

NEWS

March 2007

2	There is no need to tinker with city sign language (New Zealand Herald Rudman's city) This article deals with a rather surprising flip-flop by Christine Caughey concerning the proposed bill board bylaw change. It also mentions, as an aside the shocking, virtual demolition of the Jean Batten building, supposedly saved in a multi-party agreement with BNZ last year.
2	Proposed Auckland billboard ban attracts huge response (3 radio live)
2	Bio fuels may have caused thousands of UK car breakdowns (3 radio live)
3	The woman behind the Tiffany lamp (New Zealand Herald/Independent/David Usborne) Clara Driscoll's role in creating many of Tiffany's most sought-after lamps is only just being acknowledged.
5	Fuel tax could pave way for electric rail (New Zealand Herald Matthew Dearnaley) ARC support for levy encourages government to consider work on the Auckland network. Note: Civic Trust Auckland believes that electrification of the rail network is essential. It is dismayed that decisions in this matter were not made years ago and even now the matter is only being considered if Aucklanders undertake the funding.
7	Trouble in train-again and again and again (New Zealand Herald Rudman's city) Equipment failures cause havoc on the Auckland Western line.
7	Thieves snatch historic gates (East and Bays Courier) Gates stolen from St Aidan's in Remuera.
7	Quarter-century since St Mary's move (East and Bays Courier) St Mary's Church in Parnell designed by Benjamin Mountfort and built between 1884 and 1897. In a highly contentious move, the building was trundled across the road and shoehorned into a tight site on March 6, 1982. It has since been upgraded.
7	Campaigners attack apartment plan (East and Bays Courier, Justine Glucina) Residents are furious over a proposal to add a third level to an apartment block on a scenic Street at 15 to 19 Vale Rd, St Helliers.
7	Volcano for sale (New Zealand Herald advertisement) Land around and within the volcanic crater on to Pukaki Road, Park freehold and part leasehold is offered for sale by tender closing 4 April. Note: Civic Trust Auckland would be interested to know if there is a white knight willing to purchase this land and preserve it for public usage. It should be reserve in the ownership of either the local authority or regional Council.
8	Auckland City Council to borrow more and tanks developers harder (New Zealand Herald Bernard Orsman)
8	Farmers win veto rights over waterway access (New Zealand Herald Paula Oliver) For some years the government has pushed for public rights of access over private land. This has been a most contentious issue. Within this article Paula notes that in December 1840 Queen Victoria instructed Governor Hobson to ensure that her survey general set aside a strip of land one chain (about 20 m) wide for the recreation and amusement of the inhabitants. That was interpreted as setting aside a strip of land alongside waterways as a public reserve. The so-called Queen's chain is now well-known but has never been legally defined. Note: Civic trust Auckland considers the concept of a Queen's chain to be outdated as it tends to be adhered to by local authorities in providing a minimal width reserve, which serves little other purpose than mere access and sometimes that access is totally impractical. Meaningful reserves require much more space.
9	Some of Auckland's public transport decisions are the wrong decisions for the wrong reasons (New Zealand Herald Owen McShane, director of the centre for resource management studies)
9	Historic house closed for earthquake repairs (East and Bays Courier Justine Glucina) Cotter Homestead in Remuera built in 1847 was damaged when earthquakes up to 4.5 on the Richter scale hit Auckland on February 21.
10	Trio for sale includes historic Blackstone Chambers (New Zealand Herald Colin Taylor) Buildings at 12 to 16 Wyndham St are currently on the market. Leases contained demolition clauses and existing buildings would appear doomed.
10	The dust bowl they call Paradise lost at Albany

