

Client Ref: 310205273

31 October 2022

Otaki Revisited Limited  
c/-The Wellington Company

**Attention: Earl Hope-Pearson**

Dear Earl

**Otaki Maori Racecourse  
Transport Appraisal for Fast Track Referral Application**

This Transport Appraisal is submitted under the Covid-19 Recovery (Fast Track Consenting) Act 2020 as part of an application seeking referral from the Minister for the Environment to fast track the resource consent application to redevelop the Otaki Maori Racecourse. The proposal seeks to provide community housing, alongside its continuing operation as a racecourse.

The Appraisal provides a high-level account of the essential transportation needs and outcomes of the proposed development.

**1.0 Introduction**

Te Tupu Pai, Kapiti Coast District Council's strategy for enabling sustainable growth in Kapiti sets out a 30-year framework for where and how the city should grow. It identifies Otaki as a growth node, with opportunity for intensification in the area around the Racecourse once Otaki Station is connected to the commuter rail network. That project includes extending rail electrification and double-tracking northwards from Waikanae to Otaki, the timing of which will go hand-in-hand with land development. Prior to that infrastructure being realised, increased train services are planned on the existing rail corridor.

With these planning and infrastructure changes and initiatives, the district's vision of encouraging more compact urban growth is supported by more people living closer to urban centres and near train stations, frequent bus routes and connected cycleways, with an intended outcome that more people are likely to leave their car at home and travel by another mode.

The Peka Peka to Otaki Expressway is planned to be open for use in late 2022. The Expressway involves a bypass of Otaki and the provision of a high standard four-lane arterial offering road safety improvements, increased travel time reliability, and reduced congestion at major pinch points such as at Otaki. The corridor includes a shared path for cyclists, pedestrians and horse riders.

These infrastructure improvements will provide increased accessibility and travel mode choice for housing development at the Otaki Maori Racecourse, in a way that provides for residents to connect well locally to facilities and amenities in Otaki, and regionally by road and rail.

## 2.0 The Transport System

The Kapiti district has experienced a number of transport changes in recent years, including the opening of the MacKays to Peka Peka section of the Kapiti Expressway in 2017, that delivered a step change reduction in traffic volumes on the former state highway. An equivalent step reduction is expected on completion of the Peka Peka to Otaki section of the Expressway, presenting opportunities to accommodate growth in local traffic as well as support improved active mode use to, from and between emerging developments areas and urban centres.

Kapiti Coast District Council, Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency, Greater Wellington Regional Council and Metlink have combined to provide significant investment to deliver transport improvements within and around Otaki. By the end of 2022, major changes will be realised in the form of the Peka Peka to Otaki Expressway that provides for unrelated through traffic to bypass Otaki and return the urban roads to local traffic. A fundamental change will be the traffic relief afforded to the current levels of congestion through the Otaki town centre.

With these changes, the Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency will work with the Kapiti Coast District Council to revoke the SH1 designation, signalling the transition of the highway to Council as a local urban road.

From what will be the old highway, the Otaki Maori Racecourse is connected with the Otaki town centre via Rahui Road and its overbridge of the Expressway and railway line, which includes a local service bus route and a wide shared path on its southern side, for use by pedestrians and cyclists. As one of the frontages to the Racecourse, Rahui Road is a local road that operates with a 50km/h speed limit and currently carries around 1,500 vehicles per day. Connecting with Rahui Road, Te Roto Road provides a second road frontage to the Racecourse and also operates with a 50km/h speed limit, carrying around only 300 vehicles per day.

Both roads will provide vehicle access to the proposed housing development and also continue to provide access to the racecourse, including for day-to-day operational purposes, and on event days. The level of traffic currently carried by each is such that they can accommodate future traffic increases, including of the scale that can be anticipated by the proposed development, which could give rise to 1,500 to 2,000 vehicles per day added to each progressively over time. These are not significant volumes and may be identified through the subsequent consent process as needing to be supported with localised improvements.

## 3.0 The Racecourse Proposal

The proposal for the Otaki Maori Racecourse provides for available greenfield land to be developed for the purpose of a new community housing offering between 400 and 580 residential units of various typologies, while also supporting a continuing racecourse function.

The overall layout and housing zones are proposed in the manner presented by the Moller Architects masterplan. Stantec has provided traffic advice and design input to the development of this masterplan.

The masterplan shows primary clusters of housing on the eastern side and southwestern corner of the existing racecourse and a smaller zone in the northwestern corner. Access to the housing is proposed by way of multiple road connections to both Rahui Road and Te Roto Road and by way of internal roading that provides accessibility and permeability across the site, linking the community clusters.

