

Thames Coromandel District Council - Supplementary Agenda

MEETING	19 November 2014
SUBJECT	Historic Kopu Bridge
DEPUTATION	Harry Wilson - Regional Director from NZ Transport Agency

The purpose of this supplementary agenda is to inform the Council of the response from New Zealand Transport Agency following on from the resolution made by Council on the 22 October 2014.

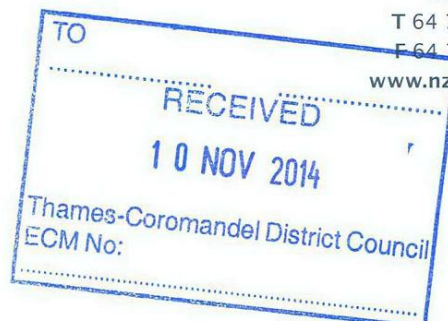
Attachment A *NZTA response - Old Kopu Bridge*



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03 November 2014

His Worship the Mayor
Thames Coromandel District Council
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Dear Mr Mayor

Old Kopu Bridge

Thank you for your letter dated 29 October 2014 advising that the Council have decided in principle to support the retention of the old Kopu Bridge subject to a number of conditions. In your letter you have also indicated that to enable the Historic Kopu Bridge Society to undertake further research, you are advocating that they have access to the old Kopu Bridge.

To address the first point, and in light of Council's resolution referred to above, I would like to set out the Transport Agency's position. The Transport Agency will only proceed with seeking demolition consents if we plan to demolish the bridge. We are not prepared to obtain consents with the intention of handing them on to Council as the public consultation required to obtain the consents would be very complicated in intent and message. At best it would be very confusing for the public about what our plan actually is for the bridge, at worst the process may appear disingenuous.

If Council wishes to retain the old Kopu Bridge, then the funds budgeted for the demolition, which includes the value of recycled steel, MSQA for demolition, adaptive reuse of historic components, the remaining forecast fees to seek consents, heritage assessments, consent hearings plus contingency would all be transferred to Council.

At this stage our estimate for these costs is still approximately \$2.3M. At this stage we are unable to make this estimate any more accurate. As your staff have already advised you, exactly what the end value will be is not easily stated as the scope of work will be influenced by specific final consent conditions and actual risk that exists within that scope of work and specific risk share model between client and contractor. The cost may further increase due to the cost of Environment Court process and timing (escalation of demolition scope and costs). We understand your staff have contacted Hebs and obtained their own estimate of future demolition costs.

As previously advised, Council would need to satisfy us that ownership of the structure and all future costs and liabilities would transfer away from the Transport Agency and there would be minimal, or no risk that the entity would fail in the future and leave a burden on the general public or the government. If Council is agreeable to this, then we would commence the process of transferring the asset to Council. Alternatively, if this is not acceptable to Council, then we will proceed with the consenting process and when complete, begin the demolition and adaptive reuse of the historic components (eg the swing span), as required by the consents.

We have already delayed our work for a considerable period of time so would be grateful if Council could advise us of its decision by Friday 28 November.

It should be noted that the Agency is of the opinion that there appears to be no evidence to suggest that the Society could financially support the ongoing upkeep of the Old Kopu Bridge.

To address the other matter in your letter, where you are advocating access to the bridge so that the Historic Kopu Bridge Society can undertake further research, we would need additional information to be able to progress this request. Due to health and safety factors, we would be grateful if you could provide us with the nature of this further research. Specifically we are seeking clarification on what access is required, by whom and when.

Finally, I have found it somewhat disappointing that we have not been invited to attend a meeting with Council to discuss these issues face to face. I am more than happy to attend a Council meeting to clarify any of the issues around the future of the Old Kopu Bridge.

Yours sincerely

PP



Harry Wilson
Regional Director