

2 June 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):

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

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.

On 26 May 2023 Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency provided a response to most of your request. For the remainder of your request regarding traffic data, the following document falls within scope and is enclosed:

- Attachment 1 – Appendix F – Roundabout Traffic Modelling.

Certain information has been withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act. This section allows for the withholding of information to protect the privacy of natural persons, including that of deceased natural persons.

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.

The modelling, when completed in 2020, indicated that the three chosen roundabout designs would operate efficiently based on available actual traffic data at that time. The modelling also used forecasts to evaluate when the roundabouts may exceed their capacity in the future, and lead to some queuing occurring on SH2 at peak times. However, forecast increases in traffic numbers are uncertain. Increases in traffic volume and changes in travel demand following COVID-19 are not yet known. Other factors such as further urban development are also unknown.

As outlined in our previous response of 26 May 2023, the single lane roundabouts were chosen for the intersections of Wiltons Road and East Taratahi Road, and Norfolk Road and Cornwall Road, as the most cost- and time-efficient way to improve safety – particularly as they avoided the time and cost associated with property acquisition. The Ngaumutawa Road roundabout has dual lanes on the SH2 legs of the intersection and a single lane for the Ngaumutawa Road leg.

The objective of state highway safety funding is to improve safety in as many locations as possible, nationwide, with the money available. These roundabouts will significantly reduce the risk of serious or fatal crashes at these intersections.

Waka Kotahi will monitor the performance of the roundabouts when they are completed, carry out further traffic counts, and use this information to inform any future proposals to invest in capacity upgrades on the corridor. The current designs do not preclude any future projects that may look to further upgrade or dual-lane these roundabouts. We will work with Masterton and Carterton District Councils to understand how future developments may change traffic patterns and how state highway investments are best made to respond to these.

Under section 28 of the Act, you have the right to ask the Ombudsman to review my decision to withhold part of this information. 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, 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



Mark Kinvig
National Manager, Infrastructure Design