

19 September 2014

Michael Allan  
Journalist  
Radio New Zealand  
[Michael.Allan@radionz.co.nz](mailto:Michael.Allan@radionz.co.nz)

Dear Michael

**Official Information Act Request: Basin Bridge project**

Thank you for your letter of 8 August 2014 requesting information under the Official Information Act 1982. You requested detail on the expenditure by the NZ Transport Agency on the Basin 'Reserve Flyover to as far as it got (the Board of Inquiry)' and you also requested a breakdown of that figure, as follows:

1. *The budget for the flyover was \$90 million. What is the budget for the planning and developing stages of the proposal?*

I take your reference to a '\$90 million budget' to be in reference to the scheme estimate identified for Option A in the *Basin Reserve Transport Improvements Project Scheme Assessment Report* (March 2012). This Scheme Assessment Report was approved by the NZ Transport Agency Board on 12 June 2012. The budget for this report was approved in December 2008, and was \$3.3m.

2. *How many hours were spent by Agency staff on the proposal?*

The Agency does not record time spent by its staff on a project by project basis.

3. *How much money was spent by the New Zealand Transport Agency on the Basin Reserve Flyover proposal project to date from the beginning of the project?*
4. *A detailed breakdown on what the money was spent on and when?*

I take your reference to the 'Basin Reserve Flyover' to be the Basin Bridge proposal. A decision to proceed with the Basin Bridge as a proposal was made by the Transport Agency Board on 12 June 2012. The budget to undertake the Scheme Assessment Report that informed the decision to proceed with the Basin Bridge has been identified above. Since 12 June 2012 costs for developing and/or preparing the Basin Bridge proposal have related to the costs of preparing and presenting its RMA applications.

The table below provides a detailed breakdown of the costs for the Basin Bridge proposal as requested:

Year	Study / Phase	Cost (see note 1)
2012-13	Costs to prepare and lodge RMA applications	\$3.4 million
2013-14	Transport Agency attendance at Board of Inquiry (see note 2)	\$2.8 million
2013-14	Transport Agency reimbursement of Environmental Protection Authority (EPA)/Board of Inquiry processing fees	\$2.4 million
2012-14	Total legal advice and representation	\$2.3 million
<b>Transport Agency total costs</b>		<b>\$10.9 million</b>

**Notes**

1. Due to a change in financial systems during the 2012/13 financial year it is not possible to provide a full accurate breakdown of costs by task, as some data on individual transaction coding did not transfer.
2. Transport Agency attendance at the Board of Inquiry: This stage entailed appointment of 35 independent experts who prepared evidence in chief, rebuttal evidence, opening summary statements, presented evidence and answered questions from submitters and the Board and attended the hearing when other relevant evidence was being heard. Many experts were also required to attend conferencing workshops (sometimes over many days, eg. transport and planning expert conferencing was each over 5 to 6 days), as well as attend Board arranged facilitated meetings with the submitters (x5), attend meetings with submitters and to prepare supplementary evidence statements. Additionally, in response to concerns further visualisations were prepared and the design of the project modified.

Please note that the costs reported in the table above include costs for:

- investigations of options in 2012 and 2013 with Wellington City Council and in response to submissions during the Board of Inquiry hearing
- the doubling of the length of the Board of Inquiry hearing causing an approximate doubling of Transport Agency, legal and EPA/Board of Inquiry costs for the Basin Bridge proposal.

*Advice and correspondence*


You have also requested all advice to the Transport Agency's Chief Executive on the proposal and all correspondence between the Transport Agency and the Minister for Transport on the Basin Bridge proposal. While you subsequently clarified on 12 August 2014 via email that you want documents from 2009, the Basin Bridge proposal's commencement is in fact 12 June 2012 as stated above. We have therefore limited the supply of documents to the period since 12 June 2012.

Advice to the Transport Agency's Chief Executive is provided via email. These emails will be provided to you shortly, when we have finished preparing them.

Correspondence with the Minister for Transport is attached.

Please feel free to contact Anthony Frith on 04 894 5251 or [anthony.frith@nzta.govt](mailto:anthony.frith@nzta.govt) to arrange a meeting time or if you have any questions about this letter.

