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Committee Regional Transport Committee  
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## **Proposed variation to the Wellington Regional Land Transport Programme 2012 – 2015: Park and Ride Land Purchase**

### **1. Purpose**

To seek the Regional Transport Committee's (the Committee) support for a variation of the Wellington Regional Land Transport Programme, at the request of Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC) and the NZ Transport Agency (NZTA).

### **2. Background**

#### **2.1 The Regional Land Transport Programme**

The current Regional Land Transport Programme 2012 – 2015 (RLTP) was prepared by this Committee and subsequently approved by GWRC in June 2012.

The RLTP contains all the land transport activities proposed to be undertaken throughout the region over 3 financial years, the regional priority of those activities, indicative activities over the following 3 financial years, plus a 10 year financial forecast.

The activities in the RLTP are submitted by the NZTA and 'Approved Organisations' (including the eight territorial authorities and GWRC). The activities in the programme relate to passenger transport, walking and cycling, local roads, state highways, and the movement of freight.

### **3. Process for considering a variation**

The Land Transport Management Act 2003 (the Act)<sup>1</sup> includes provision for changes to some types of activities without the need for a variation to the RLTP. However, this provision does not apply to the proposed new activity

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<sup>1</sup> As amended by the Land Transport Management Amendment Act 2013.

outlined below. As such, the process for dealing with requests for variations must be followed.

Section 18D of the Act states that if a good reason exists to do so, the Committee may prepare a variation to its RLTP during the three years to which it applies. This can be at the request of an Approved Organisation or the NZTA, or on the Committee's own motion. In this case, the request has been made by an Approved Organisation and the NZTA.

Section 18D(4) of the Act requires the Committee to consider any variation request promptly.

Section 18D(5) of the Act notes that consultation is not required for any variation that is not significant.

## **4. Proposed variation**

Demand for park and ride capacity continues to be strong across the regional rail network. Expansion of park and ride is a key determinant of patronage growth particularly at busy stations. Many park and ride facilities remain under extreme pressure and additional capacity is almost immediately taken up.

The expansion of rail park and ride facilities is supported and encouraged by the most recent Regional Rail Plan, Regional Public Transport Plan and Regional Land Transport Strategy.

This variation (see **Attachment 1**) is required to take advantage of two specific land purchase opportunities to provide much needed additional park and ride capacity at two busy metro railway stations. The variation only covers the land purchase. Development costs will be funded from existing rail infrastructure "like for like" and "minor improvement" budgets, with maintenance covered by operational budgets. The two stations are Tawa and Petone:

- Tawa land purchase will secure around 109 carparks (242% increase) (see **Attachment 2**).
- Petone land purchase will secure around 396 carparks (214% increase) (see **Attachment 3**).

### **4.1 Tawa**

In 1991, GWRC purchased a small block of land opposite Tawa Railway Station for commuter car parking. The land comprises 861 square metres and currently provides 45 commuter car parks.

Over time demand for commuter car parking at Tawa Station has steadily increased and demand for car parks has exceeded supply for some time now.

Directly north of the GWRC land is a large commercial complex known as Tawa Junction. It comprises large format retail/showroom buildings, car parking and areas of undeveloped land.

Over the last several years GWRC has intermittently engaged in negotiations for purchase of part of this site for the expansion of the currently inadequate Tawa Station commuter car park. Over several months negotiations have progressed with the new owners and terms have now been agreed for the purchase of the land required by GWRC for commuter car park expansion.

The land proposed for purchase at Tawa comprises an irregular parcel of about 3,070 square metres directly adjacent to the existing GWRC car park land. It adjoins the Tawa Railway Station to the east and the Porirua Stream to the west.

The land proposed to be purchased is that area outlined by the red broken line on the plan attached (**Attachment 2**).

The land is currently undeveloped and largely overgrown. However, it is of a level contour and entirely suitable for developing as a car park, potentially providing 109 additional car park spaces.

The purchase of this land has been advocated for and supported by the local Tawa Community Board and commuters as parking pressure has increased beyond capacity on local streets and nearby stations Takapu Road and Redwood. Affected adjacent land owners KiwiRail, GWRC and Wakefield Property Holdings Limited have been consulted and support the development.

## **4.2 Petone**

NZTA has, for some time, been working through a programme of identifying property in its ownership which is not needed for its core operational activities. Once surplus property has been identified, a process commences to dispose of the property at current market value. As part of the disposal process NZTA first considers if any other government or local government agency has an interest in the property, before offering it for sale on the open market.

NZTA land at Pito-One Road, Petone has been declared surplus to NZTA's requirements and offered to GWRC.

GWRC currently provides commuter car parking at Petone Railway Station on land adjacent to the station which is also leased from KiwiRail (providing approximately 185 car park spaces) and on further land located on the opposite side of SH2 land (providing approximately 96 car park spaces) which is leased from NZTA. The car parks leased from NZTA are accessible from the station via a major pedestrian over-bridge.

Demand for commuter car parking at Petone Railway Station has exceeded supply for some time now and GWRC has been actively pursuing options to secure additional land for car park expansion. Hence GWRC has confirmed its interest in the acquisition of the surplus NZTA land and is engaged in negotiations to agree an appropriate transfer value.

