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Media release

Recent flooding events a reminder of RiverLink's importance

A safer and more resilient transport and flood protection system for the Hutt Valley is one step closer as the RiverLink partners make their final preparations to submit the resource consent application for the estimated \$700m project.

RiverLink is the largest infrastructure project in the history of Lower Hutt, and is central to transforming the Lower Hutt City Centre and Te Awa Kairangi/Hutt River into a vibrant, connected and resilient area.

Greater Wellington Regional Council, Hutt City Council and Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency are working together with Mana Whenua partners – Ngāti Toa Rangatira and Taranaki Whānui ki te Upoko o te Ika (Port Nicholson Block Settlement Trust) to jointly deliver RiverLink.

Lower Hutt Mayor, Campbell Barry, says the weather event over the weekend is a clear reminder that the case for investment in RiverLink is compelling.

“If we don’t invest to increase the level of flood protection, there is a risk of catastrophic damage to our businesses, households, and the city itself,” says Campbell Barry.

“RiverLink is first and foremost about protecting our CBD, especially seeing that we have the most densely populated floodplain in the country.

“By leveraging off the flood protection work and a new Melling Interchange, we also have a once in a generation opportunity to turn the city back towards the river, which is why we’ve committed \$138.5 million for RiverLink in our ten year plan.”

A favourable decision on the application, with ongoing support from the community, will see construction begin in 2023 and take approximately four years to complete.

RiverLink Project Director Tom Newson says, “The project is a culmination of years of project development by all the partners. It involves the construction of several significant infrastructure projects within a 3-kilometre section of the Te Awa Kairangi/Hutt River - between Kennedy Good Bridge and Ewen Bridge.

“It includes flood protection works, roading and interchange works for State Highway 2 (SH2), a new Melling road bridge and a new pedestrian and cycle bridge across Te Awa Kairangi, the revitalisation of the Lower Hutt city centre, and a relocated redeveloped Melling Station.

“A significant amount of engagement with agency partners, stakeholders and the Lower Hutt community has been completed to date and there will be continued opportunities for community involvement.”



“Te Awa Kairangi Hutt River is a treasure for our region, and one of our greatest risks due to the potential for it to flood. Recent heavy rain has reminded us how important this is. Greater Wellington’s work will protect up to 3,000 homes, five schools, 600 businesses and prevent major damage to the community,” says Greater Wellington Councillor Prue Lamason.

“Greater Wellington is also planting more native plants as part of its flood protection along the river’s edge between the Melling and Kennedy Good Bridges, so the river can safely flow through the area while also enhancing the environment and landscape.”

The transport infrastructure improvements include a new interchange and road bridge connecting to Queens Drive, a new cycle and pedestrian bridge connecting directly to the relocated Melling Station and a network of new walkways and cycle ways connecting people to the river.

“The Melling Transport Improvements project will improve safety and offer people more transport choice for getting to Hutt City and around the Wellington region,” says Emma Speight, Director Regional Relationships Wellington, Waka Kotahi.

In June, the Government increased funding for the Melling Transport Improvements Project, through the NZ Upgrade Programme, to \$420 million, while last month Hutt City Council increased its funding share for RiverLink to \$138.4 million.

Notes for editors

Details of the lodged consent application, and supporting documents, will soon be available to view on the project website www.riverlink.co.nz - we encourage people to read them and become fully informed. The application will be lodged with Greater Wellington (the Regulator in association with Hutt City Council) and made available via the Greater Wellington website once notified. The project website will be continually updated, and there will be ongoing opportunities for engagement, throughout the RiverLink project, so keep checking in.

The Notice of Requirement and resource consent application is an essential part of the planning process to define the designations and regional consent requirements related to construction, operation, and maintenance of the RiverLink infrastructure. In order to proceed with RiverLink projects appropriate authorisations are required from those with regulatory responsibilities for the natural and built environments, culture and heritage and the conservation estate.

RiverLink anticipates Greater Wellington will publicly notify the application and call for submissions within the next couple of months.

Find out more – www.riverlink.co.nz

Contact us riverlink@gw.govt.nz

Call us 0800 496 734

RiverLink



RiverLink indicative design: looking south