

This aerial plan shows approximately 138 metres of under-designed retaining walls along the busy road.

Back to the drawing board for Putiki Road retaining walls

Retaining walls along Putiki Road's already controversial road rebuild have been described as dangerously under-specified and will be replaced.

Work on the project was begun earlier this year but island architects have, for the last month, been advising Auckland Council, Auckland Transport and council contractors that its nearly 140 metres of new retaining walls did not comply with the Building Code or have a building consent.

"I and my professional colleagues have serious concerns over the inadequacy of the retaining walls currently being constructed in Putiki Road and I consider that I have a statutory responsibility under the

Architects Act and the OSH Act to bring this matter to your attention," a spokesman for the group, long-time island architect Ron Stevenson, told Auckland Transport in early June.

If this was illegal works on private land then a stop-work notice would have been issued immediately - Ron Stevenson

As professional architects, they could not stand by and not advise contractors that the walls were grossly under-designed and could be subject to a "catastrophic failure", he said.

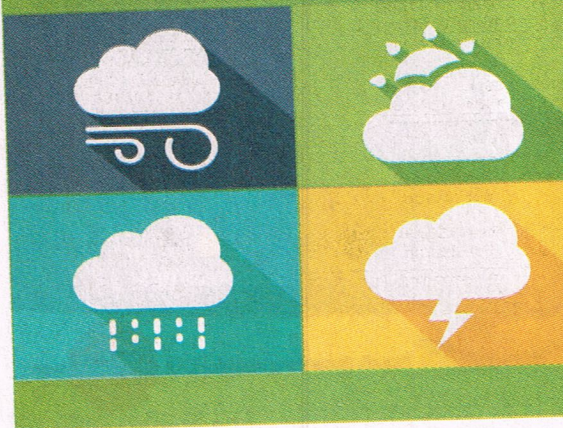
Building regulations say retaining walls within the council or AT roading are required to be designed to take a significantly larger load, calculated as surcharges.

"If the retaining wall is holding up a road or footpath adjacent to a road then the weight of the vehicles will put a lot



The wall outside the Catherine Mitchell Centre which would definitely attract a roading surcharge, say the architects.

WAIHEKE WEATHER



Supplied by Weatherwise Auckland, 020 4023 0106

25 June - 1 July 2018	Rainfall mm		Maximum temperature °C		Minimum temperature °C	
	Waiheke	Auckland	Waiheke	Auckland	Waiheke	Auckland
Monday	7.5	10.0	12.9	13.6	7.5	7.6
Tuesday	11.0	12.0	11.0	12.6	4.5	2.4
Wednesday	0.5	1.0	14.8	15.5	8.0	4.2
Thursday	3.0	3.0	13.8	15.7	8.4	7.7
Friday	0.0	0.5	14.3	14.9	6.5	2.7
Saturday	0.0	0.0	14.0	15.6	9.4	5.6
Sunday	6.0	7.0	13.9	14.4	11.8	11.1
Weekly Total	28.0	33.5				
July Total	6.0	7.0				
Weekly ave			13.5	14.6	8.0	5.9
July Hist Ave	129.6	160.5	15.3	15.2	8.2	8.0

Putiki Road's controversial design

Plans by Auckland Transport consultants Opus show the rebuilt Putiki Road as a two-carriage road with a mix of 1.5 metre-wide footpaths and parallel parking bays above the retaining walls along the northern and more commercial side of the road that links Wharf and Ostend Roads.

The existing table drain along the residential side of the increasingly busy

street is to be retained.

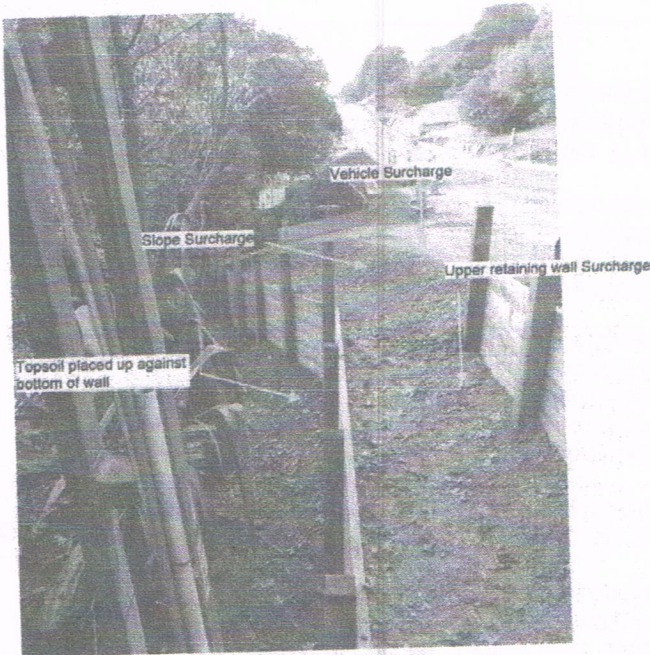
Earlier public concerns about Auckland Transport's short time-frames for public consultation and their hasty plans for the project prompted local residents to lobby for an alternative that would see a footpath along what they said was an ample road reserve on the residential side.

