

16 October 2026

s9(2)(a)

REF: OIA-23524

Dear s9(2)(a)

Request made under the Official Information Act 1982

Thank you for your email of 28 August 2026 requesting the following information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) concerning the NZ Upgrade Programme Queenstown Package.

I will answer each of your questions in turn.

1. **Assurance reviews of the package, and the responses to them. For the period 1 January 2020 to the date of this request: the final report of every independent or third-party assurance review of the Queenstown Package, together with the management response or action plan prepared in reply to each. This includes, without limiting the request:**
 - any Treasury Gateway review at any gate (Gates 0 to 5);
 - every Investment Quality Assurance (IQA) assessment and IQA business case quality assessment, including the IQA undertaken on the 2020 Queenstown Business Case and any IQA or re-assurance undertaken on the reduced-scope package;
 - any independent challenge team, technical audit, investment audit or independent peer review commissioned by the Agency, or by the NZ Upgrade Programme governance arrangements.

If no Gateway review or post-2023 IQA of this package was undertaken, please say so.

The following documents fall within the scope of your request and are enclosed:

- Attachment 1 - Queenstown Business Case_X Assurance Process v1
- Attachment 2 - 201117 Peer Review of Frankton to Queenstown Business Case
- Attachment 3 - Challenge Team Presentation Final
- Attachment 4 - 12560966-GHD-Memo-SH6_SH6A intersection review_Rev 4
- Attachment 5 - 2023-04-06 Focused Scope Review Report (Final).

Certain information is being withheld in Attachments 1, 2, 3 and 4 under section 9(2)(a) of the Act to protect the privacy of natural persons.

There are no documents NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi (NZTA) holds relating to the following parts of this request:

- Treasury Gateway reviews regarding the Queenstown Package,
- Investment Quality Assurance (IQA) assessments for the reduced scope package

Therefore, we are refusing these parts of your request under section 18(e) of the Act as the documents alleged to contain the information requested does not exist or, despite reasonable efforts to locate it, cannot be found.

- 2. The decision record for the reduced-scope package. For the period 1 September 2023 to 30 June 2024: the paper or papers put to the NZTA Board for the decision of 11 December 2023 approving the reduced scope, together with the relevant Board minute; and briefings BRI-2886 and BRI-2919 with their attachments. Regarding BRI-2973, while the Ministerial Briefing has been released, no supporting information regarding the following points made in that briefing have been released:**
 - **In April 2023, NZTA began to progress a design, total cost and reconciliation for a reduced Package of the most important elements to achieve the travel choice and safety outcomes sought. The reduced Package comprises the intersection of SH6/6A (BP intersection), the Frankton bus hub and the Howards Drive roundabout.**
 - **OIA Request: please share the NZTA analysis on redesign and price estimations and recommended inclusions for the reduced Package.**
 - **These were assessed by NZTA to be the most critical parts of the Package in achieving the strategic priorities for the Queenstown transport network. The Queenstown Lakes District Council and Otago Regional Council have agreed these prioritised Package elements are the most important.**
 - **OIA Request: please share the NZTA analysis on the following work that supports this paragraph in the briefing to Ministers:**
 - **The most critical parts of the Package (how they were assessed and whether the original recommendations were revisited (including the Offline MRT Gondola solution)**
 - **What the NZTA determined were the "Strategic priorities for the Queenstown transport network" and the "travel choice outcomes" and how it came to these conclusions including detailed capacity analysis of the residual package against the business case transport capacity targets for SH6A**

The following documents fall within the scope of your request and are enclosed:

- Attachment 6 - 07.2.1 Attachment 1 - NZUP Governance Group Waka Kotahi NZUP Monthly Report for Sep 2023
- Attachment 7 - NZ Upgrade Prog Sep 2023
- Attachment 8 - 230304 - Briefing memo to GM TS NZUP Queenstown
- Attachment 8a - Appendix A TOC 4 Preliminary Partial Reconciliation
- Attachment 8b - Appendix B BondCM Themes & Issues Letter
- Attachment 8c - Appendix C Proposed Prioritisation Table

Certain information in Attachments 8 and 8c are being withheld under section 9(2)(j) of the Act to enable a Minister of the Crown or any public service agency or organisation holding the information to carry on, without prejudice or disadvantage, negotiations (including commercial and industrial negotiations).

Certain information in Attachment 8c is being withheld under section 9(2)(g)(i) to maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through the free and frank expression of opinions by or between or to Ministers of the Crown or members of an organisation or officers and employees of any public service agency or organisation in the course of their duty.

Attachments 8a and 8b are being withheld in full under section 9(2)(j). These documents contain information relating to pricing, tendering, and estimates that could not be disclosed without impacting negotiations.

Please note that the Mass Rapid Transit Gondola was not part of the NZUP Queenstown Package and so could not be a part of any scope reduction consideration.

Please note that the NZTA Board papers that fall within the scope of this request have previously been released and are publicly available on the NZTA website: www.nzta.govt.nz/about-us/our-data-and-official-information/official-information-act/official-information-act-responses#. Specifically, this can be found under:

SH6/6A intersection upgrades

Responded date: 30 January 2026

Requested by: Member of the public

- [Response letter \[PDF, 575 KB\]\(external link\)](#)
- [13 attachments \(in a zipped file\) \[ZIP, 13 MB\]](#).

