

MINISTERIAL BRIEFING NOTE

Subject	Announcement of revised concept design for State Highway 2 Melling Interchange
Date	31 May 2024
Briefing number	BRI-3062

Contact(s) for telephone discussion (if required)				
Name	Position	Direct line	Cell phone	1 st contact
Brett Gliddon	Group General Manager, Transport Services	s 9(2)(a)	s 9(2)(a)	✓

Action taken by Office of the Minister

- ☐ Noted
- ☐ Seen by Minister
- ☐ Agreed
- ☐ Feedback provided
- ☐ Forwarded to
- ☐ Needs change [please specify]
- ☐ Withdrawn
- ☐ Overtaken by events

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31 May 2024

Hon Simeon Brown – Minister of Transport

ANNOUNCEMENT OF REVISED CONCEPT DESIGN FOR STATE HIGHWAY 2 MELLING INTERCHANGE

Purpose

1. This briefing provides an update on the revised design concept for the interchange proposed for State Highway 2 (SH2) at Melling, Lower Hutt.

Context

2. The interchange is a key component of the Melling Transport Improvements – part of the Roads of Regional Significance (RoRS) programme.
3. It is being delivered by NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi (NZTA) together with Te Wai Takamori o Te Awa Kairangi Alliance (AECOM and Fletcher Construction).
4. The project is part of the wider Te Wai Takamori o Te Awa Kairangi programme, alongside flood protection upgrades and Lower Hutt city centre infrastructure being delivered by the local and regional councils.
5. Over the past year, NZTA in conjunction with the Alliance, has been reviewing the original design as part of the Interim Project Alliance Agreement (IPAA).
6. This type of innovation and improvement is normal practice of the IPAA phase, a process which includes design reviews to identify where improvements can be made, construction planning, and opportunities to improve value for money.
7. The existing traffic lights on State Highway 2 (SH2) at Melling are congested and unsafe. With around 40,000 journeys through this intersection every day, the new interchange is needed to make it more productive, resilient, accessible, and safer for everyone.
8. The reason for this announcement is to engage with consent-related stakeholders as part of the IPAA phase, and to show the public the progress we've made over the past year.
9. This will be the first major update since the delivery model announcement on 28 March 2024 by the programme partners (NZTA, Greater Wellington Regional Council and Hutt City Council).

Updated design

10. The original consented design (a diamond interchange) was reviewed due to feasibility and safety concerns, and to help address affordability issues.

11. As illustrated in **Appendix 1**, the revised concept design includes:
 - a grade separated interchange (removing the existing traffic lights and separating through traffic on the state highway/local roads)
 - optimised walking and cycling paths (including removal of paths on northern side of bridge and widening paths on the southern side (northern side now has 1.5 metre shoulder)).
 - better connections for Tirohanga and Harbour View Road residents and businesses by connecting these local roads to the interchange
 - better access to public transport through the relocation of the Melling train station/park and ride facilities.
12. Key benefits of the revised concept design includes:
 - safer and more efficient travel for all users, especially at peak times
 - enables higher volumes of traffic to safely flow through the interchange
 - reduced number and length of pedestrian crossings at the interchange when travelling between Lower Hutt and the Western Hills, improving safety, and helping traffic move along more efficiently
 - less environmental impacts by reducing the amount of vegetation clearance and slope cuts in the Western Hills, alongside fewer retaining walls and a smaller bridge footprint.
13. Funding for this project is capped as part of the wider \$6.54 billion Crown investment for the Roads of National Significance and Roads of Regional Significance. Completion of the IPAA phase includes finalising the project's concept design, construction planning, and establishing the project's estimated final cost to complete. The cost estimate process includes market testing and parallel independent estimation and reconciliation. NZTA will continue to work with the Alliance on this.
14. It is expected that the IPAA will continue until later this year when designs and costs are finalised, and the Project Alliance Agreement is signed, with construction scheduled to begin in early 2025.

