

## PART A: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE PROJECT

### 1. INTRODUCTION

#### Overview

The NZ Transport Agency (“the NZTA”) is lodging Notices of Requirement (“NoRs”) and resource consent applications to widen and upgrade Main South Road to provide for a four-lane median separated expressway from Rolleston to between Waterholes Road and Robinsons Road (Main South Road Four Laning or “MSRFL”). The Project also includes constructing, operating and maintaining a motorway from the end of the four-laning of Main South Road to the end of the Christchurch Southern Motorway Stage 1 (“CSM1”) at Halswell Junction Road (Christchurch Southern Motorway Stage 2 or “CSM2”).

The Project is part of the Southern Corridor of the Christchurch Motorways ‘Roads of National Significance’ (“RoNS”), one of three state highway ‘corridors’ around Christchurch which were identified as RoNS in terms of the 2009 Government Policy Statement on Land Transport Funding (“GPS”) and the recent 2012 GPS.

This Assessment of Environmental Effects (“AEE”) assesses the potential effects of the construction, operation and maintenance of the Project to support the NoRs and resource consent applications submitted to the Environmental Protection Authority (“EPA”) under the National Consenting Process.

#### 1.1. The requiring authority

A notice of requirement for a designation may only be lodged by a requiring authority. Under section 166 of the RMA, a requiring authority is defined as:

- (a) a Minister of the Crown; or
- (b) a local authority; or
- (c) a network utility operator approved as a requiring authority under section 167.

The NZTA is a network utility operator approved as a requiring authority under section 167 of the Resource Management Act 1991 (“RMA”). The Gazette Notice reference approving the applicant as a requiring authority is contained in Appendix A of this AEE (Resource Management (Approval of Transit New Zealand as Requiring Authority) Notice 1994), which was notified in the Gazette on 3 March 1994<sup>4</sup>.

The NZTA is a Crown entity, and its objective as set out in section 94 of the Land Transport Management Act 2003 (“LTMA”) is to:

<sup>4</sup> Under clause 29 of Schedule 2 of the Land Transport Management Amendment Act 2008, the NZTA replaced Transit New Zealand as the requiring authority approved under this Gazette Notice.

*“undertake its functions in a way that contributes to an affordable, integrated, safe, responsive and sustainable land transport system”.*

The NZTA’s statutory functions include:

- to promote an affordable, integrated, safe, responsive, and sustainable land transport system<sup>5</sup>; and
- to manage the State highway system<sup>6</sup>.

The NZTA’s operating principles are set out in section 96 of the LTMA. Section 96(1) of the LTMA requires the NZTA to exhibit a sense of “social and environmental responsibility” in meeting its objectives and undertaking its functions. The NZTA also has a statutory obligation to “use its revenue in a manner that seeks value for money” under section 96(1)(b) of LTMA.

One of the NZTA’s five strategic priorities, as defined in its Statement of Intent 2011 - 2014, is to plan and deliver the RoNS.

## 1.2. The Project

The Project involves the widening and upgrading of SH1 Main South Road between Rolleston and Robinsons Road to provide a four-lane median separated expressway (Main South Road Four Laning known as MSRFL) and the construction, operation and maintenance of the Christchurch Southern Motorway Stage 2 (known as CSM2), being a four-lane median separated motorway<sup>7</sup> which continues from Robinsons Road to the end of CSM1. A total of 16km of new and upgraded local road is proposed to be built also. An overview map of the Project is provided on Figure 1.

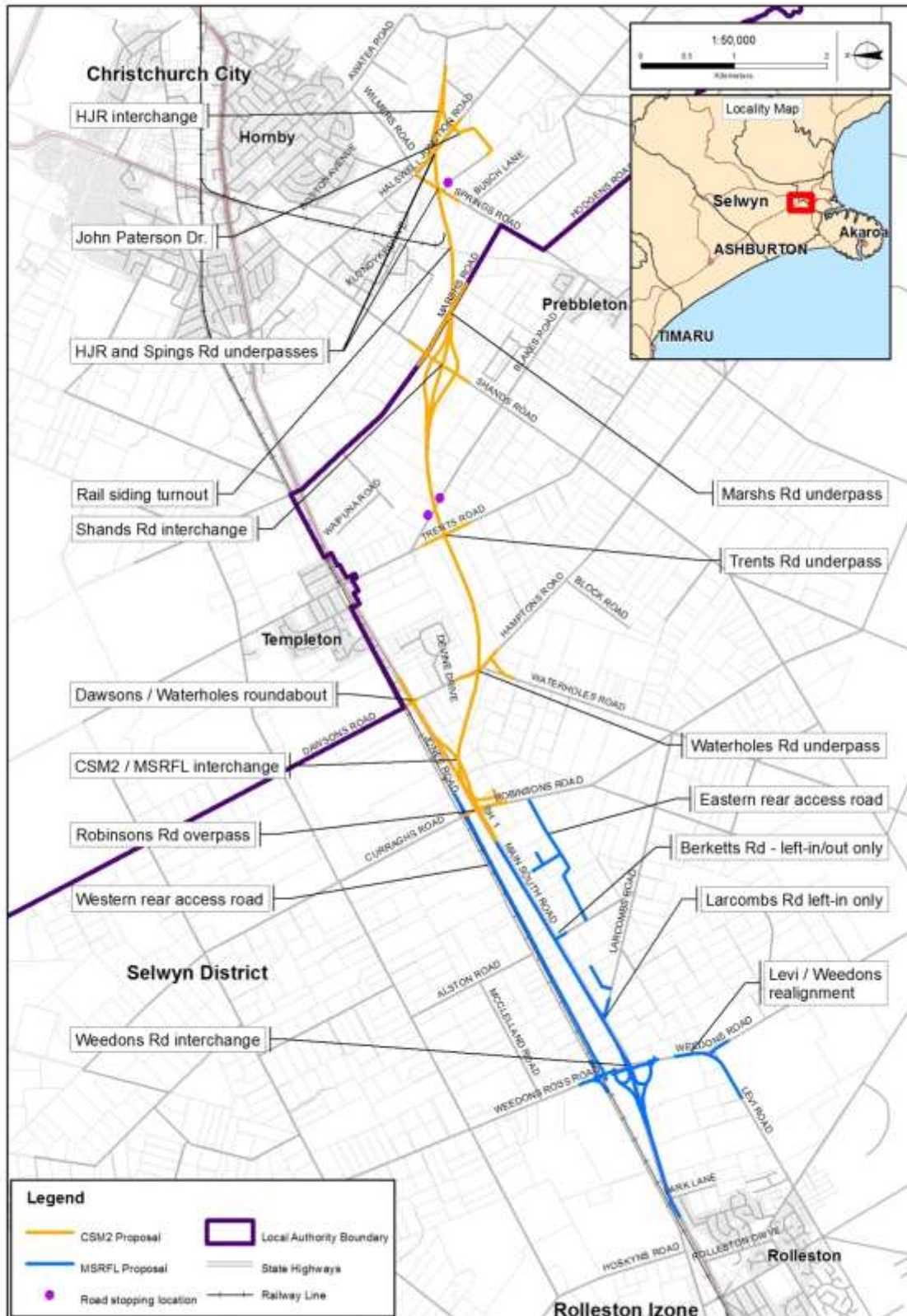
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<sup>5</sup> Section 95 (1)(a) of the LTMA 2003

