

26 May 2023

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REF: OIA-12654

Dear ██████████

Request made under the Official Information Act 1982

Thank you for your email of 30 April 2023 requesting the following information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act). I will respond to each part of your request in turn:

- *When were these designs presented in 2021 and to who? What was the feedback? Did you amend any of the designs based off the feedback you received?*

Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency engaged with our iwi partners and key stakeholders such as the district councils for Masterton, Carterton, South Wairarapa and Greater Wellington Regional Councils, community groups, and a range of road user industry groups including the New Zealand Automobile Association, the Road Transport Association, Ia Ara Aotearoa Transporting New Zealand (formerly Road Transport Forum), NZ Heavy Haulage Association, NZ Police, and Fire and Emergency New Zealand.

On Monday 26 July 2021 Waka Kotahi started formal consultation on proposed new speed limits on SH2 Masterton to Featherston and sought feedback on infrastructure changes as part of the Masterton to Carterton project. Consultation was initially open for four weeks but was extended by three weeks to Sunday 19 September 2021, as a distribution error meant that the printed consultation booklets were not delivered to letterboxes in some parts of the community as planned.

Summaries of feedback received, and a copy of all submissions, are available in the following documents:

- Speed review consultation summary: <https://www.nzta.govt.nz/assets/projects/sh2-wairarapa-highway-improvements/SH2-Masterton-to-Featherston-speed-review-consultation-summary-January-2023.pdf>
- Infrastructure feedback summary: <https://www.nzta.govt.nz/assets/projects/sh2-wairarapa-highway-improvements/sh2-masterton-to-carterton-safety-improvements-engagement-summary.pdf>
- All submissions received: <https://www.nzta.govt.nz/assets/projects/sh2-wairarapa-highway-improvements/SH2-Masterton-to-Featherston-speed-review-feedback-submissions-January-2023.pdf>.

As a result of this feedback, no changes to the roundabout designs were made.

- *The Norfolk roundabout and Ngaumutawa roundabouts are the most problematic. Could you please share some of your traffic data. It would be helpful to understand why a single lane roundabout was agreed. It would be clearly obvious, that at times of peak flow, single lane will not be adequate and will most likely result in an increase in fender bender incidents. The population of the Wairarapa is increasing as is the traffic movements at these roundabouts. This project has been in the planning phase for over five years so I would've thought this would've been ample time to acquire the land to increase the designations for double laned roundabouts.*

The objective of the project is to reduce the likelihood of fatal and serious crashes in a cost-effective way. Roundabouts are effective at reducing deaths and serious injuries in part because, if a crash occurs, it is likely to be at a lower speed (as compared to other intersection types) and the angle of impact is likely to be more forgiving. While crashes can still occur at both single- and double-lane roundabouts, they are less likely to be serious or fatal.

This project's focus is to reduce death and serious injury crashes quickly through low-cost, targeted changes. We made the decision to make design improvements within the existing road corridor as much as possible. Making all roundabouts double-lane would have required the purchase of property, adding both time and cost to the project. The Ngaumutawa Road roundabout has dual lanes on the SH2 legs and single lanes on the Ngaumutawa Road leg.

We are currently consulting with another organisation on information regarding traffic data. As stated in our extension letter of 26 May 2023, we will send you this information on or before 2 June 2023.

- *Who is the person overseeing this project from Waka Ko? How often are they visiting the sites? Are they visiting during peak traffic flow?*

We acknowledge that the current construction work, including the roundabouts which have been operating with a temporary running surface, has caused congestion and delays particularly at peak times. This is expected to ease once the project is complete.

All three roundabouts will be completed with an initial asphalt surfacing by approximately the end of July 2023 – weather permitting. As the final asphalt surface requires warmer weather conditions to be installed, it will be completed in December 2023.

Waka Kotahi is responsible for managing the project at this stage and has been during earlier phases. The Project Manager visits the site at least once per fortnight. A consultant Engineer's Representative is on site most days representing Waka Kotahi as client. We also undertake regular monitoring and visit the sites at all times of the day.

I am very concerned these designs will lead to a significant amount of vehicle accidents resulting in more people getting injured or killed. I do not believe the design has allowed for the current and forecasted traffic flows through these roundabouts. It needs to be reviewed with urgency.

The design has been through all usual Waka Kotahi project processes, including safety audits to provide assurance that the design is safe.

The project has been designed in a way that does not preclude adding a second lane to the roundabouts in future, if this was to be funded as part of a new project. However, as the project is now under construction and there will not be a change to add these lanes to the current project.

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

If you would like to discuss this response with Waka Kotahi, please contact us by email to official.correspondence@nzta.govt.nz.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Kinvig', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Mark Kinvig
National Manager, Infrastructure Design