

21 March 2017

[mike@ixnz.com](mailto:mike@ixnz.com)

Dear Mike,

**CAS-387033-S4D0X0 Sealing Ahuroa Road, Puhoi**

Thank you for your recent enquiry regarding the potential seal extension of Ahuroa Road, Puhoi.

Historically, the Auckland region has had an extensive unsealed road network. With the growth in population across the Auckland region, as with the Hauraki Gulf Islands and to a lesser extent Franklin, there has been increasing pressure to seal the unsealed road network to mitigate the increasing traffic volumes and dust nuisance.

The cost of sealing unsealed roads in rural areas is significant. Many of the roads having a high priority are in difficult terrain and many may require land acquisition to ensure that appropriate design standards can be achieved. Whilst, in certain circumstances it may be appropriate to relax some of these standards, Auckland Transport has to ensure that in sealing a road, the higher vehicles speeds generated, do not cause a greater safety risk in terms of frequency or severity.

Budgetary constraints are also significant. The benefits accruing from sealing are very localised in nature. Road sealing is not currently of sufficient national priority to attract regional transport funding from government. Equally, within Auckland the seal extension budget is competing for the limited funding made available to Auckland Transport against other projects generating significant regional benefits.

The level of funding for seal extensions identified in Auckland Council's Long Term Plan totals \$10m over the three-year period from 2015 to 2018. Whilst this is clearly a significant investment, it falls short of the level needed to make significant progress in sealing the 868km of unsealed roads across Auckland. There is therefore a need to prioritise this investment to ensure that it delivers the maximum benefits to residents.

The prioritisation is undertaken using the criteria contained in the Auckland Transport Seal Extension Guidelines. The prioritisation list is managed and kept up to date by re-assessing each unsealed road on an annual basis.

The criteria considers traffic volume including heavy commercial vehicles, houses and amenities close to the road, safety (traffic accidents) and road gradient (steepness). The highest weighting for prioritisation is given to traffic volume as vehicle movements are the primary cause of dust.

I am pleased to inform you that Ahuroa Road is considered a high priority road and is currently ranked 4<sup>th</sup> on the Auckland Transport prioritisation list. This means that, subject to funding being made

available in Auckland Council's Long Term Plan to be published in 2018, that Ahuroa Road should be sealed between 2018 and 2021.

Yours sincerely



Andy Finch  
**Manager –Asset Management and Systems**