Therefore, I am partially refusing this part of your request under section 18(d) of the Act as the information requested is or will soon be publicly available.

- 3. The re-evaluation of benefits and costs. For the period 1 January 2020 to the date of this request: the economic evaluation prepared for the reduced-scope package under the Monetised Benefits and Costs Manual, including the benefit–cost ratio, the benefit streams and their monetised values, the version of the manual applied, the assumptions register, and any sensitivity or scenario testing. I am seeking the comparison against the benefit–cost ratios reported in the 2020 Queenstown Business Case (2.3 for the first ten years of the recommended programme; 1.5 for the full programme). If no re-evaluation was carried out at the point of the December 2023 scope reduction, please confirm that. During the review of costs and benefits, was consideration given to reverting to the original recommended scope including the Offline PT (Gondola) option which scored highly in the business case MCA? Was consideration given to accelerating a package of non-built solutions such as the TDM measures alongside the reduced scope (few of which appear to have been implemented to date)?**

There was no consideration given to accelerating a package of non-built solutions alongside the reduced scope. The nature of the change was one of reduction of existing scope for budget control reasons, as opposed to promotion of a new or expanded scope. There was no re-evaluation of monetised benefits, noting there was no standalone business case for the NZ Upgrade Programme (NZUP) Queenstown Package.

The mass rapid transit gondola was not a part of the NZUP Queenstown Package, and so could not be part of any scope reduction consideration.

Focus continues to be on delivery of the Queenstown Package, with the revised scope and budget expectations.

4. **Benefits realisation. For the period 1 January 2020 to the date of this request: the benefits realisation plan, benefit map and benefits register for the package; all benefits monitoring or benefit realisation review reports produced to date; and any post-implementation review, whether completed, in progress or scheduled, together with its scheduled date.**

I am particularly interested in the monitoring and current measured position for the two benefits on which the original investment case rested: the mode shift target of 40 percent of peak trips on SH6A by non-car modes by 2028, and the more-than-100-percent increase in people-movement capacity on the SH6A corridor by 2028.

The following document falls within the scope of your request and is enclosed:

- Attachment 9 - Queenstown BRP v1.

5. **Cost estimates at each approval point. For the period 1 January 2020 to the date of this request: the P50 and P95 cost estimates for the package as they stood at each funding approval, scope change or Board decision, with the date of each; the cost estimation report, estimate review or peer review supporting each; and the record of the scope-change approval that reduced the package to its current three elements.**

I do not need documents the Agency released publicly in January 2026 in response to an earlier request on the cost of this package. What I am seeking beyond that release is the reconciliation between the figures now on the public record: the \$90 million allocation and \$106.2 million estimate in the 2020 Queenstown Business Case; the \$107.6 million budget approved in 2020 and the revised \$115 million budget; the \$130 million funding allocation; the reconciled delivery price of \$329.97 million; and the \$250 million budget subsequently adopted. Please explain what each figure covers, what scope sits inside and outside each, and the current forecast out-turn cost.

The origin of the costs is from the Queenstown Transport Business Case, which you have already been provided:

- \$107.6 million is a compilation of those individual activity costs that made up the NZUP Queenstown Package. The following spreadsheet contains information in scope of this part of your request and is enclosed:
 - Attachment 10 - NZUP Final BC Estimates.
- \$115 million was the original allocation, where the difference between \$107.6 million and \$115 million was because of NZTA's indirect costs (a component of NZTA's costs is capitalised against the project).
- \$130 million was due to escalation-related increases being applied across NZUP, from which \$15 million was allocated to the NZUP Queenstown package.

The above costs were all based on estimates, as opposed to pricing provided by delivery suppliers.

The \$250 million became the revised budget after the combination of reduced scoping, revised pricing, NZTA and Ministerial approval. The \$250 million budget comprises of:

- \$2.217 million on the business case and other pre-programme costs. This is primarily for the Queenstown Transport Business Case and NZTA direct and managed costs.
- \$14.451 million property costs for acquisition, including consultant fees and legal process costs.
- \$35.324 million pre-implementation cost for design, consenting, geotechnical investigation, preparation of supplier price proposals and NZTA direct and managed costs.
- \$188.446 million implementation cost for construction, quality management and validation, utility relocation costs and other NZTA direct and managed costs.
- \$9.56 million of NZTA indirect costs.

The business case and pre-implementation costs are generally based on the non-reduced package, whereas the property and implementation costs are based on the reduced scope. The reduced scope includes:

- At Frankton:
 - Traffic Signals at: State Highway 6 (SH6) / Joe O'Connell Drive, SH6 / SH6A, bus hub exit, bus hub entry (includes new Golf Course access), plus SH6/McBride Street.
 - Road widening and bus lanes between Joe O'Connell Drive and bus hub entry
 - New and expanded bus hub vertical infrastructure
 - Associated relocations - utilities, weigh-pit, and golf course access
 - Associated improved stormwater/water supply, utility resilience, landscaping, etc.
- On Ladies Mile:
 - Traffic Signals at: SH6/Howards Drive.