This alteration would have left the opposite side free for more provision of

parking which is in demand for Ostend's Saturday market and events at the Ostend War Memorial Hall.

Last week, Auckland Transport advised the Waiheke Local Board that sealing and stabilising work on Putiki Road would be delayed until the spring as a result of cold temperatures and wet weather.

In answer to questions from *Gulf News* this week, Auckland Transport confirmed that the retaining wall will have to be rebuilt to a better standard. •



Above - The retaining walls at 16 Putiki Road have been annotated with the various surcharge loadings that should have been added to the specifications for the retaining wall materials.

more pressure on the wall than if it was just a level planted area for example. Even a slope above the retaining wall will put more pressure on the wall.

"This is what Auckland Transport and Auckland Council require us to do when we design timber pole walls within the road reserve or on or near the boundary," Mr Stevenson said.

Although the Building Act allows a retaining wall to be constructed without a permit for a height up to 1.5m, "this doesn't mean that you can install matchsticks to retain an excavation up to 1.5m in height and certainly not if the wall is to be subject to any load from vehicles and the adjacent road".

"These posts were way too small."

It had been a frustrating process, Mr Stevenson said, especially seeing the diffi-

culty and expense to replace or modify the retaining structures increasing exponentially by the day.

"If this was illegal works on private land then a stop-work notice would have been issued immediately.

"If action had been taken when it was first brought to AT's notice, when the walls were not backfilled, they could have been easily replaced or modified. Ten days later the footpaths and kerbing would be in place and it would cost tens of thousands of dollars to put right.

He said he had a design done for the walls in less than half an hour.

"Why is it taking Downers or Opus 10 days?"

"It greatly concerns me and my professional architect and engineering colleagues that AT is not following due process with respect to complying

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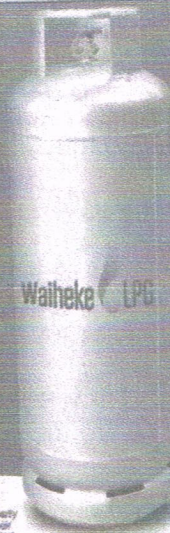
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Two views of a wall halfway along the road showing, top, the original 1.5 metre height of the retaining wall and, above, the same stretch after topsoil had been piled up to reduce the height to a metre.

Island Small Practice Group, a formal group of 12 registered and practising architects.

“We are all familiar with the requirements of the Building Act and the design of retaining walls carrying vehicle surcharge.

“We deal with these structures on a daily basis. We are all extremely concerned that the public will be at risk from these illegal structures and as all of us are Waiheke ratepayers, we are also very concerned at the waste of ratepayers money that will go into replacing these walls.

The architects group took their concerns to the Waiheke Local Board last week and Auckland Transport spokesman Mark Hannan has confirmed to *Gulf News* that parts of the wall will need to be strengthened.

Auckland Transport will only meet the costs associated with constructing the wall properly in the first instance and it is expected that the remedial work will be done within four to six weeks, he said.

However, Mr Stevenson says his colleagues “are amazed and dismayed at the lack of regulatory process by Auckland Transport when it involves their own projects”.

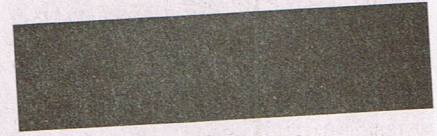
“Auckland Transport put our clients to considerable expense and delay their

with the Building Act, not doing proper designs and not taking out building permits,” Mr Stevenson said, speaking on behalf of the Waiheke architects’ Waiheke

projects by months with pedantic and time-consuming process around even the most minor driveway works in the road corridors.” • *Liz Waters*



IT'S BLACK



AND WHITE



PLASTIC



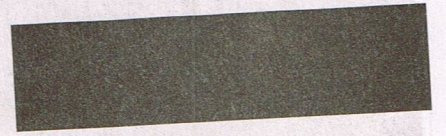
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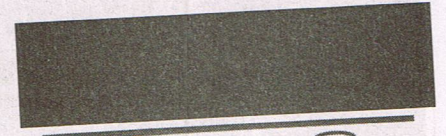
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