Yours sincerely



Rod James  
State Highway Manager  
NZ Transport Agency

MINISTERIAL BRIEFING NOTE

Subject Proposed announcement of the Wellington City "Tunnel to Tunnel" Transport Improvements project  
Date Friday 27 July 2012  
OCU number BRI-0263  
Priority

Contact for telephone discussion (if required)

Name	Position	Direct line	Cell phone
Selwyn Blackmore	Principal Project Manager Wellington RoNS development	(04) 894-5247	021-229-7936

Action taken by Office of Minister of Transport

- Noted
- Approved
- Seen by Minister
- Referred to
- Needs change
- Withdrawn
- Overtaken by events

RELEASED UNDER THE  
OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT



Friday 27 July 2012

Minister of Transport

**Announcement of the Wellington City transport improvements between the Terrace Tunnel and the Mt Victoria Tunnel**

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**Purpose**

1. To provide you with advance notice that the NZ Transport Agency will announce its *Wellington City "Tunnel to Tunnel" Transport Improvements project* on Tuesday 14 August 2012, following the proposed announcement of the National War Memorial Park on Tuesday 7 August 2012.

**Summary of key points for public announcements**

2. Two separate public announcements are proposed for the National War Memorial Park and the Wellington City Tunnel to Tunnel Transport Improvements project, as follows:

Proposed Date	Public announcement	Lead
Tuesday 7 August 2012	National War Memorial Park	Government
Tuesday 14 August 2012	Wellington Inner-City Tunnel to Tunnel Transport Improvements project	NZTA

3. The Wellington City Tunnel to Tunnel Transport Improvements project will be announced following the announcement of the National War Memorial Park to allow time for stakeholder engagement on the whole project (including the Memorial Park underpass and the bridge around the Basin Reserve). Separate announcements will also avoid confusion around the separate approval processes that will apply to the Memorial Park underpass and the bridge around the Basin Reserve.
4. Key aspects of the **Wellington City Tunnel to Tunnel Transport Improvements project** announcement include:
  - The announcement of the preferred location for the bridge around the Basin Reserve, this being **Option A** (see **Attachment 1** for a summary of the decision making process for the bridge)
  - The package of transport improvements will be referred to as *Wellington Tunnel to Tunnel Transport Improvements project*. This package includes the Basin Reserve bridge, the Memorial Park underpass and Inner-City Bypass improvements
  - The project will improve traffic flows between the Mt Victoria and Terrace Tunnels, and get Wellington moving by delivering significant transport benefits for state highway and local road traffic (including public transport), pedestrians and cyclists, and

- The likely announcement of the NZ Transport Agency's preferred alliance consortium that will undertake the detail design and construction of the project.

#### Wellington City Tunnel to Tunnel Transport Improvements project

5. Key features of the Wellington City Tunnel to Tunnel Transport Improvements project include:
  - A two lane bridge for westbound traffic extending for 260m from Paterson Street through to just east of the Tory/Buckle Street intersection. The bridge is to be located approximately 20m north of the Basin Reserve
  - A three lane "Memorial Park underpass" extending from just east of the Tory/Buckle Street intersection to about 80m east of the Taranaki/Buckle Street intersection. The underpass will be about 150m long, 13m to 14m wide and 5.8m high, and
  - Improvements to key intersections along Arthur Street, Karo Drive and Vivian Street (collectively referred to as the "Inner-City Bypass").
6. The project is an extension of the existing *Basin Reserve Transport Improvements* project, which forms part of the Wellington Northern Corridor Roads of National Significance programme. Extending the existing project's scope to include the Memorial Park underpass and Inner-City Bypass improvements enables the NZ Transport Agency to realise construction efficiencies that will deliver cost savings across what would have normally been three separate projects.
7. As the scope of Basin Reserve Transport Improvements project now includes the Memorial Park underpass and Inner-City Bypass improvements, the project has been renamed the *Wellington City Tunnel to Tunnel Transport Improvements* project
8. Attachment 2 sets out the overall site plan for the Wellington City Tunnel to Tunnel Transport Improvements project.

#### Key programme milestones

9. Key programme milestones for the **Memorial Park underpass** are as follows:

Month/Year	Activity
Late July 2012	Geotechnical investigations commence
Early October 2012	National War Memorial Park Empowering Act 2012 enacted
Mid to late October 2012	Construction of temporary road commences
January/February 2013	Construction of the Memorial Park underpass commences
Late 2014	Memorial Park underpass completed, and landscaping of the National War Memorial Park commences

10. Key programme milestones for the **bridge around the Basin Reserve** are as follows:

Month/Year	Activity
Early 2013	Lodge RMA applications with EPA, and public notification of applications
Late 2013	Decision on RMA applications
Late 2013 to mid 2014	Complete detail design
Mid 2014 to mid 2016	Complete construction of the bridge

11. The improvements proposed for the Inner-City Bypass are programmed to be undertaken between 2013 and 2016.

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**Selwyn Blackmore**

Principal Project Manager Wellington RoNS development

**CONTACT DETAILS**

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Selwyn Blackmore, Principal Project Manager Wellington  
RoNS development

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Geoff Dangerfield, Chief Executive

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Attachment 1

Figure 1 shows the preferred bridge option entering the Buckle Street underpass.

