

15 January 2024



CityRailLink.co.nz    

Richard Grant

Via FYI website: fyi-request-25081-3f114861@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Mr Grant

City Rail Link Ltd (CRL Ltd) – Official Information Act request

We refer to your Official Information Act 1982 (“OIA”) request dated 8 December 2023 OIA-107 for the following:

- *Please could you provide any information you have regarding the cost of the above-ground infrastructure at the stations you are constructing, including the that it occupies.*
- *Please could you also provide any information you have explaining the reasons for creating this above-ground infrastructure, in light of the cost of its construction and the land that it occupies.*
- *Finally, please could you provide any information you have explaining the difference in service standards that this above-ground infrastructure will offer passengers, compared with the alternative approach used my most underground railways in major cities (such as London or New York), where most stations have zero above-ground infrastructure and land occupation, aside from a staircase leading down from the street.*

Response

Unfortunately, the information you have requested regarding the cost of the above-ground infrastructure at the stations CRL Ltd is delivering does not exist. The cost of the above-ground infrastructure cannot be separated from the cost of underground works as the project is split into contract packages that combine both. Accordingly, your request is refused pursuant to section 18(e) of the OIA.

Regarding your requests for any information related to the reasoning behind the creation of the above-ground infrastructure and difference in service standards it will offer passengers, CRL Ltd was established in 2017 to deliver a project that had already been designed and consented by Auckland

Transport. Therefore, any decisions regarding above-ground infrastructure were made before CRL Ltd came into existence.

To assist you with your request for information, CRL Ltd researched several relevant project documents and contacted several technical experts who were involved in the development of the project's business case prior to the establishment of CRL Ltd Ltd. In doing so, we have been unable to locate a specific document that provides an assessment of alternative options or cost-benefit analysis that specifically relates to 'above-ground' versus 'below-ground' station infrastructure. We are therefore refusing your request under section 18(e) of the OIA because we cannot locate the requested information despite reasonable efforts.

However, the technical experts we contacted have provided the following information to answer your information request – which you may find helpful.

The number of stations, station locations, and station 'forms' (i.e., the stations being predominantly 'above-ground') were the subject of an evolving options evaluation and concept design process leading up to the Notice of Requirement process that commenced in 2012 for establishing the CRL designations.

A wide range of factors have contributed to the final form of the stations including accommodation of critical systems for fire and life safety, urban design, and mobility access to achieve modern standards. As per your information request, many overseas underground railways were established a long time ago, and therefore inconsistent with modern station design and operations.

In addition to providing for passenger entry/exit, the stations need to accommodate multiple systems and equipment that are critical to the operation of the railway and fire safety. Not all of this can be accommodated below-ground.

For example, most of the above-ground southern entrance building at Te Waihorotiu Station accommodates ventilation, power distribution, communications and other equipment. To locate all this underground would have required significantly more land acquisition, greater cost, and add complexity to access for future and ongoing maintenance.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision.
Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or
freephone 0800 802 602.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Emma Kurtovich', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Emma Kurtovich
General Counsel and Company Secretary
City Rail Link Limited