

07 April 2014

Chris Montgomerie
Kilbirnie School
72 Hamilton Road
Hataitai
PO Box 14543

Dear Chris

Mt Victoria Tunnel Duplication - Road of National Significance

Thank you for your letter dated 25 February 2014 regarding Kilbirnie School's concerns about the Mount Victoria Tunnel Duplication Project (the Project), and the questions following the community meeting in November 2013. Please accept my apologies for the delay in replying, and please find the answers to the questions attached. It is important to note the answers are based on the design before the incorporation of bus rapid transit (BRT) through the Project Area, the inclusion of which may result in some changes.

We value the input you have had into this process to date. I note you are concerned about the effects on the local roading network surrounding Kilbirnie School and the ability for school children to cross Wellington Road safely and efficiently. We can confirm that we are looking into these concerns as part of the on-going design process for the Project.

For your information, we are currently facing a 4-5 month delay in lodging the RMA applications for the Project and are now looking tentatively at September / October for public consultation and later in the year for lodgement. The delay to the Project is a result of the following:

- the 3-month extension granted to the Basin Bridge decision making timeframe and the need to avoid consultation during this time;
- to allow time to incorporate the outcomes of the Basin Bridge decision into the Project if necessary;
- the need to carry out further design and modelling to integrate BRT into the Project as per the outcome on the Public Transport Spine Study. This may have design implications for how we address your concerns; and
- the September general election.

We are continuing to advance aspects of the design and assessment work unaffected by the points above, including the design and layout of the areas immediately adjacent to the Western and Eastern Tunnel Portals. The Project team are currently working on technical assessments to fully determine the effects in these areas.

We will be in touch when we have a proposed design incorporating BRT, however, if you would like to discuss this letter or have any further comments or questions at this stage please contact Susan Rawles in the first instance on 04 910 8199 or email susan.rawles@nzta.govt.nz. You can also contact me on 04 910 9978, 027 222 9751 or email stewart.mckenzie@nzta.govt.nz. We value your on-going input and would like to continue working with you on how we can best mitigate the effects of the Project

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Stewart McKenzie". The signature is written in a cursive style with a period at the end.

Stewart McKenzie

Project Manager

Mt Victoria Tunnel Duplication Project

NZ Transport Agency

Response to questions asked at community meeting at Kilbirnie School on Monday 25 November 2013:

Will the pedestrian overbridge to Hataitai Park be widened as well as replaced?

Yes, although the dimensions of the pedestrian overbridge are still to be determined, it will be wider than the existing bridge.

In response to the noise fences – have they given thought to absorbing the sound, rather than sending it up? Overtoun Terrace already gets a lot of noise from the roads below.

The design of the cut slopes around the Eastern Portal and proposed road surface on Ruahine Street will assist in mitigating the noise effects on Overtoun Terrace. Overall, these measures in combination with proposed noise walls along Ruahine Street and Wellington Road will mitigate the noise effects of the Project so that noise is within the acceptable threshold, as required by the NZ standard for road noise (NZS 6806:2010).

How will you deal with cars who will zip down Hamilton Road to avoid Moxham Ave? People going to Kilbirnie will avoid lights and go down Hamilton Road, which is essentially one way.

NZTA consider that Moxham Ave will remain the more attractive route due to the favourable phasing of the traffic lights and the flat, straight alignment of Moxham Ave compared to the longer, windier and hillier Hamilton Road. Further investigation of the potential for 'rat running' will be undertaken however.

What do protected crossings mean?

It means signalised pedestrian crossings at intersections that are fully protected from all traffic turning movements ie. there is no conflict between pedestrians and turning traffic, as typically experienced at most signalised intersections. This is an improvement on the existing situation at the intersection of Kilbirnie Crescent/Wellington Road/Hamilton Road.

Have you considered a pedestrian overbridge at Wellington Road? What about an underpass?

Evidence suggests that where there is a safe at-grade (street level) crossing option available (for example, a protected signalised pedestrian crossing), this is favoured by pedestrians over use of a grade separated facility such as an overbridge which takes more time to cross. There is also a large additional land take required to construct an overbridge, associated with the need to construct access ramps and steps. There are also potential visual effects associated with a large overhead structure such as an overbridge.

