The Strand Optimisation project team
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THE STRAND OPTIMISATION PROJECT

INTRODUCTION

The Strand Optimisation Project is a joint Waka Kotahi and Auckland Transport project, running along The Strand between Alten Road and Tāmaki Drive in Auckland. Described as a short-term project that aims to improve travel choices, efficiency for freight and safety for all along this corridor, anticipating future population growth in Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland, and greater travel demand on existing networks and infrastructure. This creating the need to optimise the current transport corridors by using the space we have more efficiently.

The Strand optimisation project aims to:

- Improve travel choice by creating a safe, separated shared path from Alten Rd to Tāmaki Drive for people who walk and cycle
- Improve efficiency for freight and high-occupancy vehicles by creating a Special Vehicle Lane
- Improve safety for all users

And comprises

- A separated shared user path for cyclists and pedestrians
- Special Vehicle Lanes (SVL)
- Bus stop removal/relocation
- New pedestrian crossings
- Intersection improvements

Our response to this initiative needs to be seen in the light of recent floods in Auckland, which devastated retailers along this corridor. So understandably their focus is on business sustainability and resilience, which includes several matters of importance such as effective and improved drainage, decisions around the future locality of their businesses, access to customers and goods, but also concern around further disruption during construction, plus the removal of already limited parking. After several years of COVID and now the floods, many businesses are anxious about the future and weighing up their options.

The Strand supports several outlets of one of the leading retail categories and destination drivers for Parnell – home design and décor. Diluting this important category for Parnell is not desirable and could have a knock on effect to other home décor stores in other areas of Parnell. Automotive and industrial suppliers along this stretch are also making way for renewed development, including hotel and apartment properties, who no doubt will have access and drop off requirements.

And then there is the cost. While we understand that this project is part of the Auckland Network Optimisation, which has funding, this timing, together with severe budget cuts by Auckland Council, is unfortunate.

SHARED PATH FOR CYCLISTS AND PEDESTRIANS

The proposal includes a shared user path connecting to the existing Grafton Gully Shared User path just prior to Alten Road. This will be separated from the road to improve safety.

The general consensus is that this is a sensible idea. The Strand is notoriously dangerous for cyclists and has sadly resulted in a loss of life. The connection of Grafton Gully to Tāmaki Drive will improve the Auckland cycle network. We understand that certain sections of the path, such as along Stanley Street, will have cycle barriers installed to separate them from the traffic, as well as along The Strand from under the railway bridge to Ronayne Street.

There is a growing group of cyclists who commute to some of the large corporates in Parnell, especially up St Georges Bay Rd. The connection to Grafton Gully/Beach Road cycleway and Tāmaki Drive, with facilitated pedestrian crossings, (especially near the corner of St Georges Bay Rd), will really improve the safety of cyclists.

Cyclists in our business community, with whom we have spoken, believe this will increase new cycle trips per day.

We ask that consideration be given to the opportunity to address permeable solutions within the construction of the cycleway.

We understand that in the stretch of road between Nicholls Lane and Parnell Rise, the raised median will need to be removed in order to widen the footpath sufficiently for the shared path. Planning of these works will need to be very carefully considered as this block is a crucial connection to Parnell and The Port and diversions are extremely difficult, especially for trucks. Some have asked the question if it would not be more favourable to enhance the cycle connection between Churchill Street and onto Beach road, to avoid disruption in this section?

SPECIAL VEHICLE LANES

There is a certain scepticism towards this part of the proposal, with some feeling that SVL should not be created at all.

You have proposed that a Special Vehicle Lane (SVL) will be created along part of the route to improve travel efficiency for freight and vehicles with multiple occupants. The SVL is proposed to be operational between 7-10am and 4-7pm (Monday-Friday) in both directions. Outside of the SVL operational time, the lane can be used by general traffic. If this proceeds, this lane needs to be a T2 and not a T3.

Your modelling suggests that this could increase freight efficiency by about 2.7 minutes max when there is no pedestrian demand. You have also said that freight is forecast to increase by

up to 300 containers on the road additional over the next 10 years. In sharing your modelling however, it is plain to see that in both the AM and PM peak, if there is full pedestrian demand, all vehicles will experience delays, but if there is no pedestrian demand, there could be a savings of up to 2.7 minutes for T2, (but in all cases, general T1 traffic is worse off, supporting our concern for added congestion).

