

20 December 2023

[REDACTED]

Tēnā koe [REDACTED]

### Request for information 2023.305

I refer to your request for information dated 14 December 2023, which was received by Greater Wellington Regional Council (Greater Wellington) on 14 December 2023. You have requested, with urgency, the following:

*“Can I please get, under the LGOIMA (ideally today), all advice from GW to KiwiRail and the Government about the IREx project?”*

### Greater Wellington’s response follows:

Given the urgency of your request we have undertaken a broad, high-level search of our records management system to identify information relevant to your request. As a result, the following information has been readily identified as falling within the scope of your request:

Document	Attachment reference
Letter of 13 March 2020 from Greater Wellington Regional Council Chair to the Group Chief Executive, KiwiRail, regarding Wellington Ferry Terminal.	Attachment 1
Letter of 9 April 2020 from Greater Wellington Regional Council and Horizon Regional Council Chairs to the Minister of State-Owned Enterprises and Minister of Finance, regarding Wellington Ferry Terminal.	Attachment 2
Letter of 8 May 2020 from Greater Wellington Regional Council Chair to the Minister of Finance, regarding Budget 2020: Inter-Island Ferries, with two attachments.	Attachments 3, 3A, and 3B

Letter of 23 December 2020 from Greater Wellington Regional Council Chair to the Minister for the Environment, Minister for Infrastructure, and Minister for state-Owned Enterprises, regarding Wellington Ferry Terminal	Attachment 4
Letter of 12 August 2022 from Greater Wellington Regional Council Chief Executive to Minister of Finance and Minister of Transport, regarding multi-user ferry precinct, with one attachment.	Attachments 5, and 5A

In addition to the information detailed above, Greater Wellington provided comments, as an interested party, to the Kaiwharawhara Wellington Ferry Terminal Redevelopment expert consenting panel on KiwiRail's application for a fast-tracked consent. Greater Wellington's comments are publicly available [here](#).

If you have any concerns with the decision(s) referred to in this letter, you have the right to request an investigation and review by the Ombudsman under section 27(3) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987.

Please note that it is our policy to proactively release our responses to official information requests where possible. Our response to your request will be published shortly on Greater Wellington's website with your personal information removed.

Nāku iti noa, nā



**Luke Troy**  
Kaiwhakahaere Matua Rautaki | Group Manager Strategy

## By email

13 March 2020

File Ref: EXTR-8-675

Greg Miller  
Group Chief Executive  
KiwiRail

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Dear Greg

## Wellington Ferry Terminal

Thanks for the conversation on Wednesday regarding KiwiRail's view of the Wellington ferry terminal programme. It was useful to hear your views first hand – you provided a different perspective from what we had understood from your staff involved in the project team. I look forward to continuing our conversations and to finding a mutually beneficial outcome for all parties. Greater Wellington is the current convener of the joint Ferry Terminal programme and we have a Programme Steering Group meeting scheduled for Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> March. In advance of that it would be helpful to have written confirmation of KiwiRail's position, so that we can manage the process appropriately. From our discussion on Wednesday can you confirm that your organisation's position is that you:

- Do not support the preferred ferry terminal site being located at Kaiwharawhara for either an interim or longer-term option;
- Do not support the concept of a multi-user ferry terminal and would only support a single-user option;
- Will no longer participate in the joint ferry terminal programme process and request a separate negotiation process with CentrePort and Greater Wellington directly.

In terms of the way forward, you undertook to provide CentrePort and Greater Wellington with information to assist us in considering the next steps. This included:

- Thank you for your concept drawing, both the Port Company and Regional Councils will consider your proposal
- Your overall rail strategy for NZ including your inland port approach
- Information on how you intend to allocate your new locomotives to different freight tasks around the regions.



One of the key issues you brought up was that in the short-medium term KiwiRail will have to re-consider the best allocation of its resources across the different regions and ports and that in your

opinion this was likely to mean that locomotives may no longer be provided to support the movement of containers via CentreRail and log freight trains. This is obviously of considerable interest to Greater Wellington as the majority shareholder of CentrePort and we would be grateful if you could assist us with a greater understanding of your business approach to this issue.

We look forward to hearing from you in due course. Once we have your information, I will ensure that my team moves quickly to establish a process for us to move forward. Lachie Johnstone has also given this undertaken on behalf of CentrePort.

Regards



**Daran Ponter**  
Chair

cc: Rachel Keedwell, Chair, Horizons Regional Council  
Lachie Johnstone, Chair, CentrePort

## By email

9 April 2020

File Ref: EXTR-9-888

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Rt Hon Winston Peters  
Minister of State Owned Enterprises  
Parliament Buildings  
**Wellington**

Hon Grant Robertson  
Minister of Finance  
Parliament Buildings  
**Wellington**

Tēnā kōrua Ministers

## Wellington Ferry Terminal

As you will know Greater Wellington has over the past 18 months, been coordinating a project group investigating the options for a new multi-user ferry terminal in Wellington harbour. This group consisted of: GW, Wellington City Council, New Zealand Transport Agency, CentrePort, KiwiRail and Bluebridge, at officer, CE and Board/Council level.

The investigation of alternatives and the preparation of a business case has been undertaken on a collaborative basis and has been extensive and thorough. A large number of sites were evaluated and significant information has been gathered to support the assessment, including information on seismic performance, transport connections, fit with city and regional plans and operational performance for the ferry operators. The work of this group concluded in a preference for a site at Kaiwharawhara.

The two shareholding Councils in CentrePort, Greater Wellington and Horizons Regional Council, have since met in early April, to formally support the preferred site at Kaiwharawhara. Both Councils also noted that the other sites evaluated would have a significant impact on the ability of the Port to continue its business and were not supported.

We believe that a new multi-user terminal will bring significant benefits to the region and NZ. The ferry services are a critical part of the national transport network and the current facilities are well past their use-by date. A multi-user solution will enable efficiencies to be gained for the operators and the port and importantly free-up other parts of the port land for alternative uses that benefit the economy and the city.



CentrePort as the port operator, are ready to progress the planning of a new terminal through the next stages, including detailed design of a terminal and related marine facilities and will work with the ferry operators to develop a transition plan.

To make this new Wellington ferry terminal a success will require the close cooperation of all parties, including Government. Significant funding is likely to be required, both for the terminal/marine facilities and the related transport infrastructure to connect onto the State Highway. Both Greater Wellington and Horizons Regional Council are committed to delivering a successful outcome and will do whatever we can to ensure this can be achieved and look forward to working with the ferry operators on this exciting development.

We would welcome the opportunity to discuss this further with you and to working collaboratively towards a successful outcome for NZ.

Ngā mihi



**Daran Ponter**  
Chair  
Greater Wellington Regional Council  
DD: 027 454 0689



**Rachel Keedwell PhD**  
Chair  
Horizons Regional Council  
DD: 021 177 2790

cc: Brian Corban, Chair, KiwiRail  
Greg Miller, CE, KiwiRail

## By email

8 May 2020

File Ref: EXTR-9-907

Hon Grant Robertson  
Minister of Finance  
Parliament Buildings  
Wellington

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Tēnā koe Minister

## Budget 2020: Inter-Island Ferries

I am writing you in your capacity as Minister of Finance, conscious that you are also a Kiwirail Shareholding Minister and the MP for Wellington Central.

I know you are busy and conscious that the decision-making process for a new ferry terminal for Wellington is not high on your priority list.

You will be aware that KiwiRail has withdrawn from the multi-party process for resolving the location of the ferry terminal at Kaiwharawhara. Greater Wellington has been informed that KiwiRail is looking to go down the “shovel ready” path to unilaterally pursue its preferred option under some form of compulsory acquisition, which would involve the loss of the Port’s container operations and the many direct and indirect jobs that come with this facility. That option was the lowest ranked on the basis of the multi-party processes’ agreed methodology.

