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Report to Environment Committee
from Wayne Hastie, Manager, Resource Policy

Transmission Gully – Update on Environmental Matters

1. Purpose

To update the Committee on environmental matters associated with the construction of the Transmission Gully Motorway.

2. Background

Following discussion at the last Committee meeting, Councillor Buchanan requested a further report on matters relating to Transmission Gully for the next Committee meeting. This report is intended to fulfil that request.

A substantial background paper on the environmental issues associated with Transmission Gully was presented to the Regional Land Transport Committee at its meeting on 2 April 2001 (Report 01.209). The material presented in that report will not be repeated here. Rather this report will focus on the progress that has been made since April in relation to:

1. The Regional Council's appeal on the designation;
2. The Paremata Residents Association appeal on the designation; and
3. Resource Consents.

3. The Regional Council's Appeal on the Designation

The Regional Council's appeal on the designation sought three things:

- Greater and more certain input to key aspects of the proposal, consistent with the requirements in Regional Park Management Plans and the associated procedures for approval of works document;

- Assured access for on-going management and harvesting of the plantation forestry at Battle Hill; and
- Appropriate protection for the maintenance, repair and replacement of the Kaitoke-Wellington water main.

Negotiations on all of these matters have occurred over a two-year period and, as reported to the last Committee meeting, all issues have been resolved. A draft consent order has been filed at the Environment Court and we await the Court's response.

4. **The Paremata Residents Association Appeal on the Designation**

The Paremata Residents Association's appeal seeks to reduce the period of time for retiring land and advance planting work prior to construction from eight to two years. Wellington Regional Council, Porirua City Council and the Department of Conservation have all registered as interested parties to the appeal.

The conditions on the designation include a requirement that Transit shall not commence work until the eleven specified areas have been fenced off and retired from agriculture and other productive use eight years prior to commencement of construction. The purpose of the retirement is for advance ecological mitigation.

Six months prior to retirement of the eleven areas for advanced ecological mitigation Transit is required to submit, for territorial authority approval, a management plan for each of the areas, prepared in consultation with Wellington Regional Council and the Department of Conservation. The management plan is to provide details of any planting to be carried out.

Transit's consultants prepared a report "Transmission Gully Motorway General Approach to Ecological Mitigation Land Retirement and Planting – Draft for Discussion Purposes Only". The Report, dated July 2001, was submitted to Porirua City Council, Wellington Regional Council, and the Department of Conservation for comments. All parties have provided comments, supporting the general thrust of what is proposed but seeking minor changes to some of the details. The parties met on 9 August to discuss the Report and a number of issues were resolved. There was a focus on Area 7 as a trial area for planting, and a separate implementation plan had been prepared for that area with details of the proposed planting.

At the 9 August meeting it was decided that the technical experts should meet to further discuss the general approach and the implementation plan for Area 7. This meeting occurred on 15 August and further issues were resolved. A number of the participants visited Area 7. It is considered that both the meeting and the site visit were successful in clarifying issues of concern, and Transit's consultants are currently in the process of modifying both the General Approach document and the Implementation Plan for Area 7 to incorporate the issues identified in these meetings, the site visit and correspondence from Wellington Regional Council, Porirua City Council and the Department of Conservation. It is anticipated that both of these documents will be reissued within the two weeks of the time of writing this report (28 August).

At the same time as modifying the two documents Transit's consultants have been progressing arrangements for planting this winter (based on the outcomes of the joint meetings and site visits). They have managed to locate and order the plants necessary to plant approximately 25% of Retirement Area 7, and are currently preparing contract documents for planting. It is anticipated that a contract will be awarded in early September and that planting will commence soon after. As there will be some ground preparation work required prior to planting it is expected that planting will commence around the last week of September. Planting of this area is estimated to take about 1 week.

5. **Resource Consents**

Construction of the Transmission Gully Motorway will require a number of consents from the Regional Council. Consents Management staff met with a Transit representative on 7 August to discuss in a preliminary way how the Council might deal with erosion and sediment control issues, and to identify the key contacts at the Council in relation to resource consents.

6. **General Meeting**

Dr Bradbury and myself met with Mr Brian Hasell, Regional Manager, Transit New Zealand on 9 August to discuss general issues association with Transmission Gully and to ensure that future lines of communication were clarified.

7. **Communication**

The matters raised in this Report are being discussed between the various parties and no further communication is considered necessary at this point.

8. **Recommendation**

That the report be received and the information noted.

Report prepared by

Approved by

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