The Ports of Auckland have indicated that they have just over 1,200 vehicle moves on peak days. They are however financially incentivising trucks to book their slots out of peak hours and into the night, in order to reduce congestion.

The observation of several businesses along The Strand, who watch congestion day in and day out, some of whom have been there nearly a decade, believe that the introduction of Special Vehicle Lanes will create further congestion than is already experienced. Although there are certainly a lot of trucks which use the corridor, they believe from observation that general t1 traffic is the majority. They have also highlighted that increased congestion will create further emission fumes, which is unpleasant for their stores. Some have suggested that the impact could be as far reaching as St Georges Bay Road/Gladstone Road and even Tāmaki Drive, which will then create another raft of unintended consequences.

When Quay Street was developed, part of the Council/AT objective was to discourage vehicle movements from Tāmaki Drive through the city, and encourage use of the motorway and The Strand as a bypass. At the time we highlighted that we believed that this would intensify the use of several 'rat runs' in Parnell in order to avoid congestion, one of them being the route via St Georges Bay Road, Farnham Street and Earle Street and then down Parnell Rise. This has taken place, and was especially obvious pre COVID. Adding additional priority to trucks and reducing the capacity for cars on The Strand is not desirable for Parnell.

Overall, we don't want dedicated SVL lanes creating another physical barrier to moving in and around Parnell, it is already difficult. We believe the focus for cargo should be on rail movements, not adding to already congested roading infrastructure.

PARKING

As we know, Parking is a highly emotive issue. Your proposal indicates the removal of 18 parking spaces on the northern side of The Strand, and 21 on the southern side of The Strand, (total removed 39), with only six on-road parking spaces being retained on the northern side of The Strand.

During 2022 the Parnell Business Association conducted a customer arrival survey with the businesses in the area in order to understand the travel preference and demographic of typical patrons of our retail support on The Strand and found the following:

- There are substantial requirements for adequate loading facilities and truck access to several stores along The Strand, mostly those that are décor related.
- The current travel preference (and necessity) of this demographic is largely their own vehicles. 100% of the respondents rated this as the preferred preference, with all of them saying their customer support was exclusively via private vehicle or between 95-98%.

- Most retail visits are single visit, destination driven – particularly to high-end home décor stores.
- Several businesses quoted that the time spent in store can be up to two hours for a serious buyer, and customers often walk and browse from store to store.
- Also clients often loan product from the showroom to trial in their own homes, so private cars are their best means of transportation.

You have noted that you understand the importance for parking in this area for businesses and their deliveries and as such are proposing formalising 35 parking spaces. 12 on The Strand, 21 on Shipwright Lane and 2 loading zones on Shipwright Lane. It is important to note that all these parking spaces (and more) are currently being used by businesses along the stretch from 73 The Strand to Shipwright Lane, and are essential for the normal running of their businesses, so from their point of view there is no added advantage.

The observation and feedback from businesses regarding the parking proposal along that stretch is as follows:

- That the utilisation of parking on the opposite side of The Strand (which is currently not monitored) is a combination of apartment residents, staff and customers. Their observation is that many of those spaces are occupied for several days at a time. The parking that is going to be retained on the northern side should be P60. Anything longer will be open to misuse from Uni students. You have mentioned metered parking – which is of no help unless it is enforced.

- They have expressed concern that all means need to be taken to make sure that the very precious allocation of these few proposed formalised parking spaces, are not open to misuse, and are generally in favour of a P60 Zones, with some loading zones. (Some have mentioned P90).

- They have queried the possibility of branding their parking places, as it appears that misuse of parking sometimes occurs by staff from neighbouring premises.

- All vehicle entrances to an existing building need to have "vehicle entrance" access applied, not just "loading zones".

The other point that we do not believe has been adequately considered, is how safely customers or staff/service vehicles will cross The Strand if approaching from the opposite side of the street. This can be managed if vehicle entrances are correctly marked and there is manoeuvring space, as that currently takes place.

Specific feedback as follows:

- **73-75 The Strand (Cult).** Two spaces here are essential as per the plan.
- **65-71 The Strand (VTNZ).** This property was badly damaged in the flood and we are not clear of their intentions moving forward.