Greater Wellington Regional Council would not ordinarily comment on KiwiRail operations, but the significant threat to CentrePort operations posed by KiwiRail’s bullish and unsubstantiated proposals compels me to highlight a number of issues. The KiwiRail proposals will:

- Seriously compromise CentrePort’s container operations, the associated 26,000 direct and indirect jobs, and the \$2.5B GDP contribution to the economy – it is likely that the container operations would cease all together to make way for railyards associated with the rail ferry;
- Cost many \$100s of Millions more than continuing with ferry operations at Kaiwharawhara (at a time when I understand that the cost of a new the Port of Marlborough facility is also significantly increasing); and
- Provide no seismic benefits over the Kaiwharawhara location.



Wrapped up in all of this is the significantly increased cost involved in KiwiRail's insistence of:

- Significantly larger vessels; and
- Continuing with a rail enabled ferry – when roll-on/roll-off passenger (ROPAX) ferries will more than likely meet their requirements. Rail enabled ferries are bespoke and significantly more costly than ROPAX vessels and need much more costly land-side facilities. ROPAX vessels are also more readily available on the secondhand market – all the more likely in a post Covid environment.

Greater Wellington continues to advocate for the Kaiwharawhara facility and both CentrePort and Greater Wellington stand ready to advance the development of the Kaiwharawhara site as a priority Covid project should we receive a green light. It would be particularly beneficial if we could use the RMA fast tracking provisions recently announced by Minister Parker.

In order for this to occur, the Government is likely to have to be firm with KiwiRail on the budget available for new ferries and landside facilities, in Budget 2020.

Ngā mihi



**Daran Ponter**  
Chair

DD: 027 454 0689

Attachments: Q and A  
Briefing Paper



## PCG Timeline

### Key date points

19 May 2017	CentrePort and KiwiRail meet with GWRC/NZTA at Kaiwharawhara to outline the concept of MUFT and seek stakeholder support to find a way forward. Subsequent to that GWRC appoints a project manager, G Pollock to form a Stakeholder group.
30 November 2017	First project steering group meeting (management level), chaired by GWRC. KR/ILL, SNZB, WCC, NZTA and CPL in attendance,
27 March 2018	First project control group meeting (CEO/Chair level) chaired by GWRC. KR/ILL, SNZB, WCC, NZTA and CPL in attendance,
2018	PSG level representatives together with a groups of subject matter experts work through the a programme to determine a site preference for a MUFT. KR/ILL active participant. Regular PSG and PCG meetings also held.
25 February 2019	<p>PCG CEO group (all members including KR) make resolution to support preference for Kaiwharawhara site, subject to further detailed seismic assessment work and layout development work to make the solution more elegant. Seismic work still ongoing, but elegant work done. Also acknowledged that each stakeholder's governance level support would be required to progress once the detail BC work had been done.</p> <p>Following this the project team then worked to pull together the detailed design (i.e. more elegant) and summary business case documents.</p> <p>Prior to release of BC documents, CPL, GWRC, Horizons, WCC all resolved to support. Strait indicated they were comfortable. NZTA could not "approve" but noted it (and raised no objection). KR indicated its board had also approved.</p>
16 August 2019	GWRC releases Business Case Summary document and Press release. Other stakeholders release press statements.
9 October 2019	PCG CEO group meeting GWRC chairs, with WCC, CPL, KR, NZTA, SNZB in attendance. Agreed by PCG that site preference to be reviewed based on a revised multi criteria analysis MCA, focus on four sites on or around the port. Noted that PSG level group would then bring this back to PCG group for review and programme business case updated as required.
October to April 2020	PSG level representatives together with a groups of subject matter experts work through another round of MCA analysis and assessments to determine a site preference for a MUFT. KR/ILL active participant. Kaiwharawhara comes through as the preferred
18 March 2020	PSG meeting held on MCA analysis and GWRC advises to stakeholders present that KR has removed itself from process. Remaining stakeholders agree to complete the assessment.

9 April 2020

GWRC releases Press Release that they and Horizons have affirmed their support for the findings of the second assessment process and the preference for Kaiwharawhara.

PROACTIVE RELEASE

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**CENTREPORT, WELLINGTON**

**BRIEFING FOR MINISTER OF FINANCE- MAY 2020**

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PROACTIVE MEDIA RELEASE  
DRAFT

## 1 INTRODUCTION

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For the past three years, CentrePort has been working on a proposed new interisland ferry terminal for Wellington together with its shareholders – the Greater Wellington Regional Council and Horizons Regional Council – and KiwiRail, StraitNZ Bluebridge, the New Zealand Transport Agency and Wellington City Council.

The parties formed a joint Project Control Group to assess various locations for a new ferry terminal using Treasury’s Better Business Case framework.

The Group’s assessment, using the Better Business case methodology, has twice resulted in Kaiwharawhara being ranked (subject to detailed seismic assessment) as the preferred location in Wellington for either a new Multi-User Ferry Terminal (MUFT) or co-located Single User Ferry Terminals (SUFT) for the two ferry operators – KiwiRail-owned Interislander and the StraitNZ Bluebridge service - for the next 20-30 years. (In future other locations may become preferable.)

In March KiwiRail withdrew support for Kaiwharawhara and withdrew from the process. However, each of the five remaining members have remained in the Group.

This is a significant infrastructure decision of both regional and national importance with material implications for a wide range of stakeholders.

Any decision on a new interisland ferry terminal in Wellington should be supported by a transparent and robust process based on evidence and a clear understanding of the costs and benefits for all stakeholders of the various options.

CentrePort and its shareholders request the Minister’s support for a robust, evidence-based decision-making process.

This is a decision of regional and national importance that needs to be supported by a robust and disciplined process.

## 2 BACKGROUND

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CentrePort and KiwiRail have worked closely for the past 60 years on the interisland ferry terminal at Kaiwharawhara, including multiple upgrades to the infrastructure in the 1970s and 1980s.

In more recent years, our two companies have been collaborating on a possible new Wellington ferry terminal and associated infrastructure.

In 2017, CentrePort and KiwiRail approached the Greater Wellington Regional Council, Horizons Regional Council, StraitNZ Bluebridge, the New Zealand Transport Agency and Wellington City Council to form a Project Control Group to develop the business case for a new ferry terminal in Wellington.

The Group, chaired by the Greater Wellington Regional Council, adopted the Treasury Better Business Case framework to develop its business case and assessed various locations for a new terminal.

Using this methodology, the Group agreed last August that, subject to confirmation of feasibility in light of detailed seismic assessment, Kaiwharawhara was the preferred location for either a new Multi-User Ferry Terminal (MUFT) or co-located Single User Ferry Terminals (SUFT) for the two ferry operators – KiwiRail-owned Interislander and StraitNZ Bluebridge for the next 20-30 years. (Thereafter other locations may become preferable, though this would depend on a range of other factors.)

However, KiwiRail commissioned GNS to provide a brief concept paper on the potential impact of a 7.8 magnitude earthquake on Kaiwharawhara as part of their development of an interim terminal in Wellington.

The GNS concept paper does not provide a detailed natural hazards comparison of the other locations considered by the Project Control Group. Neither does it include an assessment of probability, nor seismic risk based on the type of ships used at the terminal, noting that roll-on, roll-off ships would result in terminal infrastructure with a lower seismic risk than rail-capable ships.

Following receipt of the GNS paper KiwiRail raised its concerns with the Group. In response to KiwiRail's concerns, the Group repeated its assessment of the options, including two additional options, using the Better Business Case methodology but utilising revised criteria.

