

Entered by Board Secretary

Support Growth Alliance South Engagement during COVID-19

For decision:

For noting:

Choose an item.

That the Auckland Transport Board (board):

- i. **Notes** that the Supporting Growth Alliance (SGA) public engagement approach and material for the South was approved by the Auckland Transport (AT) Board and Executive Leadership Team (ELT) in November and December 2019, and SGA planned to commence public engagement on 26 March 2020 but this was suspended due to the COVID-19 level 4 announcement, and
- ii. **Approves** continuing with non-contact public engagement in the South to support progressing the NZ Upgrade Programme, Covid-19 Stimulus Package and interconnected parts of the SGA programme, which are seen as key platforms in the Government's approach to the economic recovery and support the planning of major urban growth proposals in Drury.

Te whakarāpopototanga matua / Executive summary

1. In November and December 2019, the Board approved the next stage of the SGA public engagement to support the development of the Detailed Business Cases (DBC's) and notices of requirement (NoRs) for the South projects. Public engagement with the community and affected landowners was planned to commence on 26 March 2020 but was suspended due to the COVID-19 alert level 4 announcement.
2. NZ Transport Agency (Waka Kotahi) intends to engage on the accelerated NZ Upgrade Programme projects (Mill Road and Rail Stations) irrespective. The community and affected landowners are expecting wider public engagement on the related SGA programme in the South. There is concern that public engagement may not be well received by the community given the current COVID-19 environment.
3. The key mitigating factor for the public engagement is that it is seeking feedback on preferred options only (i.e. no property acquisition discussions). The majority of properties affected is also Greenfield land and based on rates information a high proportion of these landowners are assumed not to be occupying the affected property (i.e. approximately 62%).
4. SGA, in consultation with AT and Waka Kotahi, have made amendments to the engagement material and implemented other mitigation steps to manage the potential reputational risk of engaging during the COVID-19 period. Waka Kotahi has approved continuing with non-contact public engagement in the South during the COVID-19 and Franklin Local Board also supports this approach.

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5. Given the significance of proceeding with public engagement during the current COVID-19 situation, the decision is referred to the AT Board.

Ngā tuinga ō mua / Previous deliberations

Date	Report Title	Key Outcomes
November 2019	Supporting Growth – Amended Programme Alliance Agreement	AT Board approval of progressing to public engagement as part of business as usual development of the DBCs for the South projects in order to mitigate financial and reputational risks.
December 2019	Executive Leadership Team Report:	AT ELT approval of progressing to public engagement as part of business as usual development of the DBCs for the South projects given their low complexity. Noted that Mill Road central is a 'high risk' project.

Te horopaki me te tīaroaro rautaki / Context and strategic alignment

- The SGA programme is a continuation of the 2015 Transport for Future Urban Growth Programme Business Case work with the objective of completing business cases and route protecting the entire preferred transport network needed to support future urban growth by 2022. There are four geographic growth areas and 73 projects that constitute the programme to be route protected.
- There has been a high level of public engagement and the business cases for the South have been developed with the help of partners, stakeholders, landowners and the community over a number of years. Further public engagement is needed on options/preferred options to complete the DBCs and NoRs and this was approved by the Board and ELT respectively in late 2019.
- The Covid-19 situation has abruptly landed on New Zealand shores and within a space of 8-10 weeks all non-essential businesses have been closed and residents confined to their homes. The SGA has suspended public engagement during the initial lockdown period.
- The NZ Upgrade Programme (Mill Road and Rail Stations) and potential Stimulus Package (Rail Station Road Connections) projects are on an accelerated programme. Waka Kotahi has been requested by the Government to progress the NZ Upgrade Programme and has approved SGA continuing with consultation in the South.
- The interconnected nature of the South projects means these cannot be easily decoupled from the rest of the transport network for public engagement. Some landowners are affected by more than one project and all affected landowners received letters in July and December 2019 advising of further public engagement in March-April 2020. Many landowners have been making enquiries to SGA.