- **59-63 The Strand (Refined Living)** Four car parks are required for 59-63 The Strand, not one. Remove the pedestrian crossing as trucks will not be able to access the building for both Refined Living and Palazzo Kitchens. Truck access is vital. A loading zone is required in the immediate area. Is this possible to be located outside of 65-71 The Strand? At this stage there is only one in Shipwright Lane which is hopelessly too far.
- **55-57 The Strand (Cuchi) –** no specific feedback to date.
- **51-53 The Strand (Forma).** They have requested that the driveway outside their store is to be kept clear to ensure customers have easy access into the proposed parking in front of Forma and they believe it would be helpful if the driveway had yellow lines painted on it with 'no parking' signs. This would assist with either delivery or customer vehicles entering and exiting their parking. They are happy with two parks in front of their store, but would like to name them. They are happy with 60 minutes, ideally we would prefer 90 minutes.
- **35-41 The Strand**, is a new development housing retail on the ground floor. They have accommodated parking within the envelope of the building.
- **25-33 The Strand**, is a new development under construction, called Augustus Park. Appendix A indicates plants/trees on the footpath they are planning to install. They have requested that you investigate potential opportunities for carparks (indicated in orange). They are planning some hospitality on the street level.
- **15-19 Shipwright Lane**. The proposed plan does not identify their vehicle entrances either at the main entrance or loading dock, access to which is essential for the tenant's furniture business Bauhaus.
- **21-23 Shipwright Lane**. No parking at all appears to have been considered outside this property, and this needs to be addressed.

It is absolutely critical that The Strand Optimisation team speak individually with every single business along Shipwright Lane as well as on The Strand from no 25-73, to determine their appropriate needs for this very scarce resource, before decisions are made on how to reconfigure parking outside their premises.

INTERSECTION ST GEORGES BAY RD/THE STRAND

The proposal indicates that the camber of the road will be adjusted along The Strand in the vicinity of the St Georges Bay Road intersection to help reduce instances of truck roll-over events which have occurred in the past. This has been one of our primary safety concerns as we have witnessed several near fatal accidents on this corner. We understand that you will be maintaining a single lane approaching the corner from the overbridge to reduce the incidents of trucks increasing speed on approach, but would still like to note that while this could be an improvement, we do not believe this is the optimal solution.

You have also indicated that any further changes to this intersection may be considered at some time in the future, as it is outside of the scope of this project.

However the following considerations need to be taken into account:-

- With the existing traffic congestion on the Strand, there needs to be further consideration given to the extra vehicle movement entering and exiting St Georges Bay Rd as a result of the above –(as previously described we believe it will increase the 'rat runs' through Parnell. The view of traffic backing up at the pedestrian crossing outside the Saatchi building may encourage more vehicles to turn left into St Georges Bay. We would like some current statistics of car movements during peak hours on weekdays so we are able to compare this in the future.
- Consideration of future planning due to additional floor area currently allowable as a result of planned intensification on St Georges Bay Rd following zoning and height changes with the Unitary Plan, plus the additional floor area that will be permissible following Plan Change 78 (Walkable Catchments). This street has developed immensely over the past few years and is likely to continue.
- We would strongly request further investigation be undertaken re future traffic movements in and out of St Georges Bay Rd, with a view to introducing a roundabout or traffic lights installation at the intersection of the Strand and St Georges Bay Rd. We know you have said that according to your modelling this will add significant delays.
- Currently it is often is quite slow turning out of St Georges Bay Rd, especially late afternoon, and we are worried that the SVL lane would make this slower still. Turning right out of St Georges Bay Rd is hazardous and we do not see anything in this proposal to indicate this would not be worse.

PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS

The 3 new signalised crossings along The Strand are of most interest to us.
We understand that the signals will only be activated if pedestrians/cyclists on foot need to cross and that the flow of traffic can be manipulated by ATOC.