In March, KiwiRail withdrew its support for Kaiwharawhara as a preferred location and withdrew from the Group. The Group's assessment, using the Better Business case methodology, resulted in Kaiwharawhara being ranked, again and by a considerable margin, as the preferred location.

Earlier this month, both GWRC and Horizons re-confirmed their commitment to Kaiwharawhara. CentrePort shares that commitment. Neither Strait Shipping nor NZTA have expressed any objection to it.

The Project Control Group has undertaken a high-level assessment of seismic risks of all the short-listed locations as part of the assessment process under the BBC methodology. Detailed seismic analysis for the Kaiwharawhara land is also nearing completion. Meanwhile, KiwiRail has proposed an alternative location which is ranked lowest by the Project Control Group's methodology.

### 3 IMPLICATIONS AND NEEDS

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The decision on a new ferry terminal for Wellington is a significant infrastructure decision of both regional and national importance.

The decision must be supported by a transparent and robust process based on evidence and a clear understanding of the costs and benefits for all stakeholders of the various options.

Alternatives to Kaiwharawhara present significant and costly impacts for CentrePort's operations and for importers and exporters across central New Zealand who rely on the Port as the most cost-effective route to market, with CentrePort providing the lowest cost to market for 60% of containerised trade in Central New Zealand.

Independent research shows that CentrePort supports 26,000 jobs and \$2.5 billion of annual GDP for central New Zealand.

This is made possible by the current configuration of the port including its container operations.

Any decisions that compromise this would have serious implications for importers and exporters who would incur substantial increases in their inland transportation costs via other Ports. This was observed after the 2016 earthquake. Once CentrePort's container cranes were operational 10 months later nearly all the freight returned to the port.

Alternatives to Kaiwharawhara would also have significant implications for the multi-billion dollar *Let's Get Wellington Moving* initiative and Wellington's urban development plans and aspirations.

In summary, the decision about a new ferry terminal for Wellington is not a standalone issue. It is a decision of regional and national importance with implications for the national supply chain, the main trunk network, State Highway 1 and services in and out of the region.

## APPENDIX: CENTREPORT FACTS AND FIGURES

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### *About CentrePort*

CentrePort is a key strategic asset for central New Zealand. It facilitates economic growth in regions in the North and South Islands through safe and efficient movement of cargo.

With a staff of 240 and working with a range of partners CPL provides supply chain solutions and expertise including the CentreRail Service with KiwiRail, and a network of inland cargo hubs.

CentrePort facilitates international and coastal shipping, the inter-island Cook Strait ferry services, and land and aviation fuel supplies.

### *CentrePort's Financial Performance*

The underlying profit after tax and before earthquake impacts, changes in fair value and realisation of financial instruments for the Financial Year 2019 was \$16.6m reflecting a 40 per cent improvement on the previous year.

CentrePort's profitability has reflected the continued growth in trades apart from the disruption of the November 2016 Kaikoura Earthquake.

Financial Year	CPL NPAT
2019	\$16.6m
2018	\$11.8m
2017	\$8.6m
2016	\$13.3m
2015	\$12.3m

### *Dividends to shareholders*

The serious impacts of the November 2016 Kaikoura earthquakes meant CentrePort did not pay a dividend in FY17 as it focused on repair and recovery operations. The Port quickly returned to pre-quake volumes and financial performance and was able to declare a \$2m dividend for FY18, two years ahead of schedule. A \$4m dividend was declared for FY19.

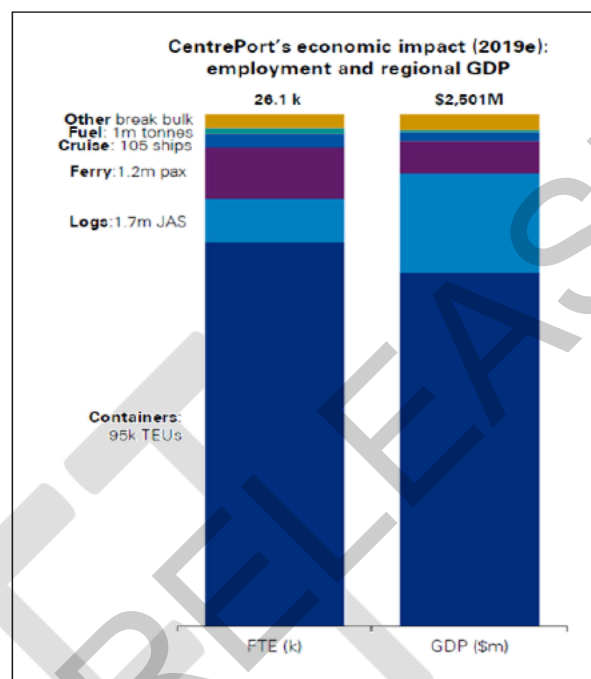
### *CentrePort's contribution to the central New Zealand economy*

Berl research shows that in 2019 CentrePort-related activity contributed \$2.5b to Central New Zealand and supported over 26,000 jobs.

This includes:

- the jobs of CentrePort's customers
- indirect jobs generated along the value chain
- expenditure by visitors in the region and GDP impact of these activities.

Berl forecasts the CentrePort contribution to GDP to grow to \$3b by 2022 and activity-related employment to more than 36,000 jobs.



### *CentrePort Cargo Volumes*

**Containers:** The containers business has continued to bounce back from the impacts of the 2016 Kaikoura Earthquake.

- The quake put the Port's two ship-to-shore cranes out for 10 months, significantly denting volumes. Since the cranes came back into operation there has been continued growth.
- Container volumes grew 11 per cent in FY19, with 93,846 twenty-foot equivalent units (TEUs). CentrePort's platform for growth strategy is paying dividends, and the container business received a significant boost with the securing of the ANZEX shipping service which gives our customers direct access to the north Asian markets (China and Korea). The new service, which starts in June, increases our container shipping services from three to four.

**Logs:** Volumes have doubled in the past six years, and growth is predicted to continue.

- In FY19 a record 1,709,435 JAS (Japanese Agricultural Standard) was exported. This was a 27 per cent increase on the previous year, led by strong demand from China.
- Volumes will be impacted by COVID-19, but medium-to-long term outlook remains strong.

**Fuel:** For the past three financial years CentrePort has hit 1m tonnes through its fuel facilities.

- Based at Seaview on the Lower Hutt side of Wellington harbour, fuel is the "quiet cargo" for CentrePort and the Seaview wharf facility is a critical asset for the region.
- The million tonnes through Seaview provides nearly all of the fuel for the lower North Island. In addition, CentrePort facilitates all the aviation fuel supplies for Wellington International Airport from Burnham wharf.



***Bulk cargoes/cruise:*** CentrePort received a record 112 cruise ship visits in the 2019/20 cruise season, beating the previous record mark of 110 visits in 2018/20. Vehicle volumes have been consistently around the 25,000-unit mark for the past three years.

### ***Lifelines/resilience***

CentrePort is a recognised Lifelines utility and plays an important role in the recovery of Wellington after a natural disaster event. The importance of CentrePort was recognised in the work of the Wellington Lifelines Group and the business case developed by that group contained a number of projects for CentrePort.

The COVID-19 crisis provides further evidence of CentrePort's value as a 'lifelines' asset for the central New Zealand economy. Deemed an essential service, CentrePort has continued to operate bringing in essential supplies and fuel and facilitating exports to global markets.

- CentrePort effectively connects State Highway 1 between the North and South Islands and provides an export connection to the rest of the world.
- In the event of an emergency, fuel facilitated through CentrePort assets would be essential to supply rescue equipment in the immediate response. In an earthquake, ferries would also play an important part in the response, as a key supply chain due to the expected loss of roading.