Underpasses potentially encourage anti-social behaviour and generate issues around perceived crime, and are not favoured from a crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED) perspective. At-grade crossings are the preferred approach from a CPTED perspective.

Can the intersection of Wellington Road and Ruahine Road be cut out? Or can an overbridge go in taking cars to the airport?

Grade separated options involving on and off ramps and overbridges were considered and documented as part of the scoping phase of the Project for the intersection of Wellington Road and Ruahine Street. These were disregarded as a result of the large additional land take into the town belt and residential areas required to accommodate them and the major potential adverse visual, landscape, noise and urban design effects associated with them.

Public transport spine study – what implications will there be for buses on Moxham Ave?

Bus services on Moxham Ave may change due to the implementation of the PTSS, or more specifically, implementation of the recommended option from the PTSS - bus rapid transit (BRT). The configuration

and routing of any BRT scheme is yet to be determined, with further modelling and investigation to be carried out by Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC), NZTA and Wellington City Council (WCC) to come up with a preferred option which will be consulted on. Irrespective of BRT there will still be local bus services servicing Hataitai via Moxham Ave.

How much time will all this save motorists?

For the current design, in the morning peak period, it reduces travel times in the westbound direction (towards the CBD) by around 5.0 minutes and in the eastbound direction (towards the airport) by around 3.6 minutes. In the evening peak period, it reduces travel times in the westbound direction by around 2.2 minutes and in the eastbound direction, by around 2.8 minutes. In the inter-peak periods, there are reduced improvements varying between 20 seconds and 40 seconds. Route security and trip reliability would also be enhanced by the Project.

Are there any speed limit changes?

Yes, we are currently proposing to drop the speed limit along Ruahine Street from 70km/h to 50km/h to maintain a consistent speed through the urban environment and improve safety. This will be consulted on further.

Concern about a loss of community at a local level.

To address concerns around possible loss of community and community related effects the Project will deliver the following:

- a new and greatly improved segregated shared path for pedestrians and cyclists through the new duplicate tunnel;
- a dedicated shared path along Ruahine St and Wellington Road. When combined with the shared path through the new duplicate tunnel this will provide a vastly improved route for pedestrians and cyclists between the Eastern Suburbs and the City;
- New protected signalised pedestrian crossings at the intersections of Ruahine St and Goa St, Moxham Ave and Goa St, Moxham Ave and Taurima St and Ruahine St and Wellington Rd, all of which will improve pedestrian access between Hataitai, Kilbirnie and into the Townbelt and Hataitai Park;
- a new widened pedestrian overbridge from Hataitai Village to Hataitai Park; and
- new open spaces adjacent to Wellington Rd and the Western Portal in Mt Victoria. The new open space on Wellington Rd will also provide a green link from Kilbirnie Park to the Townbelt.

NZTA believe the above improvements will be beneficial to the local community and will mitigate concerns around community effects including potential severance effects.

Concern about higher benzene levels when more cars are waiting at more lights.

The NZTA has carried out air quality monitoring and will continue to do so when the Project (if consented) is built to ensure air quality remains well within acceptable levels. Generally, air quality in Wellington is very good because the wind disperses contaminants quickly. However, if the monitoring shows that there are adverse effects on air quality associated with the Project measures will be taken to remedy and mitigate these effects.

Did you consider an underpass at Goa/Ruahine St?

As discussed above with respect to the Kilbirnie Crescent/Wellington Road/Hamilton Road intersection, underpasses potentially encourage anti-social behaviour and generate issues around perceived crime, and are not favoured from a crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED) perspective. At-grade crossings are the preferred approach.

What will happen to the pedestrian crossing outside school on Moxham Ave?

This will be maintained and potentially upgraded (subject to the outcome of more detailed investigations of Moxham Ave).

What is the timing of the lights on Moxham Ave?

The phasing of the traffic lights on Moxham Ave is a matter of detail that has not been finalised. However, the signals are proposed to be optimised to give traffic exiting Hataitai a long green phase turning into Goa St from Moxham Ave, then integrated with a green phase from Goa St onto Ruahine St. It is anticipated that traffic on Moxham Ave exiting Hataitai will only wait one signal phase before turning right onto Goa St.

