
REPORT 4
(1215/12/IM)

**RATIFICATION OF THE TAWA COMMUNITY BOARD
SUBMISSION TO THE NGAURANGA TO AIRPORT
STRATEGIC STUDY**

It is recommended that the Tawa Community Board:

1. *Receive the information.*
2. *Ratify the Tawa Community Submission to the Ngauranga to Airport Strategic Study.*

Attached is the Boards submission to the:

- Ngauranga to Airport Strategic Study (appendix 1)

APPENDIX 1

SUBMISSION OF THE TAWA COMMUNITY BOARD TO THE NGAURANGA TO AIRPORT STRATEGIC STUDY

Tawa is approximately 14 km north of central Wellington and is the northernmost suburb of Wellington City.

It is geographically separated from the rest of Wellington City and can only be reached by three routes all within 500 metres of each other. These routes are: State Highway 1 which leads down the Ngauranga Gorge, the Main Trunk Rail Line which crosses the Ngauranga Gorge, Middleton Road which leads to Johnsonville at the top of the Ngauranga Gorge.

It is clear that Tawa is dependent on efficient use of the Ngauranga Gorge.

Most of the residents of Tawa work outside Tawa. The majority of workers work in Wellington or the southern suburbs. The majority of the balance works in the Hutt Valley.

Access to work and recreation requires travel on a route that utilises the Ngauranga Gorge.

Private Transport

It must be acknowledged that the majority of families in of Tawa, if not the greater Wellington area, own at least one motor vehicle. We concur with the observations in the consultation document that without additional capacity, or significant modal change, traffic volumes will continue to increase. We believe that to support modal change public transport reliability and access along with opportunities to walk and cycle must be improved.

Walking and Cycling must be encouraged for short to medium journeys, which requires high quality cycle ways and well maintained footpaths. At present footpaths from the City South are of reasonable standard, however those North of the City are of poor quality, often littered with glass and with multiple vehicle crossings. Whilst there is provision for cycling from Ngauranga to the city, again the area is often littered with glass and vehicle crossings and angle parking creating a treacherous environment in which to cycle.

Public Transport

Access to Wellington, and the southern Suburbs, and to the Hutt Valley is by way of train or bus.

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Train

Tawa has four stations. These are:

Takapu Road (southern most)

Redwood

Tawa

Linden (northern most)

Kenepuru while in Porirua serves as a fifth station for the northern most part of Linden.

All stations, apart from Kenepuru, have parking spaces. All parking spaces are heavily utilized and there is insufficient space for any increased rail patronage.

Trains are well utilized but are frequently late and, because Tawa is the southern most area, frequently full before Tawa. This requires Tawa users to stand for their journeys into Wellington. This is having a tendency to force people out of public transport and into their car. If you work in the Hutt Valley you face a journey into Wellington and then back out of Wellington. This is both inefficient from a time perspective, but also is very expensive.

The frequency of trains stopping at Tawa stations is low in comparison to trains into Porirua and stations further north. This also forces people out of public transport and into their car.

Bus

Mana coachlines run bus services along the Main Road through to Johnsonville and into Wellington. These buses appear to be well utilized but because of the congestion down the Ngauranga Gorge are slower than the train service.

Bus/Train Coordination

At present there appears no, or little, coordination of timetables to ensure that buses leave the Transport terminus by Wellington Railway Station soon after the arrival of trains nor that trains leave soon after the arrival of buses.

Recreation

Most families have children who are involved in sport or are themselves involved in sport. A substantial amount of that sport is in Wellington or the Hutt Valley. Wellington City has built, or is building the majority of its sporting and recreational facilities in the southern or eastern suburbs.

It is not viable to transport children and their sporting equipment by multimode public transport. It is not practical.

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Airport

Despite what may be one of the closest airports to a City, public transport to, or from, Wellington International Airport is abysmal. No services operate at the time most tourist/international flights depart or arrive. What public transport there is, is expensive, inefficient and not designed for the stowing of luggage. The time taken to get by train and bus to or from Tawa and Wellington Airport makes it a frustrating experience. A Flyer bus service, similar to that operating from Upper Hutt to the Airport, and via the Hospital, from the Northern suburbs, would be a great improvement. As it is the only way that you can be guaranteed to arrive on time is to use your own car, shuttle or taxi. Even then the traffic issues can make this a frustrating experience which requires planning.

Hospital

The Government decision to rebuild the regional hospital at Newtown makes it imperative that road access from North of Wellington through Wellington to Newtown is of high efficiency. The change (lack) of services at Keneperu hospital exacerbates the situation. Lives will be lost if emergency vehicles cannot get through in time. Air Ambulance is a costly solution!

Improvements

Roading

While, environmentally, the best practice is for everyone to leave their cars at home and catch public transport, the reality is that it is not going to happen. This is due to many factors:

- Speed of journey by public transport.
- Cost of journey by public transport.
- Reliability of public transport.
- Convenience of private cars.
- The need to use more than one service to get to many areas is not convenient.

