

Editorial



Craig Hind – Editor

Welcome to the Winter 2009 edition of Urban Scrawl. This edition focuses on how the planning profession, and the team at Beca Planning, contributes to the delivery of major infrastructure projects. There is a strong correlation between comprehensive infrastructure provision and economic productivity, and adequacy of infrastructure is a major determiner in making people proud, or otherwise, of the city or area they live in.

We have included examples of our recent involvement in the delivery of various infrastructure projects from staff passionate about this process. We also hear from one of our major infrastructure clients who expounds the importance of consultation as part of the delivery process.

Taking a high level view on the importance of infrastructure investment, a recent KPMG study¹ surveying business leaders throughout the world noted the availability of infrastructure as a critical issue for business as 'it impacts costs and therefore is a major factor in where businesses locate and choose to expand'.

Interestingly these business leaders saw it as being critical due to the global financial crisis, to 'get it right' from the start and to recognise that infrastructure projects are complex. 'Projects that are properly planned and conducted efficiently should result in more effective outcomes and are more likely to gain the necessary buy-in from the business community and the public'.

A key mechanism to incorporate this buy in for infrastructure projects is the requisite statutory approvals process. The current amendments to the

Resource Management Act intend to address some of the frustrations proponents, and the community, have with drawn out approvals processes.

However, for all the changes being proposed in the RMA the fundamental decision making criteria within the legislation has not changed at all. While the government supports a shorter decision making timeframe, it should follow an appropriately robust and well planned investigation phase incorporating community input and providing a level of certainty about the extent and ongoing management of the impacts of a particular infrastructure development.

Current initiatives, including the establishment of an EPA (Environmental Protection Authority) that would process major infrastructure applications and a specialist National Infrastructure Unit, are all long overdue and will help provide more guidance on the key infrastructure investments needed over strategic timeframes. The development of better infrastructure is vitally important to New Zealand's economy, but should not come at the cost of losing some of the fundamental elements of the environment and social and community coherence that make New Zealand what it is.

Correctly balancing national interests with local impacts is a complex task that must constantly be addressed throughout the infrastructure planning process. The following articles show how this 'good planning' can lead to excellent outcomes for both infrastructure providers and the communities they serve.

Editor's note: See People on the Move in this edition for Craig's next challenge.

¹ Bridging the Global Infrastructure Gap, KPMG International in cooperation with the Economist Intelligence Unit, December 2008

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Tauranga's Harbour Link Nears Completion

Touchdown for Tauranga Harbour Bridge Stage 2

After ten years in the making, Stage 2 of the Harbour Link project - the viaduct over the industrial zone at Sulphur Point linking to a second Tauranga Harbour crossing - is nearing completion. The bridge 'touched down' onto the other side on 30 April.

Beca Planning has provided the planning services for this project since inception, including feasibility, options analysis, and designation and resource consents gained for Tauranga City Council. The east-west link across Tauranga Harbour has become a state highway, and in the construction phase Beca Infrastructure is Principal's Agent for the NZ Transport Agency.

Project considerations included the potential effects of construction and the operation of the viaduct, bridge and ramps on the ecology and hydrology of the harbour and Waikareao Estuary, noise effects on the residential properties and the historic Elms Mission Station to the south of the viaduct and the Whareroa Marae east of the approach causeway to the bridge.

Special road seal, noise barriers and planted bunds are mitigating the road noise. Great care is being taken in the construction phase about the western harbour bridge approach which is immediately adjacent to the Otamataha Pa and Mission Cemetery.

The geotechnical conditions in the harbour are challenging and the piling design and construction were carefully considered.

During the three year construction period of Harbour Link Stage 2:

- Approximately 36,000 cubic metres of concrete will have been poured
- 106 piles will have been constructed, 19 of which will be in the water with the deepest pile being 70 metres below the seabed
- 191 bridge beams for the Chapel St viaduct will have been produced in the purpose-built concrete precast yard - each beam is up to 37 metres long and weighs up to 80 tonnes
- The new Harbour Bridge and Aerodrome Bridge will have used 750,000 metres of 'stressing strand' – metal cable. If laid end to end, it would take 7½ hours to drive from one end to the other at 100km an hour.

