

By email

22 November 2024

Hon Chris Bishop
Minister for Infrastructure
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Tēnā koe Chris

Te Wai Takamori o Te Awa Kairangi (Riverlink) – GW Implementation

Further to our meeting on 15 November 2024 I thought it would be useful to outline the work that GW has completed to date to progress implementation of Te Wai Takamori o Te Awa Kairangi (RiverLink).

Firstly, it is worthwhile confirming that the GW ‘contract’ with the Hutt communities to provide flood protection infrastructure comes via our Hutt River Floodplain Management Plan that Greater Wellington, Hutt City and Upper Hutt City Councils approved in 2001. This Plan established a 1:440yr flood protection standard for our new infrastructure. For the Riverlink programme, this standard means a design that permits a 2,800 cumec flow to pass safely past the Hutt City CBD area, whilst providing a 90-95% confidence level that the infrastructure will remain resilient under this flood pressure.

Since 2016, GW has purchased domestic and commercial properties and moved tenants and businesses to allow for river widening on the true right bank (TRB – SH2 side) and in the Mills St area on the true left bank (TLB - City side). We have spent approximately \$120M to date, with no legal challenges occurring, reflecting over 10 years of consultation and communications with affected owners to ensure no surprises. This work has clearly saved NZTA, and therefore Government, considerable cost as a number of these properties are also required for the new SH2 Interchange.

GW, together with HCC, also purchased the old Randwick Meats site in 2023 to help facilitate NZTA with constructing the relocated Melling Train Station.

Following property purchase, GW agreed to take on and manage the contracts for above ground demolition at Mills, Pharazyn and Marsden Streets at a cost of \$12.2M. We are now progressing the below ground demolition in these areas, with an expected cost of \$3.8M. Some of these costs will be shared with NZTA. GW took this work on to ensure work progressed and to keep costs down.

Mills St Stopbank

As you will be aware, the former Mills St TLB stopbank upstream of the Melling Bridge provided the lowest level of protection for Hutt residents and the CBD. The standard in this area only provided a 1:65 yr protection.

GW determined that replacement of this stopbank was a priority and decided in mid-2023 to commit to constructing a new stopbank to provide the agreed 1:440yr standard. Fletcher Construction and Taylors Earthmoving were contracted by GW outside of the NZTA / Alliance structure. Construction commenced in February 2024 and completed in late October 2024 at a cost of approximately \$19M. This cost also included completion of riverworks to establish the design channel alignment.

Unfortunately, the current Melling Bridge is a major constriction to flood flows and the new Mills St stopbank only affords a 1:200 yr protection standard. Removal of the current Melling Bridge is essential to enable GW to provide the design protection standard between Kennedy Good and Ewen Bridges.

Looking ahead, GW is on track to continue essential flood protection work over the 2024/25 construction season (Oct – March end), including:

- Completion of below ground demolition.
- Installing new rock protection lines and berm lowering, largely to protect the new Mills St stopbank. \$5M has been spent to date to secure the rock required for this work.
- Removal of river edge willows and reuse as [“horizontal bundles”](#) to further protect river edges above Melling Bridge. This work is known as bioengineering.
- Working with Wellington Electricity Ltd and NZTA to remove the 11/33KVA cables under the northern section of the old Mills St stopbank to enable replacement of this section during the 2025/26 construction season. The proposed cable relocation through Hutt City provides a much better outcome for the city than was originally proposed.

GW construction works beyond autumn 2025 depends largely on the NZTA decision on Melling Transport Improvements in December 2024.

Should the NZTA programme proceed, then GW will likely focus on TLB stopbank works adjacent to the CBD and early relocation works around Marsden Street on the TRB. This will include additional commercial property purchases on Daly St and progressing contracts to remove the utilities in these areas to prepare for stopbank replacement.

You will be aware that GW removed its work programme from NZTA / Alliance delivery in March 2024 to enable us to better control our delivery and costs. Despite this, GW continues to work closely with our Riverlink partners (NZTA, HCC) through the Programme Governance Group, to ensure we achieve an agreed co-ordinated delivery plan, including maximising opportunities to reduce partner costs whilst delivering our commitments to our respective funders and communities.

Ngā mihi



Daran Ponter
Heamana | Chair

Attachment: Implementation of Te Wai Takamori o Te Awa Kairangi/ Riverlink Map

Copy: Hon Ginny Anderson, Labour List MP
Hon Simeon Brown, Minister of Transport