

Clevedon Quarry Proposal. Response:

It is very evident from reading this proposal that there is a great lack of empathy and understanding of the special character of the surroundings and neighbourhood that the quarry owners find themselves in. Little attention is paid to the considerable disruption this proposal will cause on the community and a paltry amount of appeasement is tendered.

Make no mistake about this it will quite literally divide the community in two. Not ideologically but physically, for the amount of traffic that is proposed is equal to a main highway.

It is pointed out that the nearest highway to the quarry is the Clevedon, Papakura highway. Light is made of the fact that this is some distance away from the quarry and that the extra traffic movements will be somewhat diluted by the time they interact. In fact the closest highway is that of McNicol and Clevedon Kawakawa Rd. The use of this junction would however transit quarry traffic through Clevedon itself. One can imagine the impact this would have on this settlement. If people have not a good handle on what this level of traffic movement is, then stand outside Alfriston School on Alfriston Rd for just 5 min and if you dare, attempt to cross the road. If it is not acceptable for the village, then why is it acceptable for the community on McNicol and Tourist Rd. Much play is made of the single lane bridge on Tourist Rd, which can be debunked in an instant since it fails to take account of the fact that the traffic flow here is intermodal, that is to say it is not all powered vehicles as the modelling suggests. It ignores one of the basic special characters of Clevedon, it is a horse town. There is a riding school just down the road in Monument Rd together with a riding arena next to the Showgrounds. There's the polo grounds opposite the start of McNicol Rd and there is a bridal path into the forest at the end of McNicol. It not uncommon to find riders making full use of their rural environment. A high tech solution to the problem of mixed flow traffic is proposed in the form of an automated signalling system to flash when cyclists are present. Which is purity naff unless it can distinguish between the metal of a horseshoe and translate the cyclist icon to one of a horse rider. Horses and cycles are a lot slower than a powered vehicles and I wonder what the computer modelling would make of that. The correct answer is that FH should build a foot traffic bridge alongside the vehicle bridge. This in itself would be made an empty gesture since very few are game take up the challenge of pitting their lycra against fourteen wheels on five axles driven by a thousand horsepower.

The only way this is going to work is a separate bridle path along both McNicol and Tourist Rd.

Here we are, a community trying to define an identity as a rural community by planning to encircle the village with a cycle, foot, bridle path, while the industrialists plan to cleave the diaspora in two by erecting an impermeable barrier of an endless procession of heavy trucks, isolating the village from the rest of the valley and stopping people from enjoying the bounty of rural life. An attempt is made to use the computer modelling of traffic flow as applied to the bridge to the single track road immediately before the quarry. I can only assume this to be a vain attempt to making light of the situation, since simple finger arithmetic will tell you that the transit time along this section of road is longer than the interval between trucks, how you can interweave two way flow into the mix, leaves my head in a spin. They do accept that the road needs to be widened here and tacitly accept this is not going to be easy. Preferring to adopt the notion that they can get by with a single track. WRONG.

Make no mistake this part of McNicol Rd is pivotal to this application, without its associated improvements and major engineering works this RC will not proceed. Yet there is no detail as to how to proceed with this task. No technical assessment of its feasibility, no environmental impact report of its association with the river, no indication on how they intend to secure this asset from the vagaries of the river. In fact the impact of the quarry expansion on the access road leading to it, is treated very flippantly. This is in reference to the whole of McNicol Rd from Tourist Rd to the quarry.

This road not your normal highway you find interconnecting various parts of the district. It has a legal description of a Paper Road this is an archaic description referring to a road drawn on a map without regard to its physical disposition. A five metre strip along the true left bank of the river stretching from the Kawakaka Rd to the Cossey Access Rd. No you cannot just jump into your 4x4 and head off up the river, pretty soon you will be stopped by the terrain. Though you have the legal right to, nature will get in the way. This may be a good thing in a way for it is one of those special character aspects of the district. You can walk no more than 10 minutes from the quarry and find yourself in true backcountry wilderness. This legal quirkery of the Paper Rd is made use of in otherways. It allows the the Te Arohoa Trail (a continuous 3,000 km walking track from Cape Reinga to Bluff) the right of passage through your neighborhood. Now threatened by amount of traffic about to inhabit McNicol Rd. It is not just the trail that is threatened by this traffic increase but the road

