


OC231112

23 February 2024



Tēnā koe 

I refer to your email dated 21 December 2023, requesting the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

“Kia orana,

Under the Official Information Act 1982 I request the following document provided to the Minister of Transport:

'Withdrawing from Let's Get Wellington Moving'

Kia manuia,

David”

Three documents fall within the scope of your request and are detailed in the document schedule attached as Annex 1. The schedule outlines how the documents you requested have been treated under the Act.

Certain information and documents are withheld under section 9(2)(a), section 9(2)(f)(iv), and section 9(2)(g)(i) of the Act.

With regard to the information that has been withheld under section 9 of the Act, I am satisfied that the reasons for withholding the information at this time are not outweighed by public interest considerations that would make it desirable to make the information available.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review of this response by the Ombudsman, in accordance with section 28(3) of the Act. The relevant details can be found on the Ombudsman's website www.ombudsman.parliament.nz

The Ministry publishes our Official Information Act responses and the information contained in our reply to you may be published on the Ministry website. Before publishing we will remove any personal or identifiable information.

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Gulik'.

Chris Gulik
Manager Major Projects

Annex 1: In-scope documents

Doc #	Reference number	Date	Title of Document	Decision on request
1	OC230960	1/12/2023	WITHDRAWING FROM LET'S GET WELLINGTON MOVING	Certain information is withheld under the following sections of the Act: 9(2)(a) and 9(2)(f)(iv)
2	N/A	1/12/2023	LGWM – draft Ministerial letter to WCC and GWRC	Withheld under section 9(2)(g)(i) of the Act
3	N/A	1/12/2023	LGWM – draft Ministerial letter to NZTA Chair	Withheld under section 9(2)(g)(i) of the Act



1 December 2023

OC230960

Hon Simeon Brown

Action required by:

Minister of Transport

Wednesday, 6 December 2023

WITHDRAWING FROM LET'S GET WELLINGTON MOVING

Purpose

This briefing provides advice about fulfilling the Government's commitment to withdraw central government from Let's Get Wellington Moving (LGWM) within the first hundred days of taking office. NZ Transport Agency (NZTA) will provide separate advice on LGWM.

Key points

- LGWM is a partnership between NZTA, Wellington City Council (WCC), and Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC) to deliver a transitional programme of works and a more ambitious transformational programme.
- s 9(2)(f)(iv)
- This briefing provides draft letters to separately advise NZTA and the councils of the Government's intention to withdraw from the programme. This will trigger the LGWM partners to begin the process to disestablish LGWM. The letters do not directly affect work on specific projects but clarify the Government's view that the overall programme should be stopped, and that you will not support direct Crown funding for it.
- Disestablishing the LGWM structure would allow for some individual projects to continue under more regular settings, with the local road improvements being the responsibility of WCC (with co-funding from the National Land Transport Fund) and central government taking direct responsibility for the Mt Victoria tunnel and Basin Reserve as state highway improvements. Separate advice from the Ministry on funding the tunnel and Basin Reserve improvements will be provided as part of a new Government Policy Statement on Land Transport.
- You have previously signalled you do not wish to continue with the light rail component of LGWM. s 9(2)(f)(iv)

s 9(2)(f)(iv)

Recommendations

We recommend you:

- 1 **sign** the attached draft letters to the Chair of NZTA, the Mayor of Wellington City Council and the Chair of Greater Wellington Regional Council setting out the Government's intention to stop supporting Let's Get Wellington Moving Yes / No



p.p.

David Wood
Deputy Chief Executive Investment & Monitoring

1 / 12 / 2023

Hon Simeon Brown
Minister of Transport

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Minister's office to complete:☐ Approved☐ Declined☐ Seen by Minister☐ Not seen by Minister☐ Overtaken by events**Comments****Contacts**

Name	Telephone	First contact
David Wood, Deputy Chief Executive, Investment & Monitoring	s 9(2)(a)	✓
Daniel Cruden, Principal Adviser, Major Projects		

WITHDRAWING FROM LET'S GET WELLINGTON MOVING

Background

Let's Get Wellington Moving is a programme of transport upgrades intended to support urban development and intensification in Wellington City