	(New Zealand Herald special feature)
12	<p>Super sized boost for Tamaki River development (New Zealand Herald Matthew Dearnaley) New roads and bridges under passes and bus lanes and ingredients of a \$1.5 billion super transport scheme for Panmure and it's immediately surrounding area.</p>
12	<p>A wee problem (New Zealand Herald letters section) Well-known rail fan and train commentator Merv Smith writes in to note that there are no toilets on trains on the Western line, nor are there toilets readily available at the various stations. A later Brian Rudman article in the Herald (on the 19th see below) would highlight this problem to readers. Note: Civic trust Auckland also wishes to ask the question-why are there so few toilets in areas where people wait for transport? Is it not a given fact that the standard of our toilets is a measure of the extent to which we have become civilised?</p>
12	<p>The government's new governance plan for Auckland-let the lunatics reform their own asylum (New Zealand Herald Rudman's city)</p>
12	<p>Government offers new chance to reshape region's rule (New Zealand Herald Bernard Orsman) Another comment on proposals to reform local body politics in the region. Seven councils and the ARC have three months to come up with a single plan.</p>
12	<p>Transport plan will hit 400 residences (New Zealand Herald Matthew Dearnaley) New transport proposals for Panmure and its environs will take 15 years. 566 properties will have to be brought roads to be widened and bus lanes to be installed. 383 will have to be brought in Auckland city of which 257 residential and 126 commercial. Another 183 properties, 150 residential and 33 commercial will be needed in Manukau.</p>
12	<p>Tiles not just a pretty façade (New Zealand Herald/Newsweek/Mary Carmichael) A recent issue of the journal <i>Science</i> shows that some Islamic patterns of tiling reflect mathematical concepts 500 years before those concepts were known in the West.</p>
13	<p>Urban drift creates a world of slums (New Zealand Herald/Independent/Daniel Howden) Some time this year, city dwellers on earth will outnumber rural people for the first time.</p>
13	<p>Controversial Soho Square development and Ponsonby has residents in a flutter (New Zealand Herald Bernard Orsman)</p>
14	<p>Town Hall in line for a nip and tuck (New Zealand Herald Jenny Ling)</p>
14	<p>Chance to see port at work (East and Bays Courier) It is port week from March 25-31. To is of the port are available, but numbers are limited and bookings essential.</p>
14	<p>Historic brewery site for sale (New Zealand Herald Nicholas Moody) Lion Nathan is offering the Newmarket brewery in Khyber pass road for sale. It could fetch up to \$175 million.</p>
14	<p>Ethanol wrong bio fuel option, American experts tell New Zealand (New Zealand Herald Christine Nikiel)</p>
14	<p>UK unveils 60% carbon cut law New Zealand Herald/telegraph group Ltd/Reuters/AP) The proposal is to cut carbon emissions by 60% by the year 2050.</p>
14	<p>The team approach for good bridge bones (New Zealand Herald Joel Cayford, Auckland regional Councillor) a second bridge over the Manukau needs careful planning and co-operation. Auckland's roads, bridges, bus ways and Railways are the bones of our city's future. It is important to get plans right before casting them in concrete. Note: Civic trust Auckland heartily agrees, but in terms of the proposed second Manukau Harbour Crossing, wishes to make it known that it objects to any further damage to the sacred explosion crater Te Kapua a Mataoho, known also as Gloucester Park. We would like to see the existing south-western motorway diverted around this important volcanic and ancestral Maori artefact. We would also like to see a rail connection from Onehunga to the airport and beyond to Manukau City as a matter of urgency(see also next article).</p>
14	<p>Delight at government's decision to reopen Onehunga branch line (New Zealand Herald Matthew Dearnaley) Finance Minister Michael: believes that the line can be reinstated for around \$10 million. The Auckland regional transport authority expects to spend another \$3m-\$5m on a new station and extra trains. Note: Civic trust Auckland is surprised at the relatively small amounts of money being quoted, particularly as the Finance Minister also announced \$5 million as the cost of merely relocating the old historic Newmarket station building. Watch this space for cost reassessment</p>
14	<p>Signal couldn't be clearer-electrification is needed (New Zealand Herald Rudman's city)</p>
15	<p>Committee says yes to \$871 Million Rd scheme (New Zealand Herald Matthew Dearnaley) Opponents fear transport package is a step towards reviving the eastern motorway. Note: Civic trust Auckland has looked with some trepidation at the new dual carriageway being constructed through the old Winstone's quarry. It appears to serve no local purpose and can only be the first portion of the eastern corridor, thought to have been shelved, but obviously very much alive.</p>
16	<p>Alarm over road plan (East and Bays Courier Justine Glucina)</p>