NZ Transport Agency project manager Kevin Reid said he is very pleased with the project's progress to date. Barring any unforeseen delays, it is hoped to have both harbour bridges and viaduct opened ahead of schedule, just before Christmas 2009. Related work to complete the project will be carried out in early 2010.

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Awards

Beca planners win recognition for infrastructure projects

Victoria Park Tunnel wins Resource Management Law Association Project Awards 2008

This award lauded the project team from New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA), Beca, Chapman Tripp and Zomac Planning Solutions Ltd for a successful approach and best practice in the investigation and reporting (consenting) stage of the Vic Park Tunnel Project. As well as demonstrating compliance with the relevant provisions and information requirements of the RMA, the award also recognizes clarity and presentation of documentation, fairness in evaluation and appropriate consultation. Criteria include demonstrating the application of relevant mitigation mechanisms, best current knowledge and practice and employing innovative techniques and methods of merit.

New Zealand Planning Institute Project Award for the Northern Busway Project

In May 2009 this Award acknowledged NZTA, North Shore City Council, Beca, Zomac and Opus International Consultants for the successful delivery of a project that 'demonstrates excellence and has delivered significant natural environment, social, and economic benefits'. According to the Award citation, the planning process has facilitated the better utilisation and enhancement of the northern motorway corridor to promote the use of public transport and to contribute to efficient regional transport infrastructure '....in a manner that maintains and enhances the remaining qualities of the area's natural environment'.

Alliance principles guide a highly effective team



Manukau Harbour Crossing a Triumph in Teamwork

This major infrastructure project is being delivered under an Alliance between the New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA - the Requiring Authority and consent holder) and a team of engineers, designers, constructors, planners, scientists and administrators from Beca, Fletcher Construction and Higgins.

These parties form a single, integrated team which operates in a high performance culture, aiming to successfully deliver the project.

The Scope of the Project

The Manukau Harbour Crossing (MHX) Project comprises the widening of Auckland's existing SH20 motorway on either side of the Manukau Harbour and the duplication of the existing Mangere Bridge.

The project will provide increased network capacity on this section of the Western Ring Route, providing a median divided carriageway with a minimum of four lanes in each direction, between Rimu Road and Gloucester Park, and a minimum of three lanes in each direction elsewhere. Provision is also being made for two bus lanes; one southbound and one northbound.

The Alliance Culture

NZTA wanted to build a project-specific Alliance culture 'from the ground up'. Alliance principles were prepared to guide the actions and behaviours of the parties involved, where all decisions are made on the basis of these principles rather than on 'positions'.

Some of these Alliance principles are:

- all decisions made on a 'best-for-project' basis to satisfy project objectives
- providing value for money
- all participants have an equal say
- collective responsibility for performance
- full access to 'best-in-class' resources
- innovative ideas are encouraged
- a 'no-blame' culture
- open, straight and honest communication
- unconditional support to the Alliance; and
- all transactions are fully 'open-book'.

Beca Planning's involvement, supported from both the Auckland and Christchurch offices, has included managing all aspects of the planning and consultation of the project. The team also prepared, coordinated and verified all statutory documents (AEE's and the Outline Plan), and briefed and managed sub consultant input into the Outline Plan.

A milestone achievement for Beca Planning team was assisting with resolving all Environment Court Appeals ahead of the scheduled programme, allowing construction to begin early.

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Planning with care to keep Marsden Point on track



Oakleigh to Marsden Point Rail Link

Beca is assisting ONTRACK (a division of the New Zealand Railways Corporation) to deliver the Oakleigh to Marsden Point Rail Link Project, a proposed new 20km rail corridor extending from south of Whangarei out to the region's deep water port at Marsden Point. This phase of the project is to secure the designation and resource consents, all of which were publicly notified in March 2009.

Extracts from an interview conducted by Damian Pedreschi (Marketing Manager, Beca Infrastructure) with Fiona Blight (Beca Senior Planner and Project Manager) and Paul Shivanan (ONTRACK's Project Manager) give some insight into the project.

What is the purpose of the project? Challenges?

Paul – The purpose from the start and our focus is to secure a route for the proposed railway out to Marsden Point. One of the things we have struggled with is changing the route to try and keep affected land owners happy and keeping it within the framework of rail constraints.

Who are the key drivers for this to go ahead?

