

Before the Independent Hearing Panel
Appointed by Environment Southland and Gore District Council

Under the Resource Management Act 1991

In the matter of an application by Gore District Council for resource consent to
establish the Longford Bridge across the Mataura River

Statement of evidence in reply of Peter Kenneth Standing

29 January 2021

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**anderson
lloyd.**

Introduction

- 1 My full name is Peter Kenneth Standing.
- 2 I am the Roading Asset Manager at the Gore District Council (**GDC** or **Council**). I have prepared a statement of evidence dated 2 December 2020. My qualifications and experience are set out in that statement. I confirm that this supplementary evidence is also prepared in accordance with the Code of Conduct for Expert Witnesses contained in the Environment Court Practice Note 2014.

Scope of evidence

- 3 This evidence in reply addresses an assessment of alternative bridge alignments against a number of project objectives and cost considerations.

Assessment of alternative alignments

- 4 During the Longford Bridge consent hearing held 16th and 17th December 2020 a number of alternative alignments were discussed. These alternatives were called Option A (Rock Street), Option B (Denton Street), and Option C (Maitland Street) as shown in the figure below (this is Figure 1 of the evidence provided by Michael Pentecost).



Figure 1: Alternative Bridge Locations (Extract from M. Pentecost evidence)

- 5 My statement of evidence dated 2 December 2020 sets out the policy and strategy directives relevant to the project. It also discusses project development following from the Council's decision that an overbridge was the preferred option for the water supply upgrade and the direction to

consider a dual purpose structure which would also provide pedestrian and cycle connection.

- 6 In developing a dual purpose bridge, relevant objectives can be summarised as:
- (a) connection of the water supply pipeline, including the length and ease of connection, and accessibility for future maintenance;
 - (b) pedestrian and cycle connectivity, including safety, accessibility for a range of users, a direct/efficient route, connection to other walkways including the stopbank walkway or further river track development, connection to the roading network, and continuity of access / level of service;
 - (c) amenity benefits, as an attraction to locals and visitors to Gore which enhances amenity, encourages cycling and walking and assists in wayfinding; and
 - (d) cost, in relation to both construction and maintenance, and the ability to obtain NZTA funding.
- 7 Mr Bayliss' evidence in reply addresses water supply pipeline considerations. I comment below on the merits of the four options (the preferred site and three alternatives) as relevant to pedestrian and cycle connectivity and amenity benefits. Cost considerations are addressed at the end of this evidence.

Option A – Rock Street

- 8 Pedestrian and cycle connectivity:
- (a) this option does provide an efficient link between East Gore and Gore, as it connects closer to the CBD. However the linkage on the western side of the river would connect through the Richmond Street / Norfolk Street / State Highway 1 area, which has been identified as less desirable for cyclists given the complexity of the road network and high number of vehicle movements;
 - (b) the end of Rock Street is significantly elevated from the height of the stopbank in the West. This will present challenges to ensure accessibility for all intended bridge users;
 - (c) this option will connect directly to the track along the western stopbank;

- (d) this option will help promote future recreation and walking track development around the riverbanks as it is the closest route for the majority of the residents in East Gore. However, the elevation of the bridge (as described by Mr Crocker) may create a barrier to connection;
- (e) having an elevated walkway above an existing carriageway (River Terrace) with the danger of objects be dropped from Height; and
- (f) the elevated bridge and accessways would remain clear of floodwater in mid flood events (up to 71.5 level and 550 m³/s flow), as shown below in images of the 22 January 2021 event:



9 Amenity benefits:

- (a) the evidence of Mr Pentecost presented at the hearing indicated that this alternative site would retain wayfinding functions and promote walking and cycling opportunities; and
- (b) this option would change the character of the quiet cul-de-sac.

