



Annual Plan Submissions

Marlborough District Council
PO Box 443
Blenheim 7240

Email: annualplan@marlborough.govt.nz

Andrew Caddie

President KCSRA

c/- PO Box 5054

Springlands

Blenheim 7241

email: president@kcsra.org.nz

WWW: kcsra.org.nz

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Dear Madam/Sir

Submission –Annual Plan 2023/2024

This submission concerns the Council consultation process re the proposed Annual Plan 2023/2024 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 a roading infrastructure related matter. Namely:

- 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.

We also wish to comment on progress around a matter we raised as submission in last years Annual Plan process last year namely:

- 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.

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 for 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 2021 and August 2022 storm events 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 six years ago it became apparent to the then Committee that roading outcomes for the Sounds were sub standard. Over the last five years the Committee has taken a very “hands on” role in looking to improve roading outcomes.

For example we joined with other similarly concerned Sounds community organizations 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 2021 and August 2022 storm events we were cautiously optimistic that the new NZTA arrangements with its contractors could result in better local roading outcomes.

These storm events have 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 events and disruption to the availability of the Kenepuru Road. The Committee has taken an active interest in the recovery work/programs over this stressful time. For the detail I **attach** as Schedule One the KCSRA roading report delivered to members at our recent 2023 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 2024. We note the progress and scope of the Sounds Future Access study. Nevertheless we are confident that there will be Kenepuru Roding network albeit perhaps with different service levels from what the community and other users enjoyed prior to these storm events.

As can be appreciated as a result of our intensive involvement and contact with the workings of the existing contractual structure and the outcomes it delivers (or not) 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. Roothing outcomes would, in our view, be greatly improved for Council, ratepayers (and for that matter tax payers) if Council has 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 program of rural recovery works underway and yet to start. We also respectfully suggest this extra in house expertise should also improve efficacy around the administration of roading contracts.

Further, 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**.

Accordingly, we were encouraged to hear that Council has commissioned NIWA to carry out an extensive coastal study to assess and gauge climate change effects on infrastructure and property in this zone.

As far as we can ascertain the cost of this work is not set out in the Annual Plan. However we note that the Annual Plan Consultation document is very brief and rather broad brush in approach and hope that the NIWA study forms part of this year's Annual Plan. We look forward to confirming that when presenting this submission.

Attendance at Hearing

The Association 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

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Andrew Caddie". The signature is written in a cursive style with a period at the end.

Andrew Caddie

President
Kenepuru and Central Sounds Residents' Association

c/- PO Box 5054, Springlands, Blenheim 7241

email: president@kcsra.org.nz

Schedule One

Rodding report to the Association's 2023 AGM

(see attached)

ROAD REPORT FOR KCSRA – KENEPURU & CENTRAL SOUNDS AGM MEETING 8 APRIL 2023

Firstly, apologies, as Heather and I are unable to attend this meeting.

KCSRA aim is to concentrate in getting the Marlborough Distric Council (MDC) and Marlborough Roads (MR), Joint Venture to concentrate on getting the actual maintenance and storm damage works completed in a competent manner and at a sensible cost.

The July 21 storm damage repairs, whilst mainly funded by the NZTA Flood Damage Fund, was not organised or implemented on a competent or cost-effective basis, and was only partially completed, when the August 22 storm hit the area.

With the August 22 event, the community had a quicker response, partially due to the Recovery Team being still in place from July 21, and with the Committee promptly advocating to MDC. an MR for the road to be opened up for residents, light vehicles, and trailers, as soon as possible.

The local based contractors, Price and Goodlass were given the go ahead to carry out emergency road clearance and did a very good job of initially cutting a track through the various over slips and slumps, forming bunds etc only then to be put off.

Around the Portage, Tara Bay area, the local residents (Grey Power) arrived with tractors, mini excavators, chainsaws, a lot of hard work, all done on a voluntary basis, and set an example to the Fulton Hogan – HEB Construction Joint Venture on how to provide limited access through the over slips, in these events.

From September 2022, the roading committee, has held approx. 7 meetings plus 3 onsite meetings with MDC - MR Recovery team to advocate and ensure that the repair work would be carried out on a normal cost effective basis, (not over engineered as the consultants did in the July 21 event), with the use of minimal temporary traffic management, compared to the absurd waste of money after the July 21 event.

At these meetings, we found it was easier for us to provide them with a priority schedule of work, that was required for community access.

The objective of these meetings was to get the over slip materials removed off the road, clean and deepen the water tables, open up culvert entrances and have blocked/damaged culverts either cleaned out or replaced, with the over slips to be re-vegetated by hydro seeding using a manuka bush mix to be completed by end of March.

The committee challenged the MDC in regards to the way they have organised this recovery work, in particular their employment of one very inefficient contractor.

Finally, we have convinced MDC to re utilise local contractors, Price & Goodlass, and hire other competent contractors, such as Edridge for grader work.

One of the committee's major concerns has been the lack of competent, onsite organisation and attention to detail.

It was comforting to see that in February 2023 MR appointed Gary Duffy, engineer, as the new recovery manager for the Kenepuru and outer Sounds area, as a replacement. His presence has considerably improved the onsite works organisation, and provided a better line of communication.

Gary is now contacting us to discuss the proposed programme of works and giving the committee the opportunity to have some input.

The committee has recently been given a list of the actual culverts in place along Kenepuru Road, with a proposed work schedule that includes culvert replacements etc.

Outer Sounds

From March onwards the gravel sections of the road in the outer sounds are receiving long overdue maintenance of the road. Edridge Contracting's grader, with a competent operator, is working throughout the Outer Sounds, cleaning out the water tables, and reshaping the road. The Price crew carting and spreading limited maintenance gravel.

BAU (Business as usual, Maintenance Contract)

Apparently, there is further work scheduled for these roads under BAU contract.

This BAU work appears to always be very slow to get started.

However, Lucan Orchard is now back in charge of this BAU work, hopefully this will happen much quicker under his competent leadership.

The committee is liaising with the MDC & MR to better understand how this BAU contract is set up and how the various works (if ever done) are charged against various sections of the road. It appears to be a very complex and over complicated system, which undoubtedly does not provide a good outcome for the rate paying community.

The committee are of the belief that MDC. need to employ their own in-house roading engineer, who has considerable experience in particular with rural road maintenance. MDC has an Assets Manager and 3 waters engineers but no roading engineer.

Marlborough District Council is the only Council in NZ that uses NZTA to manage their roading system.

MR is a division of NZTA (Waka Kotahi), which manages all the State Highways in NZ. Unfortunately for the ratepayers, the **bureaucratic rigidity, Temporary Traffic Management Ideology** of the NZTA system is extremely expensive for low volume rural roads in Marlborough.

We can only advocate for positive improvement.

Regards

Alistair Cameron