

Te Ara O Hei- "The Path of Hei" (Coromandel Walks) - Project Fact Sheet # 5

PARKING, VISITOR AND TRAFFIC ISSUES

In 2015 our Council commissioned an independent traffic assessment report (known as the MWH Report) and significant traffic monitoring over the 2015-16 summer period to quantify existing traffic around Hahei and Cathedral Cove and to identify solutions to deal with growing visitor numbers to Cathedral Cove and Hot Water Beach now. The MWH report also looked at the expected traffic impacts of the Walk and what infrastructure is required to mitigate these, now and projected traffic growth into the future (final report can be viewed [link](#)).

The report made a number of short and long-term solutions which has informed the Council's Annual and Long-term budget processes.

In the long term plan our Council has budgeted for the following key traffic related infrastructure:

- Hahei Village Entrance Park and Ride car park expansion to 200 car parks. 2015/2016;
- Lees Road car park 500 spaces consenting, built in two stages, stage 1: 199 car parks 2016/2017;
- Roading improvements to Lees Road, including widening and sealing the road to 7m up to the new car park, and sealing the road to 5m (similar to the existing dust seal) up the rest of the road to the Stella Evered reserve.
- Safety improvements to the intersection with Lees Road and Hahei Road, and new right hand turn bay onto Lees Road from Hahei Road.
- Hahei Village Entrance car park - For this summer (2016-2017), the Park and Ride car park will be running, from 27 December 2016 to 1 February 2017. It will also operate over Waitangi Weekend 2017.
- Grange Rd - Traffic Ambassadors are also being used to manage traffic flows at the Grange Rd car park at Cathedral Cove and direct people to the Hahei Village Entrance Park and Ride.
- Shuttle services. Expressions of interest have been sought for commercial operators to provide shuttle service for this summer from Whitianga to Hahei (via Cooks Beach) and Hot Water Beach. The service will be extended with a new expression of interest open following construction of the new car parking and walking tracks.

Mercury Bay South traffic

A draft parking strategy has been prepared, which sets out principles and actions around management of parking across the Mercury Bay South Area. Council staff have been working with the Hahei Business Association and Hahei Stakeholders Group, and sought formal feedback on the draft in October 2016. The strategy was also peer reviewed by a group which included Mercury Bay Area Manager Allan Tiplady, Community Board members and external experts in the business and tourism industry. A number of recommendations have been proposed and further feedback is being sought over summer 2016-17 before the final strategy is endorsed.

Parking

There is no doubt parking and transport infrastructure is needed to manage existing and future tourist numbers. Our Council is funding the expansion of the existing Hahei Village Entrance Park and Ride car park to 200 car parking spaces, and will continue to ensure the park and ride shuttle facility to Grange Road operates over the summer. We are also proposing significant investment in the new car parking facility at Lees Road, as well as a major upgrade of Lees Road with widening and sealing the road to

7metres up to the proposed car park (1.65km up the road) as well as further sealing to the end at Stella Evered Reserve on Lees Road. The car park will provide for a total of 500 car parks, but will be constructed in two stages, with the first 200 car parking and bus parking scheduled for completion December 2017 (following the outcome of resource consenting). Safety improvements will also be made to the intersection of Lees Road and Hahei Road, as well as a new right hand turn for traffic.

Shuttle Service

Expressions of interest have been sought for commercial operations of the park and ride shuttle service from the Hahei Village Entrance Car Park to Grange Road for the summer 2016/2017 as well as the shuttle service from Ferry Landing (Whitianga) to Hahei Hot Water Beach via Cooks Beach and Hahei. Our Council will also be seeking expressions for commercial operators once the Lees Road Car park has been constructed for an extended shuttle service to include Lees Road. On-going monitoring will be required to ensure service provision meets demand and changes can be made to achieve an appropriate level of service.

Future Parking

A future parking site has been suggested at or near the edge of Hahei Village (possibly 100 Acre block). This site will service existing visitors plus new visitors to the Blowhole and further south to Hot Water beach.

Once the property and structure plan issues have been sorted, the Hahei Village Entrance car park could also potentially be expanded further. If the carpark was to be extended in or near the village the issue of congestion on Hahei Beach Road at peak times would need to be considered as part of the design.

Enforcement

Once the car parks have been completed for Cathedral Cove, a bylaw change will be made to prohibit parking on side of roads around Grange Road, whilst still providing for residents. Once the bylaw is in place it will be strictly enforced to encourage people to use the new car park.

A bylaw is also proposed for Lees Road as well as signage and yellow lines to discourage parking on the road verge. Our Council will monitor parking and traffic issues following the completion new car parks and will adjust bylaws and enforcement as the need arises.

Road Signage

Directional and tourist signage will be revamped prior to the completion of the proposed Lees Road car park. The directional signage will promote Lees Road car park as the main access/car park to Cathedral Cove during the peak and shoulder seasons. We are currently looking at winter signage options with the Hahei Businesses Association to help to promote Hahei Village during off peak periods in particular.

As well as directional signage ways to improve Tourist signage promoting Hahei Village will also be discussed with the Hahei Business Association.

Tourist information

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Ensuring the tourist information is clear and accessible across a range of tourists is essential to the success of the project and management of summer traffic. Tourist information will be provided through a range of media including Destination Coromandel, websites and tourist information I-sites. Shuttle and park n ride times, tide times and other relevant information

about parking and Purangi Estuary crossing will be promoted via a number of mediums including signage at starting points and key locations.