

# **Accessibility Advisory Group Minutes**

**Tuesday, 26<sup>th</sup> April 5:30pm – 7:30pm**

**Wellington City Council, 101 Wakefield St  
Committee Room 2**

## **Chairperson:**

Lee Rutene

## **Members Present:**

Tim Pate, Lee Rutene, Tristram Ingham,  
Christine Richardson, Alan Royal, Amanda Cameron,  
Christine O'Sullivan, Michael Bealing

## **Councillors:**

Cr Lee

## **Staff:**

James Mather, Neil Johnstone, Pete Whiting,  
Charles Kingsford, Deb Hume, Adam Nichols

### **1. Welcome from the Chair & Apologies – 5:33pm**

Lee opened the meeting with a prayer

Julia apologised for her absence, Michael apologised for being late

### **2. Conflicts of interest – 5:35pm**

No conflicts of interest were declared

### **3. Neil Johnstone Introduction – 5:40pm**

Neil introduced himself to AAG, working within the roading section of WCC.

The primary role of this section is maintaining council roads and footpaths

Recently there was a review of the Wellington Railway station;

Several parties attended, AAG members were invited. Multiple issues with the railways station were identified, these are being looked into.

There is a proposal to build a ramp at the front of the Railway Station. Regional Wellington is to look into it in collaboration with Kiwirail and Victoria University

The phasing of traffic lights was discussed – no major faults were found but ongoing improvements are being sought. It was recognised that not all parties share the view that the current phasing is acceptable.

Wheelchair ramps were raised as an issue; information on them has been collected for 2 years. The ramps outside the station are being reviewed.

AAG queried which other ramps are being looked into, they were advised that the 'worst ramps' are being looked into around the city. It was not clarified how 'worst' is quantified or scheduled for upgrades.

### **The floor was opened to AAG to query Neil:**

Q- Have you considered looking at the differing types of wheel chairs when designing? There isn't a universal wheelchair design.

A- We design to standard; there are issues around things such as stormwater. We are limited with how we can build ramps. We would look to wheelchair designers to look to NZ standards, so that they work. Our desirable grade is 1:12, max is 1:8. There have been ramps put in previously that are steeper than that. There is one ramp that is 1:5, we would like to get that fixed promptly. We acknowledge that 1:5 is too steep.

Q- Is the heritage status an issue when designing? I certainly recognise that cost is a factor.

A- It could be, but heritage status itself doesn't preclude good design.

Q- You said you had good data on the kerb ramps? How many ramps on the golden mile don't meet standard currently?

A- Only 10% have a dish channel, most have a 'V'. We don't consider the V good standard. 90% don't comply with that. In terms of steepness more than 80% would be less than 1:8 gradients.

Q- What is the approximate cost to bring a ramp up to code?

A- To build a ramp is \$2-\$3000. In some instances we would have to make alterations to the street itself. A complex one could take \$25,000 for example.

Q- With your existing budget how many can you remediate per annum?

A- 10 per annum. It would take 100's of years to remedy the issue at this rate.

Q- Is there a plan to show the non-compliant ramps?

A- We are collecting that information; we have measured about 300 so far. I think there are around 2000 ramps in the city but I am not sure.

Q- How can we assist in pressing the case for more funds?

A- A funding case would have to be made. Current practice is when we are working on a road we fix substandard ramps to minimise cost at the time. We don't have a budget for just fixing ramps.

Q- I went along to the railway meeting, when my friend with me walked out of the station there were no tactile indicators that there was traffic nearby/incoming on that route. She was ok as she had a sight dog, but is there any plan to remediate this?

A- There is talk of some solutions, both pedestrian and motorist focused. Engineers are looking into it.

Q- What is your opinion of the forecourt outside the station being formalised as a shared space?

A- Conceptually sounds good, I am not an engineer however. Clearly a drop off point for cars, so there needs to be a balance.

Q- Would you be confident in saying that all new construction is code compliant with accessibility standards?

A- I wouldn't be in a position to comment on that. I am in the roading section. We have a case right now with Mr Bun, where they wanted something accessible. We are facilitating a solution in that space currently to bring it to code.

#### **4. Let's get Wellington Moving (LGWM) – 5:50pm**

LGWM consists of 3 agencies working together to shape the transport policies and principles for Wellington. LGWM gestated from the cessation of the Basin Bridge transport solution.

