

# Manukau Rail Link Request for Funding

## Glossary

Auckland Council	(AC)
Auckland Electrification Project	(AEP)
Auckland Regional Transport Authority	(ARTA)
Auckland Transport	(AT)
Developing Auckland Rail Transport	(DART)
Electric Multiple Unit	(EMU)
Manukau Rail Link (north facing)	(MRL)
Ministry of Transport	(MOT)
New Zealand Transport Agency	(NZTA)

## Executive Summary

Upgrade of the Auckland rail network through the Government funded DART (track infrastructure including double tracking the Western Line) project by mid-2013 and AEP (signalling and electric traction) project by August 2013 is intended to provide an electrified rail network capable of delivering 10 minute peak rail passenger services.

As DART is nearing completion and the order for 57 EMUs has been completed, an additional project has been identified as necessary to ensure that the network is capable of delivering robust and reliable 10 minute peak rail services. This project is the construction of a double track connection from the (already double tracked) MRL to the double tracked main line at Wiri Junction.

The MRL connection was originally constructed as a single track connection. However, it is clear from further network modelling and operational performance of the network since the introduction of services to Manukau in April 2012, that the double track connection from the MRL to the mainline at Wiri is essential for the delivery of reliable 10 minute peak services. Without the double track connection, 10 minute peak passenger services cannot be reliably provided.

KiwiRail is currently undertaking track works in the MRL and Wiri Junction area to provide access from the main line to the new EMU depot. While double tracking the MRL connection is not needed until August 2014, significant cost savings can be achieved through alignment to KiwiRail's existing construction programme with construction commencing in March 2013.

KiwiRail has agreed to fund the provision of traction overhead from the AEP project budget, but has requested that AT funds the costs of formation, signalling and track. Negotiations have been held with KiwiRail to confirm the cost of these components and the total estimated cost is \$3.6 million. This paper seeks approval for funding of the proposed MRL double track connection phased over the current 2012/13 and the next 2013/14 capital funding programme to take advantage of this opportunity.

The MRL double track connection project is not currently included in AT's capital programme. This paper therefore seeks approval for provision of \$2.6m to be made in the 2012/13 AT capital programme, to be funded from the EMU Depot project budget contingency. Approval is also sought for the balance of \$1.0m to be included in the 2013/14 capital programme when that is considered by the AT Board. AC approval will be required to reallocate funding within the 2012/13 capital programme and for inclusion in the 2013/14 programme.

To potentially reduce the need for this additional AT expenditure, it is proposed that AT request NZTA to consider a funding contribution to the project.

## Recommendations

It is recommended that the Board:

- i). Receive the report
- ii). Approve that provision of \$2.6 million be made within the 2012/13 AT capital programme for the MRL double track connection project to be funded from the EMU Depot project budget contingency
- iii). Approve that provision of the balance of \$1.0m to fund the MRL double track connection project be made within the 2013/14 AT capital programme
- iv). Request AC to approve the inclusion of the MRL double track connection project within AT's capital programme
- v). AT confirm to KiwiRail by mid-January 2013 that construction of the MRL double track connection can proceed
- vi). Request NZTA to consider a funding contribution to projects necessary for delivery of a rail network capable of delivering robust and reliable 10 minute peak services

## Strategic Context

Upgrade of the Auckland rail network through the Government funded DART (track infrastructure including double tracking the Western Line) project by mid-2013 and AEP (signalling and electric traction) project by August 2013 is intended to provide an electrified rail network capable of delivering 10 minute peak rail passenger services. The upgrade comprises the electrification and resignalling of the core network between Papakura and Swanson including Onehunga, and the construction and electrification of the MRL to provide services to and from Manukau. Transition to new EMUs is programmed to commence in 2014.

## Background

### MRL Double Track Connection

Construction of the MRL as a double track and Manukau station was completed in early 2012 with a single track connection to the main line at Wiri Junction. Passenger services to and from Manukau commenced operation on 15 April 2012. Services currently operate at approximately 20 to 30 minute intervals in peak periods and hourly in the off peak.

The transition to an electrified system will take place over the next three years with EMUs expected to be in service and 10 minute peak services operating across the core network by approximately mid 2015. However, network modelling and operational performance of the MRL since April 2012 demonstrates a double track connection from the MRL to the mainline at Wiri will be needed. The modelling demonstrates that the existing single track connection will not provide sufficient resilience to allow recovery from delays.<sup>1</sup>

The double track connection will need to be in place before any additional Manukau services can be introduced. Current planning requires the additional connection to be operational by approximately August 2014.

### Current Position

KiwiRail is undertaking track works in the MRL and Wiri Junction area to provide access from the main line to the new EMU depot. The proposed track layout includes provision for the double track connection to the MRL and KiwiRail has proposed that it construct the MRL connection as part of these works.

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<sup>1</sup> Interfleet Auckland Network Modelling Report Issue 1E.

KiwiRail has agreed to fund the provision of traction overhead from the AEP project budget, but has requested funding from AT to cover the costs of formation, signalling and track. Negotiations have been held with KiwiRail to confirm the cost of these components and the total estimated cost is \$3.6 million.

While the double track connection is not required for passenger operations until August 2014, the most efficient and cost effective approach is for KiwiRail to undertake the works as part of the wider project in the Wiri Junction area. Deferring the works and undertaking them separately is likely to increase costs due to the need to mobilise construction contractors twice. KiwiRail advise that the additional cost of remobilising would be of the order of 5%, plus more importantly, the signalling arrangements would need to be redesigned and upgraded a second time and the signalling contractor appointed under a new separate contract as the signalling at Wiri Junction is scheduled to be finalised in July 2013 with the whole network shortly after – this has not been costed.

### Request for AT Funding




With original DART funding expectations for rail network infrastructure to deliver reliable 10 minute peak frequency, there is currently no provision for the MRL double track connection in AT's existing capital programme. It is proposed that funding for the MRL project be phased over two years, with \$2.6 million to be provided in the current financial year from the EMU Depot project budget contingency and the balance of \$1.0 million to be included in AT's capital programme for the 2013/14 financial year.

If the project is to progress, AT will need to advise KiwiRail that funding will be provided over two financial years as indicated above. Approval will also need to be sought from AC for the MRL project to be included in AT's capital programme.

A funding contribution could also be sought from NZTA towards the cost of the MRL double track connection. NZTA has not generally funded "below track" rail infrastructure projects, primarily due to the investment made by Government in DART and AEP. However, now that the DART and AEP projects are nearing completion and no further funding is available from Government via KiwiRail, NZTA's policy in this area could potentially be revised. However, a funding contribution from NZTA will not be able to be confirmed prior to advice being given to KiwiRail to proceed with construction.

### Next Steps

Approval will need to be sought from the AC to reallocate funding within the AT capital programme to fund the MRL double track connection project. Subject to AC approval being provided, AT will need to confirm to KiwiRail in January 2013 that construction of the MRL connection can proceed.

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