



Takitimu North Link Stage Two

Engagement summary – draft design

Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency

1 October 2023

Summary of feedback themes

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More information

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Introduction

During public engagement on the draft design for Takitimu North Link Stage Two – Te Puna to Ōmokoroa, we received 100 submissions, which we have read and analysed.

Seeking feedback is an important step in this phase of the project, it gives us a better understanding of the project area, the needs of the community, and any improvements that can be made to the proposals.

The feedback assists us to refine the draft designs, which will then be submitted as part of the process to lodge designation and resource consents with Western Bay of Plenty District Council and Bay of Plenty Regional Council. This is programmed for late 2023. Our current approach is that these applications will be publicly notified and submissions called for, with a hearing in 2024 – we will publicise these dates once they are confirmed.

A summary of the feedback we have received is below. Feedback has been positive with support for investment in public transport, walking and cycling facilities and improving safety outcomes on local roads and state highways.

Key themes		How community feedback has been included
<p>Cycleway and walkway connections.</p>	<p>Submitters have requested a safe and viable option to walk/cycle across the Highway interchange from Youngson Road, Whakamārama to Ōmokoroa.</p> <p>Submitters have requested pedestrian access from both sides of SH2 and better connections to the cycle paths from various points along the alignment.</p> <p>A concern was the perceived cutting off of communities along the southern side of the new highway from the northern side.</p>	<p>A shared pathway runs the entire length of the Project and includes feeder pathways from all overbridges and southern connections.</p> <p>The Project will create a much needed and safer multimodal transport environment for all areas along the alignment.</p> <p>The Ōmokoroa diamond interchange will include cycle lanes and an underpass allowing connection to the main shared path from surrounding land either side of the interchange.</p>
<p>Delegation of one lane (each direction) for freight/transport vehicles only.</p>	<p>Submitters have requested a minimum of four lanes to be available for all traffic at all times. This is a regular theme throughout the submissions.</p> <p>Restricting commuter vehicles to one lane either side of the highway is not considered to be a fair response to future users and not much better than the existing conditions.</p>	<p>Western Bay of Plenty and Tauranga City has the highest number of single occupancy vehicles in New Zealand contributing to congestion issues. There are opportunities to focus on the number of people that can use the corridor instead of the number of vehicles that can use the corridor to address population growth and increase the efficiency of the transport system. Closer to construction,</p>

Key themes	How community feedback has been included	
	<p>Waka Kotahi will perform an analysis on how to best increase the total number of people that can use the new corridor including the possibility of using a 'Managed Lane' philosophy including using Transit 2, Transit 3 or Bus lanes. Incorporating freight, or not, in these managed lanes will also be explored.</p>	
<p>Horses, and ability for horse rider connectivity along the alignment</p>	<p>The Equine community has requested pathways/trails for horses to be provided alongside the shared path.</p> <p>A safety barrier has been suggested with the horse path beyond the barrier. A number of submissions have requested that the Project be more horse friendly and accommodating to the equine community.</p>	<p>Equine facilities are not currently being considered as part of the Project, though any incoming legislative requirements will be complied with.</p>
<p>Tolls</p>	<p>A number of submissions have raised tolls as an issue. Future users feel penalised and do not support the use of tolls. Current financial stress and burden has been discussed as well as the likelihood of commuters using the SH2 to avoid tolls.</p>	<p>Tolls are subject to economic and budgetary forces and will be evaluated by Waka Kotahi. For every new state highway built Waka Kotahi carries out an assessment to see if it meets the criteria to be tolled.</p> <p>Tolling assessments are designed to apply many perspectives to the complex issue of determining tolling feasibility, including how a potential toll road might interact with the wider transport network. Read more about the tolling assessment process here.</p>
<p>Timing</p>	<p>A number of submitters raised issues in relation to the timing; they believe the whole Project is taking too long and has been in play for many years now. A common fear is that the Project will not eventuate. The</p>	<p>Availability of national funding influences the timing of the Project. The steps we are taking now to protect the route will provide certainty that the Project can be constructed when funding becomes available.</p>

