

Ministry of Transport: Aide Memoire

To: Hon Phil Twyford
From: Marian Willberg
Date: 5 April 2019
Subject: Request for further advice on Let's Get Wellington Moving mode priority
OC Number: OC190303

Purpose of this aide memoire

1. This aide memoire provides you with a response to your request for:
 - A comparison of vehicle journey times and overall number of passenger (people) movements with:
 - A: walking, cycling, public transport, parking charges and rapid transit only
 - B: A + Basin Reserve improvements
 - C: A + B + Mt Victoria tunnel improvements
 - BCR of the Basin Reserve and Mt Victoria tunnel improvements after Scenario A has been implemented
 - Potential downsides of removing or delaying the second Mt Victoria Tunnel.
2. The advice in this aide memoire has been provided by the NZ Transport Agency and members of the Let's Get Wellington Moving (LGWM) working group. They have advised that full analysis on these requests would need to be carried out to give more comprehensive answers, and that there has not been a thorough review or modelling of partial programmes to enable detailed analysis of what the future looks like without some of the key components of the overall plan.

Comparison of vehicle journey times and overall number of passenger (people) movements

3. This has not been directly estimated. As stated previously, a detailed analysis of partial programmes would require more time to give detailed advice.

Scenario A: walking, cycling, public transport, parking charges and rapid transit only

4. This has not been directly estimated, however based upon previous analysis it is likely to deliver:
 - significant walking, cycling and public transport benefits
 - reliable public transport travel times
 - increased and unreliable state highway and arterial travel times due to road space reallocation to walking/cycling/public transport, mitigated to a certain extent by increased parking charges encouraging mode shift.
5. A cordon based congestion charge, upon which most of the current analysis relating to LGWM has been based, encourages through traffic to re-route from the Waterfront/Quays to the state highway, thus avoiding paying a charge, resulting in opportunities to reallocate road space along the Waterfront route to rapid transit and active modes.
6. Whilst increased parking charges would discourage car trips into the CBD, it is unlikely to have the same impact (and deliver the same opportunities) as a congestion charge in terms of removing vehicles from the Waterfront/Quays by encouraging through car trips to use the state highway.

Scenario B: A + Basin Reserve improvements

7. The Basin Reserve improvements are likely to:
 - deliver more reliable travel times between the CBD and Wellington's eastern suburbs
 - based upon high-level analysis, potentially deliver 1 to 2 minutes travel time savings for general traffic using the state highway (relative to Scenario A) along with more reliable travel times
 - enable rapid transit to be delivered along the preferred alignment
 - improve walking/cycling connections and increase amenity values.

Scenario C: A + B + additional Mt Victoria tunnel

8. The additional Mt Victoria tunnel improvements are likely to:
 - deliver more reliable travel times between the CBD and Wellington's eastern suburbs/Airport
 - based upon high level analysis, potentially deliver 1 to 2 minutes travel time savings for general traffic using the state highway relative to Scenario B, along with more reliable travel times
 - deliver more reliable travel times between the rest of the region, eastern suburbs and the Airport
 - reduce traffic volumes on Evans Bay Parade and Oriental Parade
 - enable rapid transit to be delivered by reducing traffic in Newtown

- improve walking/cycling connections to the eastern suburbs.

BCR of the Basin Reserve and Mt Victoria tunnel after Scenario A has been implemented

9. This has not been directly estimated.
10. When assessed in isolation, the benefits of the Basin Reserve and Mt Victoria improvements are relatively modest, however they are likely to increase relative to Scenario A alone because of the likely deterioration in state highway travel times and reliability due to reallocation of road space in Scenario A to rapid transit, walking and cycling.
11. In order to realise higher benefits, both the Basin Reserve and Mt Victoria tunnel improvements should be packaged with optimisation of the state highway through Wellington CBD, delivering more reliable travel times and providing the opportunity to reallocate road space to walking, cycling and rapid transit.

Potential downsides of removing or delaying the second Mt Victoria tunnel

12. Several potential downsides of removing or delaying a second Mt Victoria tunnel have been identified:
 - Poor quality walking and cycling connections between the Basin Reserve and eastern suburbs.
 - Unreliable general traffic times between the Wellington CBD and the eastern suburbs/Airport.
 - Lack of opportunity to prioritise high occupancy vehicles through dedicated high occupancy vehicle lanes.
 - The continued rerouting of traffic away from the desired state highway route to the eastern suburbs (through Mt Victoria tunnel) to the alternative waterfront route (the waterfront quays and 'around the bays') and Adelaide Road/Newtown, resulting in the following impacts:
 - poorer amenity and levels of service for people walking and cycling on the waterfront route
 - increased congestion through Newtown/Adelaide Road, affecting accessibility/amenity and potentially affecting rapid transit reliability.
13. Delaying or removing the additional Mt Victoria tunnel would remove several benefits associated with pressures arising during the construction of rapid transit through Newtown and between Newtown and the Airport.
14. Benefits that an additional Mt Victoria tunnel would deliver during construction of rapid transit include the following:
 - Providing a discretionary route for general traffic to the east (currently using Constable Street, Riddiford Street and Adelaide Road) which would be constrained.

- Providing an alternative temporary prioritised route for buses to the east (currently using Constable Street, Riddiford Street and Adelaide Road).
- Delivering improved bus services to Kilbirnie, Miramar, and the airport in advance of rapid transit completion to the east.

Mode shift perspective on LGWM package sequencing

15. Given the time constraints for providing this advice, the review from a mode shift perspective has been limited.
16. The sequencing of LGWM proposes that improvements for active modes are implemented first.
17. From a mode shift perspective it is important for the rapid transit, other public transport, walking and cycling investments to be built ahead of extra road capacity. This then "leaves the door open" to see whether the road capacity really is still required once the alternatives are in place.
18. On some occasions it might be physically necessary to make a road investment to enable rapid transit, but from a mode shift perspective it is both the push and pull factor of reallocating space from cars to other modes that will most strongly support mode shift.

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