The internal roading takes the form of a hierarchy of roads that present three different functions, as follows:

- a primary road that provides a spine linking between Rahui Road and Te Roto Road. It is proposed that this road be vested;
- a series of connecting roads that provide the main links from the primary road through the housing zones; and

- shared lanes that provide shared space for vehicle access and use by active modes.

The form and design of these roads may depart from Council's technical roading standards to realise a balanced development approach with urban design and landscape outcomes, while ensuring traffic safety. Any departures will be reviewed and developed in collaboration with the Council through the subsequent consent process.

The form and layout of the housing development includes significant attention to active modes. It is planned that the primary road and connecting roads be constructed with footpaths, and that a wide shared path for use by pedestrians and cyclists be established around the perimeter of the racecourse that will provide for efficient people connections to be made between the housing zones and for recreational purposes.

The active mode links will connect with the public street network at Rahui Road and Te Roto Road, from which good walking and cycling access is available to the Otaki town centre, including the railway station. This is facilitated by the improvements arising from the Peka Peka to Otaki Expressway project which has included grade separation of the railway line and Expressway via the Rahui Road overbridge. Again, localised off-site improvements may be confirmed through the subsequent consent process that will facilitate strong active mode outcomes, including for example safe connections across Te Roto Road.

#### **4.0 Scope of Future Transport Assessment to support Fast Track Application**

The Racecourse is well located in a transport sense. It is close and within walking and cycling distance to the facilities and amenities of the Otaki town centre, including the railway station, and well connected by road locally and regionally, including with the improvements afforded by the Peka Peka to Otaki Expressway.

Traffic movements from the site will be distributed to and from Rahui Road and Te Roto Road. Both roads have available capacity to accommodate additional traffic movements of the scale likely to be generated by development of the Racecourse site in the manner proposed, and indeed as anticipated by Te Tupu Pai. Within these corridors, it is anticipated that local improvements will be developed during the subsequent design phases and consent process, including at the site access points and at the Rahui Road / Te Roto Road intersections, that will ensure safe access for all modes.

For the fuller fast-track application to follow, the further transport assessment of the proposal can be expected to be informed by traffic modelling using the Council's district-wide transport model. The purpose of this modelling will be to determine impacts on the surrounding network and the form and scale of mitigation measures, should they be required, in addition to the site access and intersection focused improvements noted above.

At this stage, it is not expected that any significant adverse transport effects warranting substantial mitigation would be triggered by traffic from the proposed housing development, noting that the existing highway network in the vicinity currently carries significantly higher volumes of traffic than it will in the future, and that a step change reduction in traffic volumes on the immediate network presents opportunities to accommodate local activity growth from the likes of the proposed Racecourse redevelopment. This is reflected in Council's desire to encourage development within Otaki.

In line with the District Plan requirements for activities that generate more than 100 vehicle movements per day, the Transport Assessment that will accompany the application will address any adverse effects of development traffic on the transport network. Detailed analysis at this next stage will ensure network capacity and safety can be maintained, and considered in the context of the District Plan's transport policies as well as compliance with the Council's Subdivision and Development Principles and Requirements standards. This includes in respect of the internal network of roads and lanes for which any design departures will be developed with the Council.

The assessment will include in respect of transport choices other than car, for which the site's ten-minute walk to the Otaki train station and good connectivity in the form of cycling and walking infrastructure assists in achieving the transport outcomes sought by Te Tupu Pai.

## 5.0 Conclusion

Te Tupu Pai presents a strategy for growth and development across the Kapiti district. Otaki is identified as a growth node, with opportunity for further development and intensification as infrastructure improvements on the rail corridor come online.

Recent investment in the transport system in the form of the Peka Peka to Otaki Expressway is an enabler to local land development, by way of removing current constraints and traffic congestion, and providing opportunities for improved local travel. The current proposal for future housing development at Otaki Maori Racecourse will be supported well with the added capacity afforded in the network at the completion of the Expressway and the improved safety, travel and active mode facilities offered.

From a transport perspective, the effects of additional traffic activity generated by development of the land as proposed can be appropriately managed and mitigated. This is anticipated to include responses in respect of Rahui Road and Te Roto Road, and in terms of the form of the internal network of roads and lanes.

Furthermore, development of housing in this location will support the ability for other transport improvements to be made in the future, including investment in the rail corridor to extend commuter rail to Otaki.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Mark Georgeson', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Mark Georgeson  
**Operations Leader, Transportation**  
**Stantec New Zealand**