

19 September 2014

Tim Doyle
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Dear Tim

Request made under the Official Information Act 1982

Thank you for your email of 25 August 2014 requesting information about the planned upgrade of State Highway 1 between Aotea Quay and Ngauranga.

Your questions and our responses are provided below.

1. The project is stated to have a cost of \$50 million. What is the benefit-cost ratio of this project?

Work to upgrade the Aotea Quay to Ngauranga section of State Highway 1 will be carried out in stages. This is to ensure the benefits are delivered as quickly as possible.

The next phase of the project is broken into two stages:

- improvements to the active traffic management system, which has a benefit-cost ratio of 1.9
- four-laning of the northbound section, which has a benefit-cost ratio of 2.5.

2. If it is NZ's "first managed motorway" why isn't installing a moveable median barrier considered as a method of maximising the availability of the road, i.e. match the required number of lanes to the direction of flow, rather than widening it?

A moveable median barrier was considered but rejected because investigations determined that a permanent fourth lane will be safer and more efficient to operate.

3. NZTA's Rod James is quoted in the article as saying "the project would loosen up evening rush-hour congestion heading north and take traffic off Hutt Rd, freeing up space for faster, more reliable bus journeys out of Wellington" but the NZTA website says that the bus lane is the responsibility of Wellington City Council.

Northbound buses would get benefit from a reduction in traffic going to Ngaio Gorge along Hutt Road, however there is seldom congestion on Hutt Road north of Ngaio Gorge.

How does the project reduce the traffic going north to Ngaio Gorge?

The motorway will be increased from three to four lanes between the Aotea Quay on-ramp to and the point where it separates into State Highway 1 and State Highway 2. This will reduce congestion on this section of the motorway, making it more efficient and attractive for motorists. In turn this will reduce congestion on Hutt Road and Thorndon Quay making bus journeys out of Wellington faster with more reliable travel times.

Why is this project not a busway project in the first instance?

The Aotea Quay to Ngauranga upgrade is focused on moving people and freight more safely and efficiently. The Greater Wellington Regional Council is considering a bus priority lane along Hutt Road. Most bus routes use Hutt Road rather than the motorway.

4. **Mr. James goes on to say in the article. .."It's another step towards creating a fully integrated, multi-modal transport network for the Wellington region" this seems contradictory. Giving the public more traffic lanes so they drive more seems to marginalise modes other than road. How is the project going to create a fully-integrated, multi-modal transport network for Wellington?**

Four-laning the motorway between Aotea Quay and Ngauranga will increase its capacity making it more attractive than Hutt Road to motorists. Fewer vehicles on Hutt Road will make it more attractive for other modes such as buses and cycling.

5. **The article implies a time saving of up to 2.5 minutes will be achieved, based on another widening project. What is the variance of peak journeys travelling to and from the CBD along the Wellington Urban Motorway?**

We use Bluetooth technology to monitor travel time along this section of the motorway. We use this information to monitor travel times over a range of conditions. To ensure consistency when comparing travel times we measure traffic at the same time of the day and not during particular events such as school holidays.

The table below shows the average travel times between Hobson Street and Ngauranga Gorge during March 2014.

	Average travel times during March 2014 (minutes)		Slowest peak times at 85th percentile (minutes)	
	Southbound	Northbound	Southbound	Northbound
AM peak (7am—9am)	8.3	3.8	12.8	4
PM peak (4pm—6pm)	3.8	4.8	3.9	7.5

6. During the time of school holidays, the commuting time seems to plummet, causing a saving of up to 20 minutes on a ~35 minute commute. Has a demand-side management project been scoped that could be undertaken, and what are the likely benefits?

No specific demand-side management study has been undertaken. However, the Ngauranga Triangle Strategy Study investigated high-occupancy vehicles and bus lanes. A link to this study is provided below:

www.nzta.govt.nz/resources/ngauranga-triangle-strategy-study/ngauranga-triangle-strategy-study.html

If you would like to discuss this reply with the NZ Transport Agency, please contact Glen Prince, Acting Principal Project Manager, by email to glen.prince@nzta.govt.nz.

Yours sincerely



Rod James
Highway Manager Wellington
For Chief Executive