- The new crossing proposed outside 59-63 The Strand is seen as unnecessary, and needs to be removed. This proposed pedestrian crossing crosses to an area that currently is a series of industrial storage yards, so is not residential, and will result in making it impossible for service/goods vehicles being able to stop on the southern side (59-63). Businesses in the area see very few pedestrians crossing the street at that juncture, and there is already another crossing further along.
- The new crossing proposed from the car park towards the Saatchi building is absolutely essential, as several pedestrians take their life in their hands every day, trying to navigate that intersection. We also believe that the cycle path needs to be extended across the parking area to link with the crossing. However the exact position of the crossing needs debate. Feedback from the Saatchi and Saatchi building, which has two carpark exits, one either side of the crossing, is as follows. "*We believe that the location of the new proposed pedestrian crossing by our building would cause on-going traffic issues for vehicles trying to come and go from our parking entrances. Could this pedestrian crossing be located another 50m up to the left? The first cars to hit the orange/red light heading west will pull up right in front of the carpark exit point. They won't have enough warning to slow and stop earlier to leave a gap. I think the proximity has the potential to make getting out of our car parks a real nightmare in the afternoons particularly*". In addition, we hope that the proposal has considered the possibility that

- trucks might slam on brakes approaching that corner if suddenly they need to stop, which is a further hazard.
- The third crossing outside the Mirage apartments is also seen as necessary as businesses have witnessed several dangerous crossings in that vicinity, from the current bus stop.
- We know there are differing opinions regarding the crossing in Gladstone Road, but have left that for the residents to comment.

It could be important that all signalised crossings are equipped with red light cameras to ensure compliance.

BUS STOPS AND SERVICE

- We understand the relocation of the bus stop on the northern side of the Strand, opposite no 77, as well as the other one to Gladstone Road.
- We support the slight relocation of the one outside the Saatchi buildings as we have always felt that was too close to the corner.
- We do however have a major gripe about the lack of public transport that services the growing warehouse district of Parnell and have been complaining about this since 2017. In the St Georges Bay Road area, there are probably over 2,000 employees, and only 1 bus route! This is totally unsatisfactory.

GLADSTONE INTERSECTION

We think it is unfortunate that the cycleway does not continue to Tamaki Drive, and the Gladstone intersection has not been holistically considered.
You have noted that the Gladstone Road intersection as a whole is not within the scope of this project given this is a short-term initiative with limited budget, and that there are longer term plans for both the bridge and Gladstone Road.
However your crash data indicates that there were double the amount of incidents on that corner as compared to the intersection of St Georges Bay and The Strand.
In the interim you have committed to clear signage improvements.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- Several members close to the intersection with Beach Rd/Parnell Rise believe that the light sequence is not optimal and could be improved. We know that ATOC has the capacity, but may not always be monitoring that intersection. We are unaware of any AT cameras that have a view down The Strand, past the railway bridge, and believe this should be considered. The Parnell Business Association has several cameras on the corner of St Georges Bay Rd and The Strand and are open to discussions in this regard.
- The Delegated Authority from Waka Kotahi, for AT to apply enforcement along The Strand needs to be sorted out in time for these changes to take effect.
- Once the detailed design has been completed, we will need an accurate estimate of the sequencing of works.
    - We need to be consulted on the TMP and have time for input.

- We need a development response plan from AT/WK for the businesses most affected.
- We certainly hope that where possible, night works will be considered to minimise impact.

- Most of the décor/design retailers have said their quietest time is just before Christmas and all of January.
- We would like to see the parking across from the Saatchi building be better managed – especially since the floods we have noticed water colleting there.
- We are aware there is a separate project working on a stormwater upgrade along a section of Stanley Street which will be included alongside this project during construction and that ASM and Auckland Council have a current project under construction which will connect the last section of major twin 2.5m-diameter stormwater pipes from Quay Street to the harbour outfall. We have had indications this will be complete in Q1 of 2024, and would hope that none of these works will affect that in any way?
- The Strand optimisation project should be an opportunity to increase stormwater resilience, as well as tackle safety and the better functioning of the road.

CONCLUSION

You have noted that this short term, low budget project has been planned with the future City Centre Masterplan/Grafton Gully Boulevard in mind. You have spoken of The Strand having a 'sense of place', more residential development, vibrant retail, increased amenity. We support that vision.

Currently, a large section of The Strand is a retail hub for stores specialising in furniture and home furnishings. This critical mass of retailers gives the customers the ability to park, and walk between a number of high end, independently owned outlets. If these changes do not have the desired outcome and subsequently dilute the tenant mix, and if certain businesses find that they cannot continue to operate, the entire ambience will change, and Parnell will be left with a semi industrial wasteland.