For these reasons improvements to the roading infrastructure is necessary

The Gorge

There are three lanes in either direction. At the bottom of the gorge one lane goes to the Hutt Road and the Hutt motorway on ramp. The other two lanes go to the city and merge with two lanes from the Hutt to form three lanes into the city. There are three lanes up the gorge which become two at the Johnsonville off ramp.

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The centre barrier needs to be built to be movable (see the Auckland Harbour Bridge) so that the number of lanes in any given direction can be altered to fit the traffic requirement. This may require alterations to the flyover at the bottom of the gorge. Every major route should have a lane that is used purely for public transport and emergency services.

The footpath/cycle way should be regularly cleaned and maintained to ensure safe riding both up, and down, the gorge. Consideration should be given to a dedicated cycle lane going down the gorge where speed of cyclists increases, creating incompatibilities with foot traffic.

Thorndon Quay and Oriental Parade

Consideration should be given to reverse parking in these areas to improve the safety of cyclists.

Motorway

The motorway needs to have the same moveable barrier as the gorge.

Terrace Tunnel

The second tunnel needs to be built.

Terrace to Airport

Whilst we recognize the significant improvement in the traffic flow through Te Aro due to the bypass, we believe the Government and its roading authorities did Wellington a huge disservice. The bypass should have been at least four lanes in a trench. The new bypass and the Vivian Street route have many intersections. This delays traffic on the bypass, on Vivian Street and on the roads that cross them. Both access to and from the tunnel should have been in one trench feeding past the basin reserve to the Mt Victoria tunnel. We believe that whilst light rail is the ideal solution, dedicated public transport routes would be more cost effective in the shorter term.,

Mt Victoria Tunnel

This reached its maximum capacity many years ago. A second tunnel is imperative to secure reliable transit through this area.

Mt Victoria to Airport

The roading between the airport and the Wellington Road traffic lights is adequate for current use. The difficulty is the stretch of roading between the Mt Victoria tunnel and these lights. This needs to have four lanes.

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Public Transport

The reality is that public transport is unlikely to be efficient or acceptable to the public for across town traffic. The need to change from trains to buses will continue to prevent widespread acceptance. Improvements can be made to stimulate public use.

Ticketing

It is time that electronic ticketing is introduced. Such ticketing would allow the use of one ticket on train and bus and thus easier change of service.

A switching system needs to be introduced to allow people to get off the train and onto a bus to parts of the central city (as far as Courtenay Place and top of Willis Street) without paying a second fare. At present the requirement to pay two fares makes utilizing the train and the bus less cost effective than a car.

Timetables

The trains and buses need to be coordinated to ensure that time spent at the Transport Terminus is as minimal as possible.

Equipment

If people are to get out of their cars and onto public transport it needs to be efficient, reliable, clean, tidy and welcoming. It also needs to have sufficient capacity to carry most people in seated positions. The number of people standing on the trains in a confined space is a potential danger.

Once reliability issues have been addressed a system, such as GPS, needs to be installed on all public transport. This will allow the location of the next service to be ascertained and the time to the next service arriving can be displayed at stops

Trains and light rail requires a higher capital outlay when compared to buses. They are however more efficient in that it takes fewer staff and vehicles to move a larger number of people on a more direct route not influenced by road traffic. We believe that whilst light rail is the ideal solution, dedicated public transport routes would be more cost effective in the shorter term.,

Infrastructure

Whilst the Government is funding upgrades to the track, the signals and the points, much needs to be done rectifying these faults, and providing a modern, safe and effective 'rail' infrastructure. Delays caused by infrastructure failures are the most common cause of delays which force people to use their car.

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Whilst Wellington is lauded as having a great rail network, the reality is that the Government has spent substantial amounts on the Auckland rail system. This has made their rail system equal, if not better, than that of Wellington.

The current situation whereby the Hutt and Paraparaumu lines share a common crossing point just south of the stadium creates a choke point. An additional set of tracks need to be installed so that each line can enter and exit the station without being affected by the other. (This agrees with an earlier report.)

City Terminus

Is Wellington Station the best place for the Terminus? A feasibility study should be held to consider moving the terminus to Courtenay Place or even the Basin Reserve with the trains/light rail continuing onto the airport.

City Fringe Terminus

Should there be a terminus at the bottom of the gorge? Cars, buses and light train from Paraparaumu and the Hutt could stop here and all passengers transfer to light rail for the balance of the journey to the city. This would require a large area for parking of trains, buses and cars. The area would need to be secure from vandals and thieves. A good case could also be made for Porirua to be the Terminus from the North, and Waterloo from the East, with 'Light Rail to the City and Airport.

Bus Lanes

Every major route should have a lane that is used purely for public transport and emergency services. ?Should Taxi's be treated as public transport, or have the same rights as a private vehicle.

Congestion Charging

Congesting charging is only viable if, and when, there is a practical route from the southern suburbs to the northern suburbs without entering central Wellington

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