

WELLINGTON TO HUTT VALLEY WALKING AND CYCLING LINK

Consultation Report Questions and Answers

How many people support each option?

Of the 428 people who responded to this question, 294 preferred a seaside option and 134 a roadside option. A preference was indicated for the seaward side option by slightly over half of the 778 people who made a submission or took part in our online survey.

Why do people support a seaside or a roadside option?

People supported a seaside option because its length would be consistent, it was completely separate from road traffic and would provide resilience for the transport corridor out of Wellington following an earthquake.

People supported a roadside option because it could be built sooner, was seen as more affordable, was more direct and was considered adequate for commuting.

Does the report give any indication to how many people currently cycle and how many would consider cycling if a new route is built?

Of the 578 people who replied to this question, 381 cycle all or part of the route, 20 walk and the remainder do not currently use any part of the route (walking or cycling). Of the 293 that answered a question about use of the existing path, 130 said they cycled on the shoulder of the highway rather than the cycleway.

When asked if improvements would encourage people to walk or cycle at least once a week to work along the corridor, 40 out of 72 said they would, five said they wouldn't and 27 said they already cycled. When asked about recreational use, 61 out of 75 said they would walk or cycle for recreation if improvements were made.

What are the next steps?

With feedback analysed, the Transport Agency will complete a Detailed Business Case for the Walking and Cycling Link outlining all the options. The Transport Agency and its partners will then need to agree on recommendations from the Business Case before selecting a preferred option. This is expected to happen in the next two to three months. Once this has happened, we will begin preparing consent applications for our preferred option, which we expect to lodge in 2016.

What is the timing of the Walking and Cycling Link's construction?

Construction timing will depend on which option is preferred.

What is the potential for the project to be brought forward?

Elements of the Walking and Cycling Link may be able to be brought forward. This is something that will be considered by the Transport Agency and its partners and will depend on funding being available.

What improvements can be made now if we have to wait longer for a seaward side option?

The Melling to Petone and Ngauranga to Wellington City sections could be progressed ahead of improvements along the State Highway 2 corridor between Petone and Ngauranga Interchanges. This is something that the Transport Agency and its partners can consider and agree to, subject to funding and approvals.

Will the Walking and Cycling Link be combined with the Petone to Grenada Link Road?

No decision has been made on this. We have indicated previously that there are benefits in aligning the construction of the Walking and Cycling Link with the Petone to Grenada Link Road if a seaside option is preferred as excess soil and rock can be used to reclaim the foreshore. Further discussions about whether the two projects should be connected could take place once a preferred option has been identified.

If development and construction is combined with the Petone to Grenada Link Road, what impact could a delay/issue on that project have on the Walking and Cycling Link?

This would depend on the timing of the Petone to Grenada Link Road and whether any elements of either project could be brought forward.

How will the Walking and Cycling Link connect with facilities in the Hutt Valley (including the Petone Esplanade) and through to Wellington CBD?

At the moment each option would connect with existing facilities at Ngauranga Interchange and Petone Interchange. Both options have identified how these could connect with the existing facilities from Petone esplanade and Thorndon Quay and specifics of these connections will depend on which option is preferred. We will be continuing to work closely with Hutt City and Wellington City councils to provide improved journeys between Melling and Wellington City.

Will cyclists use the new Walking and Cycling Link or are they more likely to continue using the shoulder of the road on State Highway 2?

Feedback indicates that people would use a new facility, although there is some acknowledgement that more experienced/competitive cyclists may still choose to ride along the shoulder of the highway.

Will more confident/competitive cyclists still be entitled to ride on the highway if that is their preference?

The road is still designated as a highway and therefore cyclists who wish to cycle along SH2 can continue to do so. It would be our hope that many would choose to transfer to the new Walking and Cycling Link.

How will the project be funded?

This will depend on which option is preferred. We have previously indicated that a roadside option costs less and that we have money earmarked for this amount, subject to funding being approved. In comparison, a seaside option is more expensive and therefore additional funding beyond what is already earmarked would be required. However, the Transport Agency and its partners (including Wellington City Council, Hutt City Council, Greater Wellington Regional Council and KiwiRail) all acknowledge that this option has wider benefits for the region and the cost of a seaside Walking and Cycling Link could be reduced if excess soil and rock is taken from the nearby hillsides during construction of the Link Road. The Transport Agency and its partners still need to consider where additional funds would come from if this is the preferred option. This may include money from the Urban Cycleway Fund.

Can the Urban Cycleway Programme help support construction of the Walking and Cycling Link?

This could accelerate aspects of the Walking and Cycling Link's development.

How many properties/land is required for a new seaward side link?

Land required for improvements between Petone and Ngauranga Interchange, roadside or seaside, is generally crown owned land.

How is a seaward side link affected by the Foreshore and Seabed Act 2004?

Both options include reclamation of the harbour's foreshore from Petone, therefore they are affected by the Seabed and Foreshore Act. We are working through the specifics of this in order to fully understand the implications

Do Iwi support the Wellington to Hutt Valley Walking and Cycling Link?

As a key stakeholder, Iwi were consulted with and, overall, they are supportive of a Walking and Cycling Link "in principle" and recognise the importance of a safe journey that the facility may support.

How does the Walking and Cycling Link support the Great Harbour Way?

The Walking and Cycling Link would help support the vision of the Great Harbour Way, which is to create a continuous walking and cycling route around Wellington Harbour.

Can a seaward side option support the development of a water sports hub at Petone?

If a seaside option is preferred and constructed, this could be constructed to accommodate a future water sports hub at Petone if this is progressed by the Council or another interested group.

What safety concerns are there about a seaward side link in the event of poor weather/tsunami/earthquake?

The Walking and Cycling Link's design will need to meet current safety standards and processes would be put in place to address these particular concerns. This would be consistent with current issues where poor weather or other concerns requires the Transport Agency or Emergency Services to close the road for safety reasons.