



April 23, 2025

Kia ora koutou katoa,

We are writing this letter to ask Auckland Transport to reverse their recent and unconsulted changes to the designs for the Karanga-a-Hape Station precinct integration project.

This project's stated aim from the start has been to maximise the value of the City Rail Link, a \$5.5 billion project which will transform this city and the Karangahape neighbourhood. Over 2023 and 2024, this project followed a good process, with excellent and regular community engagement.

There have also been a number of design adjustments and additions along the way. Many addressed people's genuine concerns without compromising the project, while others met local aspirations to enhance the project's outcomes. In general, Auckland Transport's project team has done a fantastic job.

However, as only became evident at the end of a workshop presentation to the Waitematā local Board on the 8th of April 2025, Auckland Transport has changed the supported and consulted designs for the Karanga-a-Hape Station precinct integration project, with drastic impacts for the designs on Cross Street, Canada Street, and East Street. This follows the recent reversal of well supported plans to implement a pedestrian mall on Upper Mercury Lane citing the threat of legal action from a persistent vocal stakeholder.

None of these changes were consulted on with key stakeholders and the wider community who participated, in good faith, in workshops and consultations throughout 2023 to arrive at a well-supported design. What's worse is that all of these changes are in direct opposition to the results of that careful and considerate work with the community - thus undoing public confidence in the process, and in Auckland Transport.

People supported a pedestrian mall on Upper Mercury Lane, under the special consultative requirement set out in the local Government Act. Auckland Transport has removed this from the design.

People supported removing car parking on Cross Street in favour of loading zones and wider, more accessible footpaths with attractive planters. Auckland Transport have removed these from the design.

People supported keeping the protected cycleway on East St. Auckland Transport has removed this from the design to allow two-way traffic, and has replaced a safe cycleway with painted sharrows - a clear downgrade of safety and accessibility.

People asked for more green space, trees, and planters, Auckland Transport have removed these from the design to enable increased traffic access.

The widely consulted plans were unanimously supported in 2023 by the Waitematā Local Board and approved by the Auckland Council Governing Body and the Board of Auckland Transport. Where further work and adjustments were needed, the project team engaged with community stakeholders to contribute to the design of the project, who showed support for enhancing the consulted plans, removing parking for more people-friendly space, and more street amenities like planters.

The original plans are well-aligned with the broader vision and strategy for the City Centre, as outlined in the City Centre Masterplan, City Centre Action Plan, and Access for Everyone.

Auckland Transport has not yet publicly given a satisfactory rationale for this extraordinary last-minute U-turn. We are deeply concerned that it is the result of backroom lobbying by a vocal minority who are unhappy with the intended changes, and that AT's leadership has changed the project at the last minute, when it is already well under construction.

We ask that Auckland Transport returns to implementing the consulted and agreed upon plans that were highly supported by those who engaged in good faith with the project. Ignoring that public support not only undermines public confidence in consultative processes, but risks loss of social licence for any future such projects.

By returning to the plan you do have social licence for, Auckland Transport will deliver the street environment as promised, maximising the value and impact of the CRL on the Karangahape Road Area while honouring both the consultation process and the aspirations of Aucklanders.

Ngā mihi,

Connor Sharp, Greater Auckland, local resident
Patrick Reynolds, Greater Auckland
Matt Lowrie, Greater Auckland
Scott Caldwell, Greater Auckland, local resident

The undersigned includes people who live and work in the immediate Karanga-ā-hape area, people who use public transport to and through the area, businesses in the area, and community organisations with an interest in a safe, healthy, high quality public realm for active modes and public transport.

City Centre Residents Group
Campaign for Better Transport
Bike Auckland
All Aboard Aotearoa
Walk Auckland
Bike Grey Lynn
Grey Lynn 2030

Chlöe Swarbrick, Auckland Central MP
Jon Turner, Puketapapa local Board, local worker
Tim Adriaansen
Jenifer Silva
Alistair Woodward, local resident
Lindsay McMorran
Tim Dawson
Liz Allen, local resident and business owner
Ron Frost
Adam Weller
Mark Johnson
Nik Clement
Marshall Piercy
Harrison Fernandes-Burnard
Julian King
Kevin Manson
Bruce Jarvis
Toby Kelly, local commuter
Darren Schroeder
Lewis Foster
Stuart Crosswell, local resident
Robyn C., local resident
Heidi O'Callahan
Benoit Depireux, local commuter
Eric Gomez, local commuter
Richie Mundy-Castle, frequent visitor
Irene Saxby
Maud Cahill
Grant Edmonds
Adeline Cook, local worker and resident
Jim FAMILTON
Peter Robinson
Keith Dilley
Liz Busch, local resident

