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Committee Passenger Transport Committee
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Leader

Matawara Station - proposed withdrawal of services

1. Purpose

To outline the case for the withdrawal of services from Matawara station and the proposed implementation procedure.

2. Significance of the decision

The matters for decision in this report **do not** trigger the significance policy of the Council or otherwise trigger section 76(3)(b) of the Local Government Act 2002.

3. Background

Matawara station is situated in a rural environment and does not benefit from normal train boarding facilities. The station is without a platform and boarding is from track level, lighting levels are poor and a small timber weather board shelter is old but adequate for current use. There are no standing pads or paths and the ground is uneven, and parking facilities do not exist except for a grass berm along the road edge.

4. Comment

In September 2006 a survey of customer use was undertaken at this station. A total of thirteen people were recorded using the three morning peak services. A range of questions were asked in order to establish:

- How often they used the train (between 4 and 5 times per week)
- How did they arrive at the station (all by car)
- Was this their nearest station (11 yes 2 No)

Other questions were around the service and facilities provided.

Part of the survey carried out was to establish how far the person lived from the station and whether an alternative could be used. It is evident that at least 50% lived within a 2.5km distance from an alternative station and it was convenience that led them to use this station.

5. Cost of providing full station facilities

In order to bring Matawara station up to an acceptable safe standard for boarding and alighting passengers, a number of key facilities would need to be provided.

1. Construction of a new platform on the west side of the track 60m long by 3.5m wide by 450mm high (ONTRACK minimum build requirements). The construction would include access steps and ramps for wheelchair access between the road and or the car park. Removal of an existing concrete fronted loading bank adjacent to track and road is required (estimated at \$110,000).
2. Provide new shelter facilities and lighting for both platform and shelter. Station furniture to include seats, bins and signage. Road signage for station location. Drainage from shelter and platform into the road reserve or car park (estimated at \$26,000).
3. Provision for parking of 15 spaces constructed to GWRC standards sealed and painted to include allocated disabled space lighting and signage (estimated at \$35,000).

6. Providing a basic platform with minimum facilities

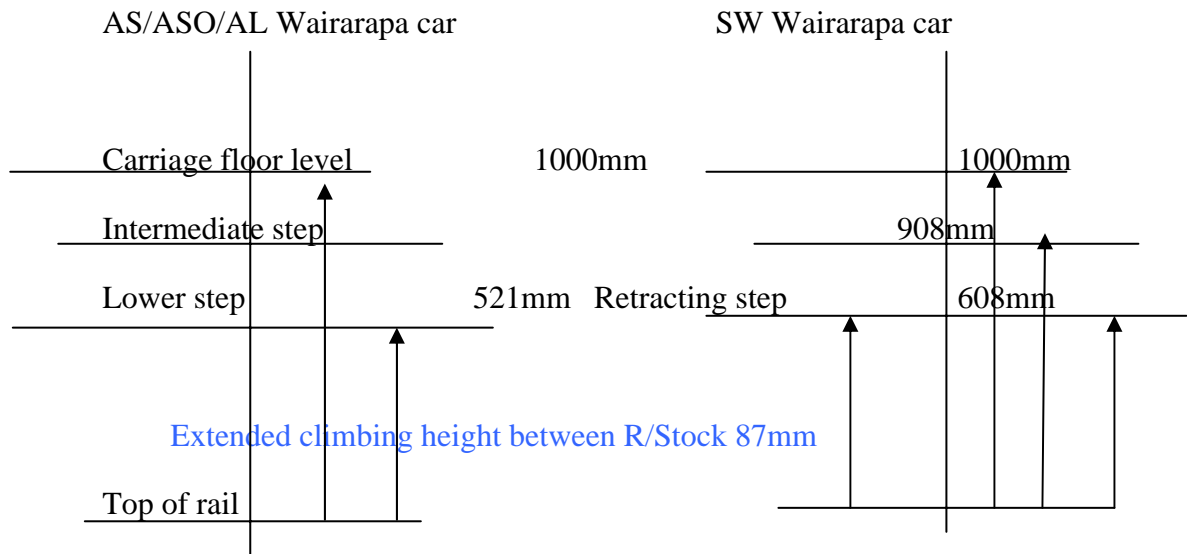
A low cost platform could be achieved by excluding some non essential facilities. The construction of a new platform using the ONTRACK minimum build requirements would include: 60m platform with step access from the road reserve, existing lighting and shelter to be withdrawn during construction and re installed on completion along with new signage and timetable information, drainage would still need to be provided i.e. run off from platform and shelter (estimated at \$120,000).