What assumptions have you made on your models? Is the data publically available?

High level Regional and City wide transport modelling information is available from GWRC. Detailed traffic modelling information will be made available with the traffic and transport report, prepared to support the Resource Management Act (RMA) applications for the Project. All technical reports will be publically available when they are finalised and the RMA applications are lodged with the EPA.

How are children on bikes going to be able to cross across Wellington Road to get to the sports grounds beyond?

Children will be able to cross by walking their bikes using the signalised pedestrian phase to cross or if using the road they will be able to ride across on the green phase at the intersection.

On the shared path, how will it be delineated for cyclists, pedestrians, and in some cases, cars too?

This is a matter for detailed design and is yet to be finalised. And will be subject to consultation. The NZTA are currently working on a design for the shared path including the possibility of delineating the section provided for vehicle access. There are many examples from New Zealand and overseas however of shared paths where no delineation for different users has been used and a safe outcome has been achieved for all users.

What are you doing to stop the accidents that are happening now? Do we have to wait until this big project gets through to get lights at Wellington/Ruahine?

The Project provides the only real opportunity to comprehensively address the existing safety issues at the intersection of Wellington Rd and Ruahine St and other intersections throughout the Project Area.

What happens to spoil from the tunnel?

All spoil not able to be reused in construction of the new tunnel or for road widening purposes is proposed to be transported to the Southern Landfill on Happy Valley Road. Other potential locations for spoil will be kept open however for further investigation.

How wide will footpaths be?

The shared walking and cycling path will generally be between 3m and 4m depending on the function of the path – where it is proposed to accommodate vehicle access it will be up to 4.5m. All other footpaths will be standard width footpaths with a minimum width of 2m.

When will people be able to send in written submissions?

Formal written submissions can be made when the RMA applications are lodged with the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) and the application is publically notified. The NZTA previously advised that the applications would be lodged in July 2014, however as a result of the extended timeframe for the Basin Bridge decision making process (a final decision is now due in August), and the need to carry out further investigations into BRT, lodgement is likely to be delayed until later this year. There will be the

opportunity to make informal written submissions on the Project when consultation is undertaken on a preferred option later this year.

Does the AEE include the social effects as well?

Yes. A social impact assessment (SIA) (also referred to as an assessment of social effects) is being prepared and will form part of the overall Assessment of Environmental Effects (AEE) that will support the RMA applications. It will also help inform the design and decision making process, and will identify ways to avoid and mitigate the social effects of the Project.

Are the latest details that you have given us on the website? When will it be up?

We try to update the webpage as often as possible, and the website is usually updated with information every time there is a new public newsletter or consultation event. A newsletter confirming the delay in lodgement of the RMA applications and public consultation will be distributed in April and will also be on the website.

Can you provide a cross section of the height of Ruahine Road [Street]?

Given the need to carry out further investigation work to incorporate BRT into the Project, the final footprint and configuration of Ruahine Street is currently unknown. As such it is not possible to provide this information. When a preferred option is identified detailed cross sections will be developed and provided.

What will the speed limits be from the basin to Cobham Drive?

The speed limit is proposed to be 50km/h although this will be subject to further investigation and consultation.

Will there be a way for cyclists to get from the tunnel to the overbridge to Hataitai Park?

The overbridge will be for pedestrians only, however people will be able to walk bikes over the overbridge as it will have ramp access. Alternatively, cyclists exiting the tunnel will be able to cross Taurima Street, head along the shared path to Goa Street and cross at the signalised pedestrian crossing into Hataitai Park.

More discussion about the cycle way. A comment that it will be nice, but on a practical level, it won't be used by cyclists into the city as the gradient is still too steep – they will still use Moxham Ave.

The gradient along Ruahine Street is being reduced as part of the Project which will make cycling easier than it is currently. The shared path will be between 3 and 4 meters wide, which is considerably wider than the space typically allocated to cyclists in cycle lanes on roads. The shared path will also be physically segregated from the traffic lanes, meaning that it will be safer than cycling on Moxham Ave where there is no dedicated space for cyclists. Overall we consider that the dedicated shared path through the Duplicate Mt Victoria Tunnel and along Ruahine Street and Wellington Road will encourage cyclists to use this route.