

Submission to the Dunedin City Council regarding the proposal to widen the Portobello and Harrington Point Roads.

Submitted by Portobello Community Incorporated.

Introduction

Portobello Community Incorporated was formed as a community organisation to work in our community to promote, develop and improve on some of the great things we have in our township.

Living on the Otago Peninsula provides residents and their families with some unique opportunities in their lifestyle, environment and community that our residents enjoy. To foster and encourage those opportunities Portobello Community Inc. have clear goals to assist us in creating opportunities for our area.

Those goals include;

- Ensuring we have a vibrant, artistic, family-friendly community
- Having a strong sense of identity and community
- Developing our amenities, facilities and environment for the benefit of our residents and our visitors.

Submission

Portobello Community Incorporated want to work constructively with the City Council over the road widening issue as it has done before on other major projects in our area. We bring a strong level of local knowledge and expertise to these projects.

Bus-stop Reclamations

Portobello Community Incorporated is deeply concerned with the level of reclamations for bus stops at Edwards Bay, adjacent to Seaton Road and the Portobello Jetty. These areas of reclamation are not consistent with the current bus route operated by the independent contractors for the Otago Regional Council. Presently, buses coming from the city take the route up Beaconsfield Road and down Nicholas Street turning back into Portobello Road into the township. Therefore there is no need to reclaim these areas as the bus services do not utilise these areas and reclamation is an unnecessary cost to the project and the community.

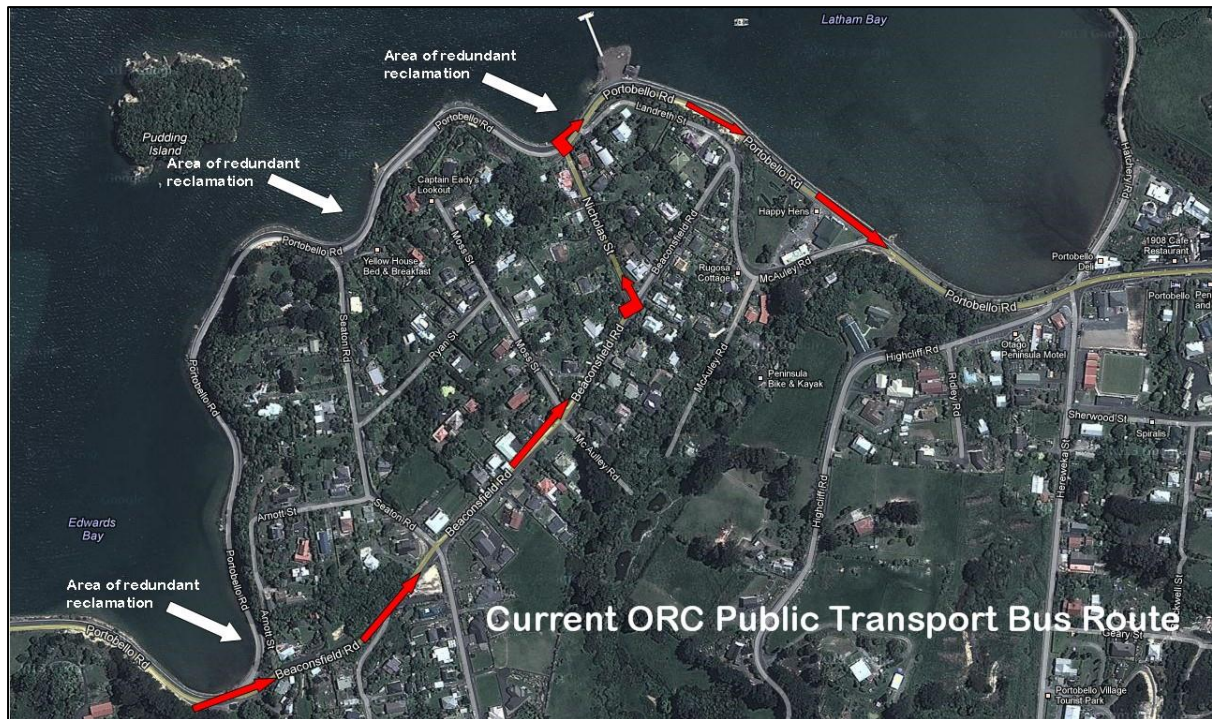


Figure 1 The current Portobello bus route does not utilise the roadside areas beside the harbour.

