

19 November 2025

OIA25-TW18

s9(2)(a)

s9(2)  
(a)

Via email: s9(2)(a)

Dear s9(2)  
(a),

Thank you for your Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) request, received on 21 October 2025 as follows:

- "1. All formal reports, or briefings, or advice produced by the Infrastructure Commission on the Northern Expressway project - i.e. the RONS project in planning for Whangārei to Port Marsden, Alternative to the Brynderwyn Hills, and Warkworth to Wellsford.*
- 2. All briefings, aide memoire or other papers authored by the Infrastructure Commission and provided to a Minister since January 2024 referencing the cost of the Roads of National Significance (RONS) Programme*
- 3. All briefings, aide memoire or other papers authored by the Infrastructure Commission and provided to a Minister since January 2024 referencing the cost of the Government's land transport plans and possible trade-offs needed to fund them."*

## My Decision

I have interpreted your request to mean formal advice produced by the New Zealand Infrastructure Commission/Te Waihanga (the Commission) during the period from 1 January 2024 to 21 October 2025.

For part 3 of your request, I have interpreted the reference to *Government's land transport plans* as referring to the National Land Transport Programme.

Your request has been addressed in the various parts below.

## Information in Scope

The information identified in scope of your request is listed in the tables below. Where this information has been proactively released, it has been noted in the tables, and I have refused your request for these documents under section 18(d) of the Act as the information requested is publicly available.

*1. All formal reports, or briefings, or advice produced by the Infrastructure Commission on the Northern Expressway project - i.e. the RONS project in planning for Whangārei to Port Marsden, Alternative to the Brynderwyn Hills, and Warkworth to Wellsford.*

Item	Date	Document Description	Decision – Refused under section 18(d) of the Act
1	6 Sept 2024	OIA Response Re: Infrastructure including RoNS	Proactively released: <a href="https://media.umbraco.io/te-waihanga-30-year-strategy/edbj41uo/oia-response-updates-memos-advice-aide-memoirs-briefings-to-the-ministers.pdf">https://media.umbraco.io/te-waihanga-30-year-strategy/edbj41uo/oia-response-updates-memos-advice-aide-memoirs-briefings-to-the-ministers.pdf</a>
2	2 Oct 2024	OIA Response Re: Northland Corridor Media advice	Proactively released: <a href="https://media.umbraco.io/te-waihanga-30-year-strategy/drdeqti1/oia-response-northland-corridor-advice-2-october-2024.pdf">https://media.umbraco.io/te-waihanga-30-year-strategy/drdeqti1/oia-response-northland-corridor-advice-2-october-2024.pdf</a>
3	11 Nov 2024	Weekly update for week starting 11 November 2024 (Ref: TW-2024-508)	Proactively released (refer to page 4): <a href="https://media.umbraco.io/te-waihanga-30-year-strategy/qrhnm4s0/proactive-release-weekly-update-for-the-week-starting-11-november-2024.pdf">https://media.umbraco.io/te-waihanga-30-year-strategy/qrhnm4s0/proactive-release-weekly-update-for-the-week-starting-11-november-2024.pdf</a>
4	January 2025	Paper to support Transport and Infrastructure Select Committee – Briefing on the report of NZIER – Te Tai Tokerau Northland Expressway	Proactively released: <a href="https://media.umbraco.io/te-waihanga-30-year-strategy/psldjbz4/opening-remarks-transport-infrastructure-select-committee-inquiry-northland-rons.pdf">https://media.umbraco.io/te-waihanga-30-year-strategy/psldjbz4/opening-remarks-transport-infrastructure-select-committee-inquiry-northland-rons.pdf</a>

I have also identified a document within scope of this part of your request that was previously proactively released with redactions. I have recently reviewed the redactions in this document and have decided to release this to you in full subject only to withholding of personal information.

5	4 July 2024	Aide Memoire - Cabinet paper consultation: Accelerating Delivery of the Northland Corridor Road of National Significance (Ref: TW-2024-439)	Released subject to information withheld under s9(2)(a) (attached)
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*2. All briefings, aide memoire or other papers authored by the Infrastructure Commission and provided to a Minister since January 2024 referencing the cost of the Roads of National Significance (RONS) Programme*

Item	Date	Document Description	Decision – Refused under section 18(d) of the Act
6	18 Nov 2024	Weekly update for week starting 18 November 2024 (Ref: TW-2024-510)	Proactively released (refer to page 3): <a href="https://media.umbraco.io/te-waihanga-30-year-strategy/h04hseik/proactive-release-weekly-update-for-the-week-starting-18-november-2024.pdf">https://media.umbraco.io/te-waihanga-30-year-strategy/h04hseik/proactive-release-weekly-update-for-the-week-starting-18-november-2024.pdf</a>
7	30 Jan 2025	Aide Memoire - Challenges and opportunities in the transport system (Ref: TW-2025-528)	Proactively released: <a href="https://media.umbraco.io/te-waihanga-30-year-strategy/30fppqpo/proposed-proactive-release-challenges-and-opportunities-in-the-transport-system-tw-2025-528.pdf">https://media.umbraco.io/te-waihanga-30-year-strategy/30fppqpo/proposed-proactive-release-challenges-and-opportunities-in-the-transport-system-tw-2025-528.pdf</a>

*3. All briefings, aide memoire or other papers authored by the Infrastructure Commission and provided to a Minister since January 2024 referencing the cost of the Government's land transport plans and possible trade-offs needed to fund them.*

The New Zealand Transport Agency | Waka Kotahi has independent statutory authority to develop the National Land Transport Programme (NLTP). The Commission has not provided advice on the development of the NLTP and therefore does not hold information within scope of this part of your request. This part of your request is therefore refused under section 18(e) as the information you are seeking does not currently exist.

