

24 August 2022

Denise Piper
Senior Reporter
Stuff
denise.piper@stuff.co.nz

REF: OIA-10516

Dear Denise

Request made under the Official Information Act 1982

Thank you for your email of 11 July 2022 requesting information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) in relation to the Loop Road Safety Improvements project.

I will answer each of your questions in turn.

1a. What was the budget for stage 1 of this project?

The original scope for the Loop Road Safety Improvements project included a single-lane roundabout and intersection improvements at the Portland Road intersection. The budget for this work was approximated \$27 million, and includes costs associated with the business case, pre-implementation, implementation and property.

1b. What is the actual spend, to date, for stage 1 of this project?

The spend to date for the project is \$34,418,000 excluding GST and administration costs. This includes the costs associated with the business case, pre-implementation, implementation and property. Part of the costs for the Stage 2 works associated with upgrading the roundabout from single lane to dual lanes are already included in this figure, excluding the dual lanes southbound from the new roundabout across Otaika Creek.

1c. What is the budget for any remaining stages of this project?

The remaining scope for Stage 2 of the project for the dual lanes southbound from the roundabout across Otaika Creek, merging back into the single lane southbound beyond Oaks Road intersection is currently being put to tender, and Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency will be undertaking negotiations with contractors in the coming months. I am withholding the details of the budget for the remaining stage of the project under section 9(2)(j) of the Act to enable a Minister of the Crown or any department or organisation holding the information to carry on, without prejudice or disadvantage, negotiations (including commercial and industrial negotiations).

2. I would like to request all documentation, including email correspondence, about the issue with the newly laid road surface between Lookout Hill and the Loop Road intersection, between 1 July 2021 and 30 June 2022.

An email sweep was performed in order to determine what information was in scope of this part of your request, which returned 4,395 results. We refined the sweep to focus on emails sent between the relevant project and regional managers and returned the same number of results. I consider that providing you with these emails would amount to substantial collusion, and so this aspect of your request is being refused under section 18(f) of the Act, as the information requested cannot be made available without substantial collusion or research.

The following documents also fall in scope of your request:

- SH1 Loop Road to Smeatons Hill (Zone 1) NCR, July 2021
- Loop Road Pavement Investigation, 10 March 2022
- Loop Road Pavement Investigation – Revision 2, 7 April 2022
- Notice to Contractor, 16 May 2022
- Notice to Engineer, 19 May 2022
- Notice to Contractor, 1 June 2022

Waka Kotahi is continuing to work on a solution to remedy the issues with the pavement surfacing. Therefore, I am withholding these documents in full under section 9(2)(j) of the Act to enable a Minister of the Crown or any department or organisation holding the information to carry on, without prejudice or disadvantage, negotiations (including commercial and industrial negotiations).

With respect to the information that has been withheld, I do not consider there are any other factors which would render it desirable, in the public interest, to make the information available.

Under section 28 of the Act, you have the right to ask the Ombudsman to review my decision to withhold this information and partially refuse your request. The contact details for the Ombudsman can be located at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz.

In line with Waka Kotahi policy, this response will soon be published on our website.

If you would like to discuss this reply with Waka Kotahi, please contact Andy Knackstedt, Senior Manager Media by email to andrew.knackstedt@nzta.govt.nz.

Yours sincerely



Mark Kinvig
National Manager Infrastructure Delivery