No lines have yet been drawn on a map, this is the engagement phase. Some of the consultation we have had so far has incorporated accessibility, but we are here for a more specialised set of feedback from you.

The general area we are working in is Nauranga to the Airport, North of the port to the Airport. We are aiming at not constraining our users, so questions we are asking are broad – in order to form principles.

Constraints we are working with are; we aren't trying to reinvent what has already been heavily debated. We would rather term those aspects advice.

#### **The floor was opened to AAG to query LGWM:**

Q- The feeder systems, will those compromise existing or other systems?

A- We will have to strike a balance; some of the changes will be very specific. So what I am hearing here is that you value balance, public transport and various systems not being compromised.

Q- What are you looking into in terms of people in wheelchairs? Currently attitudes towards people in wheelchairs and the access itself has been a huge issue when dealing with them.

A – One of the things we are doing this time is not just thinking about structures. Some of the solutions might be training for bus drivers. I don't have an answer for you now, but we hear you regarding inclusiveness.

Q- Are you looking into smart-technology and integration between modes of transport? What about self-driving cars? Do you see Uber as a game changer when it comes to ride sharing?

A- I know that right now there will be tech solutions I can't even think of. We have things being looked into right now. In terms of principles, I am hearing you say

integration. We are also looking into scalability. We know NZTA are looking into the classification of Uber.

Q – My principle would be the central importance of accessibility. Often it is thought of as something as an aside. 25% of people live with a disability, and the vast majority of those are mobility. Accessibility has to be universal, no longer is it accessibility that some busses be accessible. All busses have to be accessible. All London taxis are required by law to be wheelchair accessible. Solutions need to include universal applicability and consistency.

A- Consistency and ease of understanding noted

LGWM noted the 9 principles developed by Grant Robertson

It was noted that access was used in these principles, but not in the manner that AAG would use it.

The group rejected the concept of trade-offs compromising accessibility to transport (i.e. time vs mode).

Inclusion, citizenship and participation were synonyms suggested to combat the accessibility term/language issue noted in the principle document, but it was noted that this doesn't solve the cultural issue.

People's expectations are increasing in terms of citizenship, so what was once 'accessible' isn't any longer acceptable. The example of being winched into a train as an 'unacceptable' accessible solution was given.

The group noted that public amenities need to be increased, huge areas with no public bathrooms.

The group thanked LGWM for coming and looked forward to them coming back for further engagement.

## **5. Cycleway Engagement – 6:20pm**

Pete Whiting introduces himself to AAG.

Pete is employed as an engagement officer working on the cycleway project

Pete is currently working on the Eastern Section of the cycleway's project; asking the community where they want a cycleway. Pete is querying public opinion of the current proposals, to find if they can be improved upon.

Submissions are currently largely opinion based, but once the design stage is about to begin AAG will be looked to for design input in terms of accessibility.

AAG thanked Pete for introducing himself and his early engagement.

## **7. Parking & Accessibility – 6:35pm**

Charles Kingsford introduces himself to AAG – principle traffic engineer

Remit is making the city more accessible and safer

Charles advised that he came to see AAG in May 2015 and tabled a document on assessing mobility spaces in the city. This document was tabled with AAG at the meeting as it has been updated slightly.

Charles explained some of the process behind mobility parking requests;

“When we receive a request for mobility parking we assess it on the point of need. From here we look at whether or not a mobility park will work in that space. We do not look to put spaces into fast traffic streams for example.”

“AAG’s advice is meant to be sought, and we acknowledge that we haven’t done that well in the last 12 months. Previously we relied on community services, and there was a specific accessibility advisor – Simon Wright.”

Each mobility space requires a formal legal traffic resolution. That resolution is the brought to Transport committee.

Recently had a mobility space placed in Kilbirine. We have found that mobility users do not pull all the way into the space. We want your advice is how to make these spaces better, and to get persons to use them correctly.

Another space was also place in Karori. We are careful to place them in lower speed/volume roads.

### **The floor was opened to AAG to query Charles:**

Q - When you recess the Kerb, does the remainder remain accessible to others?

A - Yes, they must remain 1.5m wide. Some places we can’t take the footpath away.