Figure 1 - Preferred Bridge Option and the National War Memorial Park



**Background to preferred bridge option decision**

The Basin Reserve Transport Improvements project (now the *Wellington Inner-City Tunnel to Tunnel Transport Improvements* project) forms part of the Wellington Northern Corridor Roads of National Significance programme, and is identified as a high priority project in the Wellington Regional Land Transport Strategy's Ngauranga to Airport Corridor Plan (2008).

Following an analysis of the transport benefits and construction costs of various options for improving the performance of the transport network around the Basin Reserve (including considering surface and tunnel options), the NZ Transport Agency decided to pursue building a bridge around the Basin Reserve. To help select the bridge's location it sought public feedback on two possible locations in mid 2011 as part of its *Cobham Drive to Buckle Street Improvements* public engagement programme. **Figure 1** below sets out the two bridge locations proposed by the NZ Transport Agency in 2011:

**Figure 2 - Bridge location proposals (2011)**

**Preferred option - option A**

Westbound traffic will pass approximately 20 metres north of the Basin Reserve gates on a bridge over Kent and Cambridge Terraces. The bridge will be approximately 380 metres long, a minimum of 12 metres wide and a maximum of eight metres above the ground.

**Alternative option - option B**

Westbound traffic will pass approximately 65 metres north of the Basin Reserve gates on a bridge over Kent and Cambridge Terraces. The bridge will be approximately 440 metres long, a minimum of 12 metres wide and a maximum of eight metres above the ground.



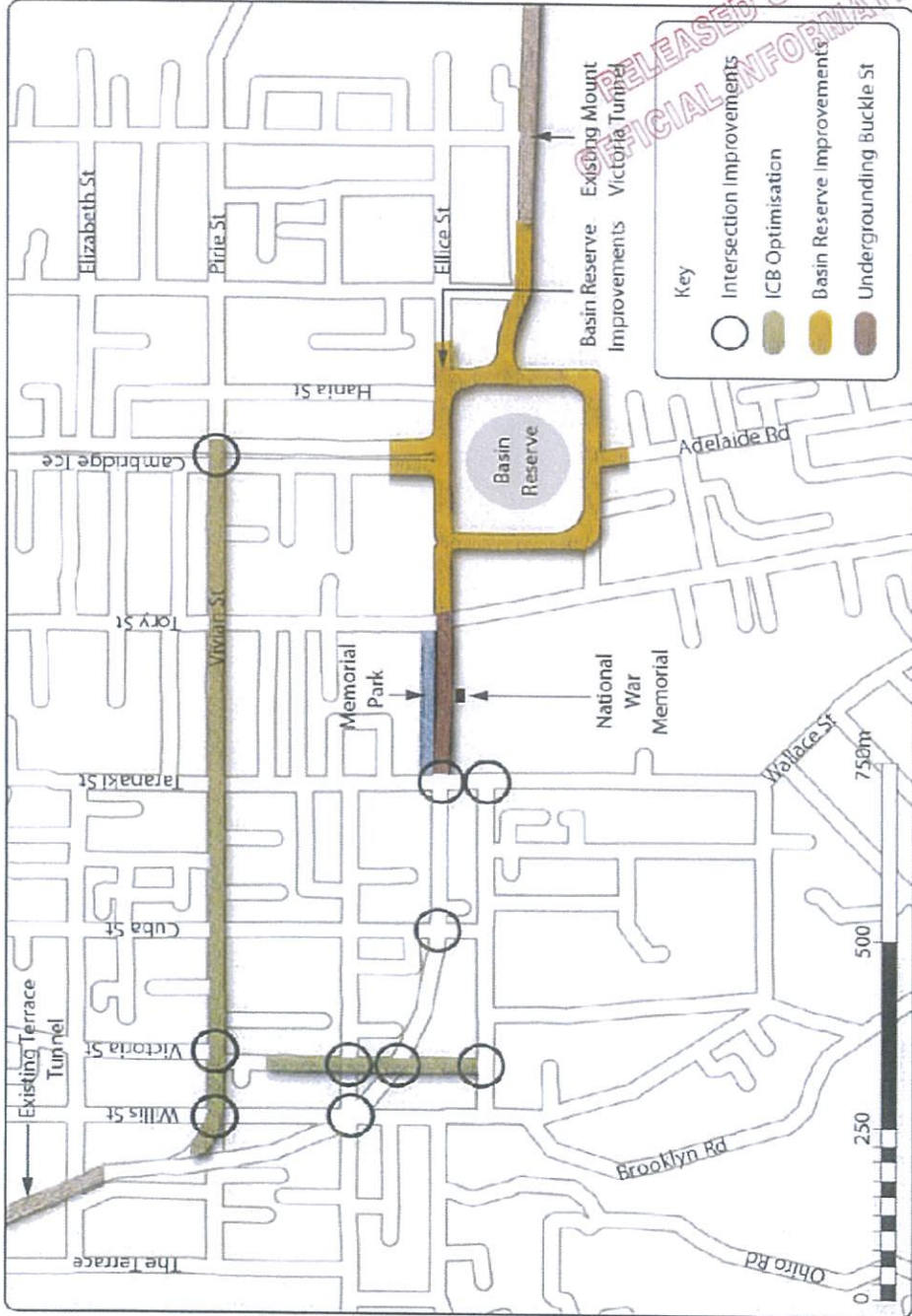
Between October 2011 and April 2012, the NZ Transport Agency considered the public's feedback on the two proposed bridge locations. In summary, *Option A* was favoured by submitters concerned about traffic noise and air quality for surrounding residents, cost, cityscape and character. *Option B* was favoured by those concerned about traffic noise and air quality at the Basin Reserve, and heritage effects on the Basin Reserve and the former Home of Compassion Crèche building. Both Wellington City and Greater Wellington Regional Councils preferred Option A, although the former did state a preference for a tunnel rather than for a bridge. Both also indicated support for undergrounding Buckle Street as part of the National War Memorial Park development.