Andrew Smith, local worker
Russell Brown, professional interests in K Road and its culture
Robin Stevenson
Phil Stevenson
Michael Ardern
Dan Crosswell
Diana Elliot
Micky Yang
Damon Lynch
Ben Smith, urban economist
Graeme Easte
Zak Morrison
Robert Drummond
Morgan Rothwell, local resident
Lance Jackson
Mark Graham
Steve Newall, local resident
Fabienne Bovis-Higgins
Bryan Pulham
Maurice Challinor
Jeffery Wells
Jolisa Gracewood, frequent visitor
Linda Price
Chris Lange
Joe Hendren, frequent visitor
Alyssa Pilbrow, PT User
Andrew Mackintosh, PT User
Barbara Grace
Hamish Driver, local worker
Leticia Bernardes
Neil McCallum, local commuter
Brook Warner
Kate Sherwood
Myles Thomas
Michael Sewell
Matt Greer, local resident
Tim Gummer, local resident
Hamish Tait, local commuter
Matthew Gascal, local resident
Bronwyn Dutton
Gordon Hill
Catherine Olsen, local commuter

Tony Manson
Josh Kirwin
Dr Bevan Jenkins, frequent visitor
Jake Humphreys, former local worker
Alexandra Goldkorn
Craig Birch
Cullen Wooller
Kieran Bennett, former local worker
Remco de Blaaij
Ben van Bruggen
Christopher Dempsey
John Ecroyd, urban planner
Tommy de Silva, frequent visitor and commuter
Tam Irvine, commuter
Ben Harris
Michael Lett
Evan Philips
Logan O'Callahan
Ross Inglis, local resident
Isaac Maunsell
Sam Knight-Whiting
Joshua Urgel, local resident
Keith Hoolihan
Kieran Jans
Marilyn Kohlhasse
James Beattie
Jennifer Ward
Dr. Tina Engels-Schwarzpaul
Josh Little
Meredith Dale
Brent Meekan, local commuter
Jose Cachero
Cendri Januar
Marie Paton
Pippa Coom
Chris Katt
Clare Katt
Jeremy Gershen
Angela Madell
Andrew Comber
Steve King
Damian Yow

J. G. Murphy

Ben C.

Aaron Chen, local resident

Angus Robinson, frequent visitor

Appendix 1 - Email from Michael Lett

What Karangahape Road has been delivered is a low-resolution version of the highly produced renders that were shared on social media, in focus groups, and during the consultation process.

The reality? Lumpy cycle lanes, dangerous driving conditions due to poorly designed or removed loading zones, disappearing street furniture, and lighting that either doesn't work or has been covered up. It's been a mess for years, with only a few rare moments of reprieve.

As someone who is essentially quoted within the newly submitted proposed changes, I strongly disagree that this counts as genuine consultation. AT is relying on small groups of individuals to dictate what amounts to easy fixes and mediocre work. It's probably too late now, but what the Karangahape Road community — and greater Auckland — is getting is, frankly, average at best.

The cost of these changes — in both money and time — must be extraordinary.

Please, AT, be brave. Give us something to be proud of. Build a city for grown-ups. And stop with the "meh."

Michael Lett
312 Karangahape Road
Cnr K Rd & East St
Auckland 1010
New Zealand

Appendix 2 - Selected comments from signatories to the letter

"Project K provides a unique opportunity to capitalise on the [CRL] and that should not be wasted."

"It challenges the mind that we spend \$5b on a public transport system to then focus on cars for where people access it."

"It's such a waste of time and money if sensible collaborative planning gives way to a last minute ill conceived patch up design that only one or two stakeholders support."

"I am similarly hugely dismayed by AT's U-turn on the fully consulted and agreed plan."

"The status quo for the local street network around the new Karanga-a-Hape station makes no sense at all. Good luck to us all in getting a sane decision on this."

"I am dismayed by the alterations to the original plan, which I thought was appropriate and made positive changes to the space."

"I currently work on K Rd, and bike into work from Avondale. Once the train station opens I will be either training in (on those rainy days) or biking in (on those beautiful sunny days). The change in design for the station affects me rain or shine, and I would love for the original plans to be reinstated." (local worker and commuter)

"The K rd district is where I live, work, play, and cycle, and I've been utterly dismayed at the progressive degradation of what was a great plan for my neighbourhood." (local resident)

"I'm a Mum with 2 school aged kids who regularly cycle or walk around the area and along Cross Street. Our apartment looks over Cross Street, and I'm horrified to think about what the chaos down there will look like, especially in the evenings on Sat or Friday when there are already a lot of drunk pedestrians and cars with less than sober drivers causing chaos. Refusing to make the street friendlier to pedestrians will definitely result in injuries or accidents during the busy night-time hours, not to mention the through traffic during the day."

