**The Never Ending Story: consenting an urban cycleway**

Advocates and even transport planners are often perplexed about how long it takes to consent an urban cycleway. After all it’s not a motorway. How hard can it be? Much harder that it might seem at first sight. As the adage goes, the devil is in the detail and getting that detail right can mean the difference between getting consent or getting a one-way ticket to the Environment Court.

Consultants planners Karen Bell and Annika Swanberg are veterans of the consenting trenches and have been deeply involved from the consultancy side in the planning and consenting for Te Ara Ki Uta Ki Tai, a 7.4 kilometre shared path in Auckland linking Glen Innes to Tāmaki Drive - a crucial link in Auckland’s emerging cycleway network.

Challenges include the various applicable standards and codes; route-related environmental issues; landowner requirements; planning, legal and regulatory environment requirements; and, of course, the various organisational, stakeholder and community interest and concerns.

Navigating this obstacle course requires thoughtful planning and design and a fair amount of patience. Like Mainland Cheese, good things take time! But the result is well worth the wait.

So, take a deep breath and learn more from Karen and Annika about what lies behind the curtain of planning in order to make a great urban cycleway, with learnings from Te Ara Ki Uta Ki Tai and other urban cycleway projects in New Zealand.