

10 March 2025

J Turner
fyi-request-29984-1af60210@requests.fyi.org.nz

REF: OIA-17556

Dear J Turner

Request made under the Official Information Act 1982

Thank you for your email of 6 February 2025 requesting the following information regarding the Strand Optimisation Project under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

Notes from meetings where the decision to remove the pedestrian crossings was made Any safety evaluation of the effects of removing the crossing Any discussion about the funding requirements of the NLTP and how that applied to this project And any other information that is relevant to the decision to remove these pedestrian crossings.

In your email of 10 February 2025, you clarified that the timeframe for your request was between 6 October 2023 to 10 February 2025.

With respect to question 3 of your request, you also clarified that for “Any discussion about the funding requirements of the NLTP and how that applied to this project”, you are interested in:

“...how the new requirements of the NLTP funding (walking to be funded separately from other projects, and the limited scope of this funding across the NLTP), affected the decision to remove pedestrian crossings from this project. So, any meeting minutes that refer to the funding changes of the NLTP and the scope of this project, both internal and at NZTA board level if relevant.”

The three pedestrian crossings were proposed to be located at the following points on The Strand:

1. Crossing opposite 88 The Strand.
2. Crossing opposite 115 The Strand.
3. Crossing opposite 61 The Strand.

I have numbered each part of your request for convenience and will answer each in turn.

1. Notes from meetings where the decision to remove the pedestrian crossings was made

There were no specific meetings where the decisions were made. Therefore, I am refusing this part of your request under section 18(e) of the Act, as the document alleged to contain the information requested does not exist, or despite reasonable efforts to locate it, cannot be found.

2. Any safety evaluation of the effects of removing the crossing

No safety evaluations were undertaken in removing the proposed pedestrian crossings from the designs, as this would only be required for removing an existing pedestrian crossing. Therefore, I am refusing this part of your request under section 18(e) of the Act.

3. Any discussion about the funding requirements of the NLTP and how that applied to this project

There were no discussions about the funding requirements of the National Land Transport Programme (NLTP) and how that applied to the Strand Optimisation Project. This is because the NLTP funding was not a reason for removing the pedestrian crossings. Therefore, I am refusing this part of your request under section 18(e) of the Act.

4. And any other information that is relevant to the decision to remove these pedestrian crossings.

The following documents fall within the scope of your request and are enclosed:

- Attachment 1 - Excerpt - The Strand Preliminary Design Review Register_Beca and Project Response
- Attachment 2 - Excerpt - The Strand Decision Register
- Attachment 3 - AFC_Modelling_TheStrandSVL_230331
- Attachment 4 - FW Monday 29 April 2024 - Stakeholder meeting notes
- Attachment 5 - 13.05.2024 The Strand Optimisation project

Crossing opposite 88 The Strand

Attachment 1 relates to the crossing opposite 88 the Strand (i.e. opposite the Mirage Apartments), and the first line on Attachment 2 (ID 5). Attachment 2 explains that this proposed crossing was removed as the rail over-bridge is due for replacement as a critical asset in the next 3-5 years. Given the proximity of the crossing, the decision was made to not install the crossing as it would be for short-term use, and it is expected that the bridge replacement will likely look to include a signal at The Strand/Gladstone Road intersection.

Crossing opposite 115 The Strand

Attachment 3 relates to the crossing opposite 115 The Strand, and the second line on Attachment 2. This proposed crossing had the greatest impact on traffic flow as it would be at a merge point. This conclusion was presented in the traffic modelling report in Attachment 3 and the project team decided to remove this proposed crossing.

Crossing opposite 61 The Strand

Attachments 4 and 5 relate to the crossing opposite 61 The Strand. Affected stakeholders opposed this proposed crossing as it would directly impact how their businesses function. However, the project team has reserved the right to still install this crossing in the future if there is demand or safety concerns caused by its exclusion from the design.

Certain information has been withheld in Attachments 3, 4 and 5 under section 9(2)(a) of the Act. This section allows for the withholding of information to protect the privacy of natural persons.

With respect to the information that has been withheld, I do not consider there are any other factors which would render it desirable, in the public interest, to make the information available.

Under section 28 of the Act, you have the right to ask the Ombudsman to review my decision to withhold this information and partially refuse this request. The contact details for the Ombudsman can be located at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz.

If you would like to discuss this reply with NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi (NZTA), please contact the Ministerial Services team, by email to official.correspondence@nzta.govt.nz.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Robyn Elston', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Robyn Elston
National Manager System Design