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Ngā matapakinga me ngā tātaritanga / Discussion and analysis

11. The AT Board is being asked to approve continuing with public engagement in the South following the initial COVID-19 level 4 alert period.
12. Communicating with landowners about potential impacts of proposals on their properties at a time when there is reduced capacity or ability to absorb and handle those pressures, results in increased stress on communities and affected landowners. Because of this there is also the potential for reputational risk to AT in respect of the context (circumstance, timing and approach) of the public engagement.
13. Options have been considered for the public engagement including postponing, engaging only on the NZ Upgrade Programme projects or continuing with the planned public engagement in the South. Cancelling wasn't considered a viable option as the NZ Upgrade Programme projects will be consulted on irrespective. It is noted that public engagement is needed to progress the DBCs.
14. There is a need to progress public engagement during Covid-19 in order to maintain momentum on the accelerated NZ Upgrade programme projects, manage community expectations around interconnected projects in the South, and continue to plan the transport networks needed to support major urban growth proposals in Drury, which together will also support the wider economic recovery.
15. The key mitigating factor for the public engagement is that feedback is being sought on preferred options only (i.e. no property acquisition discussions) and the majority of property affected is Greenfield land. Note that a high proportion of landowners are assumed not be occupying the affected property based on rates information (i.e. approximately 62%).
16. SGA, AT and the Waka Kotahi have worked together to mitigate the risks of public engagement in the COVID-19 environment. It is recommended that the public engagement proceed on the basis of the proposed risk mitigation approach explained in the table below.

Ngā tūraru matua / Key risks and mitigations

Key risk	Mitigation
Delaying public engagement can have detrimental impacts on programme and the continuity of projects within or being considered for the economic stimulus pipeline.	Progressing with public engagement mitigates the potential for delays to the economic stimulus pipeline including the accelerated NZ Upgrade Programme and potential Stimulus Package projects, and interconnected projects required to support current urban growth proposals for Drury. Together these form parts of both the Government's and wider economic recovery packages. Delaying public engagement would have potential economic and financial implications for these packages and the SGA programme.
Public engagement with communities on proposals at a time where there is reduced capacity to respond, or where community	The public engagement seeks feedback on preferred options only (i.e. no property acquisition discussions). The majority of property affected is Greenfield land and based on rates information a high proportion of landowners are assumed not be occupying the affected property (i.e. approximately 62%).

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<p>attention is elsewhere, can result in reputational damage for AT and less than optimal results.</p>	<p>Progressing with public engagement mitigates the potential risk of a disjointed engagement approach with the NZ Upgrade Programme and landowners affected by more than one project.</p> <p>Information from other projects where public engagement has proceeded during the COVID-19 period has indicated very high levels of engagement where there has been previous engagement.</p> <p>From a DBC and NoR process perspective, legal advice indicates that public engagement at this time is unlikely to be criticised by the Courts provided it is undertaken in a considerate and respectful way.</p> <p>There is a contingency plan in place should a low level of response be received.</p>
<p>Communicating with landowners about potential impacts of proposals on their properties at a time when there is reduced capacity or ability to absorb and handle those pressures, results in increased stress on communities and individuals.</p>	<p>All SGA communications have been amended to acknowledge the COVID-19 situation and the difficult time some people may having. It recaps on previous communications and that people are expecting an update now and continue to request information.</p> <p>Affected landowners will be given the option of contacting the SGA now for more information or not, and that there will be further opportunities to engage later.</p> <p>Where affected landowners choose to engage, a number of ‘touch-points’ have been built in to measure state of mind and capacity to respond.</p> <p>Feedback will be closely monitored real-time, and the approach modified/delayed should there be any concerns. Any areas of concern or escalation will be reported back to the co-owners immediately.</p>
<p>Engaging face to face at this time places people at risk.</p>	<p>All public engagement will strictly be non-contact and abide by COVID-19 requirements. Traditional and new communications tools (Microsoft Teams, Zoom) will replace face to face meetings.</p>

Ngā ritenga-ā-pūtea me ngā rauemi / Financial and resource impacts

- 17. Public engagement is part of the Target Cost Estimate 2 agreed to by AT, NZ Transport Agency and the SGA Non-Owner Participants. However, there could be financial implications for the co-owners should there be delays and extensions to the overall programme.

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Ngā reo o mana whenua rātou ko ngā mema pooti, ko ngā roopu kei raro i te maru o te Kaunihera, ko ngā hāpori katoa / Voice of mana whenua, elected members, Council Controlled Organisations, customer and community

- 18. There is a high level of awareness of the SGA programme by elected members. Workshops and meetings were held with the Auckland Planning Committee, and Franklin and Papakura Local Boards during February and March to provide an update on the public engagement.
- 19. Franklin Local Board recently discussed the proposed SGA public engagement and the COVID-19 situation at a workshop on 21 April 2020. The feedback received was that people ‘just want to know and a direct approach with affected landowners is crucial’.

Ngā whaiwhakaaro haumaruru me ngā whaiwhakaaro hauora / Health, safety and wellbeing considerations

- 20. The revised approach to public engagement is a result of COVID-19 and has people’s safety and wellbeing front of mind.