In June 2012, following the completion of the scheme assessment report for the Basin Reserve Transport Improvements project, the NZ Transport Agency Board decided that Option A was the preferred bridge location on the basis that it was considered to be superior to Option B from an urban design, social impact and cost perspective.

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Attachment 2 - Wellington City Tunnel to Tunnel Transport Improvements Site Plan



## MINISTERIAL BRIEFING NOTE

Subject	Wellington Transport Infrastructure Investment - Announcement
Date	12 June 2013
OCU number	BRI-0334
Priority (Immediate, high or routine)	Routine

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Contact for telephone discussion (if required)

Name	Position	Direct line	Cell phone
Jenny Chetwynd	NZTA Regional Director - Central Region	( 04) 931 8939	021 345 988

Action taken by Office of Minister of Transport

Noted



12 June 2013

Minister of Transport

## Wellington Transport Infrastructure Investment – Announcement

### Key Points

1. On Monday, 17 June the Basin Bridge project will be lodged with the Environment Protection Authority. On Tuesday, 18 June the Public Transport Spine Final Report and the key findings of the Mt Victoria Tunnel duplication will be finalised. All projects are signalled in the Ngauranga to Airport Corridor Plan, part of the Wellington Regional Land Transport Strategy.
2. On Tuesday, 18 June, prior to each of these milestones being made public, the NZ Transport Agency will brief key Wellington local government council members and staff, regional stakeholders and media. We want to discuss with you the appropriate approach to informing local Members of Parliament in line with our approach to previous announcements.
3. We would expect this announcement to receive significant media coverage in the *Dominion Post* and national media outlets on Wednesday 19 June.
4. The briefing will focus on how the transport projects contribute to the development of an integrated 'one network' transport solution for Wellington.
5. A significant new piece of information that will be included in this briefing is the details of mitigation measures around the Basin Reserve, including a new building within the Basin Reserve to screen the bridge from within the ground.

### Format of the stakeholder briefing

6. The briefing format for the day is:
  - Local body politicians and staff (Wellington City Councillors, Greater Wellington Regional Councillors and regional mayors) will be briefed between 1pm and 3pm in a coordinated session involving staff from the NZ Transport Agency, Greater Wellington and Wellington City Councils.
  - A media briefing will be held at 3.30pm and will involve staff from the NZ Transport Agency, Wellington City Council and Greater Wellington Regional Council. We would expect this announcement to receive significant media coverage in the *Dominion Post* and national media outlets.

