



Hon Simon Bridges
Minister of Transport
Parliament Buildings
Wellington

19th July 2015

Via email, cc Hon Nikki Kaye

Dear Minister

Re: Additional Waitemata Harbour Crossing Route Protection

Our organisation has become aware that the NZTA has invited Registrations of Interest for professional services in relation to route protection for the Additional Waitemata Harbour Crossing.¹ The scope of the route protection includes identifying the location of ventilation stacks for vehicle exhaust and the preparation of new Notices of Requirement for land on either side of the crossing itself. From presentation documents to interested parties, it appears that the NZTA has already determined that the crossing should contain three lanes of general traffic each way.²

It is our firm view that provision of six lanes of extra capacity for single occupant cars across the Waitemata Harbour is a poor solution which will only lead to considerable congestion at the constraints of Esmonde Road and the Central Motorway Junction. This will be expensive to resolve. The crossing alone has been costed at about \$4bn, with the cost of the additional work required to mitigate bottlenecks either side of the crossing and in Auckland's CBD has yet to be determined.

The route protection work currently being tendered is likely to be in the tens of millions of dollars.

You will be aware that legally³ the NZTA, in approving a proposed activity or combination of activities, must be satisfied that:

- The activity is efficient and effective; and
- The activity has been assessed against other and transport options and alternatives; and
- Relevant consultation requirements have been complied with

It is clear to us that these three facets of the law have not been complied with before the AWHC route protection work has been tendered:

- No cost benefit analysis has been carried out that is compliant with the NZTA's own Economic Evaluation Manual. The full cost of connecting six additional lanes of traffic to the existing motorway network has not been assessed and the NZTA's solution has not been proven to be either efficient or effective.

¹ <https://www.gets.govt.nz/NZTAHNO/ExternalTenderDetails.htm?id=13074954>

² <http://transportblog.co.nz/2015/06/20/awhc-route-protection-moving-ahead/>

³ Land Transport Management Act 2003



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- A rail only crossing, which would be substantially cheaper due to smaller diameter tunnels and have greater capacity than the NZTA's single occupant car based solution, has not been evaluated by the NZTA. Neither have any other transport options and alternatives.
- The NZTA have not consulted the public of Auckland about the transport project they wish to designate for, nor have they given any indication as to how the project will be funded or the amount of any toll that might be required.

For these reasons we request that the route protection tender process currently under way be placed on hold until the Land Transport Management Act can be complied with.

We ask you to intervene as a matter of urgency, given that the target award date for the legal service contract is the 8th August, while the planning and engineering work is targeted for the 18th September 2015.

There is no point in protecting a route for a mode of transport that may prove to be of little value in the future.

In our view there is no pressing urgency for the Additional Waitemata Harbour Crossing to support single occupant cars. The new multi-billion dollar Western Ring Route is designed to route traffic away from the Harbour Bridge, and as you are aware this is yet to open.

The purpose of this intervention is to ensure that we deliver a best value long term solution for Auckland – one that all Aucklanders can be sure has been evaluated properly and will serve them well into the future.

I look forward to a reply from you at your earliest convenience.

Yours sincerely

Cameron Pitches

Convenor

The Campaign for Better Transport

cam@bettertransport.org.nz