Key themes		How community feedback has been included
	consensus is the Project is needed now and not in decades to come.	Stage One is currently under construction.
<p>No on-ramps/off-ramps for a number of existing roads/locations.</p> <p>Use of Youngson Road as a collector road</p>	<p>Concerns were raised regarding the commute from Whakamārama to Ōmokoroa and the requirement for Youngson Road to be used as a collector road from SH2.</p> <p>Concerns include Barretts Road not having an exit to travel south to Tauranga and Plummers Point Road and Te Puna Quarry Road not having direct access to the new highway.</p> <p>Residents of Whakamārama raised concerns with cycle connections to the main cycle path and do not want to see a severance of the community by the new highway.</p>	<p>The new route should have limited connections in order to keep its level of service (efficiency) high as an expressway. Additional access points will require more land and will have detrimental impacts on the flow and use of the highway.</p> <p>Short trip commuters will be catered for on the local roads (eg. the existing SH2).</p> <p>The proposed access/egress points are considered to have the most minimal impact on the environment and surrounding landowners along the alignment.</p>
Ainsworth Road	<p>Submitters raised the need for safety improvements and lower speeds along Ainsworth Road.</p> <p>Submitters requested a review of a possible extension or alternate connection of Ainsworth Road.</p>	<p>The Ainsworth Road connection to the existing SH2 will be severed and realigned towards the west until it meets Munro Road East and then connect again.</p> <p>The proposal does not include the construction of additional roading to the south of Ainsworth Road.</p>
Noise impacts on existing and new developments	A submission raised road noise impacts on future subdivisions and developments and the need for noise to be mitigated and considered.	Waka Kotahi considers noise mitigation (during and post construction) carefully. The Project is supported by an Acoustic Report and subsequent noise mitigation recommendations by specialist independent noise experts.
Cost of shared path on economy	Submitters raised concerns in relation to the extra cost of the shared path. Submitters believe costs could be cut by not providing the shared path.	Western Bay of Plenty and Tauranga City has the highest number of single occupancy vehicles in New Zealand contributing to congestion

issues. There are opportunities to focus on the number of people that can use the corridor instead of the number of vehicles that can use the corridor in order to address population growth and increase the efficiency of the transport system.

It is a priority to offer people choices like public transport, cycling and walking. There are gaps in WBOP network for walking and cycling, therefore many people do not choose this option. Improved connections will encourage more people to walk or cycle.

Multi modal transport infrastructure is an important aspect of the Project. Removal of the shared path is not a viable option as it will remove the opportunity for multi modal transport including walking and cycling.

Park and Ride

More details and consideration regarding the provision of a park and ride facility have been requested. Where would a park and ride physically be located? Could there be multiple park and ride facilities? How would they work in detail?

A park and ride facility is proposed in Ōmokoroa, at a location determined suitable by Western Bay of Plenty District Council. These facilities are commonly used elsewhere in the country and will apply the same rationale and opportunity for commuters.

Bi-lingual signage

Bi-lingual road names should be abandoned.

Road and place names in te reo Māori will be used for the Project in various locations along the alignment in collaboration with hapū.

Waka Kotahi contributes to having te reo Māori seen, heard and spoken wherever possible to continue the revitalisation of the language.

Alongside our partners Te

Key themes

How community feedback has been included

Mātāwai and Local Government we are working to enable the use of bilingual traffic signs, to ensure safe and consistent use across state highways and local roads. Read more about this work [here](#).

We expect to lodge designation and resource consents with Western Bay of Plenty District Council and Bay of Plenty Regional Council late 2023. These applications will be publicly notified and submissions called for, with a hearing in 2024 – we will publicise these dates once they are confirmed.

Prior to lodgement, we welcome any comment or feedback on the project, and encourage you to share this information with people who may be interested.

Please send feedback or requests for more information by emailing bopprojects@nzta.govt.nz.