

Overview of the Kenepuru & Inner Sounds Rooding system – Position paper – Moving forward – Recovery of Kenepuru Road Network post August 2022

A. Introduction

It is my belief that the Waka Kotahi / NZTA road maintenance management system that the Council uses, has not, and will not, work well for the Kenepuru ratepayers going forward.

HEBS were the previous maintenance contractors for a 9 year period ending approx. 2020. Towards the end of the contract it is accepted by Marlborough Roads that HEBS did very little maintenance work in the Inner Kenepuru. From a ratepayer perspective it appeared that it was only when they were under duress due to ratepayers complaints, that they would be seen.

The current Council road maintenance management system, is via Marlborough Roads (MR) using a complicated partnership/joint venture approach. As I understand, the make up of MR funding is a combination of part Council funding (49%) NZTA funding (51%). Then there is a contractual management arrangement with NZTA and Council. Estentially NZTA/Marlborough Roads manage the Council roading network for the Council, as well as the state highway roading system. NZTA management (also known as MR) have now it appars combined under the one umbrella/brand with the new Joint Venture Maintenance Contractors, being HEBS and Fulton Hogan, for a new look MR brand.

This contract will run for approximately 9 years.

B. Joint Venture maintenance & recovery team repair work

Whatever the KCSRA/community suggests is used as an industry standard approach in other parts of NZ. for repair or maintenance issue, the joint venture take exception with and the responsible Council Assets and Services Manager, Richard Conningham, does not appear to wish to challenge this approach.

We feel the JV staff take a condescending attitude to any community member who challenges their poor performance and lack of maintenance. Richard, as the Asset Manager, should seriously be challenging their poor performance and horrendous costly ways of carrying out the work. In many cases, the work is done in an incorrect logical order, as per standard practice.

The Council should be looking, as to how they can carry out the storm remediation on a simpler, more cost effective basis.

We believe that Council needs its own in house civil roading engineer, such as other Councils have, rather than being brain washed by the NZTA system. At a public meeting at Waitaria Hall a resident challenged Andrew James about the Takaka Hill repairs, Andrew openly said they had not performed competently on this repair.

The ratepayers have a group of extremely competent , logically thinking people, with a diverse range of business experience, including engineering, civil construction, building logging, accountancy, legal, etc along with many of the farmers who maintain their own roading systems. However, under the present Management system, we are all being shut out of any decision making for the future of the area, other than input from our elected Councillors

C. Recovery Team make up

After the July 21 storm event, a Recovery Team was set up by Council and was lead by the very capable Dean Heiford, who was very approachable and would listen to the affected ratepayers concerns. Unfortunately, when it came to the ongoing physical repair works within the recovery team the, work was delegated to a new Programme Director, (James Newton who has a back ground in Traffic Safety Engineering) who would not liase, listen or accept ratepayers input. Instead, delegating the work to staff from FH and the JV contractors were used.

Clearly some of these staff have a conflict of interest. Public opinion would say that some of these staff are more concerned with their performance bonus's and project image, rather than repairing the storm damage on a sensible cost effective basis.

Many examples can be shown of these failings, and work having to be redone, all at a major time, cost & travel.

From the ratepayers perspective, the entire work has been given to the JV Maintenance contractors to organise and carry out. They are very reluctant to use the locally based, experienced competent local contractors.

The JV provide all manner of trivial excuses as to why they cannot employ the local contractors, instead chose to use various sub contractors from outside the area.

One in particular, were allowed to operate for a considerable time, in an unsupervised manner. They in turn, employed subcontractors from CHCH area

who appeared to be deliberately slowing the job down. As one of the crew said, they were “just their killing time”

It is this attitude that needs to be corrected in order for the recovery of the Kenepuru road network to be carried out in a timely and efficient manner.

D. Way Forward- Better KCSRA representation?

This time around we are asking the Recovery Team to appoint suitably experienced ratepayer representatives into their team to bring in fresh thinking on how to carry out the work far more cost effectively.

There have been many figures thrown around re the huge cost of temporary traffic management and the cost of numerous sets of traffic lights. A suggestion would be to get a buy in with the Ratepayer Community and reduce the entire inner sounds to a 30kph speed limit and rezone the entire road under some type of Special Construction Recovery Zone which could eliminate the large temporary Traffic Management costs.

E. We need to Learn from the July 2021 Storm Event

In my view some of the major missteps from July 21 storm event were:

- **Over excavation of most of the over slips** . This exposes a far greater area to erosion from heavy rain, until the slip areas re grows. This over excavation, then creates a large additional cost for excavation/ cartage of spoil away from the site, and logistics of where to place it.
- **Lack of spoil dumping areas** – this should have been resolved prior to much of the slip material being carted away eg Torea Road saga. (with a huge amount of spoil being excavated from a few over slips, carted to Portage carpark, stacked up into a large stockpile, only for it all to be reloaded out again, and the bulk of it going back over to Torea Bay. The local ratepayers had previously shown the Recovery Team where they could stockpile this spoil at Torea, but was ignored by the JV contractor.
- When DOC had major slips on their walking track in the July 21 event, they used excavators to remove the slip material off the track and reform the track and place the spoil on the downside edge of the track,

with no consultation or any public reaction, or issue with Council Compliance Staff.

- Council have over slip spoil coming off DOC land, above the road – this spoil should go back onto DOC land, below the road, or within close vicinity where possible, to avoid the huge additional cost of carting spoil out to Linkwater, and then paying hardfill dumping fees on top of this as well.
- **Under Slips or Drop Outs :** We appreciate some of these can be complex design issues. However, in the case of the area known as the Water Tank slip, a ratepayer engineer and others had been saying to the MR Team that the water table and culvert inlet was blocked and holding a considerable volume of water and the result was the loss of the outside edge of the road, due to not being urgently cleared, even though there was an excavator within 2km.
- **Gravel supplies-** the local rivers, streams, being the Kenepuru, Anakoha and many other smaller creek systems, have large volumes of surplus gravels in them and need to be cleaned out anyway to protect many of the bridges/culvert and river bank systems. When we as the community have suggested that this surplus gravel be used, rather than importing gravel, MR said they do not have Resource Consents in place for extraction. !!!
- In 2018 at Crail Bay foreshore erosion, we strongly advocated that they use the emergency powers of the RMA for a two fold benefit - to clean the creek out and save the bridges, and: use this gravel to build up the road around the foreshore.
- Why they would not do this in the 2021 event is unfathomable.
- MDC, as the Unitary authority, should have **global consents** in place for exactly the purpose for protecting their infrastructure by excavating

these rivers and having the material available for their roading systems, along with designated spoil dumping areas.

To sum up:

Council needs to push back against the NZTA- Waka Kotahi system, and take much firmer financial and organisational control of the JV Contractors or the ratepayers will be without a road.

Looking to Involve the local Ratepayers in the Kenepuru Road Recovery decision making process, and the Council and community will, we believe, enjoy a much better outcome.

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