

14 November 2022

File Ref: OIAP-7-26367

[REDACTED]

Tēnā koe [REDACTED]

### **Request for information 2022-190**

I refer to your request for information dated 18 October 2022, which was received by Greater Wellington Regional Council (Greater Wellington) on 18 October 2022. You have requested the following:

***“What work, if any, has been undertaken looking at the value of expanding current ferry services?”***

*I understand this is a broad question and open to some interpretation, but I am predominantly looking for reports, business cases or something more formally produced that looks at a proposal or assesses the value of expansion of services (as opposed to information, such as a public submission, that may have been considered). Also relevant here would be information that points to limitations of ferry services.*

***What projections exist for current and future ferry use in the Wellington network?***

*I note that there is an Annual monitoring report (<https://www.gw.govt.nz/assets/Documents/2021/12/Annual-Monitoring-report-for-RLTP-2021-final.pdf>) but this does not seem to break down transport use by mode. What I am looking for here is documentation on the costs, benefit-cost ratios, or business cases - whatever is easiest in providing general information here.*

***Do any reports exist comparing the value of ferry use to other forms of transport (such as cycling, buses, and private vehicles)?***

*And if so, what are these?*

***Is there an expected project timeline for restarting ferry services to Petone and Seatoun and, if this requires further work, what work (and what cost) and on what timeline?***

*Again, here I am looking for documentation in this space. If there is something like a business case that would be ideal.”*

**Greater Wellington's response follows:**

*What work, if any, has been undertaken looking at the value of expanding current ferry services?*

There are no formally produced documents around expanding the ferry service. We periodically monitor and review all our services across all of our modes, the ferry included. Currently the ferry is performing as expected and there is no plan to expand the service.

There are some key limitations with expanding the ferry, such as access to wharves and anticipated future patronage. The patronage catchment for the ferry is not expected to increase hugely, meaning expanding the service would not necessarily result in more people using the ferry.

*What projections exist for current and future ferry use in the Wellington network?*

The part of your request for the costs and benefit-cost ratio for the ferry service is being declined under section 7(2)(b)(ii) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (the Act) as the information is commercially sensitive.

We have considered whether the public interest in the requested information outweighs Greater Wellington's need to withhold certain aspects of the requested costs and benefit-cost ratio. As a result, we do not consider that the public interest outweighs Greater Wellington's reason for withholding parts of the document under the grounds identified above.

We have internal patronage projections which are set out in the table below. These projections are only used internally and are not used for any financial analysis. They are also subject to change. The figures in the table below are the most recent projections from August 2022.

Metlink is working towards a 40% mode shift to get people out of cars and private vehicles and onto public transport, including the ferry. I note that while our overall patronage growth projections are lower than expected currently due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we expect these to recover.

**Internal Forecast for Ferry Patronage:**

<i>millions</i>	ACTUAL					PROJECTION								
Medium forecast	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031
Ferry	0.20	0.20	0.17	0.17	0.14	0.15	0.16	0.18	0.19	0.20	0.20	0.21	0.22	0.22

*Do any reports exist comparing the value of ferry use to other forms of transport (such as cycling, buses, and private vehicles)?*

There are no reports that compare the value of ferry use to other forms of transport. However, with the introduction of the electric ferry we can now gather more data on ferry performance and anticipate we will be able to capture more of this information over time. The ferry operator has started reporting more on cost per passenger and continues to gain more insights which in time will allow us to undertake a comparison of the value across different modes.

*Is there an expected project timeline for restarting ferry services to Petone and Seatoun and, if this requires further work, what work (and what cost) and on what timeline?*

The wharfs used for ferry services are owned by the territorial authorities. Hutt City Council owns Petone wharf and Wellington City Council owns Seatoun wharf.

Seatoun Wharf has been refurbished and is now open. The ferry operator intends to undertake sea trials at a range of tide levels and sea conditions to help assess the viability of resuming a service to Seatoun Wharf. This is intended to start in 2023.

Petone Wharf was closed by Hutt City Council in January 2021 for safety reasons. We are not aware of any detailed business case to refurbish Petone wharf, which is a prerequisite for ferry services to Petone.

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



Samantha Gain  
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