"While I am in the Otara Papatoetoe area, just the other day I was thinking how useful it will be to be able to get the train into town and get off at K-Road if I am heading towards a destination on Great North Road. I think Auckland Transport are seriously underestimating how many people will use the K-Road station as a means of getting bikes up the hill - this makes the cycle lane very important."

"The lack of transparency and subversion of the political process to satisfy a minority goes against what I stand for. The question I would be putting to AT is who are they more scared of legal action from, a minority or the broader public. I'm fairly sure there are a number of people willing to hold AT to account over this."

"I fully support the original plans for AT's urban integration of the station. I travel out west every weekend, and so informed by my field of study and personal lifestyle I believe any decision to roll-back on the original plans will negatively impact the social accessibility and thus my own use of the station." (local resident)

"It is not only disappointing that safer and more attractive features are suddenly being jettisoned, but it seems highly irregular to materially change parts of the plan without further discussion or analysis. As a longtime rate payer, user of public transport, roadways and cycle paths I am concerned that a process that seemed robust and transparent is flawed and open to manipulation by what seems to be a handful of individuals."

"I am a cyclist, live in Morningside and use the cycleway into the city on a regular basis. I also drive and accept that when driving into the city, parking is limited. I also use trains and am looking forward to the extended train line and new stations, providing more options for getting around our city without having to use a car, even as I age and become less mobile."

"I don't live/work on K-road, but own an apartment in Kingsland and enjoy coming to K-road for R&R and looking forward to the K-road station opening, along with hopefully a well supported area [around] the station!"

"I would like to be a signatory on the open letter, as I worked for almost a decade in the area around K Road and Queen Street, commuting by bike from Avondale. Now I am looking ahead to when my kids come into town for Uni, to meet up with friends, and to work. I am heartily sick of AT wasting good work with limp leadership."

"I wish to sign up to support the Greater Auckland initiative in respect of this vital project and others [that] are intended and designed to make Auckland's inner city more pedestrian and cyclist friendly. I live in Newmarket where I am reminded every day how for too long town planning has been narrowly focused on the impact on vehicle movements and not the wider 'user experience'."

"The basis for [signing] is that I am a concerned Auckland resident (who will hopefully be a fairly frequent user of the CRL when it opens). I have no particular transport background, however I think I share a view common among most New Zealanders (particularly those who have come of age in the 21st C) where i'm just exasperated at how half-arsed we do things in New Zealand (and how quickly we doff our caps to short-sighted and self-interested propertied interests).

Kiwis travel. Many don't return because they see how blind our politicians and bureaucrats are to how other countries do things better. If we don't start adopting those lessons (aggressively, making up for a certain generation's worth of lost time); then we may as well all give up on this place and move overseas."

"I ride up East St with my son every day and really value the protected cycle lane connecting us with K Road. To take away this great infrastructure, as well as ruin the proposed pedestrianised Mercury Lane

seems like a criminal step back. I can't understand why AT would make a change that would negatively affect so many people for the sake of a few vocal opponents. Very disappointing! Thanks for bringing this to my attention!"

"Pedestrian malls are an integral part of any city with public transport, it's time Auckland caught up."

"As a transport planner, I am appalled at AT's unconsulted design changes for Project K. I have colleagues who have worked hard on this project to deliver a great outcome, only for it to be snubbed for no defensible reason. These changes ruin our opportunity to fully realise the transformational benefits of the K road train station."

"I'm dismayed at the late change to the Project K design and functionality. As a regular commuter in this area, I fully supported the previously consulted upon design. I request that you revert to this design and not to a reduced functionality compromise. It's never too late to do the right thing. That time is now."

"We are gobsmacked that the Council has halted this as thousands of us supported it. We don't live in the area but have long associations with it in our school and working years. We also take a keen interest in the CRL which is long overdue."

"I would like to add my name to the letter as a frequent shopper on K Road it is really important to me to build a walkable and vibrant district."

*"It is disappointing to hear of the changes to the once glorious design. As a former resident of the area, I followed the consulting process that led to the, now overridden, design and was amazed at how well the plan evolved. I believe that many/most of the changes will make the station's precinct unsafe, uninviting and very disappointing for the community and users.
Please reinstate the project as it was designed and presented."*