### ***Regeneration***

CentrePort is developing an ambitious regeneration plan that will deliver our vision of a 21st century logistics supply chain asset to benefit the business, the community and the New Zealand economy. The multi-user-ferry-terminal is part of the Port's regeneration planning.

- The recovery from the damage/destruction caused by the 2016 Kaikoura earthquake provided CentrePort with the opportunity to create the assets and infrastructure appropriate to serve the economy and community in the decades to come. The Port finalised its insurance claims related to the Kaikoura earthquakes for a total of \$667.2m net of deductibles.
- The planning, utilising United Nations Development Programme goals is considering a variety of factors including safety, resilience, the environment, technology, risk management, the needs of the community, and the regional and national economies.

### ***The Environment***

CentrePort is committed to environmental sustainability and is a key element of the regeneration plan for the port.

- Our award-winning Waste Minimisation Project operating since 2017 has expanded and is now recycling material from other organisations.
- The Port is developing carbon reduction targets and has several actions already underway including investing in electric cargo moving vehicles.
- The CentrePort Environmental Management System is now a certified programme under the accredited EnviroMark scheme.

## By e-mail

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23 December 2020

File Ref: EXTR-9-1073

Hon David Parker  
Minister for the Environment  
Parliament Buildings  
Wellington

Hon Grant Robertson  
Minister for Infrastructure  
Parliament Buildings  
Wellington

Hon Dr David Clark  
Minister for State-Owned  
Enterprises  
Parliament Buildings  
Wellington

Tēnā koutou Ministers

### Wellington Ferry Terminal

As you will be aware, KiwiRail has now agreed to refocus on locating the new ferry terminal at Kaiwharawhara. This significant change of direction is unanimously supported by the key members of the Future Ports Forum – Greater Wellington Regional Council (**GW**), Wellington City Council, and CentrePort. This decision paves the way for the parties to start planning in earnest for the development of the Kaiwharawhara site in anticipation of the new rail ferries.

GW believes that it is incumbent upon ourselves, the Government, and Wellington City Council to now commence the implementation of the new ferry terminal at Kaiwharawhara, which is in both regional and national interests. As owners, regulators, and representatives, we have an obligation and an opportunity to secure the best possible outcome for our community and New Zealand as a whole.

The provision of a new ferry facility at Kaiwharawhara is a huge undertaking which brings a range of complications. Not least of these is the time needed to navigate consenting processes. KiwiRail's new ferries are due to arrive in 2024/25, which provides less than four years to plan, design, consent, and construct a new world-class terminal. There are a range of issues that will need to be addressed and resolved – seismic resilience of new buildings and facilities, potential impacts on Kaiwharawhara stream and the coastline (including those from reclamation), transport access, and navigational safety. These are complex issues in which a wide range of stakeholders, including mana whenua, hold an interest.

CentrePort is also working with KiwiRail (and other members of the Future Ports Forum) on a phased approach to the design, planning, consenting, and funding/financing of the ferry terminal facilities at Kaiwharawhara to meet KiwiRail's needs, as well as the potential development of additional ferry terminal facilities for use by other operators at the site. In essence, there will be a parallel process to deliver the multi-user terminal.

In our recent Briefing to Incoming Ministers, GW sought a commitment from the Government to support fast-track consenting for a new ferry facility, to align completion with the arrival of the new ferries. We believe that the Government support will be the only practical option to enable delivery of the new terminal in the timeframe required. There are essentially two options: either approving this project for fast-track consenting or passing specific enabling legislation, such as the one used for Arras Tunnel. We would support either option, and ask you to seek urgent advice from officials on these options. We note that the *Covid-19 Recovery (Fast-Track Consenting) Act 2020* is scheduled for repeal in mid-2022.

With your agreement, we would be happy to work with your officials to better define the rationale for, and the issues to be covered in, any legislative support so that you might advance a paper to Cabinet.

We would be happy to meet to discuss this matter further.

Ngā mihi



Daran Ponter  
**Chair**

**CC:**

Mayor Andy Foster, Wellington City Council  
Barbara McKerrow, Chief Executive Wellington City Council  
Lachie Johnstone, Chair CentrePort Ltd  
Sir Brian Roche, Chair Waka Kotahi NZTA  
Brian Corban, Chair Kiwirail

Hon Grant Robertson, MP for Wellington Central  
Paul Eagle, MP for Rongotai  
Greg O'Connor, MP for Ōhāriu

12 August 2022

Hon Grant Robertson  
Minister of Finance  
Minister for Infrastructure  
Email: [g.robertson@ministers.govt.nz](mailto:g.robertson@ministers.govt.nz)

Hon Michael Wood  
Minister of Transport  
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Tēnā kōrua Ministers

We are writing to inform you of progress that has been made by the Wellington Future Port Forum in planning for the future development of a multi-user ferry precinct for Wellington.

The Future Port Forum partners – Greater Wellington Regional Council, Waka Kotahi, Wellington City Council, KiwiRail, StraitNZ, and CentrePort - have been working together with iwi partners Taranaki Whānui and Ngāti Toa (as well as the Ministry of Transport as an observer) to ensure a coordinated approach to the future development of Cook Strait ferry facilities in Wellington.

Through the project the partners have come to see the multi-user ferry precinct as an integrated transport project for the region and the nation. The Cook Strait ferries form a key part of State Highway 1 connecting the North and South islands.

With that in mind we have agreed on a vision that will consolidate both Cook Strait ferry services (Interislander and Bluebridge) into a single precinct at Kaiwharawhara, with direct access to State Highway One and the main trunk railway line. This will not only enhance both services' resilience and efficiency, but also create opportunities to enhance infrastructure, the economy, and the environment – a vision that can deliver significant benefits locally, regionally, and nationally.

For Wellington the precinct concept looks well beyond ferry facilities and creates opportunities and enables linkages with Let's Get Wellington Moving initiatives including mass rapid transit and public transport and walking and cycling projects along Hutt Road. It also opens up possibilities relating to city shaping and future urban development in the Wellington inner harbour area.

Through a master planning process conducted over 2021/22, the partners have developed future-proof design options for a multi-user ferry precinct at Kaiwharawhara. This work is summarised in an update report which is attached for your information.

In progressing this work, we have been mindful of the immediate priority to ensure timely completion of terminal facilities to service the new KiwiRail Interislander ferries from 2025. Our preferred option enables the delivery of the KiwiRail's terminal without additional cost or delay, while maintaining flexibility so that a potential future multi-user precinct development can be accommodated.

While our preferred option will require further design refinement, we have decided to put that work on hold until the design process for the KiwiRail terminal is substantially completed, allowing KiwiRail to focus its attention on the current project.

The future development of a multi-user precinct will have consenting and funding implications, which reinforces the need to take time and engage widely and appropriately. The next phase of the project will involve working with Mana Whenua and the Crown, as well as other stakeholders, to address these issues.

We recognise the need for deep, meaningful engagement with the Crown to identify and maximise the potential future benefits of the project and connections with other national initiatives. It is already clear that the second phase of the precinct development will only happen with substantive funding from the Crown. With that in mind the Future Port Forum partners seek your agreement for Crown representatives to become active members of the Forum as we progress the project through the next phases. This may include involvement from the Ministry of Transport, the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development and the Infrastructure Commission. The Forum will be looking to reconvene early in 2023 and we would assess at that point when Crown representation would be required.

Nāku iti noa, nā



**Nigel Corry**

Te Tumu Whakarae | Chief Executive

On behalf of Wellington Future Port Forum

**Attachment:** MUFP Summary Report – June 2022

cc:

Anthony Delaney (CE CentrePort)

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# Wellington Multi-User Ferry Precinct: Summary Report – June 2022

## Overview

This report summarises the progress that has been made by the Wellington Future Port Forum in planning for the future development of a multi-user ferry precinct for Wellington that will not only deliver benefits from the co-location of Cook Strait ferry services but enable wider opportunities deeply connected with other transport projects and urban development.

