

IN COMMITTEE

Agenda item N°

Action Paper N° CS/08/05/6189 Page 1 of 5

PR6-1009

Action Paper to the Transit New Zealand Board:**IN COMMITTEE****Subject: Auckland Harbour Bridge Walking and Cycling Study**Prepared
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Purpose

1. To update the Board, on the matters raised in a letter received by the Chairman from Cycle Action Auckland and Walk Auckland in relation to the provision of walking and cycling on the Harbour Bridge.

Summary of Key Issues

2. A study is underway to determine the demand, operational feasibility and options for the provision of walking and cycling on the Auckland Harbour Bridge. The study is due for completion with a recommendation for a walking and cycling option, by the end of June 2008. A first stage report due 30 May 2008 will identify a preferred option having considered demand, safety and operational implications for all modes of travel.
3. The second stage will, if applicable, be to carry out the necessary structural analysis and costing of such an option with the results and a recommendation to be completed by the end of June 2008.

Recommendation

5. That the Board:
 - (a) requests that the outcomes of Stages 1 and 2 of the Auckland Harbour Bridge Walking and Cycling Study be reported to the Board following completion of each stage; and
 - (b) retains Action Paper CS/08/05/6189 In Committee until the study is complete.

Background

6. At the March Board meeting, the Board in receiving the Chief Executives Report CS/08/5/6189, requested that the Chief Executive provide a report to this meeting on the issues raised in a letter received by the Chairman from Cycle Action Auckland (CAA) and Walk Auckland, in relation to the provision of walking and cycling on the Auckland Harbour Bridge.
7. Through late 2007 and early 2008 our regional stakeholders considered the issue of walking and cycling across the Harbour Bridge at various committees and passed the following resolutions:
 - (a) ARC's Transport and Urban Development Committee (December 5, 2007): *"That the Committee support provision for cycling and pedestrians on the Auckland Harbour Bridge in conjunction with the strengthening work on the clip-ons."*
 - (b) Auckland City Council's Transport Committee (December 13, 2007): *"That the chairman of Transport Committee write to Transit New Zealand advocating for a walkway and cycleway across the Auckland Harbour Bridge."*
 - (c) North Shore City Council (December 4, 2007): *"That this Council supports the appropriate modifications to the Auckland harbour Bridge to support a cycleway and walkway and the costs and feasibility of cycleway/walkway links to the Harbour Bridge be investigated and a report be brought back to this Committee."*
8. In addition, during the latter part of February and early March 2008, correspondence was received by the Auckland Regional Manager, from CAA seeking clarification and assurance that none of the clip-on strengthening work due to start in July 2008 will preclude or adversely affect any of the walkway/cycleway options about to be considered in the "Walking and Cycling Access" project. Such assurance was provided by the Regional Manager on 18 March 2008.
9. Further correspondence to Transit ensued and request further action. As a result Transit determined the importance of ensuring that any such investigation consider both the Harbour Crossing as well as linkages to recognised walking/cycling routes on both sides of the Harbour. Ensuring regional support of the Study findings was also considered essential.
10. The existing Additional Waitemata Harbour Crossing Study (AWHCS) jointly funded by Transit, ARTA, ARC, ACC and NSCC was tasked with.

A determining a long term solution for walking and cycling as part of the future crossing. Transit accordingly saw merit in doing this further work as a variation to the Study and funded by all parties.

11. Agreement was reached between all parties, a brief was prepared and agreed and a funding ratio agreed. Subsequently NSCC has advised they do not see a funding obligation but wish to remain involved with this further study. Transit has reluctantly accepted this advice and is funding NSCC's portion being some \$20,000 of the total \$130,000 project estimate.
12. As reported in Action Paper CS/08/05/0428, and subsequently approved by the Board, the box girder (clip-ons) strengthening works have been designed to not preclude future provision of walking and cycling facilities on the Auckland Harbour Bridge. Through innovative thinking, further structural elements have been incorporated into the current strengthening works at relatively low cost to future proof for future walking and cycling options on the box girders.

Study

13. Following development and agreement to the Study brief, a contract was awarded to Maunsell Limited.
14. The Walking and Cycling Study scope includes the assessment of:
 - A review of walking and cycling demand across the harbour;
 - Design options given constraints of lane width, segregation, gradient, speed, wind etc;
 - Connectivity to the bridge and wider walking and cycling networks;
 - Structural effects;
 - Safety;
 - Impacts on the operation of alternative transport modes;
 - Other walking and cycling opportunities;
 - Benefits and costs;
 - Regional and National prioritisation.
15. The Study will take three months to complete and is due for completion by 30 June 2008, and will report the findings and provide a recommendation for review by the Implementation Executive and recommendations to relevant Councils and Boards.
16. The Walking and Cycling Study and the Box Girder Strengthening teams are working closely together identifying and investigating a range of cycling and walking options that could be installed on the Auckland Harbour Bridge when the critical strengthening works are complete. Given the two workstreams and inter-dependency of technical resources, a two stage process was developed. Probable options will be identified in the first stage through the Maunsell Study. Structural requirements and costings for any applicable options will be determined through the collaborative efforts of the respective study teams and result in a final stage 2 report prepared.

17. Given its association, the Walking and Cycling Study is being overviewed by the Additional Waitemata Harbour Crossing Study, Implementation Executive. As part of the Stage 1 assessment, a workshop is planned with stakeholders including Cycle Action Auckland, in addition to formal progress reporting to the Implementation Executive and Councils/Boards as required.

Issues Raised by Cycle Action Auckland

18. Cycle Action Auckland have been keen to see progress made on providing for cycling and walking on the Auckland Harbour Bridge. In their letter of 31 March 2008, they acknowledge that Transit is, reappraising the walkway/cycleway. Their primary concern however appears to be that the “window of opportunity” for cost effectively providing for walking and cycling during the Clip-on’s strengthening project would be lost, and upgrade work should cease until the study is finalised.
19. The two projects however are independent of each other. Nothing being done in the structural upgrade works precludes in any way the provision for walking and cycling. In fact the structural upgrade works are a necessary part of strengthening ahead of any walking and cycling provision. Consequently it is not necessary for the structural maintenance works to be deferred pending the Walking and Cycling Study completion.
20. In terms of the resolutions proposed in their letter of 31 March 2008, these and Transit’s responses are as set out below:
 - (a) That the walkway/cycleway over the Auckland Harbour Bridge is a priority for the Auckland region.
 - Undertaking a joint study will confirm whether the proposed solution is a priority for the Auckland region.
 - (b) Given the likelihood that the next Waitemata Harbour Crossing will be a tunnel and the need to achieve “value for money” (as identified in the Ministerial Advisory Group report on Roding Costs), the Auckland Harbour Bridge strengthening project must specifically include the detailed provisioning for the walkway/cycleway.
 - As discussed in [line 12], structural elements have been incorporated into the current strengthening works at relatively low cost to future-proof for future walking and cycling options on the box girders, further works being dependent on the option selected. In any event the structural strengthening is required before any walking/cycling upgrades can occur.
 - (c) The provision of a walkway/cycleway over the Auckland Harbour Bridge will assist the Auckland region to increase the mode share of walking and cycling (a key requirement of the draft updated New Zealand Transport Strategy).

- A dedicated walkway/cycleway is one of a number of options available to assist the Auckland region to increase the mode share of walking and cycling.

In Committee Status

21. This Action Paper is given in committee status under Section 9 (2)(g) of the Official Information Act (1982) to allow the free and frank discussion between the Board and officers.