The land proposed for purchase at Petone comprises four parcels with a combined area of around 13,005 square metres adjacent to existing GWRC commuter car park areas.

The land proposed to be purchased is those areas outlined in Green, Blue, Red and Yellow on the plan in **Attachment 3**.

The combined usable area suitable for development of commuter car parking is estimated to be 7,500m<sup>2</sup> which would enable the securing of a further 396 car parks spaces at Petone Station.

While portions of the land are not suitable for GWRC's use, NZTA is disposing of the land as one block.

GWRC has been acutely aware of the shortage of commuter car parking at Petone Railway Station for some time. Demand for car parking has steadily increased in recent times. This is evidenced by illegal parking on the kerbs/verge, and the now heavy (estimated 100 cars per day) "illegitimate" use of the NZTA Blue and Yellow areas, despite it not being "officially" available or developed for commuter car parking.

If GWRC does not secure the 396 carparks it will miss both the opportunity for future growth and lose access to 196 (96 legitimate and 100 illegitimate) carparks that are currently used every weekday.

Affected adjacent land owners have been consulted and support the development. The site to the south of the Yellow Area has recently been purchased by ARISE Church with whom GWRC officers have been in discussion regarding opportunities to maximise the parking utility.

#### **4.3 Reason for the variation**

The activity was not included at the beginning of the programme period because the land has only recently been identified as surplus.

In addition, opportunities to secure land are subject to unpredictable market movements making it difficult to programme in advance. It is therefore proposed that the activity is included in the programme with a broad 'Park and Ride Land Purchase' description to cover any other potential opportunities that may arise over the remainder of the current programme period.

Details of the proposed variation for inclusion in Table 3 of the existing RLTP are set out in **Attachment 1**.

### **5. Determination of Significance**

Officers have assessed the significance of the proposed variation, for the purpose of consultation, against the RLTP significance policy.

The significance policy is set out in section 7 (page 36 and 37) of the RLTP.

In making a determination of significance (against the criteria set out in section 7.3 of the RLTP), officers considered the following factors:

- The proposed cost variation of \$3.2 million for the new Park and Ride Land Purchase activity is not considered to materially change the overall

balance of strategic investment in the context of the \$1.3 billion programme cost.

- The proposed variation would make a positive contribution towards the Government Policy Statement objectives as the subject activity will support more efficient use of the transport system at peak times.
- Consultation has been carried out directly with affected adjacent land owners who support the proposal.
- The proposed variation is not expected to affect the integrity of the RLTP or its overall affordability.

Consideration has also been given to the likely consequences, cost and benefits of carrying out consultation in relation to the subject variation and it is considered that the benefits of full public consultation in relation to the programme variation would be minimal. The cost of a public consultation process and potential delays to this activity are considered to significantly outweigh the benefits.

As such, officers consider that the proposed variation to the RLTP is not significant and does not trigger the requirement to carry out consultation.

## **6. Next Steps**

If the Committee agrees to the variation request, it will then be forwarded to GWRC for approval at its Council meeting on 21 May 2014. As is the case with the RLTP itself, GWRC must either accept the recommendation or refer the variation back to the Committee, with a request that it be reconsidered.

Once the variation has been approved by GWRC, the variation is then forwarded to the NZTA for consideration of inclusion in the National Land Transport Programme (NLTP) for funding.

There is no obligation for the NZTA to vary the NLTP by including the new activity. However, it must give written reasons for any decision not to do so. In this case, the NZTA supports the request and has indicated that it will look to add the Park and Ride Land Purchase project to the current NLTP and seek funding approval.

## **7. The decision-making process and significance**

Officers recognise that the matters referenced in this report may have a high degree of importance to affected or interested parties.

The matter requiring decision in this report has been considered by officers against the requirements of Part 6 of the Local Government Act 2002 (the Act). Part 6 sets out the obligations of local authorities in relation to the making of decisions.

### **7.1 Significance of the decision**

The matters for decision in this report are subject to the legislative requirements of the Act. Section 18D(5) of the Act requires the Committee to determine if a proposed variation to the RLTP is significant, in accordance

with its significance policy adopted under 106(2) and included in the programme.

An assessment of the variation against the RLTP significance policy is set out in section 5 of this report and concludes the matter does not trigger the requirement to carry out consultation.

## 8. Recommendations

*That the Committee:*

1. ***Receives the report.***
2. ***Notes the content of the report.***
3. ***Agrees to vary the Regional Land Transport Programme 2012 – 2015 by adding the proposed activities to Table 3, set out in **Attachment 1**, to the programme.***
4. ***Agrees to recommend the variation to the Regional Land Transport Programme 2012 – 2015 to Greater Wellington Regional Council for adoption.***

Report prepared by:	Report prepared by:	Report approved by:	Report approved by:
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Attachment 1: Variation to Wellington Regional Land Transport Programme 2012 – 2015:  
Park and Ride Land Purchase  
Attachment 2: Tawa Station Concept Plan  
Attachment 3: Petone Station Concept Plan