The Future Port Forum partners – Greater Wellington Regional Council, Waka Kotahi, Wellington City Council, KiwiRail, StraitNZ, and CentrePort - are working together with iwi partners Taranaki Whānui and Ngāti Toa to ensure a coordinated approach to create outcomes for the advantage of a wide range of stakeholders from the local community to business and the Crown.

The consolidation of ferry services at Kaiwharawhara, with direct access to State Highway One, will enhance both services' resilience and efficiency. But the impacts reach well beyond those interests. It creates opportunities to enhance infrastructure, the economy, and the environment.

The link across Cook Strait is the 'wet' section of State Highway One and the connection of the Main Trunk Railway between the North and South Islands, critical to keeping freight and people moving across New Zealand. Approximately \$20b worth of cargo and more than a million people are moved across this stretch of water annually. This project strengthens that link for the advantage of the whole country, boosting national economic growth.

Protecting and improving the environment benefits everyone. Channelling heavy traffic directly on and off State Highway One into the precinct will reduce congestion and lower carbon emissions, while also improving safety and enhancing New Zealand's supply chain.

The current focus is on completion of the facilities for the new KiwiRail Interisland ferries due to arrive from 2025. That is a building block in the longer-term precinct vision – a vision that can deliver significant positive outcomes locally, regionally, and nationally.

Through a master planning process conducted over 2021/22, the partners have created future-proof design options that enable the delivery on the KiwiRail requirements for 2025 while maintaining flexibility so that potential future needs can be accommodated.

As a result of this work, the partners have agreed on an emerging preference for the multi-user ferry precinct. This will require further design refinement, but that work will be put on hold until later this year when the design process for the KiwiRail terminal is expected to be substantially completed.

The future development of a multi-user precinct will have consenting and funding implications, which reinforces the need to take time and engage widely and appropriately. The next phase of the project will involve working with Manu Whenua and the Crown, as well as other stakeholders, to address these issues.

The precinct concept looks well beyond ferry facilities and creates opportunities and enables linkages with Let's Get Wellington Moving initiatives including mass rapid transit options, as well as opening possibilities relating to urban development on the Wellington waterfront and the wider region. The partners recognise the need for deep, meaningful engagement with key partners such as iwi and the Crown to identify and maximise the potential of these future benefits.

## 1. Introduction

This report summarises progress to date on the Wellington Multi-User Ferry Precinct (MUFP) programme. The MUFP programme is a collaborative initiative involving six partner organisations who make up the Wellington Future Ports Forum – Greater Wellington Regional Council, Waka Kotahi, Wellington City Council, KiwiRail (the operator of the Interislander ferries), StraitNZ (the operator of Bluebridge ferries), and CentrePort. The Forum is working together with iwi partners Taranaki Whānui and Ngāti Toa to ensure a coordinated approach to create outcomes for the advantage of wide range of stakeholders from the local community to business to the Crown.

Through a master planning process conducted over 2021/22, the partners have assessed a range of options for the future development of a MUFP at Kaiwharawhara. This work has progressed in parallel with KiwiRail's plans for the redevelopment of its Kaiwharawhara terminal to accommodate new Interislander ferries that will come into service from 2025.

The partners have created future-proof MUFP design options and identified an emerging preference that enables delivery on the KiwiRail requirements for 2025 while maintaining flexibility so that potential future needs can be accommodated.

The emerging preference for the MUFP will require further design refinement, but that work will be put on hold until the design process for the KiwiRail terminal is completed later this year.

This report outlines the steps that have been taken to develop the preferred and future-proofed option for the MUFP, and the steps that will be needed to progress the development of the MUFP once the programme is reactivated. It includes the following sections:

- **Background** – a summary of previous work, the MUFP workstreams, and the KiwiRail iReX project
- **MUFP Masterplan** – the process followed and conclusions reached from the MUFP Masterplan exercise, including the assessment of options, futureproofing, and an outline of the emerging preferred option for the MUFP
- **Benefits and funding** – an assessment of the expected benefits from the MUFP, and potential funding sources
- **Next Steps** – an outline of the steps that will be needed to progress the planning and development of the MUFP

## 2. Background

### MUFP programme

The MUFP programme had its origins in the Cook Strait Connectivity Programme Business Case (PBC), which was completed in 2019. The PBC investigated a range of options for future Cook Strait ferry terminal facilities in Wellington, and concluded that the best option involved the consolidation of ferry operations into a multi-user ferry precinct (MUFP) at Kaiwharawhara, that could accommodate the co-location of KiwiRail Interislander and Strait NZ Bluebridge ferries within a single precinct.

The partners reached agreement on this recommendation in 2020 and established a programme of work to progress planning for the MUFP.

Three investment objectives were agreed:

- **Resilience:** To substantially strengthen the recovery and response of the Wellington Ferry System following a significant natural event
- **Experience:** To maximise the quality of the Wellington Ferry Terminal infrastructure, access and services for Ferry users and the Wider Wellington public
- **Economy:** To optimise asset investment decision making to support future ferry investment, freight efficiency, tourist spend, urban regeneration, and port operations

The MUFP programme has been overseen by a Steering Group (Chief Executives and senior executives from the partner organisations), with support from a Working Group (senior officials and technical experts from the partner organisations) and an independent programme director.

The programme included the following workstreams:

- **MUFP Masterplan** – this workstream reviewed a range of options for the design for the MUFP at Kaiwharawhara, including components relating to marine infrastructure; reclamation; terminal, cargo and vehicle parking areas, transport connections into and out of the site. The Masterplan process and conclusions are discussed in more detail in Section 3.
- **Consenting strategy** – this considered the consenting issues that would need to be addressed. The primary focus of this work was on the consents required for the first stage, the KiwiRail single-user terminal (SUT), as discussed in more detail below. As a result of this work, it was agreed that an application for Fast-track consenting should be progressed.
- **Transport business case** – this workstream was initiated to determine the most appropriate roading connections to a new MUFP, and to ensure that any future applications for Waka Kotahi funding for those connections was supported by a robust business case.
- **Iwi engagement** – this workstream recognised the need for new ferry terminal facilities at Kaiwharawhara to be planned, designed and implemented in partnership with mana whenua. An iwi advisory group with membership from Taranaki Whānui and Ngāti Toa was established in August 2021. The primary focus of this group to date has been on the KiwiRail SUT. Iwi representatives also joined the MUFP Steering Group from August 2021.
- **Benefits and funding** – this workstream was established in recognition of the significant amount of investment that will be needed for the MUFP, and the need to identify how it will be funded. It included an assessment of the expected benefits that the MUFP will deliver, and potential beneficiaries and funders. This work is summarised in Section 4 below.



## **KiwiRail iReX project**

Concurrently, KiwiRail was finalising its plans to purchase two new rail-enabled ferries to replace its aging fleet, via the Inter-island Resilient Connection (iReX) project. This contract was signed in June 2021, and the first of the ferries is due to arrive in 2025. The new vessels require the construction of new terminal facilities at Picton and Wellington.

As part the iReX project, KiwiRail developed a concept design for a new single-user terminal (SUT) at Kaiwharawhara, which includes:

- A new terminal building with access to the ferry via an elevated passenger walkway
- Ground improvements to increase the terminal's resilience
- A new rail yard, and back shunt to marshal freight on and off the ferries, with connections between the existing rail network and a new linkspan to connect to the ferries
- Changes to the existing marshalling yard, to allow for commercial and private vehicles

Design work on iReX progressed in parallel with the MUFPP Masterplan programme during 2021, with a focus on applying for a referral for fast-track consenting under the COVID-19 Recovery (Fast-track Consenting) Act 2020. The referral application was approved in February 2022.