- We consider it useful to inform local Members of Parliament, and wish to discuss with you an appropriate format for doing so.
7. The overall objective of the joined-up announcement is to show how the three organisations and the various individual transport initiatives are contributing to the development of an integrated 'one network' transport solution for Wellington.
  8. Detailed briefing packs will be provided with further information available on the NZ Transport Agency's website [www.nzta.govt.nz](http://www.nzta.govt.nz) and individual project sites.

#### Content of stakeholder briefing

9. The stakeholder briefing will cover the following high-level project details:

**Public Transport Spine Study:** This study is complete and the final report is ready. This project has assessed the relative costs, benefits and feasibility of three public transport options (light rail, bus rapid transit and bus priority) to provide a high quality public transport 'spine' through Wellington's central business district from the railway station to the hospital and Kilbirnie.

The study findings show that overall the bus rapid transit option is the best option against all criteria and shows the highest transport benefits. Light rail is the significantly more expensive option in terms of capital cost. Operational costs between all options are similar.

All options result in shorter journey times between the south/south-east locations of Newtown and Kilbirnie through to the Wellington CBD. The most significant reduction is under the bus rapid transit and light rail options, which almost halve the travel time between Kilbirnie and the Wellington Railway Station. The report does not list a preferred option, and public comment will be sought on the three options.

**Basin Bridge:** Applications for Resource Management Act approvals for the Basin Bridge (part of the Wellington Northern Corridor Road of National Significance) will be lodged with the Environmental Protection Authority on 17 June. Key features of the mitigation package for this project include:

- a new building within the Basin Reserve to screen the bridge from within the ground, and to avoid batsmen being distracted by passing vehicles (the Basin Reserve Northern Gateway building), which will require relocation of the historic CS Dempster Gate to the southern end of the Basin Reserve (see Attachment 1)
- a pedestrian and cyclist (only) facility on the bridge, plus new and/or improvements to pedestrian and cyclist facilities surrounding the bridge and the Basin Reserve
- various landscape treatments in and around the bridge, including new landscaped areas and rain gardens that link with the National War Memorial Park, a new plaza entrance to the Basin Reserve, new trees to be located both within the Basin Reserve and its immediate surrounds, and a 12-metre-high screen to reduce adverse effects on nearby residents, and to improve the bridge's integration with its surrounds



- a new building to be located underneath the bridge on the corner of Kent Terrace and Ellice Street to mitigate potential urban design, visual, noise, and wind effects
- architectural features and lighting to be included within the bridge's design.

**Mt Victoria Tunnel duplication:** We will update stakeholders on the Mt Victoria Tunnel duplication (also part of the Wellington Northern Corridor Road of National Significance), for which Resource Management Act applications are now been prepared. Key features of the duplicate tunnel announcements include:

- a second Mt Victoria tunnel to the immediate north of the existing tunnel
- Ruahine Street and Wellington Road (all State Highway 1 roads) widen to between four and six lanes
- key intersections on Ruahine Street and Wellington Road upgraded to include traffic signals
- new pedestrian and cyclist facilities through the second tunnel and along Ruahine Street and Wellington Road.

#### Next steps

10. The Public Transport Spine Study will go out for formal consultation on a preferred option in early 2014.
11. Following lodgement, the Minister for the Environment will determine whether the applications for the Basin Bridge will be processed via the national consenting process. Once the Minister has made her decisions, and if she chooses a Board of Inquiry process, then public notification could be expected in August or September, followed by a public hearing in late 2013 or early 2014. Construction is programmed from mid 2014.
12. We expect to lodge the Resource Management Act applications for the Mt Victoria Tunnel duplication in mid 2014, following final decisions on the Public Transport Spine Study. Construction is expected in mid 2018.

#### Recommendations

13. We recommend you note the contents of this briefing.



**Jenny Chetwynd**  
Regional Director, Central Region

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**Hon Gerry Brownlee, Minister of Transport**

Noted



**CONTACT DETAILS**

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Attachment 1: Basin Reserve Northern Gateway Building



VIEW FROM EASTERN MOST CRICKET PITCH

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- Key:
- Proposed tree
  - Proposed tree (Shown transparent in 3D views)
  - Existing Tree

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