

TRANSPORT MEMO – WELLSFORD NORTH FAST TRACK REFERRAL APPLICATION

1 INTRODUCTION

Wellsford Welding Club Limited (“the applicant”) propose to lodge an application for a referred project under the Covid-19 Recovery (Fast-track Consenting) Act 2020 (the “Act”) to utilise the fast-track consenting process via an expert consenting panel. This application relates to the development of a contiguous landholding at 338 Rodney Street Wellsford, Pt Allot SE118 Psh Of Oruawharo and Pt Lot 4 DP 9919, Monowai Street Wellsford, Pt Lot 4 DP 9919 (“the site”) which are all owned and controlled by the applicant. This landholding forms part of a larger land area within Wellsford that is currently zoned Future Urban Zone under the Auckland Unitary Plan (“AUP”) and will soon form part of a private plan change process to rezone the land from Future Urban to various live residential zones under the AUP. This will enable quality urban development and well-functioning urban environments and will also generate affordable housing north of Auckland. This proposal for a referred project will give effect to the purpose of the Act to promote employment and New Zealand’s recovery to the economic and social impacts of Covid-19 through the enabled constructed and delivery of a comprehensive development that offers employment opportunities and an accelerated supply of quality housing choice and diversity.

To support the application for a referred project, this memo provides a high-level review of the transport aspects of the proposal, including:

- Summary of the proposal and site description;
- Summary of work completed to date;
- Conclusion of the proposed fast-track sites.

2 SITE DESCRIPTION AND PROPOSAL

2.1 SITE DESCRIPTION

The applicant owns 6.7ha of land at the end of Monowai Street, plus 5.8ha of land fronting Rodney Street that are the subject of this Fast Track application, all of which is currently zoned Future Urban (“FUZ”) under the AUP. Figure 2-1 shows the site location with respect to the existing road network.

Figure 2-1: Site Location



Monowai Street is not classified as an arterial road in the Unitary Plan. It is currently 200 m long, connecting Batten Street in the south and terminating with a cul de sac in the north, and has a speed limit of 50 km/h. Monowai Street has an approximate carriageway width of 7 metres, accommodating one traffic lane in each direction. On street parking is permitted on both sides of the road, and there is a footpath on the eastern side of the road.

Rodney Street, also identified as SH1, is classified as an Arterial Road in the Unitary Plan, and a National Road in the Waka Kotahi One Network Road Classification Map. In the vicinity of the site, Rodney Street has an approximate carriageway width of 11 metres, accommodating one traffic lane in each direction.

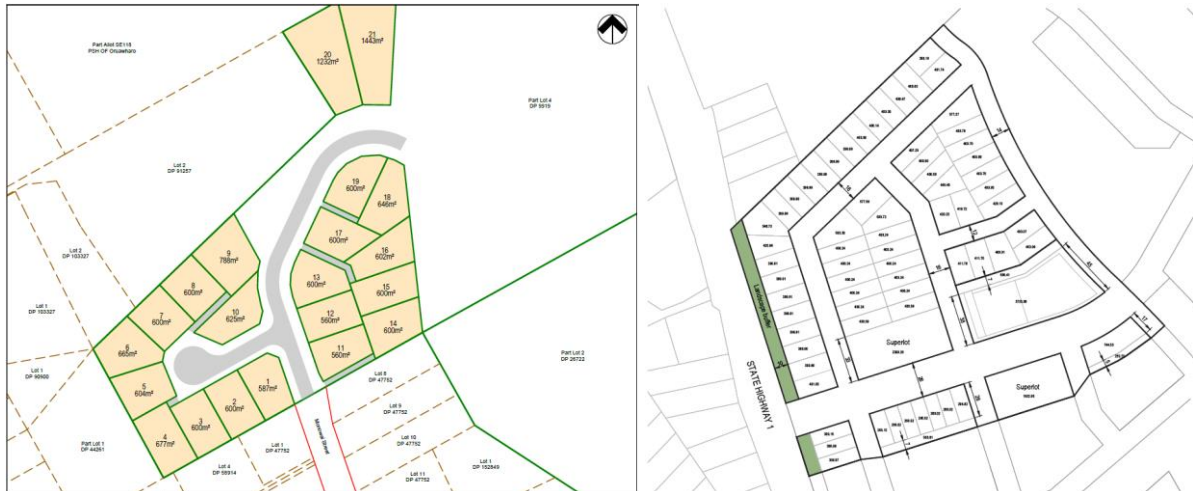
The site is located on the fringe of Wellsford Town Centre, which is also reflected in the road environment. Just south of where the site fronts Rodney Road the posted speed limit changes from 50 km/hr through the Town Centre, to 70 km/hr for the State Highway. The western side of the road has developed with residential dwellings, and has a formal kerb and channel, berm and footpath. The eastern side is generally undeveloped through the plan change area and has a 1.5 m shoulder lane.

