

WELLINGTON TO HUTT VALLEY WALKING AND CYCLING LINK

Preferred Option Announcement – FAQs

As at 9.11.15

These FAQs are an extension to the existing on the project website. These additional FAQs will concentrate solely on the announcement of a preferred option and next steps.

What does the preferred alignment include?

- a consistent **3m wide shared path** on the seaward side of the rail tracks for pedestrians and cyclists between Petone and Ngauranga
- the whole platform for the project is likely to be 5m, which will be confirmed by key stakeholders, including clearance from the rail line and room to maintain the new shared path and KiwiRail rail tracks
- **Heading east from Petone** the shared path will link with the Petone Esplanade and join the existing cycling and walking network through to Seaview
- **Heading north from Petone** pedestrians and cyclists will travel along the new path to connect with Petone station via an overbridge. We are considering options for the Petone to Melling section of the project as part of the Government's Urban Cycleway Programme.
- **From Ngauranga** the new path will connect with the existing path, although there are proposals to upgrade this section also through to Wellington railway station

Why was the seaward side chosen?

The NZTA and its partners also considered roadside shared path options between the road and the rail along SH2, including options that cut into the hillside. In comparison to a seaward side path, these options would not provide the same safety benefits, path width or look and feel. The seaside option also has the added benefit of providing a more resilient corridor for all transport users by providing a stronger and higher seawall that is able to withstand the impacts of severe weather and can take climate change factors into account.

What was the basis for the Transport Agency selecting a seaward side option?

The selection of a seaward side is based on community and stakeholder feedback, plus technical expert advice, and the wider benefits that this option provides in terms of resilience, look and feel and safety for cyclists and pedestrians on the corridor between Wellington and the Hutt Valley.

Why does it need to be a shared path rather than independent walking and cycling paths that are separate from each other?

When considering a path we needed to balanced providing a suitable width path to accommodate both pedestrians and cyclists balanced against limiting the impact on the coastal marine area. This resulted in us choosing a shared path because it took both needs into account.

How will the environmental effects of building out into the harbour be managed/mitigated?

We will be identifying and assessing mitigation options as part of our process to prepare consent applications. In particular, our ecology and marine aquaculture specialists will be working closely with iwi, the Department of Conservation and other stakeholders, to develop appropriate mitigation.

What effect will the seaward reclamation have on the current coastal environment?

Much of the marine environment along Petone to Ngauranga foreshore is already highly modified as a result of previous reclamation, with the shoreline mostly constructed of concrete rubble and similar materials. If you are interested, a current ecology assessment is available on our project webpage. We expect that the seaside

option will provide an opportunity to improve the current environment along the seawall, including enhancements to the marine and coastal environments.

Why is the platform for the path only going to be 5m rather than something wider to accommodate for future transport needs (ie rail, road)?

Through our assessment process we considered a range of platform widths. At this point in time, we have concluded that a 5m option (3m shared path and 1m shoulders either side) is all that is necessary to meet our transport requirements for this project.

Will the path be designed to withstand or avoid being closed by adverse weather?

We will design the path to minimise sea spray and, where possible, to withstand environmental effects. However, the path is closer to the sea and therefore closer to the elements meaning it could still be closed during high winds or severe weather.

Will it be challenging to get consent for a seaward side path?

We are currently planning and preparing consent documents with the express aim of avoiding, remedying and mitigating any adverse effects on the environment from construction and operation of the seaward side path. This will assist with our consent applications but further support will be needed. In particular we will be looking for comments and concepts to mitigate any adverse effects in order to be successful with our consent applications. This is why it is so important for people interested in the project to stay involved and have their say before and during the consent process.

What will be done with the existing off- road cycle path between Horokiwi and Ngauranga?

This is yet to be determined, and will be considered as part of a whole corridor approach, looking at the needs of all users.

Is the Walking/Cycling/Resilience project reliant on Petone to Grenada being built to be consented/constructed?

Both projects are being progressed independently of one another and are not interdependent. There are advantages of aligning the projects (ie in using excess soil and rock from the Petone to Grenada Link Road to reclaim the harbour for construction of the new shared path platform) and we will continue to consider how the two can be progressed in parallel, if timing is suitable.

What will be done to address pedestrian and cyclists' safety concerns along SH2 until the new path is available?

We will continue to monitor the existing highway and maintain the existing path between Horokiwi and Ngauranga with a view to safeguarding cyclists until such time as an off-road shared path is available.

What would delay the project beginning construction from 2019?

The key delay that could affect construction would be getting the necessary consents. As noted above, it will be important for people to have their say about the project's design before and during the consents process.