We still have questions around the cost benefit analysis, which has not been modelled. Even if it delivers the minuscule savings forecast for freight efficiency – what is the cost to general traffic, our retailers and their customers, and does that outweigh the benefit?

Cheryl Adamson
General Manager
Parnell Business Association
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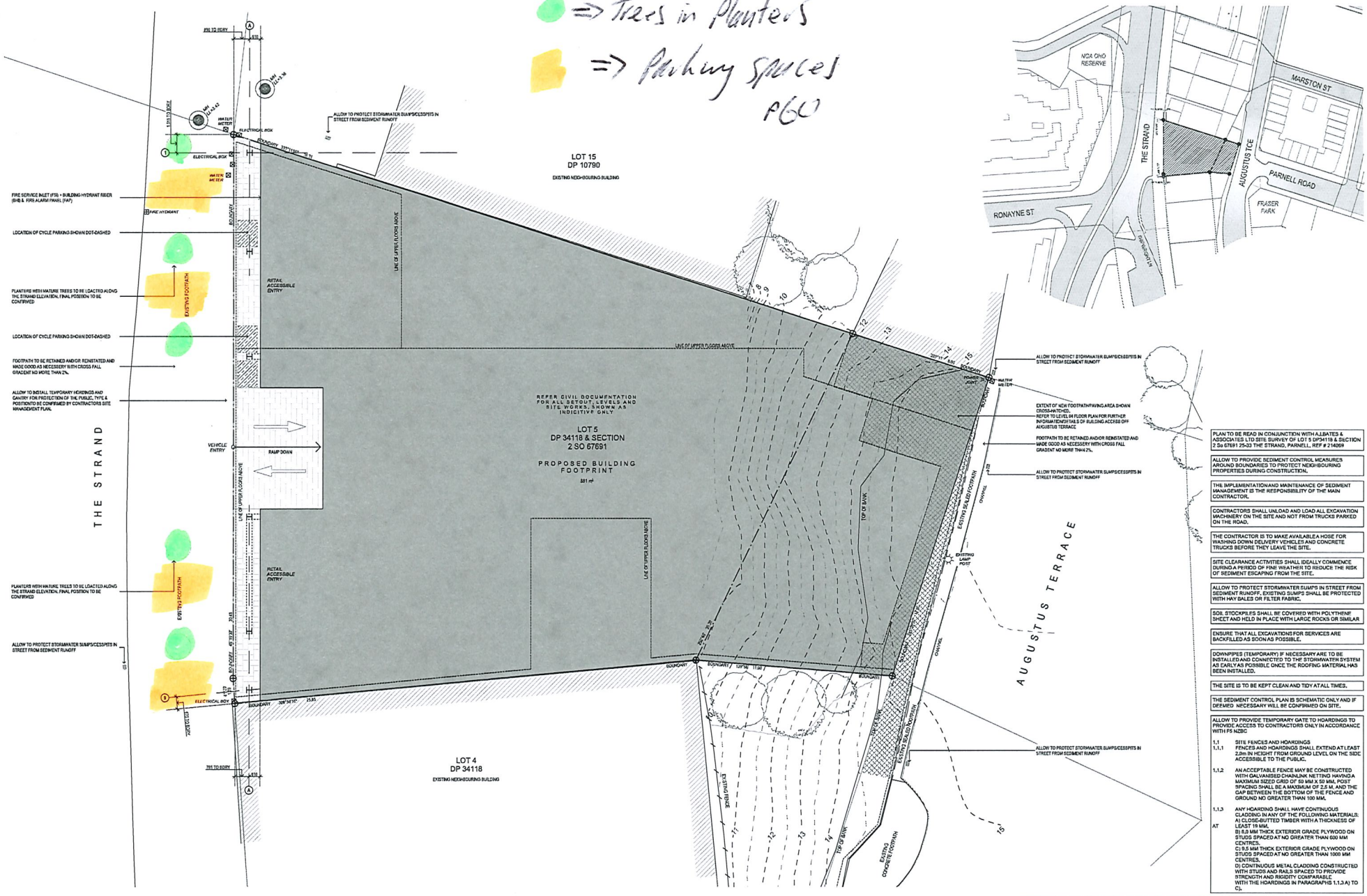
APPENDIX A



PLAN TO BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH ALBATES & ASSOCIATES LTD SITE SURVEY OF LOT 5 DP34118 & SECTION 2 So 67691 25-33 THE STRAND, PARNELL, REF # 214069

ALLOW TO PROVIDE SEDIMENT CONTROL MEASURES AROUND BOUNDARIES TO PROTECT NEIGHBOURING PROPERTIES DURING CONSTRUCTION.