7. Analysis

In order to help breakdown the build cost against number of users, the following table shows a comparison with other rural stations that are to benefit from the upgrades planned.

Station Name	Existing platform /parking shelter facilities	No users	Upgrade cost	Cost per user
Matawara Build option 1	None	Average 13	\$171,000	\$13,200
Build to include. 60m platform with access ramp and steps. New shelter. New lighting. New signage. Car parking for up to 15 cars.				
Area Development and Growth. There are no known development plans within this immediate location for subdivisions.				
Matawara Build option 2	None	Average 13	Upgrade cost \$120,000	Cost per user \$9,200
Build to include. 60m platform with access ramp and steps. Existing shelter and lighting. New signage.				
Area Development and Growth. There are no known development plans within this immediate location for subdivisions.				
Solway	50m platform Historic shelter and 40 car park spaces	Average 40	\$135,000	\$3,400
Area Development and Growth. Construction of three new sub divisions are under way.				
Renall Street	28m platform wooden shelter, no car parking.	Average 30	\$125,000	\$4,200
Area Development and Growth. There are no known development plans for this area.				
Maymorn	60m platform wooden shelter no parking but space available	Average 8	\$35,000	\$4,400
Area Development and Growth. One new sub division under construction, further sub divisions are planned.				

8. Height difference between track and train rolling stock



The diagram indicates the height differences between the existing rail carriages identified as (AS/ASO/AL) and the new carriages identified as (SW).

The actual height difference between the lower step of the existing carriages and the retractable step of the new SW's is 87mm. This may seem to be a rather insignificant difference but combined with the uneven ground level and slope of the rail ballast the climbing height is more likely to be between 100mm and 200mm more than the rail height measurement.

9. Health & Safety

The current situation where rail users are expected to board a train without the aid of a platform is unacceptable given the operator's responsibility for safety.

The operator is bound by the contract for the provision of service of suburban rail services. The operator shall comply with legal requirements and safety standards and must ensure that rail services do not pose an unreasonable hazard to any person.

Although there has been no reported accidents or events surrounding the boarding or alighting of trains at this station, it is still considered to be a hazard and a risk to the public. The lack of boarding facilities also questions how the operator is expected to comply with passenger safety and security requirements.

10. Procedure for withdrawal of service at Matawara

The following process is proposed for withdrawal of services:

1. Survey usage and times - collect data as to origin (by street) and destination over a whole week at station (Week 1)

2. Evaluate and plan other PT options using above information (Week 2)
3. Determine extent of withdrawals and timing (Week 2)
4. Draw up communications plan (Week 3)
5. Prepare letters of consultation to affected parties/stakeholders (Week 4)
6. Consult with Toll in order to agree the program and timetable changes (Week 4)
7. Erect closure notice at the station one month before closure (Week 5)
8. Post ambassadors one week pre and one week post closure to assist passengers and those that don't know with alternative PT options (Weeks 8 and 9)
9. Letter drop in immediate area based on 1 above informing about withdrawal and providing information on alternatives. (Week 5)
10. Local press advert (Weeks 5 and 8)
11. Re-print timetables with new information (station excluded) (Begin week 2 erect information week 9)
12. Monitor after closure and ensure audit trail on consultation is maintained (Week 10)

11. Conclusion

Given the detail listed above it is recommended that Greater Wellington proceed to withdraw services at Matawara station following the procedure outlined in Section 10.

If the Committee chooses not to withdraw services at Matawara, platform work will need to be undertaken before passengers could safely board the new Wairarapa carriages. Design and construction of a new station could take up to 20 weeks and further funding will be required to build the station as this has not been allowed for in the current station upgrade program.

12. Communication

Communication proposals are included in the proposed process set out in Section 10. In addition a news release will be issued following the Committee meeting.

13. Recommendations

That the Committee:

- 1. **Receives** the report.*
- 2. **Agrees** to proceed with the withdrawal of services at Matawara Station.*

Report prepared by:

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