Paul – We have received a lot of support from Northland Regional Council (NRC). They were initially driving the project from an economic and regional growth perspective. *Continued*

The term I hear most often in relation to this project is that this is a first for a rail designation under the Resource Management Act. What does that mean to you as the client?

Paul – It is new ground for us. There have been a lot of little projects but none where we have started off from Greenfield. This is a huge learning curve from my perspective in terms of what we need to do and dealing with different expectations from the various stakeholders. We know there is a process we have to follow here and we are going to do this thing right - if that means it's going to take us a little bit longer then so be it.

So, challenging and lots of new ground. How have Beca supported, or added confidence to you as a client over time?

Paul – Beca's knowledge of the process and the professional way that they approach the whole thing; not just the project management Fiona has been doing, means I can sit back with a lot of confidence and know that that side of it all is just happening in the background. Their process is totally robust and one I am quite comfortable we can stand up in the courts with when we get there.

Fiona – We have been conscious all along that, because it is a rural Greenfield project, it has different challenges. This won't necessarily be the last new designation that ONTRACK does. For everything that we do we think wider than just the Marsden Point Rail link.

So, in working with a client in new territory, what have been the challenges or good points?

Fiona – It's about making sure we know ONTRACK's business; their drivers and what is important to them in terms of operational requirements.

It is not just about designing a rail line or the RMA process, but is really about thinking wider in terms of the operational needs. When it is constructed there will be trains operating. So we need to know about those constraints. So to me that's been really interesting and very exciting.

What have been the successes for you so far as the client?

Paul – The fact that we've served the notice and have something that is robust and that achieves our aims in terms of getting that corridor in place. Taking aside the public consultation that will follow; we have the groundwork in place to say this is what we want to do.

Having got this far, how are your relationships with stakeholders and other parties?

Paul – Really good. Fiona has been really good in keeping that open communication with all the parties. And the rest of the Beca team, ringing up people, making time to talk to them and provide them with information. That has been a huge success and we have received a number of positive submissions.

You definitely feel the flow is going in the right direction now?

Paul – Well, I think from a community wide perspective there is a lot of good will towards the project. Everyone sees the benefit of having a rail corridor there from an economic and development perspective.

Fiona – What I think one of the successes has been with the affected landowners is we have built up trust with them, so they know when we talk to them we are being open and honest.

Both of you use the words "we" very easily about working on the project which should I say is not always typical of a client consultant relationship. So what's the secret?

Fiona – I think we have a really good Beca team, and Paul as ONTRACK's project manager has a good understanding of the RMA processes and pitfalls as well, which has made it work well. ONTRACK and Beca have worked collaboratively as a team, and they have been with us every step of the way.

From a personal point of view what have you both enjoyed most about this project?

Fiona – Probably dealing with the landowners and the different stakeholders and seeing the project evolve and move forward. Dealing with the issues and thinking about the solutions. And having a good team, too.

Paul – The sense of achievement. Dealing with the Beca team has also been really satisfying for me. The working relationships have been really good.

What are the lessons learn on this project?

Fiona – I think early consultation. Once you start engaging it's important to maintain ongoing and regular communication. It's about making that process clear to them (and I think we have done that quite well).

Paul – Communication is the key, understanding what the client's expectations are. Communication at this level and with landowners and other stakeholders is what really makes or breaks a project of this nature

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Rail



Protecting Nationally Significant Linear Infrastructure

Planning protection for networks under pressure

Beca Planning has been working with Vector Gas (formerly Natural Gas Corporation) to provide a higher level of planning protection for critical sections of the nation's high pressure gas transmission pipeline network.

This network, some 2,300km long, connects the main gas supply fields in Taranaki with distributor's networks in the main settlement centres throughout the North Island. The transmission network was constructed nearly 30 years ago and was legally provided for via authorisations under the Petroleum Act. After construction the pipelines were secured by easement agreements across private properties along the route.

Upon enactment of the Resource Management Act (RMA), the Petroleum Act was one of many pieces of legislation repealed. While the authorisations ensured the pipelines were lawfully established, in practical planning terms they had little protection other than existing use rights under Section 10 of the RMA. The easement agreements were also generally limited to existing pipelines and did not anticipate any new pipelines.

