



28 February 2022

OIAD-169

Tony Randle  
fyi-request-17721-85f9886f@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Tony Randle

Thank you for your email of 26 November 2021 requesting the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

*The National Urban Planning Statement 2020 (UPS) includes the following definitions of Rapid Transit: "rapid transit service means any existing or planned frequent, quick, reliable and high-capacity public transport service that operates on a permanent route (road or rail) that is largely separated from other traffic" "rapid transit stop means a place where people can enter or exit a rapid transit service, whether existing or planned" I am interested in the information used by the MFE to support the above definitions of rapid transit service in the UPS.*

On 22 December 2021, the Ministry for the Environment (the Ministry) extended the timeframe for its response to your request under section 15A(1)(a) and 15A(1)(b) of the Act, as your request requires a search through a large quantity of information and the consultations necessary to make a decision on the request were such that a proper response could not reasonably be made within the original timeframe. The Ministry noted that we would respond to your request on, if not before, 28 February 2022.

I have interpreted "National Urban Planning Statement 2020 (UPS)" to refer to the National Policy Statement on Urban Development (NPSUD).

Three previous requests under the Act, which have been published on the Ministry for the Environment's (the Ministry) website (or are soon to be published), contain information which falls within the scope of your request. The details of these requests, and links to access them, are below. Please note that some documents have been released in more than one of the responses.

OIAD-76

- Documents which relate to the definition of rapid transit in terms of bus routes.
- <https://environment.govt.nz/oia-releases/policy-definitions-and-guidance-for-how-rapid-transit-service-should-be-interpreted/>

OIAD-78

- Documents relating to the development of the definition of "Rapid Transit Service" in the National Policy Statement on Urban Development 2020 and the decision of wording choice.
- <https://environment.govt.nz/oia-releases/information-on-rapid-transit-service-in-the-nps-ud/>

OIAD-90

- Information relating to the requirement for councils to make provision for apartments of at least six storeys within walkable catchments of city centres, metropolitan centres and rapid transit stops.
- This response will be published by 15 March 2022.

I have responded in more detail to each of your questions below.

### Questions 1 – 2

- 1) Can the MFE please provide copies of the reports, presentations and/or working papers where the definitions of "rapid transit service" and/or "rapid transit stop" were discussed and/or analysed for use in the UPS?
- 2) Can the MFE please provide copies of the reports, presentations and/or working papers used to support the definitions of "rapid transit service" and/or "rapid transit stop" in the UPS?

Please refer to the documents released under OIAD-76/OIAD-78 (documents 1-8) and OIAD-90 (documents 1-3 and 11-14).

### Questions 3 – 7

- 3) Can the MFE please provide the definition of "quick" it used in deciding whether an Auckland PT service meets the "rapid transit" service speed criteria outlined in the UPS?
- 4) Can the MFE please provide the definition of "frequent" it used in deciding whether an Auckland PT service meets the "rapid transit" service frequency criteria outlined in the UPS?
- 5) Can the MFE please provide the definition of "reliable" it used in deciding whether an Auckland PT service meets the "rapid transit" service reliability criteria outlined in the UPS?
- 6) Can the MFE please provide the definition of "high-capacity" it used in deciding whether an Auckland PT service meets the "rapid transit" service capacity criteria outlined in the UPS?
- 7) Can the MFE please provide the definition of "a permanent route (road or rail) that is largely separated from other traffic" it used in deciding whether an Auckland PT service meets the "rapid transit" separated from other traffic criteria outlined in the UPS ?

Whether a particular service meets the criteria in the National Policy Statement on Urban Development 2020 (NPSUD) for a *rapid transit service* is a decision for councils to make in implementing the NPSUD.

A council must decide how the criteria and policies apply in their relevant local context; in the case of Auckland public transport this would be a decision for Auckland Council. I am therefore refusing this part of your request under section 18(e) as the Ministry has not made any decisions about whether Auckland public transport meets the definition of a *rapid transit service* under the NPSUD, and therefore the information requested does not exist.

