



20 Viaduct Harbour Avenue, Auckland 1010
Private Bag 92250, Auckland 1142, New Zealand
+64 9 355 3553 | at.govt.nz

10 April 2026

Donna McMillan
fyi-request-34081-38ec9622@requests.fyi.org.nz

Your request for information under the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (LGOIMA) – CAS-1307490-S4D9J9

Kia ora Donna,

I refer to your request for information dated 14 March 2026 regarding the resealing of Melanesia Road between 1 January 2022 to 14 March 2026.

Please find our response below provided by the Road Asset Maintenance and Renewal team and the Asset Transport Network team.

- 1. The reasons chipseal was selected rather than asphalt for the resurfacing.*

Melanesia Road was resurfaced with chip seal as it is the most cost-effective surfacing option.

- 2. Any policies, guidelines, or engineering standards regarding surfacing types for roads carrying buses or acting as arterial routes.*

All road maintenance work and resurfacing work is funded by Auckland Council and the NZ Transport Agency (NZTA).

Auckland Council requires Auckland Transport (AT) to “deliver the best value for every dollar” in accordance with Council’s Procurement policy, which can be viewed here:

<https://www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/en/about-auckland-council/how-we-buy-products-and-services/our-procurement-principles.html>

NZTA funds 51 % of the road maintenance and resurfacing work, and they require AT to comply with NZTA’s Procurement Manual, which in turn requires Auckland Transport to use the most cost-effective treatment options and to achieve best value.

NZTA’s Procurement manual can be viewed here:

<https://www.nzta.govt.nz/resources/procurement-manual>.

NZTA also require AT to comply with their standards and guidelines, which can be viewed here:

<https://www.nzta.govt.nz/resources/nzta-register-network-standards-guidelines>

Furthermore, the road resurfacing budget is based on using chip seal on roads carrying less than 10,000 vehicles per day, as this is the most cost-effective road resurfacing option. If asphalt surfacing was used on all urban roads across the city, Auckland Council would need to provide



additional funding of approximately \$75 million per year, which would not be funded by NZTA as it is not the most cost-effective option.

3. *Traffic volume data, including bus volumes and heavy vehicle counts, used to determine the appropriate surfacing.*

The traffic volume on Melanesia Road is approximately 3980 vehicles per day and approximately 4 % of the traffic is classified as heavy commercial traffic.

The existing road surface on Melanesia Road between Allum St and Long Drive was chip seal, which has performed satisfactorily since 2015.

The new chip seal surface will be designed to carry the road traffic including heavy vehicle traffic in accordance with NZTA's standards and guidelines.

4. *Any lifecycle cost comparisons, maintenance modelling, or budget assessments comparing chipseal and asphalt for this project.*

The cost of chip seal is approximately \$15 per square metre and has an expected life of 12 years. The cost of asphalt is approximately \$60 per square metre and has a similar life.

Further information on the whole-of-life comparison between chip seal and asphalt surfacing can be found in NZTA's Research Report 508, which is summarised below:

Whole-of-life costs

With the cost of thin asphalt layers being four to six times more expensive than a chipseal, and the lives not significantly greater, then the justification of using hotmix asphalt cannot be made in terms of cost in areas where both chipseals and asphalt would perform.

5. *Expected lifespan of the chipseal compared with asphalt under similar traffic conditions.*

The expected life of chip seal and asphalt is similar as advised in item 4 above.

6. *Any safety, pedestrian, cyclist, bus-operation, or heavy vehicle assessments undertaken prior to resurfacing.*

The new chip seal surface is designed to carry the road traffic including heavy vehicle traffic in accordance with NZTA's standards and guidelines.

Chip seal surface is suitable for cyclists and has been used to resurface urban roads throughout NZ since the 1930's.

The section of Melanesia Road which was recently resurfaced with chip seal has had a chip seal surface since 1983, according to the road surface records provided by the former Auckland City Council.

7. *Assessments of noise, vibration, or environmental impacts associated with the choice of chipseal.*



Chip seal surface has been used to resurface urban roads throughout NZ since the 1930's and this section of Melanesia Road has had a chip seal surface since 1983.

There are no environmental issues relating to the use of chip seal surfacing.

There are no traffic noise requirements for resurfacing existing roads in the Auckland Unitary Plan.

If there were requirements to mitigate against the effects of traffic noise in the Unitary Plan, Council would need to provide additional funding to resurface urban roads with asphalt.

8. Criteria or thresholds used to determine when roads carrying buses should be asphalt rather than chipseal.

Chip seal is suitable for urban roads carrying up to 10,000 vehicles per day in accordance with NZTA's standards and guidelines.

9. Classification of Melanesia Road within Auckland Transport's road hierarchy (arterial, collector, bus corridor, etc.) and how this influenced the resurfacing decision.

Melanesia Road is classified as a primary collector road.

The new chip seal surface is designed to carry the road traffic including heavy vehicle traffic in accordance with NZTA's standards and guidelines.

10. Any internal reports, engineering advice, or recommendations prepared regarding the resurfacing.

The road condition data is held in the Road Asset Maintenance database.

The road is inspected Beca, who are AT's road asset management consultants, and their recommendations for resurfacing are recorded in the Road Asset Maintenance database.

The chip seal design for the site is prepared by the Contractor and is held by the RAM&R team.

Please find the information we hold relevant to this request attached. Please note some information is withheld under section 7(2)(a) to protect the privacy of natural persons.

11. All internal communications, including emails, meeting notes, or memos, relating to the decision to use chipseal rather than asphalt.

Please find the information we hold relevant to this request attached.

12. Any engineering recommendations or advice prepared prior to the decision, including whether asphalt was considered or recommended.

Please find the information we hold relevant to this request attached.



13. Any documents or communications indicating whether budget constraints or cost-saving measures influenced the decision to use chipseal.

As outlined above, the funding provided by Auckland Council and NZTA is based on using the most cost-effective road resurfacing option. Asphalt surfacing is approximately four times the cost of chip seal surfacing.

If asphalt surfacing was used on all urban roads across the city, Auckland Council would need to provide additional funding of approximately \$75 million per year, which would not be funded by NZTA as it is not the most cost-effective option.

14. Any instances within 2 km where the criteria for asphalt was not met but was subsequently resealed in asphalt.

This request is declined under section 17(e) of the LGOIMA as the information does not exist.

15. Any assessments, calculations, or engineering advice regarding stormwater runoff, drainage capacity, gravel loss, dust, and noise generated by the chipseal surface, including how heavy rainfall events and impacts on pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles (e.g., gravel causing damage to brakes or other vehicle components) were considered in the decision to use chipseal rather than asphalt.

We have provided the information we hold regarding the resurfacing of Melanesia Road attached.

Resurfacing the road does not affect the stormwater runoff and drainage capacity of the road. When the chip seal surface is installed, it is swept to remove any loose chips and all catchpits are inspected and cleaned to ensure no chips have been deposited in the catchpits.

Should you believe that we have not dealt with your request appropriately, you are able to make a complaint to the Office of the Ombudsman in accordance with section 27(3) of the LGOIMA Act and seek an investigation and review regarding this matter.

Ngā mihi,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Phil Wratt', is positioned above the printed name.

Phil Wratt

**Engagement Manager
Customer Care**