Q – In ‘Bay Road’ there is a mobility park that is in a dangerous spot. Is there any way for parks to be removed if they are unusable or unsafe?

A – We have looked into spots around that area.

Q – Question about the design process of the parks – what engagement and consultation was undertaken?

A – The Kilbirine one was based on an existing design. We consulted with local people. As community services have pulled away, we are in a space where engagement is hard to fully realise. Traffic engineers are community minded, but we have limited resources and are competing to design to multiple needs. There were no objections to the Kilbirine proposal based on our consultation.

Q – The park that you have shown us, I often get out on the driver side – would I be able to get out on the driver side? If so that needs to be made clearer. I get out from all sides of the vehicle.

A- Agreed.

Q – I think the design principle of an accessible parallel mobility park should be commended, but I have issues with the application in this instance. With this indent, the indent is on a slope – this is highly problematic. Diverting the gutter channel to outside the park would be good. This would allow direct access to the vehicle from anywhere on the kerb. Better signage that the whole space is for mobility parking would be good. If it was all painted blue this could assist. There is good evidence from DHB raises the level of discomfort of non-mobility users accessing the park. This has shown to keep the area free for mobility users. The park on the corner of Courtney and Taranaki is the gold standard in my opinion of accessibility in CBD wellington.

A- Answer missed –

Q – In Kilbirine you could put a park behind National Bank/ANZ – there are spaces behind that building.

A – We seem to have gone away from the blue paint, I am not sure why. Can look into that – skid resistance has been an issue. The colour shouldn't be an issue so long as traffic regulations allow for it.

We often don't have the footpath width to accommodate the footpath width that would be desirable. Making the ramps work with the gradients and widths we have is tricky. Bringing the vehicle to footpath height would be a solution.

Q – The mobility parking policy, are you aware of any plans to rekindle this? It's over 10 years old now.

Nigel noted that he is renewing the accessibility action plan, which will incorporate mobility parking.

## **8. Annual Report – 7:00pm**

James notified the group of the due date (30<sup>th</sup> June 2016)

Michael, Lee, Alan, Tristram, Christine nominate themselves for the Report Working group.

Google docs to be used as the preferred format

## **9. Other Business – 7.05pm**

Feedback on the forum, all points from AAG members.

Nothing was spoken about that was particularly accessibility relevant. Giving us more leeway on the topics spoken about would have been good.

Commended council on the spirit of the event, there was some confusion about the purpose of the event (accessibility forum/annual plan forum). There were some elements that were missed that could have been completely relevant to accessibility. There was potentially some lost social and political capital. When you hold a forum that involves accessibility, making sure that there is some relation to accessibility. Of the 11 options that we were given, there were also no options for 0 rate increases.

It was portrayed as an accessibility forum, but the actual annual plan process has no relation to this. The fact that accessibility issues are clearly being considered, but spending options that we were given were unpalatable. Clear oversights on the actual accessibility of the forum, related to the events activities. Time was not managed well, good content could have been considered but felt so constrained.

Details of the meeting were only released only 10 minutes before the meeting. Only 2 parts that related to accessibility were the 2 questions, these were very good but are a reiteration of what we've been saying for many years.

Room was too small; with wheelchairs it was very cramped. Committee rooms just don't work.

Review of the agenda is offered by the group for the next forum.

Cr Lee noted that there was too much on offer and not enough in depth discussion. There should have been more time allocated for discussion.

Community needs the information early. Submissions made to the council on accessibility should be discussed. New discussions not needed when so much material is already in the council space.

Awareness is needed of the accessible submissions proposed, so that AAG can respond to those issues where possible.

## **10. Councillors Update – 7:25pm**

Cr David Lee

Going out to consult on the annual plan and the UDA, bringing in Zealandia and the low carbon plan and the management of WCC water laterals.

Cr Lee pushing to get 3 internships in collaboration with Emerge. Main hurdles are HR currently – positions would be unpaid and aiming to provide work experience.

## **11. Confirmation of Minutes – 7.30pm**

Minutes moved by Tristram as true and correct

Meeting adjourned at 7.40pm

**Action Points:**

- 1- James & Nigel to begin work on Accessibility Action Plan
- 2- Annual Report working group to begin drafting report, due 30<sup>th</sup> June 2016
- 3- Planning an Accessible Event work to begin