Next steps

15. Prior to notifying the public, NZTA is required to engage with consent related/key stakeholders (e.g. Project Design Liaison Group, etc.) and provide them with an opportunity to provide feedback on the design. This engagement is scheduled for evening of 6 June 2024 and will be followed up with a more robust discussion after the announcement.
16. Hutt City Council will be briefed on 5 June 2024, while Greater Wellington Regional Council will be briefed on 6 June 2024.

17. Enclosed is a draft Press Release which we prepared for you, should you wish to make an announcement of the revised design on the afternoon of 6 June 2024. This will be followed by a variety of communications activities to the public from NZTA and the Alliance.

It is recommended that you:

1. **Note** the content of this briefing
2. **Advise** if you wish to announce the revised design on 6 June 2024

Yes / No



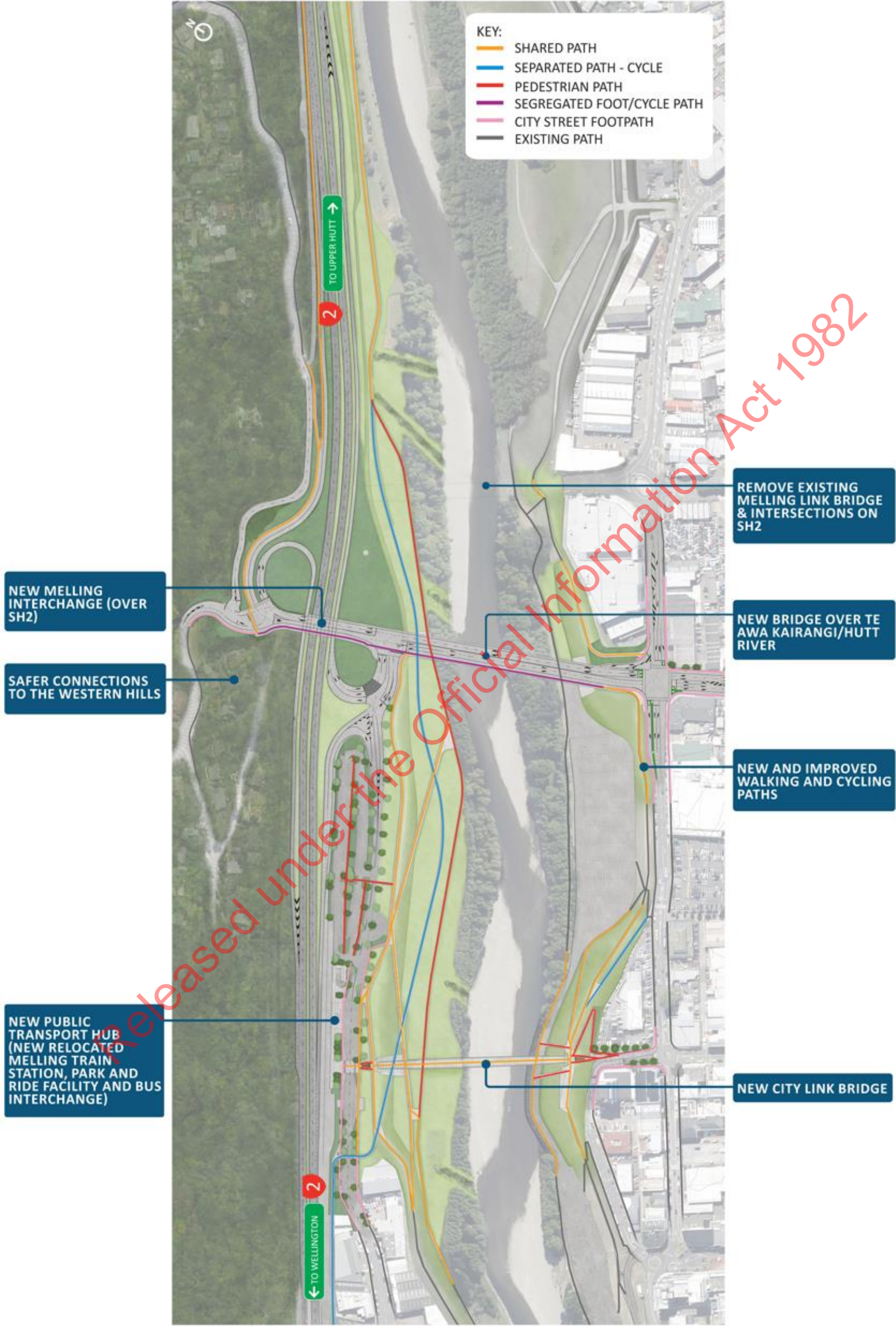
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Brett Gliddon

