to Climate Change issues as covered in the Marlborough Environment Plan (MEP).

As a result we argued for and achieved some changes to cover what we perceived as significant policy shortcomings in the relevant chapter(s). Thus a new Policy 19.2.2 was inserted in the MEP to cover the need for Council to review and assess the risk to **existing** council coastal assets - such as roads. A new policy 19.2.3 was also inserted requiring Council to take **active steps** to identify and prioritise areas and assets under threat from inundation. This was backed up with a Method of Implementation (19.M.10). This **requires** the development of an action plan by Council.

Recent media reports highlight that the rate at which sea levels are expected to rise has **accelerated**. Nevertheless, as far as we can ascertain from the Annual Plan Consultation documents there is neither funding allocated nor discussion as to progress on such a review concerning the road network in these documents.

When we raised this matter last year we were advised that a working group had been formed and they were making good progress. At the hearing it would be useful, we respectfully suggest, if a more expansive Climate Change/roading issues update was available.

Log Barge site to take pressure off Kenepuru Road

The start of this project goes back to 2014.

Members became alarmed at the increasing numbers of logging trucks on a road not designed to take such volumes. Council research suggests that in the next little while there could be as much as 500,000 tonnes due for market.

Even before the July 2021 storm event it was clear to the Association (which benefits greatly from having two experienced and competent civil contractors on its Committee) that there was no way the narrow, windy and hugely stressed Kenepuru Road was in a fit state to take such huge loads and heavy truck movements. The significant health and safety issues from any such proposal would require extensive remedial road works to mitigate the risks.

As a result of close work by the Association over a number of years Council agreed to put funding aside for a log barge site. Its purpose is to divert the projected increasing volumes of logging truck traffic away from the soft, narrow and windy Kenepuru Road.

I am sure Councillors appreciate that the July 2021 storm event has firstly emphasized the need for effective well executed and timely road maintenance and upgrades on the Kenepuru network. Secondly it has highlighted in dramatic fashion the absurdity of expecting the Kenepuru Road network to take significant volumes of logs to market safely and efficiently without a significant and very expensive upgrade over and above the recovery works. Further, the actual service level that the network will be restored too is still, we understand, a long-term work in progress by NZTA.

Accordingly, and notwithstanding the current heavily restricted access for large vehicles on the Kenepuru Road we urge Councillors to ensure Council staff are actively engaging with forest owners to progress options to road transportation. It would be extremely unfortunate if Council decides to “sit on their hands” rather than take advantage of the realities of the

situation and work with forest owners to put in place a sea based alternative to the use of Kenepuru Road.

We appreciate the willingness of Councillor Maher – the Assets and Services Committee member responsible for barge sites - to engage with us on this matter. We want to take the opportunity to urge Councillors to support and encourage Counsellor Maher and forest owners to get this project moving. Councillors can rest assured that whilst we see Council and forest owners being primarily responsible for expediting matters we would, if requested, assist Council as best we can.

In the interim **we submit** that the dedicated budget of \$800,000 set aside for the purpose of developing a log transport alternative continues to be ring fenced going forward

Attendance at Hearing

The Associations thanks the Council for the opportunity to make submissions on the Annual Plan. The Association wishes to talk to the above submissions at the hearing.

Yours sincerely

Regards

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Andrew Caddie'.

Andrew Caddie

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Schedule One

Roading report to the Association's 2022 AGM

ROAD REPORT FOR KCSRA KENEPURU & INNER SOUNDS AGM MEETING 22 April 2022

The Committee have been very active in liaising with Marlborough District Council Assets Manager Richard Coningham, Marlborough Roads Engineers and Managers Steve Murrin, and Lucan Orchard, along with the Joint Venture(JV) maintenance contractors, Fulton Hogan(FH) and Heb.

Our aim was to ensure more regular checking and clearing of culverts, water tables, culvert replacement (as necessary) grading of the unsealed sections of gravel roads, along with the metalling of these roads. From the Kenepuru head there is another approx. 100kms of Inner Sounds road. The split is 20kms sealed, 80kms unsealed. The unsealed portion of the road has been badly neglected.

Adrian Harvey and myself felt we were starting to get some progress with the new JV Contractors on the long overdue maintenance of the roads, then the 18 July 2021 storm event instantly stopped this work.

Storm Damage:

It was extremely disappointing for residents/ratepayers to see the near new sections of works, such as the repair at the RP 33km mark, known as the Solomon wall repair, road surface fail, approx. 3 months after it had been completed. This retaining wall repair cost in the vicinity of half a million dollars. The actual wall built by Crafar Crouch (which is a Standard Opus Design) did not fail, but the ancillary works around it (done by others) did. In my opinion, this was caused by either inadequate design or lack of onsite supervision.

The Living wall repair, adjacent to the Torea Road intersection RP 28.5km is another example of a relatively recent repair failure.

