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NEW LYNN matters

Issue 2, May 2008

IT'S BEGUN! - WORK ON BUILDING A WORLD-CLASS TRANSPORT HUB FOR NEW LYNN IS UNDERWAY...

THE NEW LYNN RAIL TRENCH PROJECT FORMALLY BEGAN IN MARCH WHEN NEW ZEALAND'S DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER DROVE A CRANE TO SYMBOLICALLY LIFT A SECTION OF TRACK.

The Right Honourable Dr Michael Cullen (pictured above) was watched by a gathering that included local MP David Cunliffe, Auckland Regional Council chair Mike Lee, Auckland Regional Transport Association (ARTA) chair Mark Ford, ONTRACK chair Cam Moore, Waitakere Mayor Bob Harvey, Deputy Mayor Penny Hulse, Waitakere councillors and senior officials.

Dr Cullen thanked the various organisations working together to develop the

project, saying that it would contribute to the transformation of Auckland as a whole and help make it more productive.

He noted that private investment was already flowing into New Lynn in response to the \$140 million investment by the Government and Waitakere City.

Councillor Hulse also praised the project partners for their vision, saying the idea had germinated a number of years ago when Waitakere officials had visited the Perth suburb of Subiaco and seen a similar transformational project.

She also said that the vision would only work if it delivered excellence and that the proposed "lid" and added-value station features were needed to deliver

excellence and economic transformation to the New Lynn area. These are not presently funded and she called on the partners to "dig deep" to ensure the best possible outcome.

While noting that the expansion of rail services in a region of congested roads creates a challenge for transport planners, ONTRACK chairman Cam Moore said the project is an example of creative thinking and inter-agency cooperation.

"In New Lynn's case, I am happy to say that good cooperation among the agencies - Waitakere City Council, ARTA and ONTRACK - has enabled the best transport option to be identified for the town."



TRENCH PREPARATION CONTINUES

The trench will be built in several stages and right now ONTRACK is preparing the rail corridor to allow more room for its construction, including moving gas, water and power services away from the trench site.

The council is also taking this opportunity to install a large, new stormwater pipe with an expected 100-year lifespan to replace the existing infrastructure. Totara Avenue will be one-way while this work takes place.



Site engineer Amy Hodgson with one of New Lynn's new 1050mm diameter stormwater pipes

ROUNDAABOUT CHANGES

The Clark Street/Rankin Avenue roundabout poses a particular challenge during the trench-building process, as trains and traffic need to continue moving across it. This means there will be some changes to the roundabout layout in the near future, of which the public will be notified once planning is progressed.

CHECK WITH MAXX BEFORE YOU TRAVEL

Construction work is taking place in numerous locations along the Western line. Call MAXX on **366 6400** before you travel to check what work is scheduled and how this may affect your journey, as it is likely that there will be changes to services as construction work increases. Travel updates can also be found on the MAXX website www.maxx.co.nz.



THE BIG PICTURE

New Lynn is now seeing the beginnings of the long-awaited transformation of its town centre as ONTRACK (New Zealand Railways Corporation) works to prepare for the biggest and most ambitious rail project New Zealand has seen in decades – the building of the New Lynn rail trench.

When completed, the double-track railway will be laid in the trench, eliminating two busy crossings, including the Clark Street-Rankin Avenue roundabout. The separation of road and rail will allow traffic to flow over the rail corridor on bridges, while the second track will enable

BRINGING IN THE BIG GUNS!

The New Lynn trench project is the largest single element of the Auckland Rail Upgrade (Project DART) outside the electrification of the network by 2013.

It will involve the removal of 100,000 cubic metres of earth (or 10,000 truckloads) to construct a one kilometre-long trench of up to eight metres in depth and the pouring of 60,000 cubic metres of concrete for the trench floor and retaining walls.

A project on this scale requires some big construction machinery, not all of it available in New Zealand. Several 90-100 ton cranes are currently being shipped here from Hong Kong, Italy and Korea and are due to arrive in the coming months. At the project's peak, 13 cranes are expected to be working on site.

ONTRACK is also getting some equipment custom made in Hamilton and pre-ordering steel and concrete to ensure adequate supply.



SLEWING THE TRACK

Rail commuters will have recently noticed work to 'slew' one kilometre of track to the southern (Clark Street) side of the rail corridor to keep it away from the initial trench construction work.

This huge undertaking saw contractors working around the clock over a single weekend to ensure that, by Monday, the trains could run again and the Clark Street/Rankin Avenue roundabout could be used by traffic.

The work included laying new track, connecting tracks and signals to the network, building a new platform, installing access ramps, cutting through the old platform to connect up a new pedestrian level crossing from Clark Street to Totara Avenue and creating a new pedestrian road crossing.

ONTRACK is now preparing the ground on the northern side of the rail corridor for building the first of the trench retaining walls.



Tamper being craned onto new track

trains to run in both directions every 10 minutes at peak.

Re-connecting the two halves of New Lynn previously divided by the railway is part of an ambitious plan to revitalise the town centre and see its population and business sector flourish into a major regional town centre.

In the New Lynn of the near future, intensified housing options and a bigger business sector will mean many residents will have the opportunity of working within walking and cycling distance of their homes - while others find public transport is a better commuting option than using their private cars.

THE WINNER OF THE 'MOST PAINSTAKING JOB OF THE YEAR' AWARD...

Many of us have had jobs that were tedious, but spare a thought for the Telecom worker tasked with splicing together 6,000 separate copper phone wires whilst sitting in a pit under Totara Avenue.