In late 2021 it became apparent that agreement on option assessment for the MUFPP was unlikely to be completed ahead of the deadlines for submitting the fast-track application. At that time, the focus shifted towards ensuring that the KiwiRail single-user terminal (SUT) design was future-proofed to enable the future development of potential MUFPP options. This process, which has enabled the SUT design process to be decoupled from the MUFPP, is outlined in more detail below.

### 3. MUFP Masterplan

#### Approach

The MUFP partners commenced work on a Masterplan for the MUFP in early 2021. Its purpose was to develop an initial design for the MUFP at Kaiwharawhara that would deliver the investment objectives, including components relating to marine infrastructure; reclamation; terminal, cargo and vehicle parking areas, transport connections into and out of the site.

The following outcomes were sought from the MUFP masterplan:

- Allow for all transport multi-modes to have a connection to and from MUFP.
- Ensure co-location of both Interislander and Bluebridge ferries.
- Allow for the interdependencies with the wider Wellington transport context including the Let's Get Wellington Moving (LGWM) programme.
- Achieve the layouts that enable the most efficient logistical servicing of the MUFP.
- Ensure that the 'discharge' into the transport networks does not create significant short to medium term investment problems for the city.
- Masterplan is compatible with Waka Kotahi Business case approach.
- Masterplan and its staging is consentable.

The Masterplan process identified a long list of possible layout options<sup>1</sup> which were subsequently refined into a short list<sup>2</sup>. These short-listed options were then assessed against the MUFP investment objectives, and a range of evaluation criteria. This assessment was undertaken by specialists from a range of disciplines, including planning, ecology, construction, resilience and transport via a multi criteria assessment. An assessment of the impacts of the short-listed options on Te Ao Māori was also undertaken.

#### Initial assessment

The assessment of short-listed options was completed in September 2021. The key findings from the assessment included:

- Options that involved a high degree of shared facilities between the two ferry operations were not considered practical due to their significant operational and commercial constraints, despite offering advantages in terms of reduced reclamation
- All short-listed options included a new northern road connection. The assessment found that options that included access via a new northern motorway interchange generally did not perform as well as options with access to Hutt Road.
- All options scored poorly from an ecology perspective due to impacts on the harbour and Kaiwharawhara Stream
- Options with greater reclamation result in greater ecological and Te Ao Māori impacts

The short list assessment concluded that there were no 'standout' options. However, by eliminating the worst-performing options, an initial preferred option emerged. This was referred to as Option 9A, which is illustrated in Figure 1 below. It provided for:

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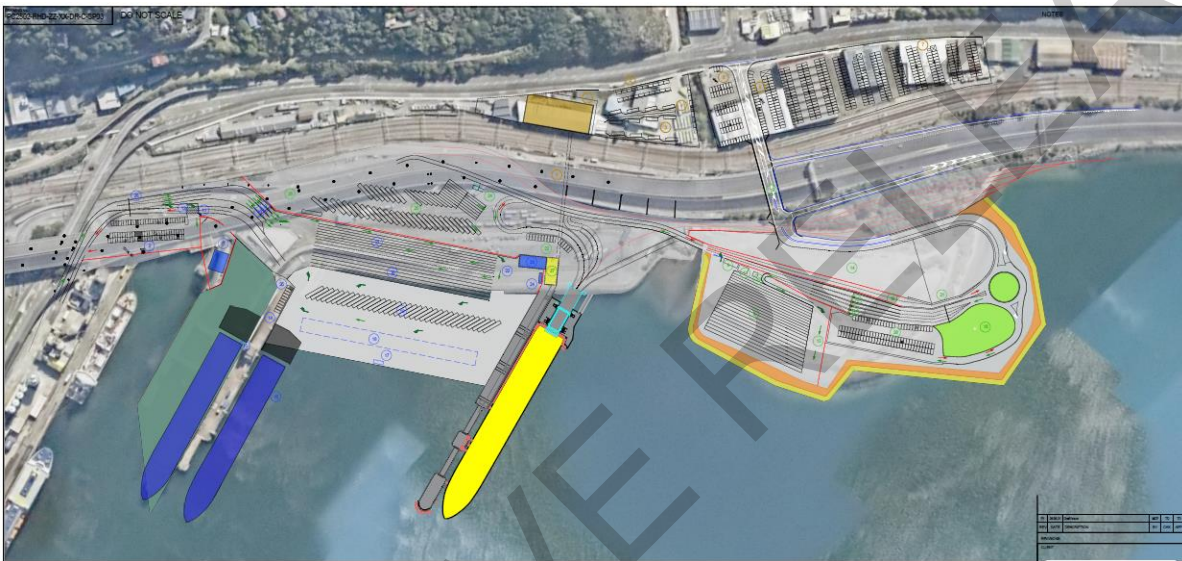
<sup>1</sup> MUFP Master Plan, Long List Report 131021 w appendix

<sup>2</sup> MUFP Master Plan, Short List Report Final 19\_10\_21

- A shared terminal on Hutt Road with opportunities for land use, public transport and active mode integration.
- Separate yard areas and marshalling facilities to minimise operational disruptions and commercial sensitivities.
- A new road connection via an overbridge to Hutt Road, and direct access to the motorway via north facing ramps.

Option 9A would involve reclamation, which is largely contained within the Commercial Port Area and about the knoll to the north of Kaiwharawhara Stream.

**Figure 1: Preferred option from initial Masterplan assessment, September 2021 (Option 9A)**



### Additional options

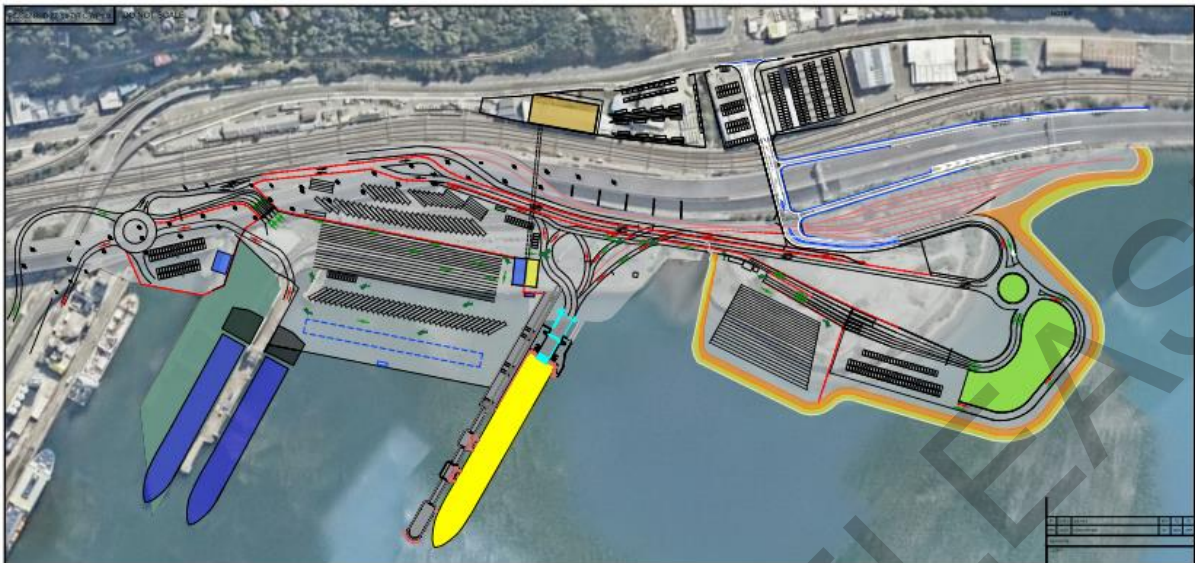
In reviewing Option 9A, stakeholders raised a number of issues which required further investigation. These included:

- The need to ensure ingress and egress for both ferry operators from both the existing southern access (Aotea Quay) and a new northern connection. This would provide greater resilience for the precinct and also enable wider benefits on the transport system.
- Connectivity from the shared terminal on Hutt Road
- Opportunities to minimise reclamation, particularly in areas outside of the commercial port area
- How to construct the option in the midst of a live, ongoing ferry operation (the KiwiRail SUT)

To address these issues, two additional options were developed by the Masterplan project team. Both options address the access issue by providing for a north/south two-way public road through the site. An assessment of these additional options (referred to as Option 9A Refined, and Option 12) is reported in **Attachment A**.