2.2 PROPOSAL

The applicant is proposing the staged development of this land for residential use, with the inclusion of a small neighbourhood centre. Residential development is proposed and will comprise of a mixture of terraced housing, duplex and standalone dwellings. There are 84 dwellings proposed as part of this application, with approximately 570 additional dwellings enabled through the Private Plan Change application, which will be lodged late this year.

Planting of a large green reserve running through the centre of the site is also proposed. Figure 2-2 shows the proposed development.

Figure 2-2: Plan of proposed development – Monowai Street site on the left, Rodney Street site on the right



The proposal includes an extension of Monowai Street which is to service the Monowai Street site, plus a new intersection on Rodney Street (SH1) to service the Rodney Street site. It is anticipated that this new intersection on Rodney Street will also service the land between the two sites as well as the land to the west of the sites (up to the railway tracks) in the future. Preliminary discussions with Waka Kotahi regarding the new intersection suggests that the proposed intersection is acceptable in practice, noting that approval cannot be given without a submitted consent/design.

3 BACKGROUND ANALYSIS

3.1 VEHICLE TRAFFIC

Traffic modelling has been undertaken in SIDRA Intersection (Version 9) for both the new intersection on Rodney Street and the intersection of Batten Street/Rodney Street (which is fed by Monowai Street) as part of the Plan Change ITA. The layout of the new intersection on Rodney Street was assumed to be the same as the neighbouring intersections- one approach/departure lane on all approaches plus the use of the central median on Rodney Street for right turn movements.

The vehicle trips generated by the entire plan change area were added to the existing vehicle volumes and analysed, to understand the future operation of the two intersections. No additional growth was added to the network given that Waka Kotahi are in the process of securing land for the Warkworth to Wellsford section of the Puhoi to Wellsford project. This project is anticipated to reduce vehicle volumes on Rodney Street and has therefore been assumed to counteract any growth.

A posted speed limit of 50 km/hr was assumed for both intersections, noting that the existing posted speed where the new road will intersect Rodney Street is 70 km/hr. Given the number of residential dwellings proposed, the development will urbanise the area and therefore a reduced vehicle speed is recommended. It is also noted that the default SIDRA gap acceptance values were edited to match Austroads critical acceptance gaps and follow-up headways.

The SIDRA models show that both intersections operate within acceptable performance thresholds, with individual movements operating at level of service (LOS)¹ C or better, experiencing average delays less than 30 seconds, and queues less than 40m. As such, the future operation of both intersections is considered acceptable.

3.2 WALKING, CYCLING, & PUBLIC TRANSPORT

As part of the Rodney Street development site, a new footpath will be provided adjacent to the site frontage onto Rodney Street. This will connect to the existing footpaths on the northern side of the corridor, which currently terminates at Kelgry Place.

Furthermore, the proposed fast track application is anticipated to be a catalyst for the Plan Change area, noting that the surrounding transport network has some existing deficiencies. These deficiencies can be described as follows:

- Lack of mode choice – currently the area has poor access to public transport and a lack of safe and attractive walking and cycling access. In order to achieve mode share within the development, provision of travel choice should be provided as the area develops. This could include the extension of the existing bus service between Wellsford and Warkworth, extending the service through to the site.
- Active mode connections to key destinations – Pedestrian and cycle demand from the site is likely to be focused on key destination in the surrounding area including the local schools and Wellsford town centre
- The roads surrounding the site are in general of a rural standard.

As part of the development of the Plan Change, an urban street network will be provided with appropriate connections to proposed collector and arterial roads surrounding the site.

4 CONCLUSION

The background analysis found that the intersection of Batten Street/Rodney Street was found to operate acceptably in the future, as was the proposed new intersection to the north. As such there are options available to access the two sites, noting that the intersection modelling shows the network can continue to operate acceptably with the additional development and intersection. This said, we see there to be no traffic or transport planning reasons the preclude the subject sites for being considered for the fast-track consenting process.

¹ LOS is an industry measure used to describe intersection operations, where LOS A is free flowing, LOS C is stable flow, and LOS F is breakdown flow / a traffic jam