The Ministry, in conjunction with Te Tūāpapa Kura Kāinga - Ministry for Housing and Urban Development, published the following guide to help local authorities understand and interpret the provisions for intensification in the NPSUD. As you may find this useful, I have included a link to access the guide on the Ministry's website.

<https://environment.govt.nz/assets/Publications/Files/Understanding-and-implementing-intensification-provisions-for-NPS-UD.pdf>

Some councils have also asked the Ministry general questions about applying the criteria for defining a *rapid transit service/stop*. While this information doesn't fall within scope of your request, I have included it as it may be of interest to you (documents 1 and 3). Please refer to the attached document schedule for details.

### Questions 8 and 9

- 8) Can the MFE please provide copies of the correspondence with Auckland Transport and/or Auckland Council or any other local government councils or agencies where there was discussion on whether the Onehunga Line would or would not meet the definitions of being a "rapid transit service" and/or "rapid transit stop"?
- 9) Can the MFE please provide copies of the correspondence with Waka Kotahi or any other government ministries, departments or agencies where there was discussion on whether the

*Onehunga Line would or would not meet the definitions of being a "rapid transit service" and/or "rapid transit stop"?*

No correspondence has been found which falls within scope of this part of your request. Therefore, I am refusing this part of your request under section 18(e) of the Act, as the documents alleged to contain the information do not exist.

### **Questions 10 and 11**

*10) Can the MFE please provide copies of the correspondence with the Wellington City Council, Greater Wellington Regional Council or any other local government councils or agencies where there was discussion on whether the Johnsonville Line would or would not meet the definitions of being a "rapid transit service" and/or "rapid transit stop"?*

*11) Can the MFE please provide copies of the correspondence with Waka Kotahi or any other government ministries, departments or agencies where there was discussion on whether the Johnsonville Line would or would not meet the definitions of being a "rapid transit service" and/or "rapid transit stop"?*

One document has been identified which falls within scope of your request – document 2 refers. Please refer to the attached document schedule for details.

### **Question 12**

*12) Can the MFE please provide copies of the correspondence with Waka Kotahi, The Road Efficiency Group or any other government ministries, departments or agencies where there was discussion on the One Network Framework and its alignment with the definitions of being a "rapid transit service" and/or "rapid transit stop" in the UPS?*

The One Network Framework, which was produced by Waka Kotahi, develops the One Network Road Classification into a two-dimensional classification focused on movement and place. As the developers of the Framework, Waka Kotahi is best placed to promote or understand how any definitions fit within it.

No correspondence between the Ministry and Waka Kotahi has been found which falls within scope of this part of your request. Therefore, I am refusing this part of your request under section 18(e) of the Act, as the documents alleged to contain the information do not exist.

### **Documents released**

The Ministry has identified three documents which we are releasing to you, as listed in the attached document schedule. Some information within these documents has been redacted as out of scope of your request or withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act to protect the privacy of natural persons.

In terms of section 9(1) of the Act, I am satisfied that, in the circumstances, the withholding of this information is not outweighed by other considerations that render it desirable to make the information available in the public interest.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Office of the Ombudsman of my decision to withhold information relating to this request, in accordance with section 28(3) of the Act. The relevant details can be found on their website at:

[www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz).

Please note that due to the public interest in our work the Ministry for the Environment publishes responses to requests for official information on our [OIA responses page](#) shortly after the response has been sent. If you have any queries about this, please feel free to contact our Ministerial Services team: [ministerials@mfe.govt.nz](mailto:ministerials@mfe.govt.nz).

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lesley Baddon". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Lesley Baddon  
**Director - Urban and Infrastructure Policy**

### Document schedule

Document no.	Document date	Content	Decisions	OIA sections applied
1	Aug 20	Excerpt from “ <i>Tracking sheet for council questions and comments for the August 2020 NPS- UD council webinars</i> ”	Partially released	9(2)(a)
2	2 - 11 Nov 20	Email chain: WCC, MfE, NZTA, HUD – Johnsonville line	Partially released	9(2)(a) Out of scope
3	6 - 7 Apr 21	Teams message: MfE, GWRC – Rapid transit stop definition	Released in full	N/A