THE IMPLEMENTATION AND MAINTENANCE OF SEDIMENT MANAGEMENT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE MAIN CONTRACTOR.

CONTRACTORS SHALL UNLOAD AND LOAD ALL EXCAVATION MACHINERY ON THE SITE AND NOT FROM TRUCKS PARKED ON THE ROAD.

THE CONTRACTOR IS TO MAKE AVAILABLE A HOSE FOR WASHING DOWN DELIVERY VEHICLES AND CONCRETE TRUCKS BEFORE THEY LEAVE THE SITE.

SITE CLEARANCE ACTIVITIES SHALL IDEALLY COMMENCE DURING A PERIOD OF FINE WEATHER TO REDUCE THE RISK OF SEDIMENT ESCAPING FROM THE SITE.

ALLOW TO PROTECT STORMWATER SUMPS IN STREET FROM SEDIMENT RUNOFF. EXISTING SUMPS SHALL BE PROTECTED WITH HAY BALES OR FILTER FABRIC.

SOIL STOCKPILES SHALL BE COVERED WITH POLYTHENE SHEET AND HELD IN PLACE WITH LARGE ROCKS OR SIMILAR

ENSURE THAT ALL EXCAVATIONS FOR SERVICES ARE BACKFILLED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

DOWNPIPES (TEMPORARY) IF NECESSARY ARE TO BE INSTALLED AND CONNECTED TO THE STORMWATER SYSTEM AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE ONCE THE ROOFING MATERIAL HAS BEEN INSTALLED.

THE SITE IS TO BE KEPT CLEAN AND TIDY AT ALL TIMES.

THE SEDIMENT CONTROL PLAN IS SCHEMATIC ONLY AND IF DEEMED NECESSARY WILL BE CONFIRMED ON SITE.

ALLOW TO PROVIDE TEMPORARY GATE TO HOARDINGS TO PROVIDE ACCESS TO CONTRACTORS ONLY IN ACCORDANCE WITH F5 NZBC

1.1 SITE FENCES AND HOARDINGS

1.1.1 FENCES AND HOARDINGS SHALL EXTEND AT LEAST 2.0m IN HEIGHT FROM GROUND LEVEL ON THE SIDE ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC.

1.1.2 AN ACCEPTABLE FENCE MAY BE CONSTRUCTED WITH GALVANISED CHAINLINK NETTING HAVING A MAXIMUM SIZED GRID OF 50 MM X 50 MM, POST SPACING SHALL BE A MAXIMUM OF 2.5 M, AND THE GAP BETWEEN THE BOTTOM OF THE FENCE AND GROUND NO GREATER THAN 100 MM.

1.1.3 ANY HOARDING SHALL HAVE CONTINUOUS CLADDING IN ANY OF THE FOLLOWING MATERIALS:
A) CLOSE-BUTTED TIMBER WITH A THICKNESS OF LEAST 19 MM;
B) 9.0 MM THICK EXTERIOR GRADE PLYWOOD ON STUDS SPACED AT NO GREATER THAN 600 MM CENTRES.
C) 9.5 MM THICK EXTERIOR GRADE PLYWOOD ON STUDS SPACED AT NO GREATER THAN 1000 MM CENTRES.
D) CONTINUOUS METAL CLADDING CONSTRUCTED WITH STUDS AND RAILS SPACED TO PROVIDE STRENGTH AND RIGIDITY COMPARABLE WITH THE HOARDINGS IN PARAGRAPHS 1.1.3 A) TO C).

AT

FOR CONSTRUCTION & CONSENT

DATE	REVISION	BY	CHK	NO.

RevID	CNID	Change Name	Date

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PROJECT	DRAWING TITLE
Augustus Park 25-33 The Strand Parnell - Auckland 1010 New Zealand	SITE PLAN

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The Builder/Contractor shall verify job dimensions to any work commencing. Figured dimensions shall take precedence over scaled work.

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90309	A0001	A