Group General Manager, Transport Services

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Hon Simeon Brown, Minister of Transport

Date: 2024

Appendix 1 – Revised concept design illustration



**Hon Simeon Brown
Minister of Transport**



12 June 2024

Revised design for Melling Interchange released

Transport Minister Simeon Brown has welcomed the release of a revised concept design for the State Highway 2 (SH2) Melling Interchange, a result of efforts by the NZ Transport Agency (NZTA), AECOM, and Fletcher Construction to deliver an efficient and cost-effective solution for this critical project in Lower Hutt.

“Unlocking economic growth and productivity are key priorities for investment in the land transport system and part of our plan to rebuild the economy. Around 40,000 vehicles travel north and south of Melling every day, and it’s crucial we deliver the best design for the new interchange, Minister Brown says.

As a Crown funded project, the SH2 Melling Interchange has been listed as a Road of Regional Significance and is included as a priority for delivery in the draft Government Policy Statement on Land Transport 2024.

“I’m pleased to see progress has been made on delivering a cost-effective design solution that prioritises safety and efficiency for all users. This is one of the benefits of bringing private sector partners to the table through the Alliance delivery model.

“The revised concept design represents an innovative approach to improve connectivity between SH2, local roads, and public transport opportunities, in a narrow corridor, with an overall smaller project footprint.

“Local communities are keen for this work to begin as soon as possible. I look forward to the final designs being completed and NZTA concluding commercial negotiations with the delivery alliance later this year so construction can begin.

You can find out more about the SH2 Melling Transport Improvements by visiting the project website here: www.nzta.govt.nz/projects/melling-transport-improvements

Media contact: Ben Craven – 022 079 2788



An artist's impression of the revised design for Melling interchange.

Notes to Editor:

- The SH2 Melling Transport Improvements are being delivered by the NZ Transport Agency (NZTA), together with Te Wai Takamori o Te Awa Kairangi Alliance (AECOM and Fletcher Construction) delivering the project.
- The project is part of the wider Te Wai Takamori o Te Awa Kairangi programme, alongside flood protection upgrades and city centre infrastructure delivered by local and regional council.
- Over the past year, NZTA in conjunction with the Alliance, has been reviewing the original design as part of the Interim Project Alliance Agreement (IPAA).
- This type of innovation and improvement is normal practice of the IPAA phase, a process which includes design reviews to identify where improvements can be made, construction planning, and opportunities to improve value for money.
- Completion of the IPAA phase, including market testing of cost estimates, is needed to establish what the project's estimated final cost to complete will be.
- It is expected that the IPAA will continue until later this year when designs and costs are finalised, and the Project Alliance Agreement is signed. Construction will then begin.

The revised concept design includes:

- A grade separated interchange (removing the existing traffic lights and separating through traffic on the state highway/local roads)
- Optimised walking and cycling paths (including removal of paths on northern side of bridge and widening paths on the southern side (northern side now has 1.5 metre shoulder)).
- Better connections for Tirohanga and Harbour View Road residents and businesses by connecting these local roads to the interchange
- Better access to public transport through the relocation of the Melling train station/park and ride facilities

Comparisons between the revised design and the previous concept design include:

- Safer and more efficient travel for all users, especially at peak times.
- Enables higher volumes of traffic to safely flow through the interchange.
- Reduced number and length of pedestrian crossings at the interchange when travelling between Te Awa Kairangi ki Tai / Lower Hutt and the Western Hills, improving safety, and helping traffic move along more efficiently. The shared path on the bridge is also wider, further improving the safety of pedestrians and cyclists.
- Less environmental impacts by reducing the amount of vegetation clearance and slope cuts in the Western Hills, alongside fewer retaining walls and a smaller bridge footprint.

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