### Other Publicly Available Information

In addition to the information identified in scope of your request above, the Commission releases information on its website here: <https://tewaihanga.govt.nz/about-us/corporate-documents-official-information/information-releases>.

I refer you to the following specific reports which may be of interest to you:

- PwC New Zealand report commissioned by us to study how pricing currently works in four network infrastructure sectors (land transport, water, telecommunications, and energy) and how well current pricing systems and approaches align with best practice principles for pricing of network infrastructure. This research was published on 17 May 2024: <https://tewaihanga.govt.nz/our-work/research-insights/network-infrastructure-pricing-study>
- Buying time: Toll roads, congestion charges, and transport investment <https://media.umbraco.io/te-waihanga-30-year-strategy/befnqpvg/ri-transport-pricing-report.pdf>
- Recommendations in the draft National Infrastructure Plan [Draft National Infrastructure Plan | Te Waihanga](#)

This reply addresses the information you requested. You have the right to ask the Ombudsman to investigate and review my decision.

Please note that this letter (with your personal details removed) may be published on the Commission's website.

Yours sincerely



Andy Hagan  
**General Manager, Investment**

## Cabinet paper consultation: Accelerating Delivery of the Northland Corridor Road of National Significance

**Date:** 4 July 2024

**Report No:** TW-2024-439

To	Action sought	Deadline
Hon Chris Bishop, Minister for Infrastructure	Provide feedback to the Minister of Transport	5 July 2024

### Attachments

Appendix A: Draft Cabinet paper: Accelerating delivery of the Northland Corridor Road of National Significance

### Contact details

Name	Role	Phone
Brendan Herder	Director Investments and Reviews (Acting)	s9(2)(a)
Andy Hagan	General Manager, Infrastructure Delivery	s9(2)(a)

### Purpose

1. The Minister of Transport has invited you to provide feedback on a draft Cabinet paper which seeks agreement to using an accelerated delivery strategy for the Northland Corridor Road of National Significance (RoNS). The Minister intends to lodge this paper on 18 July for consideration at ECO on 24 July, and has asked for your feedback by 5pm 5 July.
2. This aide memoire outlines our feedback to the New Zealand Transport Agency | Waka Kotahi (NZTA) and the Ministry of Transport on this paper, which may be useful in informing your feedback to the Minister.

### Background

3. This Cabinet paper is seeking in principle agreement to a strategy developed by NZTA for accelerating delivery of the Northland Corridor RoNS (State Highway 1 between Whangārei and Auckland). Construction on phase one of the project is expected to begin in late 2026 with all three phases completed by 2039.

4. The accelerated delivery strategy has two components – a Progressive Public Private Partnership (PPP) model and corridor-specific legislation. The intention is to help speed up land acquisition and land use approval processes, and to provide the confidence the market needs to scale-up to deliver in the proposed timeframe. The paper proposes a report back later in 2024 to provide additional detail on funding and delivery, and to seek agreement to commence the strategy and any policy approvals.

### Comments from Te Waihangā to NZTA and the Ministry of Transport

5. In our feedback to the two transport agencies, we have acknowledged the need to balance rapid progress towards project delivery and ensure that projects are supported by robust planning. We see a risk that the proposed accelerated delivery strategy prioritises speed ahead of other important considerations, and that in doing so it may not deliver the pace or outcomes expected (e.g., the proposed special legislation may or may not be able to move faster than existing reform initiatives, and may also be subject to significant resistance).
6. In summary, our feedback has been that:
  - The paper understates the significance of the RMA changes and Public Works Act (PWA) review underway, and doesn't sufficiently justify why project-specific legislation is required. The RMA amendments and improvements to the package of national direction (under the RMA) will all come into effect from mid-2025, with the PWA review to land by the end of 2025. Together these provide an alternative pathway to expedite infrastructure projects, but will have much broader application.
  - Special legislation timeframes, benefits and risks (relative to broader RMA and PWA reform) should be clarified.
  - There is a risk that any negative public reaction to project specific legislation being introduced could undermine the broader reform processes underway.
  - Land acquisition could alternatively be expedited by investigating paying premiums to incentivise the sale of land for infrastructure projects (and is expected to be in scope for the PWA review).
  - The proposed limitations on appeal rights and the implications for private property rights are unclear and should be clarified.
  - The paper should be more transparent about the uncertainty of current cost estimates, including risks relating to the terrain the highways will traverse and structures required (tunnel and viaduct for the first section). The actual costs could be much higher, and it would not be abnormal for projects of this complexity to cost 50%-100% more than initial estimates.
  - We are concerned about the process by which this project has been identified as being of such high priority for delivery, amid scarce funding. The accelerated delivery strategy seeks further in-principle, and potentially intractable, commitment

to the project ahead of a detailed investment case, which we consider high risk and inconsistent with good practice.

- Overall affordability constraints and the need for careful project selection will not be solved by financing tools, including PPP. There is a risk that the proposed revenue tools (such as tolling and value capture) will fall short of generating the funding required, meaning pressure on the NLTF and Crown funding in the long term.
- Based on historic annual investment by central government and Treasury's projections of future GDP, we estimate this project alone could consume 10% of the total non-maintenance/renewal investment for the next 25 years across all types of central government infrastructure (roads, hospitals, schools, defence, justice, public admin, etc).
- We continue to support the exploration of a progressive/collaborative PPP process for projects of this nature and expect to be involved in further design of the commercial model.

Released Under the Official Information Act 1982