Recreational Space

Portobello Community Inc. does not support the reclamation of the beach area adjacent to Portobello Jetty and adjacent to Nicholas and Landreth Streets. This area is an extremely popular recreational swimming area that has become more popular with the completion by the community of the new jetty. The area is used frequently and forms part of wider the wider recreational use of the area that is now available.

The proposed plan shows a considerable degree of reclamation at Edwards Bay as part of the unnecessary bus stop design. The sheltered nature of the bay and its position to the afternoon sun make this area a popular area for passive recreation by visitors and local families.

Accessibility

The proposal creates access points along the new portions of the wall, but many of the access points are not relevant to the current level or type of use by the local community. The City Council need to utilise local knowledge to ensure these are in their correct position.

Landscaping and Amenity Features

The proposal provides for seating and the development of landscape planting along the edges of the wall development. However, in most cases the landscape or amenity areas are built in the wrong position in relation to the prevailing winds and sheltered bays that are available from between Bacon Street and the Portobello Jetty.



Figure 2 The beach area adjacent to the Portobello Jetty and opposite Landreth and Nicholas streets is an important recreational space for the Portobello Community and has become more important since the development of the new jetty.

The proposed landscape areas will be blasted by the prevailing winds and need to be placed in conjunction with local knowledge to ensure they will survive the tough environmental conditions. The same applies to seating placement in this area. The design has placed seats in areas of high observation, but with little understanding that the strong south-west or nor-easterly winds will make these areas unusable due their high level of exposure. Again local knowledge can pin point the more appropriate places for these types of amenities to be positioned in.

Landscape and Geological Features

Portobello Community Inc. opposes the destruction of natural landscape features along Portobello and Harrington Point Road as the proposed plan indicates. The Raynbird's Point cutting, the old shoreline point opposite Pudding Island, and the Cannon site are part of the original harbour landscape and their retention in the landscape is an important part of the protection of the character of the Otago Peninsula.



Figure 3 Landscape features of the Otago Harbour and the Peninsula are an important aspect of the natural character of the area, Portobello Community Inc. opposes the destruction of these areas in the proposed plan.

The Heritage and Character of Portobello Township



Figure 4 Portobello is a heritage town that has remained intact since its foundation in 1840. Because of that historical intactness it is an important hub for residents and visitors to the Otago Peninsula.

Portobello is unique to the Otago Peninsula because it remains the only genuine township on the Otago Peninsula. It also has a genuine cultural landscape that reflects its

development since its founding by William Christie in 1840. Largely the structure of the township has remained physically unchanged since that period apart from the obvious changes in buildings within the geographical setting. The current proposal undermines that setting by the dominance of the road widening from the Portobello Jetty to Hatchery Road and adjacent to the store. That dominance also destroys the historic and cultural charm of the township which is pertinent to the lifestyle of its community and as an attraction to visitors to the area. The use of a gabion basket wall alongside the proposed pedestrian/cycleway is an industrial impediment that is both aesthetically unnecessary and grossly out of character with the nature and style of the township. The removal by reclamation of the cannon feature and the historic wall alongside Latham Bay from the Jetty to Hatchery Road will irrevocably damage the historical and natural charm of the township.

