25th September 2026

Upper Harbour Local Board Response

Submission on Draft Conditions
Auckland Prison Capacity Increase Project (FTAA-2603-1179)

To the Expert Panel,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the draft decision and proposed conditions for the Auckland Prison Capacity Increase Project.

While the Upper Harbour Local Board's primary purpose in this feedback is to comment on the draft conditions, we wish to record our disappointment with the draft decision to approve the project. Based on the information presented, we do not consider that a sufficiently compelling case has been made for increasing the capacity of Auckland Prison to the level proposed.

We note that modern corrections policy places significant emphasis on maintaining connections between prisoners and their families and support networks. Given the location of Auckland Prison and the relatively limited proportion of prisoner families residing on the North Shore, and complete lack of public transport to the site we question whether further concentration of prison capacity at this site is consistent with those objectives.

We also note the significant level of concern and opposition expressed by local residents, community organisations and submitters throughout the process. While these concerns may not ultimately determine the outcome, we consider they warrant careful consideration and should be reflected through robust and enforceable conditions that minimise adverse effects on the surrounding community.

Transport Infrastructure
The Local Board supports the proposed condition limiting prison capacity to 921 prisoners until the Dairy Flat Highway/The Avenue intersection upgrade has been completed.

However, we are concerned that upgrading and signalising the intersection alone may not adequately address the transport constraints experienced on the local network. In particular, the Lucas Creek Bridge on Dairy Flat Highway remains a significant bottleneck and should be considered as part of the wider transport solution. The Board requests that the Panel limit prison numbers at 921 until both the intersection upgrade and bridge replacement (together with any necessary traffic configuration changes) are completed.

Wastewater Infrastructure
The Local Board supports the proposed condition preventing any increase in prisoner numbers above current levels until the wastewater pipeline is connected.

Construction Impacts
The Local Board has significant concerns regarding the proposed construction noise conditions. While the draft conditions reduce allowable noise levels during the evening and overnight periods, they nevertheless enable construction activity to occur well beyond normal working hours, including during the night.

Pāremoremo is a predominantly rural and semi-rural area characterised by comparatively low background noise levels and a high level of residential amenity. Construction noise that may be considered acceptable in an urban environment can have substantially greater adverse effects in this setting. Residents reasonably expect evenings and nights to remain free from ongoing construction disturbance, particularly given the scale of the proposed works and the potential for construction to continue for an extended period.

The Board considers it inappropriate for the conditions to effectively permit 24-hour construction activity. Even where lower noise limits apply overnight, construction noise, vehicle movements, lighting, reversing alarms, machinery operation, and general site activity have the potential to significantly affect residents' sleep, wellbeing, and enjoyment of their properties.

Accordingly, the Board requests that construction activities be limited to standard construction hours, with works generally occurring between 7.30am and 6.00pm Monday to Saturday, and no routine construction activity occurring during evenings, overnight periods, Sundays, or public holidays. Any exceptions should be limited to genuine emergencies, essential utilities works, or activities that cannot reasonably be undertaken during normal working hours and should require advance notification to affected residents.

The Board is also concerned that the draft conditions do not appear to establish any overall timeframe for completion of the construction programme. Without such limits, the community could be exposed to construction-related effects for many years. The Board requests that the consent conditions include measures that encourage the timely completion of works and minimise the duration of disruption to the surrounding community.

In addition, the Board supports:

- Independent condition surveys and monitoring of roads used by construction traffic, with any project-related damage repaired at the applicant's expense.
- Restrictions on heavy vehicle movements during school drop-off and pick-up periods around Ridgeview School.
- Closure of the temporary Iona Road access immediately upon completion of construction activities, rather than allowing it to remain in place for up to two years thereafter.

Community Liaison Group
The Local Board supports the establishment of a Community Liaison Group (CLG) and requests that the membership requirements be strengthened to ensure appropriate community representation.

The Board considers that the CLG should include representatives from:

- Pāremoremo Residents and Ratepayers Association;
- Sustainable Pāremoremo;
- Upper Harbour Local Board;
- Ridgeview School;
- relevant mana whenua; and
- residents directly affected by the project, including those in the Prison Village and surrounding roads.

The CLG should meet regularly throughout the major construction phases and provide transparent public reporting of issues raised and responses provided.

The Board also notes previous community requests for public access to the Officers building and encourages Corrections to continue exploring opportunities for appropriate community use of these assets.

Emergency Notification

The Local Board supports requests for a formal emergency notification system for both Prison Village residents and the wider Pāremoremo community.

Residents should have access to timely notifications regarding escapes, fires, major incidents, road closures, or other events that may affect public safety. The responsibilities, notification methods and communication protocols should be clearly defined and publicly available.

Future of the Prison Village

The Local Board agrees with the concerns raised by the Pāremoremo Residents and Ratepayers Association regarding the future of the Prison Village.

The removal of the designation from Village land raises legitimate questions about its long-term future. We are concerned that the community has not been provided with sufficient certainty regarding future ownership, management, occupancy arrangements, security provisions and consultation processes should changes occur in the future.

We encourage the Panel to seek further clarity from Corrections on these matters and to ensure that the implications for both Village residents and the wider community are fully understood before a final decision is made.

Landscape and Visual Effects

The Local Board requests significantly stronger visual mitigation requirements than those currently proposed.

The Board considers that landscaping and screening should be designed and maintained to provide complete visual screening of the expanded prison development, including buildings, structures and associated infrastructure, to the greatest extent practicable.

In particular, we request that the Landscape Mitigation and Environmental Enhancement Plan require planting, landform treatment and other mitigation measures sufficient to screen the prison from surrounding roads, public spaces and neighbouring properties. The objective should be that the prison expansion is not visible from the surrounding community once mitigation planting has matured.

The Board also requests confidence that visual mitigation is designed to address the full height and scale of the prison development, rather than only screening lower-level structures.

There should be a management plan in place to ensure that this screen remains healthy and in place for as long as the prison is in Paremoremo.

Monitoring and Compliance

The Local Board requests independent monitoring of construction traffic, dust, noise and vibration throughout the construction period, with monitoring results and compliance reporting made publicly available and provided regularly to the Community Liaison Group.

The Board also remains concerned about provisions that allow management plans to be deemed approved if no response is received within a specified timeframe. Conditions requiring certification should require formal approval before works commence.

Conclusion

The Upper Harbour Local Board supports the proposed requirements linking future prison expansion to completion of key transport and wastewater infrastructure. However, we consider that the conditions should be strengthened to better address construction impacts, transport constraints, visual effects, community engagement, emergency management, compliance monitoring, and the future of the Prison Village.

We respectfully request that the Expert Panel consider these matters before issuing its final decision.

Yours sincerely



Anna Atkinson
Chairperson
Upper Harbour Local Board