

Comment on the Takitimu North Link - Stage 2

To: Fast-track Expert Panel / NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi

From: Norm and Maureen Bruning

Re: Comment on matters relevant to the Takitimu Northern Link Stage Two Project

Date: 24 November 2025

1. Introduction

We own the property located at the junction of State Highway 2 and Omokoroa Road, Whakamarama.

We recognise that the time has come for the roading infrastructure to be improved throughout this area, to accommodate the growing population and road usage. However, while we acknowledge the strategic importance of this project, we have significant concerns about how the current proposal will affect our property, our livelihood, and the surrounding community.

Our family has owned and operated our dairy farm on this land for **over 80 years**, making it not only our livelihood but a significant part of our heritage. Any land take or alteration to access, environmental conditions, or amenity has long-term consequences for both our farming operations and our connection to the property.

The following matters are of particular concern to us, and we do not believe they are being dealt with in a satisfactory manner, in either the project plan itself, or the compensation negotiation that we are actively engaging in. We understand, and have accepted, that we will lose a significant proportion of our property – over 40% - so it is the process of construction, and how our residue land will be left, that are our main concerns in submitting this paper.

2. The impact of Noise

Once the project has been constructed, we will be confronted by two major roads in close proximity to the property, and in particular to our residence.

The new 4 lane highway will be approximately 300 metres away from the residence, and we are advised it will be sealed with either an asphaltic mix surface (e.g. Stone Mastic Asphalt) or LN5 (an epoxy-modified porous asphalt) across the relevant alignment. Provided this remains as the specification through construction, we are content with this noise outcome. We raise the issue of visual pollution below.

However, the existing state highway is to be rerouted to swing around the front of our remaining land, to access the overpass of the new highway and so provide the free route to Tauranga. This work will bring this road closer to our property and the battering of the slopes will make the property much more exposed.

The agency argues that a Noise Assessment has found that the noise effects on the Bruning property will be insignificant and don't require any specific mitigation.

Our experience of past works undertaken on this highway lead us to very strongly dispute this finding. The road will be in closer proximity to our residence and that alone will add to the noise factor. We live uphill from the road and with the new batters, our property will be opened up to much higher noise levels.

The agency argues that road usage will drop on the free route by nearly 50% but again our experience of the driving habits of locals leads us to dispute this. Witness the congestion that occurs on a daily basis in Te Puke as locals snub the tolled highway adjacent to take the free route through that town.

To address these matters, we request the following mitigations:

- A **site-specific noise assessment**.
- Installation of **noise barriers**, bunds, or acoustic fencing for a distance in front of the residence.
- Retention or replacement of vegetation screening, extending the planting to adequately screen the residence.
- Application of **low-noise road surfacing** for the length of the property boundary.

3. The impact of Construction

We appreciate the exigencies of construction, but this farm is an operational dairy unit and that also has critical operations that cannot be delayed or deferred.

Access will be a critical matter for both construction and farming operations. This will be particularly the case as constructions ramps up, and later at different stages of construction. The focus will be on continued safe access for the dairy operation around the construction activities.

Allied to this is the potential for farm services to be disrupted as construction progresses. Farm services such as water, power and telecommunications, need to be maintained in working order, fences need to remain stockproof, and health and safety requirements fully observed.

Noise, vibration and dust from construction activities are very disruptive to productive dairying. We understand that there will be requirements placed on the construction operations to manage these nuisances through the consenting process. Our concern is to ensure that these measures are fully cognisant of the dairying activities.

Construction will inevitably lead to a marked increase in heavy vehicle movements on local roads. These roads are generally not scaled for such volumes of heavy traffic, being mainly limited to local traffic, school buses, farm vehicle access etc. The health and safety of our community is our key consideration here.

We have observed a general reduction in amenity through prolonged construction activities, leading to unnecessary friction. There is no need to add unnecessary disruption to an already unsettled rural community through the building of this road.

To address these matters, we request the following mitigations:

- A clear **construction management plan** demonstrating how noise, dust, vibration, and traffic will be controlled.
- Advance notification of construction stages affecting property access.
- Guaranteed **safe access around our property** for the farming operations and the service vehicles.
- Rapid reinstatement of any damaged fences, driveways, farm structures or services.
- A dedicated community liaison contact and a commitment to resolving complaints promptly.

4. Maintaining Safe access throughout and after the Project

Access on to a state highway has always raised safety issues, and access to our property in particular has always been of concern. However, with good forward planning and constant review and enhancement we have been able to maintain a safe entrance for personal and farm vehicles for many years now.

In the long term we would expect that changes to road alignment and elevation will impact sight distances, affecting our ability to maintain safe entrance and exit. Returning traffic speeds to open road levels after completion will further compromise the long-term safety of our entrance.

In the shorter term, construction activities themselves will add to the hazardous conditions, slow-moving construction machinery, temporary barriers and road narrowing could all compromise safety.

To address these matters, we request the following mitigations:

- A **formal sight-visibility assessment** for our entrance and any other nearby access points.
- Design modifications or safety treatments where needed.
- Clear, logical **traffic management measures** that maintain safe access at all times during construction.

5. Amendment to the Land Plan for this Requisition

The land plan for this project requires some 42 hectares which includes almost the entire holding on the coastal side of the present state highway. However, there is one title that has been excluded from the requirement. This title is on the opposite side of the required land to our remaining property, and it makes no sense for us to retain this.

The title excluded, Lot 1 DPSA 80612, is a small title of 7,190 square metres and will be completely cut off from the remaining land. Further, the land that currently is in the requirement is very likely to change significantly in character through the construction works. In our view it will not be viable or practical to retain this title once works have been completed.

To address this matter, we request the following mitigation:

- Lot 1 DPSA 80612, be included in the requirement and added to the Land Plan for this project.

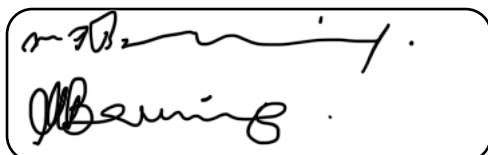
6. Conclusion

Our family has farmed this land for 80 years. The requirement from our property for the Takitimu Stage 2 project carries significant implications for our heritage, our operations, and the long-term use of our property.

Noise, safety, construction, and residual land issues need to be fully assessed and appropriately mitigated to ensure we, as landowners, are not disadvantaged by the expedited Fast-Track process.

We respectfully request that the Panel and project team consider these matters carefully and incorporate clear, enforceable mitigation and acquisition conditions into the project approval.

Signed

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Bening", enclosed within a rounded rectangular border.