Option 9A Refined was developed with a view to minimising environmental and consenting risks. It retained the shared terminal on Hutt Road (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: Option 9A Refined



Option 12 was a new option which placed more emphasis on addressing operational issues by separating the terminal facilities and relocating the Bluebridge berth facilities to a new reclaimed area north of the knoll.

Both options scored more favourably against the investment objectives than the previous options. However, it also concluded that both options still include significant risk in regard to consenting and environmental effects.

### Futureproofing assessment

In taking the time to assess the additional MUFPP options outlined above, the MUFPP partners acknowledged the need to take the necessary steps to enable the KiwiRail iReX project to progress, especially in relation to the design and consenting timetable for the SUT at Kaiwharawhara. To facilitate this, a future-proofing exercise was undertaken to consider the steps that would be needed to futureproof the SUT design to enable the future development of the MUFPP.

The KiwiRail SUT design team undertook an assessment of the MUFPP concept designs for both Option 9A Refined and Option 12 alongside the SUT design, to determine the changes that would be needed to the SUT to accommodate the MUFPP, either now (before SUT construction) or later (once the SUT was in place). The assessment provided estimates of the additional costs and time delays associated with those changes.

The initial assessment concluded that both of the two MUFPP options are feasible, but Option 9A Refined would be significantly more costly and disruptive. It estimated that Option 9A Refined would cost approximately \$55M to \$65M to futureproof now, with a 12-month delay to the SUT, which would mean missing the new ship arrival deadline. Alternatively, implementing Option 9A Refined in future, once the SUT is in place, would cost an additional \$185M.

In contrast, Option 12 would involve about \$20M additional expenditure in the future but does require not any futureproofing costs now. Option 12 would also have no significant impact on SUT operations, and would reduce vehicle conflicts, and offer a better user experience.

In terms of a futureproofing path and operability, Option 12 is preferred, although it does present greater consenting challenges. Further work was therefore undertaken to refine the concept design for Option 12, which identified a number of possible design refinements that could potentially improve its performance and reduce its impacts. A summary of this work is included in **Attachment A** (as Appendix B).

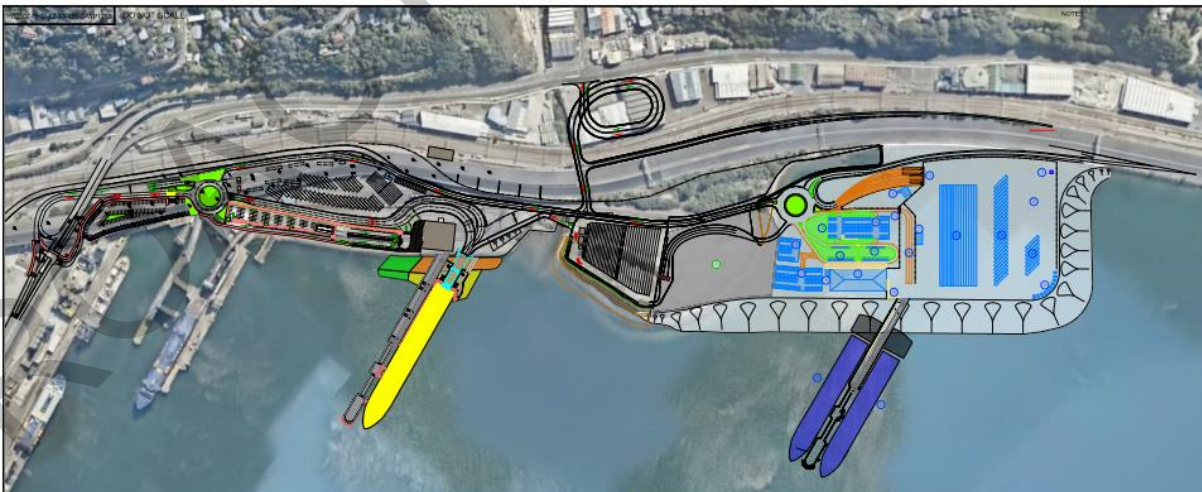
The refinements to Option 12 were presented as two sub-variants (12A and 12B) using Option 12 as a base. The only difference between the sub-variants is that Option 12A proposes an elevated roundabout that connects a Hutt Road access to the knoll and Option 12B proposes an elevated signalised T junction. All other design elements of 12A and 12B are the same and are referenced as '12+'.

Option 12+ includes the following elements:

- Less, or no reclamation work on the knoll compared to Option 12 due to the relocation of the large downward looping roundabout, allowing for greater space flexibility for operational activity.
- Introduction of a two way through road across the MUFPP, allowing access and egress from the Aotea Quay (south) and Hutt Road (north) for both operators in the MUFPP.
- Pedestrian access to both ferry terminals. Walking routes to the KiwiRail / Interislander terminal, or pedestrian access from parking areas on the SUT design are not impacted.
- Better access and reduction in vehicular traffic conflicts between inbound and outbound ferry terminal passengers, mitigated through the introduction of a southern roundabout.
- Increased access and egress with the addition of a SH1 off-ramp access to the site, distributing traffic across a number of entrances and along the new two-way road.
- Ability to construct "off-line" from the SUT

Of the two sub-variants, Option 12B (signalised T-intersection) is preferred as it involves less reclamation and is less expensive. Option 12B is illustrated in Figure 3 below.



**Figure 3: Option 12B**



Note: the spiral access road connecting to Hutt Road is an indicative illustration, and alternative configurations and locations are possible (to be determined through the transport business case process).

## Summary assessment and emerging preference

The design refinements arising from the future-proofing investigations were incorporated into a summary assessment of Masterplan options. These were reported in **Attachment A** and are summarised below. Note that cost estimates are high level indications and have not included costs related to construction and disruption within an operational port, as the SUT will be complete at the time of transition to the MUFP. However, the futureproofing assessment has noted that Option 9A would involve an additional \$185m cost to make later changes to the SUT to accommodate the MUFP.

Option	Option 9A Refined	Option 12+
		
Indicative Cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>\$450M (plus additional \$185M+ to make future changes to SUT)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>\$565M (Option 12B)</li> <li>\$600M (Option 12A)</li> </ul>
Key Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reclamation centred about the knoll and commercial port area</li> <li>Provides joint Hutt Road transport hub to provide walking, cycling, public transport integration</li> <li>Provides two-way connections from south and north</li> <li>Port visual impacts are contained to existing port environment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High level of ability to stage</li> <li>Provides separate terminals that are located away from known seismic risk</li> <li>Provides a compact transport connection with Hutt Road and strategic network</li> <li>Constructability and staging significantly easier within an operational port environment</li> <li>Operationally efficient layout with distinct yard areas for both operators</li> </ul>
Estimated Reclamation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>940,000m<sup>3</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1,980,000m<sup>3</sup> (Option 12B)</li> </ul>
Consentability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High consentability risk due to quantum of reclamation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Very high consentability risk with significant reclamation outside of Commercial Port Area</li> </ul>
Operational Efficiencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High level of operational efficiency with separate areas but need for through movements to access separate areas</li> <li>Vehicles will need to be held to prevent rail conflicts</li> <li>Simple check in procedures with Hutt Road centre – reduced chance of wrong check in</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Very high level of operational efficiency with distinct operator areas</li> <li>Limited conflict with rail and vehicle movements</li> <li>Separate berth areas reduce vessel scheduling risk</li> </ul>

In summary, the Masterplan assessment has concluded that both of the two new options score more favourably against the investment objectives compared to the previous options. However,

both continue to score poorly against environmental impacts, consistent with all previously scored options.

