

## **Media Response - Temporary on-water floating pontoon crossing, Viaduct Harbour**

**26 June 2024**

Eke Panuku provided the following update to Radio New Zealand in response to questions about a temporary on-water floating pontoon crossing for Viaduct Harbour.

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### **How does this design differ to an earlier proposed concrete pontoon, which was labelled unfeasible for health and safety concerns?**

In short, the improvements are to the accessway system to make it wider as its currently designed for one-way usage; make the accessway system longer to decrease the gradient users have to traverse to get down to the floating on-water pontoon crossing; and making the pontoon itself a consistent wider width (4.4m) for the entire on-water span so that it allows people to more easily walk both ways at the same time and reduce bottlenecks.

The original proposal was based on some assumptions around existing infrastructure and an ability to implement a crossing without consent.

Our revised design utilises a significantly wider, longer accessway system including handrails and infill, which will allow easier, safer and more accessible (less steep) access to and from the floating platform, and will also stop bottlenecks creating as people try to get on and off at the same time.

This will better allow for the potential volume of two-way usage expected for an on-water floating pontoon crossing as the current access ramps leading down from the waters edge to the floating marina mooring pontoons are too narrow and suited to significantly lower volumes of one-way traffic.

It's also important to note that the on-water floating pontoon crossing will raise and lower with the tides, so it is crucial access is as safe and stable as possible at all times.

The revised design also has a wider surface width area (consistently 4.4m wide) for the full crossing span. This will let people easily move between Te Wero Island and the Karanga Plaza in both directions at the same time, therefore reducing the creation of bottlenecks at busy times.

We have also adjusted the access points from both Te Wero Island and Karanga Plaza to safer position that will work better for all marina users – remembering this is also a busy marine environment as well as a public space.

**What changes have been made to improve on the health and safety concerns, and what still poses a risk – ie ‘Health and safety and accessibility to the floating pontoons are key considerations in the design and consenting process.’**

Even with the revised design, we may find during the consenting process that the access down to the on-water floating pontoon is not fully compliant with the required building code, and therefore some access may be restricted, for example for bicycles, scooters and wheelchairs. We will know more about this as we work through the consenting process. Our priority is to keep all users safe while using this structure.

We will also be employing additional staff to safely manage the pedestrian flow, as well as the opening and closing operation of the on-water floating pontoon to allow for marine traffic.

**What about the ability for boats to move in and out of the marina – is this bridge a semi-permanent structure, or will it be retracted for boat movement?**

Yes, legally under the existing resource consent we are required to give priority to marine access. We anticipate this will be the same for the temporary structure.

To allow marine traffic through, the whole structure will hinge just over 90degrees to the south from a steel pile at the Karanga Plaza Tidal Steps powered by an outboard engine, creating a 30m metre navigable channel to let boats through.

**Is the cost of this bridge less than the cost of continuing to run the ferry?**

No, the cost is not less than continuing to run the *Red Boat* ferry service. The *Red Boat* ferry service only runs during daylight hours on weekend days, the on-water floating pontoon crossing will be a seven-day a week operation. The hours of availability will be confirmed as we work through the process. If we are able to implement the pontoon successfully, we will cease the ferry service.

**Is resource consenting being sped up for this, and how?**

Eke Panuku is working closely with Auckland Council to progress the necessary resource and building consents. Consenting is an independent regulatory function of council and Eke Panuku is held to the same rules and process as any other party seeking consents.