

MINISTERIAL BRIEFING NOTE

Subject	Auckland Harbour Bridge shared path – Interim findings presentation
Date	6 August 2021
Briefing number	BRI-2265

Contact(s) for telephone discussion (if required)				
Name	Position	Direct line	Cell phone	1 st contact
Brett Gliddon	General Manager, Transport Services		s9(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- Withdrawn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

6 August 2021

Hon Michael Wood - Minister of Transport

AUCKLAND HARBOUR BRIDGE SHARED PATH – INTERIM FINDINGS PRESENTATION

Purpose

1. In early-2021, you asked Waka Kotahi to investigate options to accommodate a shared path on the Auckland Harbour Bridge as interim solution for walking and cycling across the Waitemata Harbour until the Northern Pathway is complete.
2. The purpose of this briefing is to formally provide you with a copy of the presentation given to you verbally by Brett Gliddon, General Manager, Transport Services on 12 July 2021.
3. This briefing also sets out the challenges identified in the presentation and confirms the decision-making process that will be followed for selecting an interim solution.

Background

4. As part of the NZ Upgrade Programme, the Government has confirmed funding of \$785m to deliver the Northern Pathway Westhaven to Akoranga project.
5. The preferred option for the Waitemata Harbour crossing section is a standalone bridge alongside the existing Auckland Harbour Bridge (AHB). The soonest construction is expected to be able to begin is mid-2022, subject to the approval process, and will take four to five years to construct.
6. Waka Kotahi is now working hard to deliver the Northern Pathway, with a large team engaged on design, consenting and construction planning.
7. In the meantime, Waka Kotahi has been asked to investigate an interim solution to provide a suitable walking and cycling connection across the Waitemata Harbour until such time that the Northern Pathway is completed. This includes the use of buses or ferries, as well as the reallocation of lanes on the AHB to provide a shared path for walking and cycling.
8. The attached presentation sets out a range of options explored for repurposing lanes on the AHB, including an assessment of the outcomes, challenges and costs for each option.
9. The objective of the investigation to date was to consider the health and safety implications for people on the bridge and our staff, what could be accommodated without impacting the overall structural integrity, operational considerations and implications across the wider transport network.
10. Waka Kotahi is continuing work to consider other interim options, including dedicated bus and ferry services.

Key findings

11. As detailed in the Interim Findings presentation, a combination of single lane and two-lane configurations, as well as short term (weekend) and permanent options to accommodate a shared path on the Auckland Harbour Bridge have been considered as part of the investigations.
12. While it is not impossible to implement either a short-term or permanent walking and cycling solution, we have identified a number of very significant challenges, including:
 - Structural implications
 - Width and gradient challenges (one lane options)
 - Health and safety concerns
 - Significant network implications
 - Restrictions for large vehicles
 - Operational challenges
13. To ensure the safety of all users, provision of a shared path on the clip-on structure would require barriers to be installed to separate general traffic from shared path users. The weight of such a barrier would require limitations to be imposed on heavy vehicle use of the clip-on lanes in a one lane configuration.
14. Due to structural limitations preventing the fixing of any structures to the bridge deck, a barrier system similar to the current movable lane barrier would be required. The procurement and installation of a suitable barrier system would take time and make a summer trial a challenge to achieve.
15. One lane options also have challenges on health and safety for users due to width and gradient, and also have wider network implications and operational challenges.
16. Due to demand on bridge capacity, two-lane options have significant impacts on the wider transport network, unless access to the shared path was limited to periods of low demand (i.e. Sunday mornings).
17. Historically, Waka Kotahi has allowed access to the bridge for special events, such as the Auckland Marathon. These events are accommodated during periods of low demand, typically before 10am on Sunday, and enable measures to be put in place to ensure the safety of users, as well as managing the impact across the wider network.
18. We consider that such events could continue to be accommodated for walkers and cyclists. However, as noted above, this is far from delivering the level of service being sought by delivering an interim solution.

Decision making

19. While use of lanes on the Auckland Harbour Bridge is an operational matter and decisions ultimately fall with the Waka Kotahi Board, Waka Kotahi recognises the significance of this and

the upcoming decisions for the Government and community. We will therefore wait for your feedback before a decision is sought from the Board.

20. Waka Kotahi is committed to working closely with you to identify and deliver a suitable interim solution.

It is recommended that you:

1. **Note** the contents of this briefing.

Noted



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Brett Gliddon

General Manager, Transport Services

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Hon Michael Wood, Minister of Transport

Date: 2021