

8 December 2023

s9(2)(a)

REF: OIA-14082

Dear s9(2)(a)

Request made under the Official Information Act 1982

Thank you for your email of 15 November 2023 requesting the following information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

Information requested

- *Background on all options for old SH1(Otaki) bridge clip on cycle pathway alternatives*
- *Costs of various options*
- *Project time of each option*
- *Details of public feedback sought*

As context and background, in 2017 a high-level route options study and a public survey was undertaken by NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi to gauge public support and interest in shared paths extending north from Peka Peka into Ōtaki township.

Over 300 survey questionnaires were submitted from local members of the public and in addition, submissions were made by Kāpiti Coast District Council (KCDC). There was a clear preference for an offline (not on the road) path, with most of the submissions preferring an eastern route between Te Horo and the Ōtaki River. Consequently, south of the Ōtaki Bridge River the shared path is offline on the eastern side of the new expressway.

To get across the Ōtaki River, an options study was undertaken in April 2018. Five route options for a shared path from the Ōtaki river to the Ōtaki Township were developed:

- Option 1 – Eastern option all the way along eastern expressway embankment, through Rahui Enterprises land to Rahui Road.
- Option 2 – Western option (under expressway through a large culvert and then a level crossing over rail lines).
- Option 3 - Western option (under expressway through the culvert and then a pedestrian rail overbridge over the rail lines)
- Option 4 – Eastern option along the Chrystals Bend stop bank and along land controlled by GWRC to the Ōtaki River.
- Option 5 - Western option (under expressway through the culvert and then a under the rail and old SH1 in a pedestrian underground culvert)

Multiple workshops were held from April through to July 2018, with participants from KCDC Councillors, Iwi representatives, Winstones, KiwiRail, the Ōtaki Community Liaison Group and Kapiti cycling, walking and equestrian interest groups etc. to explore the pros and cons of each option. Schools and NZ Police were separately consulted on access and safety concerns.

Due to challenges at that time in accessing the Ōtaki River from the eastern side due to Winstones Quarry activities and the very little land available for the two eastern options within the expressway designation, only the Western options were considered worthy of further development.

All western options involved using an underpass (using a large culvert) to cross under the expressway. However, by August 2018, the Police and local School Principals had raised concerns about the safety of the proposed culvert underpass from the perspective of public safety and crime prevention.

By September 2018, additional western options were considered to respond to these concerns:

- Additional Option 1 – Using a pedestrian overbridge over the expressway at or around the Culvert location, which connects to a pedestrian overbridge over the rail lines, with the Culvert removed.
- Additional Option 2 – A single combined pedestrian overbridge over both the Expressway and Rail which connects to Ōtaki township near the railway station, with the Culvert removed.

As interest was expressed by the community for options that provide more direct access to the Ōtaki river, two further options were considered at the request of the Friends of the Ōtaki River Group.

- Additional Option 3 – shared path users brought off the new Ōtaki River Bridge by a ramp leading on to the northern side of the Ōtaki River, then passing under the new Ōtaki River Bridge to continue into Ōtaki along the current SH1, with the Culvert removed.
- Additional Option 4 – Shared Path on western side of the new Ōtaki River Bridge through Winstones Quarry and KiwiRail land (at that point it would have still been possible to adjust the alignment of the expressway to have the shared path on either side of the new bridge).

Additional options 3 & 4 were discarded due to cost, safety, and risk concerns (particularly flood risk and delivering shared path users into a working quarry access road), and as both Winstones and KiwiRail were unsupportive. By October 2018, additional options 1 & 2 were estimated to cost at least \$11.1million and likely significantly more once risks from detailed design and geotechnical information were developed.

In parallel, Friends of the Ōtaki River Group and local equestrian interest groups had begun a campaign seeking wider stop bank and lakes access. They campaigned to KCDC and Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWGC), seeking access to and across the stop banks at Chrystalls bend to the lake area behind Winstones Quarries. In November 2018, GWRC and KCDC agreed to a study to explore solutions to enable access to Te Roto Road and other areas east of the lake.

Waka Kotahi in the meantime had investigated a new route option involving a 'clip-on' shared path on the old SH1 Ōtaki River bridge and accessing the township via a connection from Ōtaki Gorge Road, across the old SH1 bridge and along the eastern side of the old State Highway. Several sub options were considered:

- A separate parallel shared path bridge on its own new piers (i.e., not actually clipped on).
- Steel clip-ons
- Fibre Reinforced Plastic (FRP) clip-ons

We also considered attaching the clip on to the downstream side and to the upstream side of the old SH1 bridge. The community preference was for the clip-on option on the old bridge and on the upstream side of the old bridge and FRP was preferred due to its lighter weight as well as lower capital and operational costs.

Taking into account the degrees of very favourable engagement and support from the Ōtaki Community Liaison Group, Friends of the Ōtaki River Group, Equestrian, Waka Ama, walking and cycling groups and KCDC, both alternative path options were agreed to be developed and implemented; the eastern Te Roto Road route option by GWRC and the western old state highway 1 bridge clip-on path option by Waka Kotahi.

The GWRC path takes users from the eastern side of the new Ōtaki River Bridge and expressway embankment, along the Chrystalls bend stop bank past the lake area behind Winstones and exiting onto Te Roto Road and thence back to the Ōtaki Township via Rahui Road.

The western route path (currently under construction) takes users along Ōtaki Gorge Road, across a new FRP clip-on cycleway (to go onto the upstream side of the old SH1 river bridge in 2024) and along the eastern side of the old SH1 into the township.

Costs associated with the new clip-on cycleway and shared path from Ōtaki Gorge Road to the Ōtaki Township will be in the order of \$11.5million (based on contracts signed with Downers and Wagner's in 2022) and this work is under delivery now and expected to be completed in late 2024.

A summary of costs for various options, project time (dates) and costs for each option (where undertaken) is shown in the attached *Summary of Options Development - Shared Paths Ōtaki River to Ōtaki Township.docx*, along with details of public feedback sought and obtained.

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

Yours sincerely



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