Ā muri ake nei / Next steps



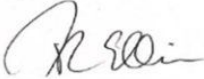
- 21. Public engagement is proposed to commence on 30 April 2020 for 4-6 weeks. Upon completion of the DBCs these will be presented to the AT Board for approval before lodgement of NoRs. For Drury Local Arterials this is expected in late 2020 and early 2021.

Choose an item.

Attachment number	Description
1.	SGA South Transport Network showing Proposed Public Engagement Projects

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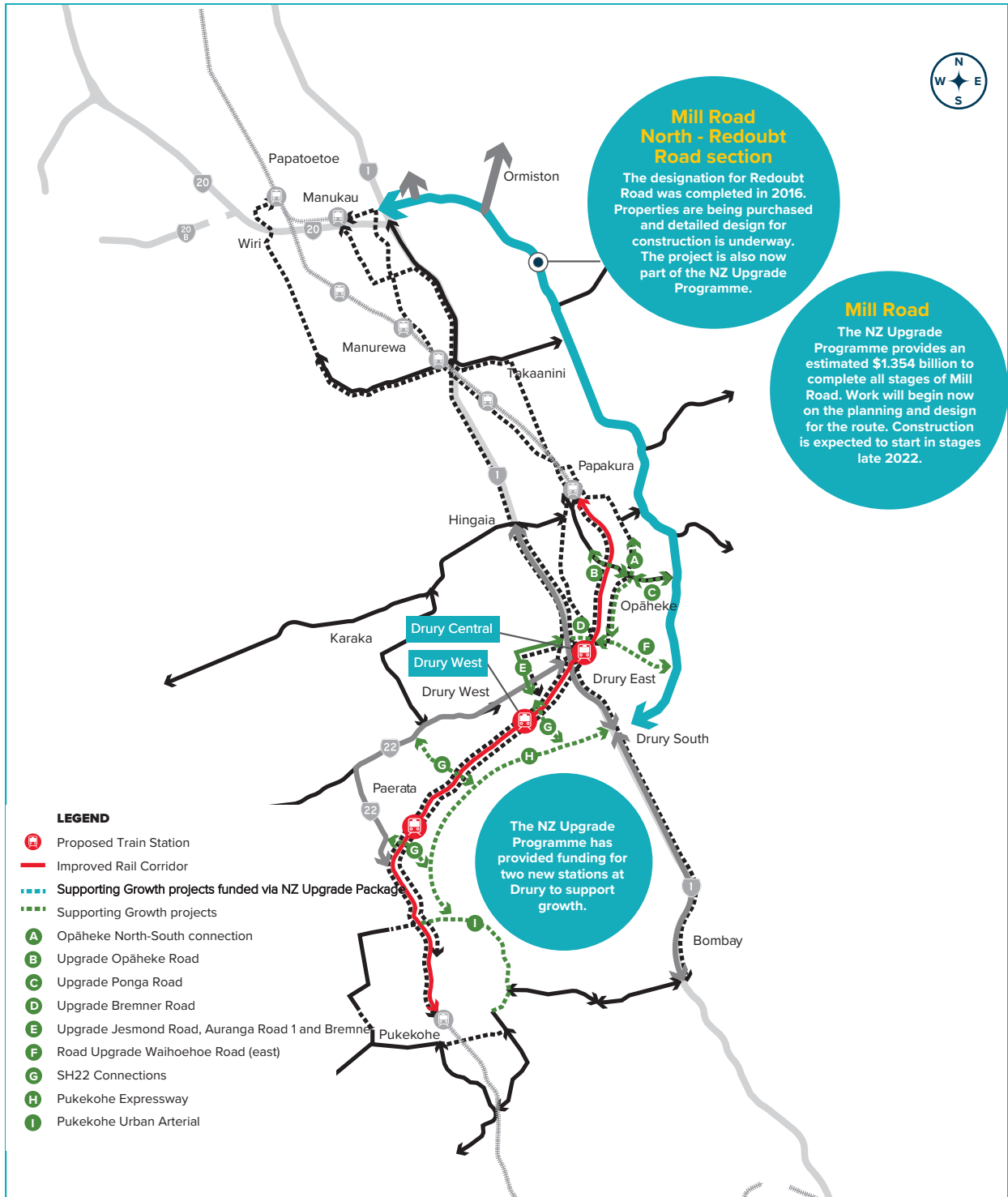
Te pou whenua tuhinga / Document ownership

Submitted by	Alastair Lovell Owner Interface Manager SGA	
Recommended by	Jenny Chetwynd Executive General Manager Planning and Investment	
Approved for submission	Shane Ellison Chief Executive	

Southern Auckland

Projects transforming the south

APRIL 2020



The projects shown on this map have been identified by indicative business cases and will require further technical investigation before their final details, locations or land requirements are confirmed.

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New Zealand Government