

Te Awa Ōtākou – Portobello

Harington Point Rd, Road Safety Improvement Project, Otago Peninsula

Our thanks to the Council for the decision to complete three of the remaining sections between Portobello and the Otakou Fisheries Wharf – parts of the Te Awa Ōtākou Portobello /Harington Pt Rd's Safety Improvement Project.

This is welcome news and part of an overdue, but desirable outcome.

As ratepayers who live east of Portobello, **along with the thousands of other Dunedin residents and tourists**, we benefit from the safer road conditions along the entire road from town, including reduced 'wash out/pot holes' on the seaward carriageway, better drainage of ground water, greater use, enjoyment and visibility of peninsula residents using the shared pathway for health and fitness, safer speed limits, seating/rest areas amongst native plantings and safer cycling and walking, especially to and from school and work.

We are looking forward to the completion of the three sections currently provided for in the Long Term Plan:

1. Ellison Rd to Otakou Wharf 2026/27

- a. This is a dangerous stretch, susceptible to water damage, weather events and insufficient and unsafe room for foot, cycle and vehicle traffic at the corners
- b. In 2024, we counted 15 different 'washout' points along this stretch taking at least 6 months to temporarily repair; 6 new washouts have appeared since then; all will expand during the winter weather.
- c. Access points onto the road spew debris onto and over Harington Point Rd in every significant rain event, taking days, and sometimes weeks, to be cleared satisfactorily.

2. Tidewater Drive to Ellison Road 2027/28





Photo not staged! Significant traffic volume, nowhere for cyclists (and walkers to safely get off the road, blind corners and hills)

- a. is currently and inappropriately a higher speed (80kph) zone, needing a designated cycle and walkway both sides to improve safety while walking/cycling/driving through an inland landscape.
- b. Frequently cyclists and walkers are forced to move off the sealed surface onto the (often non-existent) shoulders to allow fast traffic (especially large vehicles like coaches) to pass. Often vehicles have to brake heavily to negotiate other users on this stretch.
- c. There are several 'blind' corners and hills that do not allow sufficient warning of oncoming road hazards at the speeds motorised vehicles are travelling – at the very least, the speed on this section should be reduced **immediately** to 70kph, which would make it consistent with all other faster speed limits on the coastal road. We are tired of seeing near misses, and having to flash our headlights to warn oncoming traffic of cyclists and walkers.



Theoretical Bus Stop on 80kph section of Harington Point Rd (Otakou Golf Course intersection)

- d. Further, DCC should fund, for safety reasons, off-carriageway bus stopping areas at the theoretical Bus Stop at the junction of Otakou Golf Course Rd and Harington Point Rd, and work with ORC to provide a suitable bus shelter for city-bound passengers. This is just about the only bus stop on the Peninsula without a safe,

sheltered stop, and services over 60 residences – far more than many with less houses along the same route.

3. Portobello to Weir Rd 2028/29



- a. It is a mystery as to why Council saw fit **not** to finish off the last 120 metres of rural road from Portobello to Portobello Primary School at the time it was spending up large on seating and planting below the Portobello shops.
- b. On **any** school morning or afternoon, **one can see primary school age children walking and cycling on the vehicle carriageway on a blind corner and hill** between the school and township – as there are zero footpaths between any houses or the bus stop, and the school, and mostly not even room for kids to get off the sealed road when vehicles approach.
- c. **This stretch is an accident waiting to happen, and should be remedied ahead of all else in our opinion.**
- d. As to the rest of this section, from the bus turnaround area below the school, through to Weir Rd, there is actually room, mostly existing already, for separate, safe cycling and walking, so the 300 metres from the school entrance to the turnaround is all that needs serious attention, once the school can be accessed safely.

4. Otakou Wharf to Taiaroa Head carpark

- a. We note that this section is not mentioned in the project, but point out that it is currently incomplete, and in parts unsafe, and therefore needs future consideration.
- b. There is a lack of walking or cycling facilities along the front of Harington Point, before the hill – not to mention the hill itself.
- c. Although some sensible barrier and carriageway work has recently been carried out on the hill, there is also a section that disappeared in the heavy weather many months ago that was adorned with orange cones (presumably for Xmas?) but has never been repaired, further squeezing the hundreds of daily visitors into one lane.

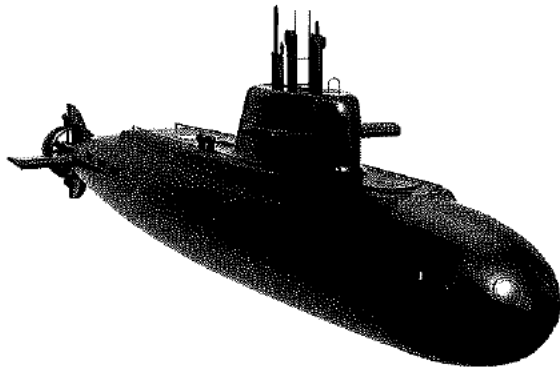
FUNDING

Noting the costs of this project, and the refusal/inability of NZTA to fund a fair share of them, we urge Council to discuss, in advance of the work, with Port Otago and its ORC owners the need for them to contribute towards the costs, commensurate with the numbers of cruise ship passengers accessing the tourist facilities at the end of the Peninsula.

In addition to that, given that the NZ Govt now clips the ticket on all incoming visitors to this country, it is legitimate to again approach them about a special Government contribution based

on non-cruise ship tourist numbers. Other Councils have used this argument to successfully secure road funding from central Government.

Completing this project will provide great benefits for all users – which number FAR more than just local residents, given the tourist attractions at the end of the Peninsula. This will be evident everyday in terms of improved safety, increasing potential for new businesses and strengthening connection through recreational opportunities previously unavailable - all while enhancing the peninsula as a destination.



Ideal vehicle for Tidewater Drive.

Further to the above issues concerning Harington Point Rd, there are also significant concerns regarding Tidewater Drive in Harwood – a bus route which on occasions is more suitable for submarines than cars and buses; and Otakou Golf Course Rd, which DCC collects rates from, and has its refuse and recycling trucks travel for 3kms weekly on, but contributes zero towards the maintenance of this. A 2023 request to Council proposing a very minor level of support for the latter road has never been replied to.

Dave Macpherson & Jane Stevens



24th April 2025

‘We wish to speak to our submission’