I have enclosed a list of some of the meetings the Committee have held with the various parties:

1. KCSRA Committee Meetings where July 2021 Storm Event Primary topic - Nine Meetings

22 July 2021 | 1 August 2021 | 29 August 2021 | 8 September 2021
29 September 2021 | 7 November 2021 | 12 December 2021
7 January 2022 | 27 February 2022

2. Engagement with Councillors

Starts 23 July and ongoing - Deputy Mayor Nadine Taylor, Barbara Faulls,
Mayor John Leggett, Francis Maher

3. Engagement with MDC Recovery Manager - Mr Dean Heiford

Starts 12 and 13 August | initial meeting 16 August with MDC Recovery
Managers, ongoing thereafter | Portage Site visit by Manager 29 October
Site Visit (L Orchard) 11 November | informal meeting 18 January 2022
discussions 2 February 2022

4. Meetings with MRRT/MDC re July Storm 2021 Event - Seven Meetings

KCSRA first meeting with MRRT and MDC 18 August - agree objective
Further meetings 30 August 2021 | 17 September 2021 | 15 October 2021
12 November 2021 | 14 December 2021 | 1 March 2022

5. Engagement with Local Contractors

Meeting 20 August 2021 | Engagement with FH/HEBs as to local
contractor issues 25/26/30 August 2021 | meeting local contractors,
KCSRA, FH/HEBs 31 August 2021 | Engagement 8 September 2021

6. Public meetings hosted by MDC/MRRT

1 September 2021 (ZOOM) | 24 September 2021 (ZOOM) | Physical
Public Meetings (Waitaria and Portage) 7 December 2021 + 29 October
2021 - MDC Recovery Team Manager - Kevin Bright and myself met
onsite with Dean Heiford and found him very supportive of the residents
situation and welfare with a 'get on with it' attitude. Dean then went onto
meet with local residents at the Portage.

MDC: Marlborough District Council
MRRT: Marlborough Road Recovery Team

Marlborough Roads Recovery Team

This team was set up to manage the repairs and reinstatement work throughout the Marlborough region.

James Newton was appointed as the “Director”. Unfortunately, I have personally found him to be very dismissive, and not wanting to engage with the Committee or concerned residents.

James does not seem to comprehend, as to why, we the ratepayers want to be provided with the information for repair designs and onsite methodology, and when this work will all happen..... His stance is all about safety, “life & limb”, but not about how to practically repair the damage on a cost effective and timely basis - winter is fast approaching.

Examples are the Torea Road slips, and the water tank (Rudkins) area road collapse.

We met onsite and showed the **MRCT** where they could practically dump the spoil at Torea. In their wisdom, they once again chose to ignore us - all the spoil was carted and dumped onto the Portage Bay Carpark, only for the majority of it all to be carted back up over the Torea saddle and dumped at one of the spots we had suggested.

Water Tank area road edge drop out - this occurred after the storm event, locals contacted MR telling them the culvert was blocked, water table flooded and urgent clearing was required. No action taken (an excavator was within the area) result was that the road partially collapsed. This is an example of several instances of poor onsite decisions.

It is difficult to comprehend such actions, but ultimately the ratepayer or Government are paying for this?

Recent Positive Works Are:

Edge slump stabilisation

Where contractors have drilled and grouted Reid Bar into good ground, and attached geo grid mesh to assist with holding these slumps, until permanent repairs are completed.

Culvert replacement

Recently a series of long overdue culvert replacements are being carried out along the Kenepuru Road, which is a plus. However, this should be classed as maintenance, not new work. In most other areas in NZ, culvert replacement is carried out without road closures, whereby a single lane access for traffic is still available. Perhaps Marlborough Roads should re think these road closures on these low volume roads?

Local Input

There are a number of engaged residents/ratepayers who have a competent engineering and civil construction background, but instead of the Recovery Team engaging with them and sharing information, they are not.

One part time resident with a civil engineering back ground went to considerable effort to provide information on light weight repair materials, ideal for the 'poor subgrade' on the outside edges of the Kenepuru road. This material has been used very successfully, elsewhere in the South Island. Unfortunately, the information provided, has once again been ignored.

The MR Recovery Team have been very reluctant to employ the competent Inner Sounds based local contractors, who understand the geology and conditions, and have the communities best interest at heart. The Recovery Team have used all number of excuses not to employ the locals, and have instead, opted to employ contractors from outside the area who then engage sub contractors from Christchurch, with some of their staff never having driven a gravel truck before or are not multi skilled. Basically, in my view, the Recovery Team are using several different standards to "lock out" the locals.

The logics and cost of these actions are very questionable.

Final comment

The Area Manager, Lucan Orchard, who has Sounds connections, has been great to work with, but now appears to have been sidelined by the Recovery Team Management, to the detriment of the community desire to get the road back to a good operating level.

The residents need to be aware that a lot of the poor onsite organisation will ultimately be very costly to us all.

Basically, the lack of forthcoming information from the Recovery Team is in my view, unacceptable.