

MINISTERIAL BRIEFING NOTE

Subject	BRI-3178 Northwest and Westgate traffic problems
Date	9 October 2024
Briefing number	BRI-3178

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- Withdrawn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

PROACTIVELY RELEASED

9 October 2024

Hon Simeon Brown – Minister of Transport

NORTHWEST AND WESTGATE NZTA INFRASTRUCTURE PLANS

Purpose

1. This briefing provides you with information on NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi (NZTA)'s infrastructure plans for the Northwest and Westgate **Out of Scope**
[REDACTED]
2. NZTA is aware of concerns with traffic problems in the area and has several works planned which will improve accessibility, reliability, and travel choices over time.
3. Auckland's North West is growing and is expected to have more than triple its current population over the next three decades. Most of the growth will occur initially in Hobsonville, Westgate, Redhills, and Whenuapai, and from 2028 further growth will follow in Kumeū-Huapai. In total, more than 75,000 people and 25,000 new jobs are expected by 2046.

Network operations

4. NZTA is responsible for the State Highway network. The traffic problems currently occurring result from missing links and the design of the internal and local roading networks along with the primary site access being created directly from the motorway interchange. **s 9(2)(g)(i)**
[REDACTED]
5. NZTA will be working with Auckland Transport, Auckland Traffic Operations Centre (ATOC) and a local landowner on short-term operational modifications to improve weekend access to the Westgate site. These include changes to signals, low cost improvements, and signage to divert some traffic to the south, Royal Road, and the northern access to Westgate via Brigham Creek. The NZTA operational modifications and signage will be in place by December 2024 for the Christmas shopping period.
6. NZTA has identified a number of physical improvements and will be engaging with the relevant road controlling authority (RCA). It is the local road and circulation improvements on site that will provide the most benefit but the delivery of these is dependent on Auckland Transport and the Westgate developers making changes to their networks. None of these projects were identified during the recent Regional Land Transport programme (RLTP) or National Land Transport programme (NLTP).

State Highway 16/18 project:

7. The SH16/18 Connections project is an important component of the overall transport network plan to support this growth and will increase and improve access between the growth areas in the North West and the North Shore.
8. The project includes a range of improvements between SH16 from Brigham Creek Road and SH18 to Squadron Drive and aims to improve accessibility, reliability and travel choices for people travelling in the northwest of Auckland.
9. The project will deliver the following:
 - a. Increased customer access to, from and within the North West to economic and social opportunities, thus promoting the liveability of the North West.
 - b. Supports longer term projects like the SH 16 North West Alternative State Highway and extension to the North West busway by providing the “connection” to the wider network.
 - c. Providing a direct connection from the North West to the North Shore by providing for all movements where SH16 and SH18 connect results in significant travel time savings and removes the “through traffic” off Brigham Creek Road.
 - d. Direct access to the future Whenuapai business zone and Westgate through the south-facing ramps at Northside Drive.
 - e. In addition the interchange improvements along SH18 at Squadron Drive serves demand and improves access between Kumeu in the North West and the urbanised Hobsonville Point.
10. There is a need to reconfirm the form, function and staging for the various elements of the SH16/SH18 Connections projects given the relationship with the Alternative Northwest State Highway and the Northwest Rapid Transit. It is likely some of this reconfirmation will occur through the RONS Alternative Northwest State Highway initiation and investment assessment development in early 2025. Awaiting that reconfirmation, no components of the SH16/18 project have been prioritised for NLTF funding for delivery in this current NLTP period. While identified in the State Highway Investment Proposal and RLTP these were prioritised behind the RONS and the Northwest Rapid Transit projects in terms of available NLTF funding.

Northwest Rapid Transit

11. NZTA is investigating ways to provide a cost effective, value for money transport solution and looking into ways to build the busway in stages to provide west Aucklanders with benefits sooner.
12. NZTA's preferred rapid transit option for SH16, a busway alongside the motorway from Brigham Creek to the city centre, will give people more travel choices, provide faster and more reliable journeys, help tackle congestion, support residential growth, and drive economic productivity. the project includes a proposed park and ride station at Brigham Creek, with stations in the west including at Westgate, Royal Road, Lincoln Road and Te Atatū. There will be further connections heading into the city centre where people will be able to seamlessly connect with the wider transport network.

- 13. The busway will run alongside SH16 through Westgate where it will connect people via a new bus station being constructed in two parts – the local station component (currently in design – see below) and the rapid transit network component (being investigated through the current investment case). The Westgate bus station is a critical component in delivering Northwest Auckland's bus network. It will connect people from local bus services with express services to the city centre – connecting them with the wider rapid transit network.

Westgate Station

- 14. NZTA is working to deliver a new bus station at Westgate, alongside SH16, in a location that assessments have confirmed is the most optimal for rapid transit, provides the best value-for-money (in both the short and long term) and is technically and economically superior to the assessed alternative locations within the well-established Westgate development.
- 15. A preliminary design has been confirmed, and work is underway on the developed design, with enabling works expected to begin later this year and overall project completion by mid-2026. The delivery is funded by government through the Infrastructure Reference Group fund (previously administered by Crown Infrastructure Partners (CIP). This funding is for a set amount of \$50m and the project scope has been managed to remain within this allocation.
- 16. Please refer to BRI-3155 for further information on the Westgate Station.

Auckland Council

- 17. Auckland Council's Development Contributions Policy for the inner northwest (Westgate, Whenuapai, Redhill's) is scheduled for consultation from 30 September to 15 November 2024. Decision making is planned to take place in February 2025 with a new policy planned to be implemented in March 2025. This policy will seek additional funding for the local road improvements such as north side drive from the growth currently underway and planned to occur.

It is recommended that you:

- 1. **Note** the contents of this briefing



Robyn Elston

Acting Group General Manager, Transport Services

Hon Simeon Brown, Minister of Transport

Date: 2024