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Report to the Passenger Transport Committee
From Kevin Grace, Transport Infrastructure Engineer

Petone Railway Station

1. Purpose

To provide the Committee with information on progress so far towards the construction of a new Petone Railway Station and to suggest a process Council could follow which will enable the new station to be built now.

2. Background

The Wellington Regional Land Transport Strategy identifies Petone Railway Station for refurbishment by 2004. Work was begun in early 2000 investigating the best way to approach a refurbishment program. A working group was established for this purpose, chaired by then local councillor Jim Allen and representatives from Tranz Rail, Petone Community Board, Hutt City and WRC officers.

The working group concluded that the current condition of the building was too run down for refurbishment to be a viable option and that a new station building was required.

There followed a rigorous process including:

- Invitations to architects for new station designs
- Public meetings, submissions and consultations on these designs
- Identifying what local people meant by “heritage values,” an often used phrase during the consultation process
- Refining of designs following consultation and budget considerations
- Selection of a final design which best represented heritage values, fitted the budget and was a practical working station.

3. Comment

3.1 Current Position

With the uncertainty over Tranz Metro's future, restrictions on WRC's ability to own transport infrastructure, and the possibility that if we build a new station we may be in the unacceptable position of "buying it back" should we acquire the network, it was decided to hold off on construction until the future ownership of the network has been decided. In the meantime detailed plans have been prepared and consents obtained so that construction of a new station can go out to tender as soon as the whole ownership process has been settled.

3.2 Construction Options

However there are two options available to Council which would allow construction to proceed now without the new station being owned by Tranz Rail and provide patrons with a much needed facility at Petone, which is the fourth busiest station on the network.

One option is to vest the ownership of a new station with the local authority Hutt City as we have done with park'n ride infrastructure in the past. The working group have raised this with Hutt City but Hutt City has shown little interest in owning the station.

The second option is to set up a Trust in whom ownership could be vested. The Trust membership would include local representatives but could include people with a wider focus to incorporate other new stations in the Trust such as Raumati South, should this be necessary in the future. A sunset clause in the Trust document would allow for ownership to return to WRC when law changes and network ownership matters are resolved.

3.3 Funding Considerations

Construction costs are estimated at \$400,000 and are allowed for in the 2001/02 and 2002/03 budgets. If construction takes place before June 2003 there is the opportunity for kick start funding of at least 40%. Ratepayer contributions with kick start funding at 40% would be reduced to \$240,000.

In addition to this there are potentially favourable patronage revenue implications for an improved facility. Each passenger maintained on the network or each new passenger created on the network represents up to \$1,200 of patronage revenue per annum.

4. Communications

Since May 2000, several articles have appeared in the Petone Chronicle, the Hutt News and the Evening Post outlining design options, the consultation process, as well as referring to the uncertainties of the current situation regarding network ownership. Photos of the final design have also been published and favourably commented on in the press. When the next step on the road to construction is decided on, Communications will prepare a press statement for release.

5. Recommendations

1. *That this report be received for information.*
2. *That the Committee support the setting up of a Trust to own a new Petone Railway Station so that construction can proceed and not be held up by the current uncertainties of network ownership.*

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