- 6. The effect of descoping on the benefits. For the period 1 September 2023 to the date of this request: any analysis, assessment or advice prepared by or for the Agency on whether removing the bus priority measures, bus lanes and pedestrian access improvements from the package affects the achievability of the benefits on which the original investment decision relied, and on what is now expected to deliver those benefits.**

Attachments 8, 8a, 8b, and 8c fall within scope of this part of the request. See the response to question 2 above.

- 7. The Queenstown Strategic Network Plan. For the period 1 January 2025 to the date of this request:**
- the current version of the Queenstown Strategic Network Plan, including any draft, emerging-direction or final document;
 - any paper, report or presentation on the Plan provided to the NZTA Board or to a committee of the Board, together with the relevant minute or record of decision;
 - the options assessment underlying the Plan's strategic approaches, in particular the assessment of the "offline PT spine" approach and of the Frankton to Queenstown and Frankton to Ladies Mile offline public transport interventions; and
 - any advice on protecting or designating corridors for future high-capacity transit in Queenstown, and on the funding, financing and delivery approaches identified in the Plan, including private investment partnering and the Infrastructure Funding and Financing Act.

The Attachments 11 to 20 detailed in the appended schedule fall within the scope of your request.

Attachments 11 and 14 are being refused under section 18(d) of the Act as the information requested is or will soon be publicly available. These are the final Queenstown Strategic Network Plan (QSNP) and the version of the QSNP that went to the NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi (NZTA) Board in its June 2026 meeting. The QSNP can be found online at: www.nzta.govt.nz/resources/queenstown-strategic-network-plan.

Regarding the last bullet point of Question 7, there has been no consideration to protecting or designating corridors. The plan mentions the need for adopting new delivery, funding and financing approaches, but these have not been investigated. Therefore, I am refusing this part of your question under section 18(e) of the Act the document alleged to contain the information requested does not exist or, despite reasonable efforts to locate it, cannot be found.

With respect to the information that has been withheld, I do not consider there are any other factors which would render it desirable, in the public interest, to make the information available.

Under section 28 of the Act, you have the right to ask the Ombudsman to review my decision to withhold this information and partially refuse this request. The contact details for the Ombudsman can be located at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz.

In line with NZTA policy, this response will soon be published on our website, with personal information removed.

If you would like to discuss this reply with NZTA, please contact the Ministerial Services team, by email to official.correspondence@nzta.govt.nz.

Yours sincerely



Jackie Smith
Manager – Ministerial Services

OIA-23524 Document Schedule

Ref	Document	Date	Description
1.	Queenstown Business Case_X Assurance Process v1	25 November 2020	Certain information withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act.
2.	201117 Peer Review of Frankton to Queenstown Business Case	November 2020	Certain information withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act.
3.	Challenge Team Presentation Final	N/A	Certain information withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act.
4.	12560966-GHD-Memo-SH6_SH6A intersection review_Rev 4	16 August 2023	Certain information withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act.
5.	2023-04-06 Focused Scope Review Report (Final)	6 April 2023	Released in full.
6.	07.2.1 Attachment 1 - NZUP Governance Group Waka Kotahi NZUP Monthly Report for Sep 2023	September 2023	Released in full.
7.	NZ Upgrade Prog Sep 2023	27 September 2023	Released in full.
8.	230304 - Breifing memo to GM TS NZUP Queenstown	10 March 2023	Certain information withheld under section 9(2)(j)
8a.	Appendix A TOC 4 Preliminary Partial Reconciliation	10 March 2023	Withheld in full under section 9(2)(j) of the Act.
8b.	Appendix B BondCM Themes & Issues Letter	10 March 2023	Withheld in full under section 9(2)(j) of the Act.
8c.	Appendix C Proposed Prioritisation Table	10 March 2023	Certain information withheld under section 9(2)(j) and 9(2)(g)(i).
9.	Queenstown BRP v1	21 August 2024	Released in full.
10.	NZUP Final BC Estimates	Unknown	Released in full.
11.	Queenstown Strategic Network Plan Final Draft	August 2026	Refused under section 18(d) of the Act.
12.	06. QSNP August 2026	12 August 2026	Released in full.

13.	06.1 Attachment 1 Summary of Queenstown Strategic Network Plan August 2026	12 August 2026	Released in full.
14.	RC 6 Queenstown Strategic Network Plan - Final	July 2026	Refused under section 18(d) of the Act.
15.	NZTA Board pre-read pack- Strategic Transport Planning_excerpt	12 June 2026	Released in full.
16.	NZTA Board Strategic Transport Planning workshop- 12Jun26	12 June 2026	Released in full.
17.	Strategic Transport Planning Board Workshop slides_June 2026	12 June 2026	Released in full.
18.	QSNP Option Assessment Technical Memo Final	12 June 2026	Released in full.
19.	20260709 Value Outcome Scope Committee Meeting - Final Minutes_excerpt	9 July 2026	Released in full.
20.	12 August 2026 NZTA Board meeting minute excerpt	23 September 2026	Released in full.