

MINISTERIAL BRIEFING NOTE

Subject	Peka Peka to Ōtaki Expressway official opening event
Date	19 December 2022
Briefing number	BRI-2688

Contact(s) for telephone discussion (if required)				
Name	Position	Direct line	Cell phone	1 st contact
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Action taken by Office of the Minister

- ☐ Noted
- ☐ Seen by Minister
- ☐ Agreed
- ☐ Feedback provided
- ☐ Forwarded to
- ☐ Needs change [please specify]
- ☐ Withdrawn
- ☐ Overtaken by events

Minister of Transport**PEKA PEKA TO ŌTAKI EXPRESSWAY OFFICIAL OPENING EVENT****Purpose**

1. This briefing provides you with information about the Peka Peka to Ōtaki Expressway official opening event on Wednesday 21 December 2022 which will occur from 10.30am-11.30am approximately.

Project funding and costs

2. The total cost for the Peka Peka to Ōtaki Expressway project, which is part of the Wellington Northern Corridor programme, is expected to be \$448 million.
3. The project was funded by the National Land Transport Fund (NLTF).

Project features

4. Key features of the Peka Peka to Ōtaki Expressway include:
 - four lanes stretching approximately 13 kilometres from Peka Peka to north of Ōtaki
 - 10km shared path for pedestrians and cyclists
 - 11 new structures – nine bridges (including the 330m-long Ōtaki River bridge) and two underpasses
 - 107 lighting poles
 - approximately 50 permanent culverts, in addition to roadside drainage swales, to protect the road from flood
 - six new wetlands alongside the expressway which absorb rain (the Makahuri Wetland has also been enhanced through additional planting)
 - two gateway sculptures erected at the southern and northern approaches to Ōtaki
 - bridge artwork and cultural features significant to local iwi and the Ōtaki community
 - heritage features such as the relocated historic Mirek Smíšek pottery kilns.

Project benefits

5. Key benefits of the Peka Peka to Ōtaki Expressway include:
 - improved road safety in the Kāpiti District due to the separation of local and highway traffic
 - reduced congestion north of Peka Peka
 - more reliable journey times
 - more efficient movement of increasing freight volumes

- increased economic productivity and growth in the area, due to more efficient movement of people and freight.

Project context

6. The Peka Peka to Ōtaki Expressway is a key part of the Wellington Northern Corridor programme. It forms part of the Kāpiti Expressway, connecting with the 18km Mackays to Peka Peka Expressway section and the 27km Transmission Gully motorway.
7. The next project to be completed along this corridor will be the Ōtaki to North of Levin Expressway (construction to begin circa 2025).
8. The road will have a phased opening over several days, beginning the evening of Wednesday 21 December and be fully open on Friday 23 December. This means different parts of the road will open in sequence to allow for things like barrier tensioning and final line marking to be carried out.
9. People will have access to drive the full length of the expressway during the holiday period, but there are two small incomplete sections at either end where people will have to drive at temporarily reduced speed limits of 70km/h until crews return in the New Year to complete them.

Key messaging

10. Key messages for the Peka Peka to Ōtaki Expressway official opening event include:
 - Road users travelling between Wellington and Ōtaki can look forward to a smoother journey over the busy holiday period with the State Highway 1 Peka Peka to Ōtaki Expressway, north of Wellington, opening before Christmas.
 - It's great to have the new expressway – which connects with the Mackays to Peka Peka Expressway and Transmission Gully Motorway – open ahead of Christmas, which sees high traffic volumes in the area and throughout the country.
 - The new road provides people with a safer way to travel, more reliable travel times and less congestion at major pinch points north of Peka Peka. The continuous four-lane route also helps connect communities along the corridor, lets freight move more efficiently and bolsters the economy.
 - There were challenges along the way, such as bad weather and COVID-19 impacts, that caused some delays. However, the team worked incredibly hard to overcome these setbacks. The road is a testament to the massive amount of work from all involved in its construction.
 - The new Peka Peka to Ōtaki Expressway supports the Government's Road to Zero vision, where everyone should get to their destination safely whether they're walking, cycling, driving, motorcycling or using public transport.
 - Our road safety vision is an Aotearoa where no one is killed or seriously injured on our roads. We've set an initial target of reducing the number of people dying or being seriously injured by 40 percent by 2030. Achieving this target requires improving all parts of the transport system, including safer roads, vehicles, drivers and speeds.

Other matters

11. While the whole expressway will open for traffic on Friday 23 December, there are two small unfinished sections at both ends of the expressway – the Peka Peka tie-in at the southern end and a safe turnaround area at the northern end) – which will have temporarily reduced speed limits of 70km/h for safety reasons and to avoid damage to the road. Those sections will be completed in the New Year.
12. While media has focused on the opening date for the expressway, we expect coverage of the opening to be largely positive (noting the benefits of the new road and its significance to the wider region). There may be questions about why some sections of the expressway are incomplete and what impact this will have on drivers – messages will be on hand to use for any media queries.
13. Traffic will flow more smoothly up to Ōtaki from Wellington/Kāpiti and travel times will be quicker. However, queues are likely to form where northbound traffic merges back into a single lane at the northern end of the expressway, especially leading up to Christmas and over the busy holiday period when there are high traffic volumes.

You have received the following briefings on this subject:

1. MINO-295, Update on PP2Ō Project, 15 September 2021
2. MINO-327, Updates on Wellington Projects, 21 February 2022

Ministerial official opening event

14. The event will be located in the Pare-o-Matangi Reserve, Ōtaki.
15. Speeches and a ribbon-cutting ceremony will take place. After your speech, Kāpiti Coast District Mayor Janet Holborow, s 9(2)(a), General Manager Major Projects, Fletcher Construction, and Richard May, Chief of Staff Waka Kotahi will speak.

Key attendees to acknowledge

16. The key attendees invited for the official opening ceremony include the following:
 - Mayor Janet Holborow and Chief Executive Officer Darren Edwards from the Kāpiti Coast District Council
 - Mayor Bernie Wanden and Chief Executive Officer Monique Davidson from the Horowhenua District Council
 - Ōtaki MP Terisa Ngobi
 - Ngā Hapū o Ōtaki and Ngāti Raukawa
 - s 9(2)(a), General Manager Major Projects, Fletcher Construction.
 - Community Board members, project team members from Waka Kotahi and Fletcher Construction, partners and suppliers, and further officials from the Kāpiti Coast District Council.

Media

17. We expect a significant amount of media interest, particularly local/regional.

18. There has been a lot of media interest in this project to date.

It is recommended that you:

Note the contents of this briefing.



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Emma Speight

Director Regional Relationships, Greater Wellington and Top of the South

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Hon Michael Wood, Minister of Transport

Date: 2022

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