itself. From Tourist Rd the road only services the landowner up that valley. The fact that it is formed at all is due in part to the existence of the quarry, otherwise it would just be a metaled strip going nowhere, the only reason it is there is the fact that it makes use of the public right to use this title of a Paper Rd. As a residents only road its structure is quite minimal, traffic movements are very low and its build quality is commensurate to this. It does not have the same stature as most of the highways around the district. If you are not sure what this means take a trip out to Brookby Quarry and have a good look at the amount of metal used as a base for this road. This approach road was in fact very similar to McNicol Rd a single track metal road till traffic density forced its improvement to a proper formed and sealed two way road. While you are there just take a look up the road, you will have a view of at least three trucks in your vista at any one time.

I cannot recommend that this is the minimum requirement for McNicol Rd, for McNicol Rd is much more than just an access road to a quarry. Its passage along a river makes it very vulnerable. Recent flooding has highlighted this and there are parts of the river that are now threatening the road. The immediate entrance to the quarry is one of them. Widening the road to two lanes will expose these extensive engineering works to the vagaries of the river. At the very least to complete these works they will have to get in the river. Ask a roading engineer to define a river and he will answer you with a ditch or sluice and compliment his definition with qualifications of laminar flow. This imperative of an engineered solution is the quickest way to lose habitat and destroy a healthy river, take a look at the Mangatawhiri. The inclusion of a pedestrian way alongside this engineering works is indeed a noble gesture but is akin to getting Bear Grylls to initiate a new pastime of changing tyres on the motorway. People are going to be so intimidated into non-compliance. A separate pathway is the only answer here and will help the engineers out immensely but there is no room. Perhaps the answer is to cross the river with an elevated walkway.

At the same time that the road is threatened by the river. The river is threatened by the road. The road will have to be reinforced along its whole length to Tourist Rd not only to support the extra traffic but to safeguard it from the river.

Little is made of this stretch of road save a passing reference in an environmental report. Which fails to take account of the special character of this river. The Wairoa River supports a whitebait run, this alone is a good indicator that there are indeed Banded Kokopu in the river.

The Environmental report is quite dismissive when it references anecdotal evidence of trout in the river. This is quite revealing of the limited data set these people are using and brings into question the authenticity of the reporters. The Auckland council reports that there are trout in this river. Fish and Game list the Wairoa River as a fishable resource. This cannot be surprising since The Acclimatisation Society established a station in the Clevedon Area in its very early days of inception, a fact that is commemorated by a plaque erected in the polo field grounds. It is they that are responsible for the introduction of game birds into the district as well as all the coarse fish and indeed trout in the rivers and dams in the area. Trout were indeed released annually into the upper reaches of the Wairoa River above the Hunua Falls until the 1990s when a 100 year flood scoured out the river "Déjà Vu" and the newly formed Fish and Game could no longer afford to pursue the practice. Remnants of this population still exist above the falls, most of this population ended up below the falls and contribute to a healthy self-sustaining population of both rainbow and brown trout. Yet another special character to the district, for this is the only natural trout fishery within the Auckland City limits and can produce some respectable fish. (Not strictly true, both the Mangatawhiri and the Mangatangi dams are recorded to have healthy populations of trout in them but their headwaters remain inaccessible to all except the very intrepid fisherman). A true wilderness fishing experience can be had simply by following the river above the end of McNicol Rd. This fishery is in a fragile state, years of riparian planting have failed to stabilize the banks, this latest flood had denuded all the growth along its banks and exposed the clay structures that predominate the area. This is a persistent problem to this catchment and is what distracts the river from wider acclaim.