Portobello Community Inc. questions the need for overdesigned extravagance in this part of the Township and would suggest that a more sympathetic option is available to ensure that the character is not built out of the township. These alternative options would provide far better financial, aesthetic, recreational, historical and safety features for the ratepayers of Portobello and visitors to the area and would include;

- Retention of the historical wall running from the Portobello Jetty to Hatchery road utilising the current 2.25 metre wide footpath as a shared cycleway and pedestrian route.
- Undertaking appropriate design to the existing path on top of the wall to improve the surface slope and drainage that utilises the current width appropriately.
- Utilising the green landscape space where the gabions are proposed to widen to pedestrian/cycleway situated below the road by a further 0.50 metres.
- Removing some of the vegetation from the landscape area adjacent to the road and the shop to improve traffic sight lines and visibility.
- Creating an access point from the cannon site to the Latham Bay beach for passive recreation.
- Undertaking to control traffic speed and create a safe crossing point (near Coronation Hall) for our children and pedestrians to cross Portobello road in safety to the shared walkway/cycleway.
- Undertaking by traffic control, speed restriction and utilising existing pedestrian options Portobello will enhance and improve the natural townscape that it already has and save the City council vital capital funding in reclamation and construction.

Consultation and Design Issues

The level of consultation that the Dunedin City Council has undertaken on the road widening project has been less than ideal. While some contact has been made with Portobello Community Inc. in the past, wider consultation and notification with the community has been noticeably absent and it is of significant concern that more has not been done to

ensure residents were fully informed with the project and its details. Portobello Community Inc. has through its website and the distribution of 600 flyers to residents tried to ensure that people are aware of this project and impacts on the community. However, the community deserve more than four weeks to assess the impact of this project.

The lack of up to date aerial photography and aerial views showing both the high tide and low tide impacts of the road widening is of concern if the community is to be able to judge effectively the impacts of the project. There were few if any cross sectional drawings in the proposed plans and this was particularly pertinent to the section of proposed gabions near the store and Hatchery Road intersection.



Figure 5 An artist's impression of the proposal reveals the imposition of a road-scape in Portobello that is not in keeping with the heritage and natural character of the Township. The design devalues the township as the hub of the Otago Peninsula and reduces the features that are important to the community. Greater design sensitivity and a use of the natural features are required to ensure that the character and amenity values of the area are enhanced and not reduced.

Conclusion of Submission

Portobello Community Incorporated are concerned that the desired level of design sensitivity that reflect the natural landscape, heritage and recreational values enjoyed by our residents are not reflected appropriately in the design proposal. A greater reliance by the City Council on the local knowledge of our area is required to ensure that the road widening will work for the residents of our community. Our organisation looks forward to being able to participate more in this aspect of the project.

In summary Portobello Community Incorporated submits the following;

- The road widening from Bacon Street, Broad Bay to the Portobello Jetty requires community involvement with the positioning of landscaping, amenity features and suitable access points.
- Portobello Community Inc. opposes the reclamation of the bays for unnecessary bus stops and parking adjacent to the Jetty opposite Nicholas and Landreth Streets, the bay opposite Seaton Road and Edwards Bay.
- Portobello Community Inc. opposes the destruction of scenic geological and natural landscape features where it is unnecessary and destroys the natural character of the Peninsula and harbour edges as proposed at Raynbirds Point, the Cannon and opposite Pudding Island.
- Seeks to ensure that the heritage wall from the Jetty to Hatchery Road remains without reclamation and that through appropriate design the existing pedestrian pathway be utilised as a shared route for walkers and cyclists retaining the natural and heritage features of the Portobello townscape.
- Seeks necessary and much needed traffic calming and crossing design to create appropriate access from adjacent to the Coronation Hall on Portobello Road so that we can slow traffic for safe crossing and use by pedestrians and cyclists safe on the existing path.
- Portobello Community Inc. opposes the construction of a gabion wall to widen the road as being unnecessary and aesthetically inappropriate in the township.



Paul Pope (Chairman of Portobello Community Inc.)

On behalf of the Committee and Organisation

Please direct replies to:

The Secretary

3 Landreth Street, Portobello

Dunedin, 9014

portobello.community@xtra.co.nz

<http://portobellocommunity.wordpress.com/>