	Further concern is noted over the Auckland Manukau eastern transport initiative, which goes by the name of Ameti. The project has yet to be approved by the Auckland and Manukau City Council's and the Auckland regional transport authority.
16	\$70 million rail revamp on track (East and Bays Courier Nicholas Moody and Justine Glucina) Further comment on the wide-ranging Auckland rail upgrade proposals of the Finance Minister.
17	Get tough bylaw aims to stop park hoons (New Zealand Herald Wayne Thompson) 40-year-old bylaws to be updated to deal with fires, dangerous weapons, litter, pollutants and misuse of vehicles. Fines could be up to \$20,000.
18	Council secures prime waterfront land-but it is leasehold, nevertheless costing \$40.5 million. (City Scene)
18	Ameti recommendations (City Scene) Details are available at www.aucklandcity.govt.nz .
18	Billboards bylaws 1700 submissions received, 200 in favour and 1500 opposed (City Scene)
18	Heritage Festival-groups and organisations invited to submit events by 31 May (City Scene)
18	New \$1.645 million Park development for Owairaka at 52 to 60 Owairaka Ave (City Scene)
19	Civic leaders need to answer the call of nature and the city's busting residents (New Zealand Herald Rudman's city) This article is in response to the wee problem, highlighted by Merv Smith in his letter of the 12 th . Note: Civic Trust Auckland considers that the lack of toilet accommodation throughout the city and elsewhere seems rather more than a wee problem and a solution, incorporating the best of art and architecture is surely well overdue.
20	Blueprint for better apartment design (New Zealand Herald Wayne Thompson) Three councils in Auckland are keen to promote apartment living, supposedly in order to avoid costly and inefficient urban sprawl. They, together with the regional authority are offering design guidance to developers and are threatening to delay projects which do not comply with guidelines, in order to improve the quality of high-rise living. Note: Civic Trust Auckland has been dismayed that the lack of decent standards of design has led to the current situation, following 15 years of development frenzy and profiteering in this sector. The idea of introducing design rules is applauded, although rules should have been in place since the early 1900's, when the first of the high-rise apartments were constructed within the CBD. Civic Trust Auckland further believes that there should be carrots as well as sticks, namely that there should be incentives to follow good design and provide additional high-rise urban amenities. High-rise living within the CBD has not been the first choice of New Zealanders in the past and it is difficult to establish whether it will be necessarily popular in the future. Much more research needs to be done to discover the amenities which high-density urban dwellers would like to see in or near their apartments. Some demographic research would also be useful, including an answer to the basic question, what is the ideal future size for the Auckland and New Zealand population.
21	Historic Sea Scout Hall may shift to make way for bridge (New Zealand Herald Matthew Dearnaley) Tranzit New Zealand needs the harbour side site for the \$330 million duplication of Mangere bridge. The hall was built in 1911, featuring a number of elements of domestic Californian bungalow construction, which would be the favoured domestic style within a few years.
22	Water torture for a dry world (New Zealand Herald Georgina Newman and Paul Brown) Today is world water day and this article explains why water is so important.
22	Auckland regional Council plans to sell land at Pakiri beach (New Zealand Herald Wayne Thompson) The ARC owns 126 ha in the controversial Arrigato subdivision in North East Rodney and proposals to sell plot of 5.1 ha, supposedly to reduce debt. \$9 million had been paid to 10 residential sites in December 2005 following purchase of 52 ha adjoining purchased earlier the same month a \$10.25 million. The portion to be sold is in land and will not affect protection of the coastline of about 3 km.
22	The second Mangere bridge project to go ahead (New Zealand Herald Matthew Dearnaley) Note: Civic Trust Auckland is most concerned that a somewhat hasty design process is being fast tracked, without fully taking into account, protection of an important volcanic land form, which is sacred to Maori and with apparently no pre-planning for urgently needed rail access between Onehunga, the airport and Manukau city.
23	Residents fear being left in a jam (East and Bays Courier Justine Glucina) Residents of Glen Innes are concerned over the effects on their community of the new (eastern corridor?) dual carriageway, currently underway within the ex-Winstone's quarry, to be eventually extended through to botany. Note: Civic Trust Auckland has been concerned over the alignment of this road, as it was initially earmarked to extend directly through the remnant and site of Te Tauomo volcano. After numerous submissions to Council, Civic Trust Auckland has learnt, in a letter from the Mayor, that his intervention in the matter has assisted in saving the volcanic remnant, which is to be preserved within a small local reserve. The dual carriageway road is to be angled away to avoid it. Civic Trust Auckland thanks the Mayor for his efforts in this regard and thanks the many others who made submissions on this matter, including the Volcanic Cones Society, GNS , local Iwi and many individuals.
23	Epsom home in breach of 92 year old volcanic act

	(New Zealand Herald Bernard Orsman) Once again there has been a breach of the Act, which should long ago have been incorporated within local authority town planning ordinances. The latest breach has occurred on the flank of Tiki Te Kopuke (<i>hill of the sacred digging stick</i>), known also as Mt St John. Note: Civic Trust Auckland is dismayed that protection of volcanic cones and other volcanic land forms is not the first duty of councils and their time planning departments, not only within the Auckland region, but throughout New Zealand. See also article by Bryan Rudman in the Herald on the 26 th .
26	Mt St John outrage beyond the radar of bureaucrats (New Zealand Herald Rudman's city)
27	Health alert over treated timber (New Zealand Herald and Gibson) Master builders Federation calls the ban on timber treated with light organic solvent preservatives, because of solvent risk. Note: Civic trust Auckland remembers that as a result of protests from the Green party, untreated timber was permitted as a cheaper alternative construction material for houses in New Zealand from about 1996. The leaky building saga has highlighted an unintended consequence. It is important to ensure the longevity of structural items in any building. Long-term, it is also important to remove from the environment any chemicals which represent both short and long-term risks to human health. More research should be undertaken on friendlier methods of timber treatment as an absolute priority in New Zealand.
30	City cuts plastic bags from its shopping list (New Zealand Herald/Independent/Andrew Gumbel in San Francisco) San Francisco has become the first American city to ban plastic bags from large supermarkets and chemist shops. Plastic bags have a hugely negative environmental impact. Unfortunately one of the most convenient alternatives is paper which will destroy trees.
30	Kerikeri stone store surrounded by floodwaters (New Zealand Herald/NZPA) Storms in Northland have been variously described as of 50 year or 100 year severity. There is concern over a number of historic buildings.