

29 March 2007

Mr Wayne Donnelly  
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Dear Wayne

**Wellington Regional Land Transport Strategy: Clarification over a long term view**

On March 20<sup>th</sup>, I attended a public hearing held by the Wellington Regional Land Transport Committee on the Draft Wellington Regional Land Transport Strategy 2007-2016 (RLTS). At this meeting, a comment was made by a submitter that the Committee should be taking a longer-term view on transport planning issues than the ten years specified in the RLTS.

Cr Terry McDavitt, the Committee Chair, responded to the submitter by indicating that in a conversation the previous day with Land Transport New Zealand, the Committee were told that they were not permitted, under law, to take a longer view on transport planning issues than ten years.

While we understand that the Committee cannot use funds designated beyond the ten year period, we consider that funding practices should not act as a constraint on long term thinking and planning. An analogy for this would be that being paid monthly does not stop us thinking about how we will spend funds in the future.

We also note that:

- (i) the Land Transport Management Act 2003, states as a purpose to the act as *improves long-term planning and investment in land transport* - section 3 (2) (d);
- (ii) the vision in the New Zealand Transport Strategy 2002, is underpinned by four principles (page 4), the first of which is 'sustainability' – which demands a long term perspective; and
- (iii) The Auckland Land Transport Committee is charged with preparing a '*Regional Land Transport Strategy 2050*'<sup>1</sup>

'Long-term' can be any time period from 10 years to infinity. The fact that transport (an infrastructure based asset) legislation refers to long-term planning and investment indicates that those implementing the legislation should indeed be taking a long-term approach in the range of fifty to one hundred years – not the ten years as implied in Cr McDavitt's response. We consider this is an important point and one that would have a significant impact on the outcome for the final Wellington Regional Transport Strategy. Can you please clarify the rights and capacity of the Committee to think beyond this ten-year boundary?

*Sustainable Future*, an independent think tank promoting long term planning, consider that a long term view is critical, particularly when dealing with infrastructure such roads and public transport facilities and services [www.sustainablefuture.info](http://www.sustainablefuture.info) .

Thank you for your assistance.

Yours faithfully

Wendy McGuinness  
cc Cr Terry McDavitt, Wellington Regional Land Transport Committee

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<sup>1</sup> The National Business Review, 23 March 2007, page 12 and <http://www.beehive.govt.nz/ViewDocument.aspx?DocumentID=28707>