Preferred option – Surrey Street

10 Pedestrian and cycle connectivity:

- (a) this option is seen as a relatively direct line for most school children in East Gore (second to Rock Street for most children);
- (b) the alignment links well to the walking and cycling tracks along the stopbanks and presents easy access to both sides' road network;
- (c) NZTA has supported this option because it aligns with the Government Policy Statement (GPS) and project objectives;
- (d) in comparison to Options B and C, the site's proximity to the CBD and schools will act as a catalyst for further development to support active modes of transport and social connectivity along the river bank with excellent walking and cycling opportunities; and
- (e) the bridge and accessways would largely remain clear of floodwater in mid flood events, as shown below from 22 January 2021:





11 Amenity benefits:

- (a) as for Rock St, Mr Pentecost identified that a bridge in this preferred location is readily absorbed into the surrounding environment and provides access to recreational cycling and walking opportunities. He also notes that the proposed bridge will provide wayfinding and enhanced legibility to the proposed walkway along the river banks.

Option B – Denton Street

12 Pedestrian and cycle connectivity:

- (a) this route represents an indirect route to address the needs of school children in the East with the bridge landing fully within the flood zone and needing to come back over the flood bank via Woolwich Street to link back on to Oxford Street, requiring substantial extra distance to be travelled;
- (b) there would be significantly more approach tracks required across the flood zone for this option;
- (c) the site is detached from town to an extent it will least likely support future riverbank development (less uptake residents and outside of the NZTA funding criteria). There have been discussions in a number of forums regarding the potential to develop focal points for activity and events on the riverbanks, to better connect the town with this natural feature. I consider those potential developments are less likely to integrate with and be supported by a structure at this position, given its distance from the CBD; and
- (d) Woolwich Street and the surrounding area are among the first areas to be inundated when there is any flooding, meaning there would be

several times each year when the bridge's approaches would be blocked, as shown below from 22 January 2021:



13 Amenity benefits:

- (a) Mr Pentecost identifies that a bridge in this location would not be as readily absorbed into landscape as there is less connection with the built form of Gore. He also notes that positioning the bridge further away from the centre of town may reduce opportunities for access for a diverse range of users, and therefore the other benefits provided in terms of wayfinding and connectivity.

Option C – Maitland Street

14 Pedestrian and cycle connectivity:

- (a) because of this site's greater distance from the populous areas of Gore and East Gore, there is unlikely to be any cycling or walking demand at this location. It will add at least 2.5km extra distance to the

users travel which discourage them to utilise it for walking or cycling. Therefore, any bridge here is likely to be only as a support structure for the water supply pipeline. While recreational riders would be accepting of the extra distance the business case was primarily developed on serving the need of school and commuter movements;

- (b) this site does not meet the transport project outcomes prescribed in the Government Policy Statement (as described in my evidence in chief); and
- (c) Maitland Street and the surrounding area are among the first areas to be inundated when there is any flooding, meaning there would be several times each year when the bridge's approaches would be blocked from both sides, as shown below from 22 January 2021:



15 Amenity benefits:

- (a) as for the Denton St option, Mr Pentecost comments that this is much more isolated from the residential areas and less readily absorbed into the landscape with significantly reduced benefits in terms of connectivity, wayfinding or recreational use.

Cost

- 16 The pipeline length and the estimated cost for the preferred location and alternative bridge location options are reflected below.

Location	Bridge span m	Pipe length m	Estimated Cost		Total Estimated Cost
			Bridge	Pipeline	
Option A, Rock Street	155	4050	\$5,500,000	\$3,527,550	\$9,027,550
Preferred location, Surrey Street	90	2900	\$3,700,000	\$2,525,900	\$6,225,900
Option B, Denton Street	90	2410	\$4,700,000	\$2,099,110	\$6,799,110
Option C, Maitland Street	100	1530	\$5,000,000	\$1,332,630	\$6,332,630

- 17 Having considered alignment with the Government Policy Statement, I consider it likely that the Rock Street location could have been favourably considered for funding, but it is unlikely the Denton Street and Maitland Street locations would be have obtained NZTA funding.
- 18 With 55% NZTA funding of the bridge, the total estimated cost to GDC ratepayers would be:
- (a) Rock St - \$6,002,550;
 - (b) preferred location - \$4,165,000;
 - (c) Denton St – with funding \$4,214,000, without funding \$6,799,110; and
 - (d) Maitland St – without funding \$6,332,630.

Dated this 29th day of January 2021

Peter Kenneth Standing