Vector Gas had two major concerns in this regard. Firstly, its pipelines were increasingly under threat from 'urbanisation' activities along key sections of the route in previously rural areas, with construction activities around and over the pipelines. Secondly, with increasing demand for gas in Auckland and further north, more pipelines would eventually be required.

As Vector Gas is a requiring authority, the designation of the existing and potential future pipelines was an obvious solution. While a designation would not necessarily guarantee a higher degree of protection to any pipeline, it would identify the route on District Plan planning maps. This knowledge of the pipeline or future pipeline's existence would help to add another layer of protection, in addition to Vector's active pipeline route management regime.

The Beca Planning team has completed two major designation exercises and a small additional route enhancement for Vector. A further designation for an additional pipeline to supply a potential thermal power station at Helensville is in progress.

Key lessons and successes the team can share from these exercises are:

- Consult often and continuously – While Vector has on-going liaison with landowners along the pipeline routes, contact with individuals is invaluable. Many concerns can be addressed by providing good, clear information packs – as evidenced by the low rate of submissions received along the routes.
- Engage early and maintain contact with the Territorial Local Authorities (TLAs) – many TLA officers are not widely experienced with designations, and may not be aware that the process differs from the resource consent procedures. Maintaining contact and continuity of information flows assists with securing timely outcomes
- Joint hearings with common commissioners are the way to go – where potential routes traverse a number of jurisdictions, joint hearings are not only feasible they are necessary. Common commissioners mean that the time taken to come up to speed with operational requirements and key planning issues can be minimised.
- Continuity and commonality of conditions is a feasible goal – for an operator it is essential to have a common base of conditions suitable to the day to day needs of the activity. For a consent authority, it is desirable that local conditions are reflected. Both can be achieved against a baseline of common conditions, with local matters added to this as required.
- The current designation provisions of the RMA are working – these designations were achieved in a timely fashion with minimal submissions and appeals, all resolved by negotiation.

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People on the Move



Craig Hind



Ainsley McLeod

Aussie calls for Craig Hind

Craig is off to the bright lights and will be joining Beca's Melbourne team in July. He has been based in the Auckland office for five years leading a number of large projects. In his new role Craig is Business Director of our planning business in Australia, with a focus on delivery of major infrastructure planning projects.

New base for Ainsley McLeod

After nine years in Beca's Wellington office, Ainsley McLeod recently moved to our Christchurch office to lead the South Island Planning Team. She has particular expertise in statutory planning under the RMA for infrastructure and utilities and is well known to a number of our clients, particularly in the government, power and telecommunications sectors.

Ainsley is enjoying providing planning advice to her existing clients from her new base and looks forward to doing the same for new clients in the region.

New Technical Director



Andrea Rickard

Introducing Andrea Rickard

Andrea Rickard joined the Auckland Planning team as Technical Director in February this year. Andrea is a Full Member of the New Zealand Planning Institute and has 14 years experience in planning and resource management in local government and consultancy roles.

Andrea is particularly interested in working at the specialist interface between resource management and environmental engineering, and she is especially keen to strengthen Beca's

combined services between our Planning and Environmental businesses, providing project management, consenting, and assessment and investigation skills.

Andrea is also an acknowledged expert witness who has given evidence at Council hearings and in the Environment Court. Before joining Beca, Andrea spent around 18 months on the Northern Gateway Alliance Management Team delivering the Newmarket Viaduct Replacement Project as Planning and Consultation Manager.

New senior planners bring valuable strategic experience to the team



Greg Lee

Greg Lee

Greg Lee joined the Wellington team in September last year. He is a senior planner with over 13 years experience in strategic planning and land development gained in New Zealand and the UK.

Greg is a specialist in growth management issues and advises on preferred directions and locations for growth on urban form, spatial strategy and policy as well as regeneration planning and using new growth to achieve change. He currently is on the Wellington Branch and National Policy Committee of the New Zealand Planning Institute and has given expert evidence at many hearings in NZ and the UK.



Craig Inskeep

Craig Inskeep

Craig Inskeep joined Beca's Hamilton team in February as a Senior Planner after spending four years managing the Waikato District Council's planning consents team. He was responsible for coordinating interdisciplinary technical teams as well as assessment and presentation of planning documentation for designations, resource consents and assessments of environmental effects.

Craig is skilled in preparing and presenting evidence at Council hearings as well as technical assessments and peer reviews of planning reports.



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