This aspect needs careful attention to sediment runoff not only by riparian planting but the stabilization of land, now subject to a change of use. Much of the farmland in the area has been retired and sold off into lifestyle blocks, where land management is no longer a priority. This is very evident right now just from sighting the skyline, many slips adorn the landscape, much of it caused by modern changes to the land features and the retirement of steep country that is no longer in use and has not been rehabilitated back into natural cover. By far the largest contributor to this is the quarry, despite its existing resource consent requiring it to control the discharge of its runoff, they continue to be in breach of this and continue to discharge sediment loaded runoff directly into the watercourse. The standard practice of a retention pond to allow the sediment to

fall out simple does not work in this area. I have long been dismayed by the lack of clarity of the Wiaroa and have sampled the water, held in a jar in my garage for over 3 months and it still has not cleared. This contributes to yet another special character to the district. The fine sediments of the area simply stay in suspension, any passive means of separation are just not going to work. The addition of a flocculant is going to be mandatory to treat this runoff and means that remedial rehabilitation of the quarry during its working life is going to be mandatory.

The quarry discharge is not the only runoff that has to be controlled. Because of the close proximity to the river any runoff from the road is going to have to be moderated. The extra traffic use is going to bring a high loading of heavy metals and hydrocarbons being washed into the river, just the extra surface area of the seal will produce high peak water flow loads on the river and contribute to downstream erosion. The newly formed road will create a barrier to runoff from the watershed above and this will have the potential to undermine the road structure, especially to the area that is now single track. Any new roading will have to be kerbed and drained as well as sealed, this is going to require piping to a suitable storage area where it will have to be held and treated.

Yet despite all this talk of pollution and murky water clarity it is still one a very few rivers in the Auckland City limits to have clean fresh water quality. Proof of this is the the fact that people want to swim in it, just metres from the quarry. Another special character to the district. There are not many other rivers within the city where you can swim in a river, the closest will be on the other side of town in the Waitakeres. All this is in jeopardy not only from pollution but simply from traffic density. To understand what I mean, I have not seen a horse ridden on Brookby Rd for many a year. The odd cyclist you might see is very innocent or very stoic. It is only the people in the know that will now use this route but only for one day a week.

Much play is made of the environmental quality of the two streams North and South that bound the quarry, that their watershed will be diminished from the extraction of at the quarry and how to take remedial action to restore this flow. This is just an exercise in futility. When the quarriers have all gone who will be around to service this? The overall catchment has not changed. It is still the same footprint for the rain to fall on, so where does it all go?

The quarry operation will have formed its own watercourse, there is the opportunity once quarrying has ceased to create new watercourses to supplement these streams but the structure is all wrong, there is nothing left of

the overburden and you are down to the hard greywacke as a base course. The quarrying has terraced the sides to that of giant steps. Not much good for anything except an amphitheater, appealing though this may sound they also intend to excavate down to the 12 meter level. Well the road is at some 20 meters and the river say 3 meters below that. We are looking at a lake that is at least 5 meters deep. Great now what can we do with that. Well the sides are too steep and there are no beach areas, the bush won't grow on the greywacke and fish will not occupy it because there is no habitat. There is not enough watershed to flush the lake or sunlight to allow photosynthesis. A great breeding ground for Gambusia. So how does this help the natural environment and who is going to protect this new resource when everyone is gone. Before the quarriers leave they should create shallow bays and promontories to encourage habitat to repopulate the area and create a breeding ground for Inaga.

How are going to protect this quarry while they are operating it. The recent flood was above the road level at that point of the river, there will be collateral damage from another flood event.

It would appear to me that the quarry is very dependent on the weighbridge to metre the trucks in and out of the site. Now what if there was a failure where these were out of action. It may only be for a short time but in half an hour you will have 25 trucks queuing along McNicol Rd. since the weighbridges are at the front of the site. This location is very precarious for if they are out of action there is no way of queuing the trucks inside the quarry. There is no way to recycle them back onto the weighbridges for there is no turning circle between them and the gate.

What they intend to do with all these truck movements while they are blasting is a big ponderance not divulged. One would hope they have the facilities to schedule truck arrivals.

Since FH do not operate a fleet of trucks of their own any assertion they may want to make about the veracity of the drivers is open to question most of these are independent operators and go where the work is, thus dispelling any local knowledge.

The one abiding question that keeps running through my mind while reading all this, it is something that has studiously gone unanswered and that is Who Pays? and I am left with a mantra of indoctrination running through my mind.

Clevedon shall not recreate till the Sabbath.

Regards

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