Option 9A Refined performs slightly better than Option 12+ in regard to consentability, social Impact and Te Ao Māori values. If consenting risk and environmental effects are weighed higher than operational efficiency, then Option 9A Refined would perform slightly better than Option 12+.

Option 12+ scores slightly better than Option 9A Refined in terms of efficient operations, largely as a result of reduced conflict between rail and other modes. If operational efficiency is weighed higher than consentability and environmental impacts, this would result in Option 12+ performing slightly better than Option 9A Refined.

Option 9A involves less reclamation and has a lower estimated capital cost than Option 12+. However, this will be offset by the significant additional costs, and associated risks, to accommodate Option 9A Refined once the SUT is in place. Option 12+ is better positioned to enable a staged delivery with lower risk and cost.

While both options are feasible, the Steering Group has identified Option 12+ (and specifically Option 12B) as an emerging preferred option, given its superior operational performance, and the ability to stage its development without the need to significantly alter the SUT. In reaching this conclusion, however, the Steering Group has acknowledged that there are significant consenting and environmental risks linked to the provision of greater operational flexibility through increased reclamation. These issues will need to be addressed in the next phase of the project, as discussed in Section 5 below.

#### 4. Benefits and funding

Development of the MUFP will require sufficient funding to support the significant investment involved. The MUFP project partners commissioned MartinJenkins to undertake an assessment of the potential benefits of the MUFP project and identify the potential funding sources using a first principles funding approach.

The purpose of this work was to assess the nature and size of the expected benefits from the MUFP, and the potential funding sources.

The resulting report is included in **Attachment B**. The assessment concluded that there are many benefits of the MUFP accruing to many different beneficiaries – both public and commercial, and that the MUFP and its benefits are deeply interconnected with other transport projects and urban development plans.

It found that benefits to the ferry operators are not large, and medium-scale benefits to CentrePort are expected. The most significant benefits are public in nature, including:

- improved efficiency and effectiveness of the national freight network
- improved resilience of the national freight network and the link between the North and South Island
- enabled urban development and public use of the Kings Wharf waterfront area, and revitalisation of Thorndon Quay and Hutt Rd precinct
- wider transport benefits unlocked through integration with LGWM projects (e.g. heavy vehicles off Hutt Rd – key corridor for LGWM)
- enabled location of Mass Rapid Transit network infrastructure (stabling, bus layover, charging, driver facilities etc)
- safety benefits. (Port, pedestrians, cyclists, recreational harbour users).

An addendum to the report (also included at **Attachment B**) addressed comments from the Ministry of Transport relating to the allocation of benefits to the Crown.

From a funding perspective, the benefits assessment suggests that the MUFP will require a mixture of local, regional and central government funding, as well as commercial funding. In addition to Waka Kōtahi, there may be a case for other Crown funding based on the broader national benefits. However, affordability and prioritisation for funders will be a challenge.



## 5. Next steps

With the completion of the Masterplan and futureproofing work outlined above, the initial planning phase of the MUFP programme has reached a logical conclusion.

The Masterplan and futureproofing work has identified viable design options for the MUFP (albeit with consenting and funding implications). It has also demonstrated that development of the KiwiRail SUT can proceed without compromising the ability to develop the MUFP in the longer term. This has enabled work on the SUT to be decoupled from the MUFP, which will enable the SUT project to be progressed in a timely manner, and with greater certainty. KiwiRail will report back to the MUFP partners on any changes arising from the SUT detailed design process that may impact on the MUFP.

As outlined above, the MUFP Steering Group has identified an emerging preference for Option 12B. However, there are a number of issues that will need to be addressed before a decision can be made to proceed. These include, but are not limited to, the potential environmental impacts, Te Ao Māori impacts and consenting risks, and agreement on funding. The MUFP also needs to be viewed in its broader context, including the potential to unlock other Wellington projects such as Let's Get Wellington Moving (LGWM).

It is apparent that decisions on the MUFP do not need to be taken now. The key decision triggers relate to events that would require StraitNZ to relocate its Bluebridge ferry operations from Kings Wharf, and the need to ensure continuity of Cook Strait capacity beyond that point. Potential triggers may include:

- The end of the StraitNZ lease at Kings Wharf, and/or a need to accommodate larger Bluebridge vessels
- The need for Kings Wharf to be used for another purpose (e.g. LGWM or waterfront redevelopment)
- The possible need for a new northern access to accommodate future increases in traffic once the SUT is operational (although modelling to date suggests that the SUT can operate with an upgraded Aotea Quay access, this may not be optimal as demands on the network grow).

Although none of these triggers are imminent, development of the MUFP will have long lead times, and the work to date has highlighted a number of significant issues that will need to be addressed and incorporated into a comprehensive business case before any decision to proceed. These include:

- refinement of the concept design and associated costings
- development of a consenting strategy
- completion of a transport business case to determine the best access arrangements
- development of a funding model
- connections with other Wellington projects such as Let's Get Wellington Moving (LGWM).
- mana whenua engagement
- Crown engagement.

The timing of further work on these issues is influenced by the following considerations:

- There is limited value in continuing to refine the MUFP concept design until KiwiRail has completed its SUT design. This is because the SUT detailed design process, which is

expected to be completed in early 2023, may identify issues that need to be addressed as part of the MUFPP concept design.

- Changes to the Resource Management Act and the introduction of a new Natural and Built Environments Bill are due later this year and could make changes to the consenting requirements for projects such as the MUFPP. It would be prudent to wait until that time to develop a consenting strategy for the MUFPP.
- A decision on the preferred LGWM rapid transit option is due in mid-2022, and this may have implications for the future use of Kings Wharf, and the timetable for any changes.
- Progressing the MUFPP in detail now may be premature without funding identified.

The Steering Group has therefore agreed to put further detailed work on the MUFPP on hold until late 2022, by which time the SUT design process will be substantially completed. This will enable more informed decisions on reactivating a programme to progress key workstreams, including refinement of the MUFPP design, development of a consenting strategy, completion of the transport business case, and development of a funding model.

In agreeing to this pause, the Steering Group has agreed that:

- GWRC should maintain a watching brief on the MUFPP programme, with a view to reconvening Steering Group in November 2022 (or earlier should the need arise)
- Further engagement with mana whenua should not be delayed. CentrePort, with support from GWRC, has been requested to meet with mana whenua representatives to update them on the emerging preferred option and determine how best to progress further engagement
- The Ministers of Finance, Infrastructure, and Transport should be advised of the progress to date and the agreed position, with an invitation for central government to take a more formal role in the MUFPP partnership when the programme is reactivated (GWRC will lead this work).

## **Attachments**

**Attachment A:** *Multi User Ferry Precinct Master Plan - Additional Option Development (Commute, 31 May 2022)*

**Attachment B:** *Multi User Ferry Precinct - Assessment of Benefits and Potential Funding Sources (MartinJenkins): Final report (December 202) and Addendum (May 2022)*

PROACTIVE RELEASE