Over the next month or so, the phone cables that currently run under the Clark Street/Rankin Avenue roundabout will be diverted to make way for the rail trench.

The diversion will involve the drilling of a 14 metre-deep tunnel under the trench site. Twelve-metre lengths of 500mm diameter PVC pipe will then be connected to form a 160-metre continuous duct, which will be fed into the small pit on Totara Avenue to line the tunnel.

Telecom will then be able to feed through their replacement copper cables and begin the two-month process of splicing them together, one by one.

A similar process is expected to take place within the next month for the under-road thrusting of a Vector high-pressure gas main under Clark Street.

GETTING THE BEST DEAL FOR NEW LYNN

Major increases in bus and train services will make central New Lynn a major destination and interchange point.

For this reason, the council is pushing for New Lynn to get the high-quality facilities and external funding required to see it develop as a world-class town centre.

In addition to current plans put forward by government agencies, the council envisions at least two new road crossings on bridges at Hetana Street and Memorial Drive to cater for an increasing population and commercial traffic, a more sophisticated train and bus interchange and a partial covering of the trench for at least some of its distance to create a walkable public space above the railway.

The council and its partners are currently discussing ways to develop and fund these extra facilities.



GO WEST ON NEW ECO-BUSES

A new era in public transport has already arrived in New Lynn, with the introduction of the brand new Go West bus fleet.

Green in both colour and environmental friendliness, the low-noise Scania buses are ideal for a busy town centre environment. They boast a Euro 4 emissions rating - better than New Zealand's mandatory Euro 3 standard - and are currently being run on bio-diesel as part of a council-run trial.

The seven 53-seat buses can 'kneel' on request to allow the doorway to get closer to the ground for elderly or disabled passengers and have a wheelchair ramp and wheelchair-friendly seating arrangements.

An additional 16 buses will be added to the fleet this year.

COMMUNITY LIAISON GROUP

Keeping residents and businesses informed about New Lynn projects and giving them the opportunity to share ideas and provide feedback is what the New Lynn Community Liaison Group is all about.

Formed in November 2007, the group includes representatives of a number of community organisations and businesses, along with advisors from Waitakere City Council, ONTRACK and ARTA, a New Lynn Ward councillor and a representative from MP David Cunliffe's office.

Chaired by New Lynn RSA president Terry Wood, the group meets once a month at the New Lynn Project Office on Totara Avenue and is encouraged to share project information and updates with others in the community to ensure they are kept up to date on project developments and future plans.

NEW LYNN PROJECT OFFICE

Your one-stop shop for New Lynn project information

For up-to-date information on New Lynn's town centre revitalisation, including the rail trench and other transport developments, visit the New Lynn Project Office at **18 Totara Avenue** (opposite the community centre) or phone **826 3164**.

The office is open from 9am to 4pm, Monday to Friday, with a council project administrator on hand to answer questions. The council's Investment Opportunities & Business Liaison Advisor, Tracy Tomlinson, also works part-time from the office.

Large display boards providing an overview of New Lynn projects line the office walls and there are also copies of information leaflets and newsletters to take away.

HANDLING COMPLAINTS

Both the council and ONTRACK are set up to respond to any queries or concerns about project work being undertaken in the New Lynn town centre.

Those relating to the rail trenching and roadworks associated with that project should be directed to ONTRACK on its 24-hour hotline - **270 4404**. All other complaints should be directed to the council's 24-hour call centre on **839 0400**. If in doubt, phone the council call centre and we will direct your complaint to the right person.

The council has a comprehensive recording and tracking system to deal with a wide range of issues, from dust and noise nuisance to vehicle access and traffic circulation. All contact with us is given a tracking number to ensure prompt and efficient follow-up. The call centre can also provide up-to-date project information.

PUBLIC OPEN DAY IN PIPELINE

The council, ONTRACK and ARTA are planning to hold a second public open day on their New Lynn projects within the next few months.

Anyone interested in what's happening in the town centre is encouraged to attend to find out about current and future projects. All three organisations will have specialist staff and contractors present to answer questions.

The date and time of the open day will be confirmed and advertised in the near future.

PUBLIC SAFETY CONCERNS

With reports of people walking in the rail corridor and ignoring new or temporary road signage in the town centre, people are urged to be mindful of their own safety.

Current construction work means road users, pedestrians and train passengers may experience some minor changes and inconveniences, so please:

- Follow any directional signage and allow extra time for your journey.
- Never walk in the rail corridor or on the tracks. Trains are fast and cannot swerve to miss you!
- Take care when driving through the town centre. There will be increasing amounts of traffic, including large construction vehicles, as project work intensifies.

PARKING STUDY RESULTS OUT SOON

Results of an in-depth parking study of the New Lynn town centre are due out this month.

Both the New Lynn Community Board and council will meet to discuss the study, which will be used to help formulate a New Lynn Parking Management Plan within the next 12 months.

In the meantime, a New Lynn Parking Guide showing town centre parking locations and designations will be produced in the near future.

The brochure will help visitors and commuters find the most appropriate parking by providing a map that identifies time-restricted and all-day public parking, as well as private retail parking.

CONTACTS FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

For the railway project:
ONTRACK's 24-hour phone line - 270 4404 - or website www.projectDART.org.nz

For New Lynn town centre information:
Waitakere City Council's 24-hour call centre - phone 839 0400 - or website www.waitakere.govt.nz

The Council's New Lynn Project Office, 18 Totara Ave - phone 826 3164