

17 October 2018

Andrew Bayly MP
Member of Parliament for Hunua
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Dear Mr Bayly

Thank you for your e-mail of 23 August 2018 containing a number of follow-up questions that arose from the NZ Transport Agency's (Transport Agency) community information evening on the Southern Corridor Improvements project.

Your questions, and the Transport Agency's responses follow:

- 1. It was not clear what had actually contributed to the one-year delay. It is obvious you had to redesign the Takanini Interchange but, since it will be completed August 2019, it is clearly not one of the "critical path" elements. We also understand it was decided to rebuild the Pahurehure Inlet bridge and we presume this will be the final element completed in December 2019. The question is then: Why was NZTA not able to bring forward other works around that Pahurehure area to meet the desired timeframes?*

The one-year delay was due to the two factors you have outlined: the re-design of the Takanini Interchange and the replacement of the sub-standard bridges over the Pahurehure Inlet. The Transport Agency remains committed to delivering this project as quickly as possible, with the next interim improvement being the delivery of the new northbound on-ramp as a 'lane gain' by January 2019.

The 'critical path' path will then remain through the Takanini Interchange, with work in the median continuing from January 2019. The remainder of the motorway widening to 3 lanes will be complete by September 2019. Subsequent milling and re-surfacing, and final commissioning will be completed, with the section (and full project) opened to traffic by the end of 2019.

We continuously review opportunities to ensure such activities are completed within the shortest possible timeframe, whilst maintaining two lanes of motorway traffic in both directions.

- 2. We understand the Takanini Interchange will be completed by August 2019. Can you confirm that all the other connecting roadworks (including sound walls) will be in place at that time and that all the roadworks north of the Pahurehure construction site will be free of traffic cones?*

Three lanes in each direction through the Takanini Interchange are planned to be constructed by September 2019. All project noise walls will be completed ahead of this date.

To ensure the safety of motorists and construction workers, temporary traffic management barriers, including traffic cones, will remain in place until the final re-surfacing, line marking and landscaping work is completed at the end of 2019.

3. *Questions were raised on Tuesday night about the triple-laning of the southbound section from Pahurehure Inlet to Papakura. Can you confirm the entire route will be triple-laned to the Papakura off-ramp?*

An additional third southbound lane will be added between Pahurehure Inlet and the Papakura Interchange off-ramp.

4. *Many people cannot understand why work has not already started on triple-laning that section. When will work be started and completed?*

This area of work has already started. The old grassed median has already been removed and pavement works completed between the Pahurehure inlet and Pescara Point. This work enabled our team to switch traffic from the northbound to southbound carriageway in order to deconstruct the existing northbound Pahurehure Inlet bridge. Southbound widening work around the Pahurehure Inlet is also well advanced, with pavement widening including kerbs and drainage channel already complete between Longford and Pescara Point.

Following completion of the replacement southbound Pahurehure Inlet structure, 3 lanes southbound from Pahurehure Inlet to Papakura Interchange is forecast to be open mid-end 2019.

5. *We understand you encountered problems with "soft earth" and a 140-year-old tree in the section from Manukau to Hill Rd, and that a lot of work has gone into completing an underground culvert. But again, people are wondering why the fourth lane south of that culvert has not already been completed. When will that lane be finished?*

The additional fourth southbound lane between Manukau and Hill Road will be completed and open to traffic in the 3rd quarter of 2019. The delay is due primarily to the two factors you have outlined, which obstructed completion of carriageway drainage works and hence subsequent widening activities.

6. *The sequential nature of the workflow crops up continually in our discussions with our constituents. Is NZTA considering any mitigating strategies to co-ordinate the various works to ensure the total project is completed earlier than December 2019? One area of particular interest to Judith and myself is NZTA's inability to exercise the compulsory acquisition of the Stevenson land. Andy Spittal mentioned that compulsorily acquiring land from an unwilling seller could take up to two and a half years. That's a matter we would like to discuss in more detail with you as it cuts to the core of the RMA.*

The project team is committed to completing the works as safely and quickly as possible, regularly reviewing and challenging work methodology and resource levels. The initial proposed design for the Takanini northbound on-ramp had to be updated from a diamond configuration to a loop. The loop design will take longer to construct as work is being undertaken within a more constrained site and additional structures are required.

7. *One person at Tuesday's meeting asked whether NZTA has undertaken any analysis of the economic cost of the delay to this project. If it has done such an analysis, how has it been factored into the decision to allow this project to be delayed an extra 12 months?*

The Transport Agency has not calculated the economic cost of the delays to the Southern Corridor Improvements project. However, the Transport Agency is working in the most efficient way to reduce adverse effects as much as possible.

During the planning stages, short term congestion effects during construction were identified and outlined in the consenting documentation. These negative effects were outweighed by the need to increase capacity on the Southern Motorway.

We are working hard to ensure the project is completed in a timely manner, and that quality and safety standards are met. This project is complex and has strict consent requirements which mean that simply increasing resources on the project or changing the project's phasing will not lead to an earlier completion date. The Transport Agency is constantly monitoring and assessing the project to ensure rapid progress is maintained.

I trust this response has been of assistance. If you have any further questions please feel free to contact me via email to Steve.Mutton@nzta.govt.nz or on (021) 893 185.

Yours sincerely



Steve Mutton

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