
Road works, Aranui Road, Mapua

2 messages

Dave Briggs <dave@briggsnz.net>
To: Jamie McPherson <Jamie.McPherson@tasman.govt.nz>
Cc: info@ourmapua.org

Sat, May 28, 2022 at 11:19 AM

Dear Mr McPherson,

Back in March I contacted Tasman DC about the poor management of the roadworks on Aranui Road. You kindly replied, though in many ways your responses were unconvincing. For example, you argued that road management procedures were laid down by COPTTM, but did not address my point: namely, that the excessive inconvenience being caused was due to the unnecessarily long lengths of road that were being coned off, even though, at any time, the work was restricted to only very short sections. Likewise, you argued that including inconvenience costs in the contract would make them unaffordably expensive to ratepayers. This, however, clearly ignores the fact that the inconvenience costs have to be paid in any case - but under the system currently applied are simply being externalised. As a result they are borne, unwillingly and without any consultation, not by ratepayers as a whole but by a small set of people who happen to live nearby. Moreover, there is abundant evidence from elsewhere in the world, and from studies of contracting procedures more generally, that internalising costs encourages more efficient modes of operation. Clearly, under the current system, there is no incentive to reduce these inconvenience costs because they're all dumped onto the local community.

At the time, I refrained from following up on my communication because I was waiting to see what the final quality of the work would be. At that time, it was already evident that it wouldn't be good. Following the resurfacing, the whole section of road still displayed substantial ruts, inherited from the previous, worn road-surface, and also now had numerous potholes and rough areas where sections of the new surface had been badly joined. The surface was also very rough - much moreso than would be standard for an urban road surface. Together, of course, these problems made the road excessively noisy. Added to that, although we were informed in writing that the loose grit, which in many areas was several centimetres deep, would be removed within a day or so of completion, weeks later the grit remained and was still being spat onto the pavements to the detriment and danger of pedestrians and cyclists.

When we were informed that there would be a further, sand coating to complete the work, we obviously assumed that these faults would be resolved. Now, the sand coating has been done, and the road surface is - if anything - even worse. Additional potholes seem to have appeared, and in places large stones protrude - sufficient to throw a cyclist off balance or trip up someone crossing the road. And because of the rough surface, the ruts and potholes and the poor joins, the road remains noisy and in wet weather is subject to ponding and unnecessary road-splash and spray. It's also evident that the surface will be subject to rapid wear because of spalling around the potholes and protruding stones. No doubt, the poor quality of the surface will also add to tire wear, and thus more pollution.

I notice that your previous explanation of procurement practices in the council made no mention of the quality of the service or product that you received - only the costs. It is evident, however, that quality matters, especially to us, the users, who also have to carry the ultimate costs of the work and repairs. So, again I would request your response. Why is the quality of the work so poor and what do you intend to do about it? And as part of that, can you assure us that the necessary repairs and improvements will not be paid by the community? And in case you feel that I'm judging the quality of the road unfairly, I would also invite you to come and look at it, together perhaps with members of our community, and see how amateurish the work has been.

Yours sincerely,

Prof David Briggs

Jamie McPherson <Jamie.McPherson@tasman.govt.nz>
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Cc: "info@ourmapua.org" <info@ourmapua.org>

Thu, Jun 2, 2022 at 4:04 PM

Kia ora Prof Briggs

Thankyou for your letter.

I have been out to have a look at the Aranui Rd surface. You are correct that a resealing activity like this does reflect some of the 'warts' of the underlying surface. That is the nature of a chipseal treatment, and it does not provide the equivalent surface of a brand new road, or a road surfaced with a much more expensive Asphaltic Concrete (AC). The overall result of the Aranui Road reseal is largely as expected for the type of treatment, although this one does provide a slightly higher level of smoothness than normal chipseals due to the extra layer of sand used, in order to reduce comparative noise levels. I notice some small localised areas of the top sand surface have not adhered to the new lower surface, this is an issue that we will look at with the contractor to determine what remedial work may be required. I understand it may be partly due to the moisture content of some of the stockpiled sand (because of the wet period leading up to sealing). But the underlying intent of the chipseal, which is to provide a waterproof surface to the structural gravel layer beneath, is intact.

I must emphasise that the Council simply can not currently afford to provide an AC surface through our road maintenance programme on all urban roads.

I am available to come out and discuss it with you, as a verbal conversation is probably more effective at covering all the relevant issues and background than trying to summarise things in an email. Please let me know what suits you – the afternoon of Thursday 9th June looks good for me, or anytime Friday 10th June except between 10.30am-12.30pm. Or sometime the following week.

Best regards

Jamie

Jamie McPherson

Transportation Manager

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