- 1 Let's Get Wellington Moving (LGWM) is a partnership between NZTA (representing the Crown), Wellington City Council (WCC) and Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC). It consists of two main components:
 - 1.1 A transitional programme of upgrades to local roads to support walking and cycling and enabling bus priority across wider areas, including improvements to the Golden Mile (from Lambton Quay to Courtenay Place)
 - 1.2 A transformational programme of improvements to State Highway 1 at Mt Victoria (including a second tunnel) and new mass rapid transit (MRT) infrastructure running from Wellington Railway Station through the city to the south coast at Island Bay.
- 2 Construction has started on some of the projects in the transitional programme with others starting soon. Funding for the delivery of the transitional programme is split between WCC and the National Land Transport Fund (NLTF). NZTA will provide you with further information on these projects and their status.
- 3 The transformational programme is in a detailed business case phase, with completion of the business case scheduled for December 2024. Construction on the different projects within the transformational programme is scheduled to start in 2028.
- 4 The Government has also committed to building a second Mount Victoria tunnel parallel to the existing one for traffic to the airport. We intend to provide advice about funding this as part of revising the draft Government Policy Statement on Land Transport

The Crown is not directly involved in governance of LGWM, and funding has been uncertain

- 5 Governance of LGWM is handled by two groups. The first is a **Partnership Board**, responsible for internal programme decisions, consisting of senior officials from WCC, GWRC, and NZTA. The second is a **Governance Reference Group** consisting of political leaders from WCC and GWRC and the Chief Executive of NZTA, as well as mana whenua. This Group debates political risks and provides guidance to the Partnership Board. Consideration of business cases and funding decisions are made through each partner's standard processes.
- 6 LGWM's governance and cost-sharing arrangements are set out in a Relationship and Funding Agreement (RFA) between NZTA, GWRC, and WCC. It has no formal decision-making role for ministers or the Ministry of Transport, and NZTA can only withdraw from the programme with its Board's approval.
- 7 In 2021, LGWM was projected to cost \$7.4 billion over 30 years (capex and opex), a figure that would be expected to rise if the programme continued in its current form. The transformational programme accounts for most of this cost (approximately

\$4.5 billion capex). Due to pressure on the NLTF over recent years, Crown funding would have been essential to deliver the Mt Victoria tunnel and Basin Reserve improvements within projected timeframes.

Confirming your intention to not support the programme is the key next step

- 8 Although in a formal sense only the NZTA Board can withdraw central government from LGWM, indications from both GWRC and WCC are that the programme is not meeting their needs and they may be willing to see it disestablished by mutual consent (although they may still want to see specific projects proceed). s 9(2)(f)(iv)
- 9 The letters attached to this briefing provide you with a mechanism to set the Government's expectations and determine key next steps for LGWM's wind-down. You may wish to subsequently supplement these letters with a meeting between yourself and the partners. Key points covered in the letters that you would need to make are:
- 9.1 That you do not support the MRT option being developed by LGWM, and that you are not willing to provide Crown funding for the project under any circumstances.
 - 9.2 Your commitment to fund and deliver the second tunnel and Basin Reserve improvements directly.
 - 9.3 That decisions about the future of the transitional programme (including the Golden Mile) are best made by WCC rather than the LGWM programme, and that funding for any uncommitted elements will be considered via normal NLTF processes.
- 10 The letters also signal a willingness to discuss next steps and priorities for further work on transport issues in the Wellington region outside of the LGWM programme.
- 11 If mutual agreement is difficult to achieve, an alternative option would see NZTA withdrawing from LGWM under clause 14 of the RFA. Such an approach would require:
- 11.1 NZTA obtaining consent from its Board to withdraw from the programme.
 - 11.2 NZTA giving 3 months' written notice to GWRC and WCC.
 - 11.3 The partners meeting promptly to discuss and agree whether to continue the programme as well as (if relevant) any processes or procedures for transferring NZTA's responsibilities relating to the programme.

12 s 9(2)(f)(iv)

13

s 9(2)(f)(iv)

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Next steps

- 19 Following receipt of the letters, it is expected the LGWM partners will initiate the process to mutually agree to disestablish the programme. The Ministry will work with NZTA to ensure you receive advice on the disestablishment process. Prior to sending the letters, it would be useful for you to contact the Mayor and the Chair and let them know of your intentions.
- 20 If you would like to meet the partners, the Ministry can liaise with your office, NZTA, and the Councils to facilitate a meeting once the letters have been sent. We will also provide you with talking points ahead of the meeting.
- 21 Once mutual agreement has been reached to disestablish the LGWM programme, the Ministry can prepare a Cabinet paper noting the outcome of that process

22 s 9(2)(f)(iv)

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