<sup>6</sup> Section 95 (1)(c) of the LTMA 2003

<sup>7</sup> CSM2 will not become a motorway until the Governor-General declares it to be a motorway upon request from the NZTA under section 71 of the Government Rounding Powers Act 1989 (GRPA). However, for the purposes of this report, the term “motorway” may be used to describe the CSM2 section of the Project.

Figure 1: Proposed location map



### 1.2.1. MSRFL

MSRFL will be approximately 4.5km in length and will extend from Park Lane at Rolleston to the connection of CSM2 with SH1 at Robinsons Road. MSRFL will comprise four lanes separated by a median strip and barrier. An interchange at Weedons / Ross Road will provide full access on and off MSRFL, and there will be alterations of existing roads intersecting with Main South Road and the alteration of the current private property access arrangements. Rear accesses in the form of rights of way and new local roads are proposed on both the west side of SH1 (between Weedons Ross Road and Currags Road), and the east side to maintain property access.

### 1.2.2. CSM2

CSM2 will extend from SH1 Main South Road near Robinsons Road for approximately 8.4km linking with the end of CSM1 at Halswell Junction Road, comprising four lanes separated by a median strip and barrier. Access to CSM2 will be limited to two interchanges at Weedons Road and Shands Road, and a grade separated half-interchange with east facing ramps at Halswell Junction Road. Three road underpasses are proposed to ensure the connectivity of the local road network is maintained. CSM2 will largely be constructed at grade, with a number of elevated structures to allow the local road network to pass over the motorway. Several local roads will be realigned for safety and to minimise impacts on private property and access, and includes the realignment of John Paterson Drive to connect with the CSM2 westbound off-ramp and Halswell Junction Road roundabout (east of CSM2).

### 1.2.3. Purpose and scope of the AEE

This AEE (and the supporting information contained in the accompanying documents) has been prepared in support of the NoRs for new and altered designations and applications for resource consents which will authorise the construction, operation and maintenance of the Project under the RMA.

This AEE addresses all aspects relevant to the consideration and determination of the NoRs and resource consent applications. These matters are all being lodged with the EPA, as together, they form part of a proposal of national significance. Further information on the statutory context for the Project is provided in Chapter 6. The NoR and resource consent application forms are provided in Volume 1.

### 1.2.4. Integrated assessment process

The information presented in the AEE and supporting documents is the culmination of an extensive design and environmental assessment exercise undertaken since the Project commenced in 2010.

The assessment process has involved close collaboration between the Project designers, specialist assessment teams and stakeholders. The close working relationship has resulted in a high level of integration between the proposed design and the mitigation measures proposed.

Specific details about how particular potential adverse environmental effects are proposed to be managed are provided in Parts G and H of this report, but in general terms, the approach has been:

- to modify the design and proposed alignment to avoid, where practicable, potential adverse effects;
- where avoidance of adverse effects is not practicable, to develop measures to adequately remedy and/or mitigate potential adverse effects;
- where mitigation and/or remediation is required, to co-ordinate these measures as much as practicable to promote good environmental outcomes; and
- involvement of a wide range of stakeholders in the design process through a multi-stage consultation and option development process. Statutory and non-statutory stakeholders involved include:
  - Environment Canterbury;
  - Ngai Tahu;
  - Network utility providers;
  - Landowners;
  - Residents' associations;
  - Cycling and walking advocacy groups;
  - Business groups;
  - Other special interest groups;
  - The general public; and
  - Individual directly affected parties.

#### **1.2.5. Structure of the AEE**

The matters covered in this AEE include:

- a description of the existing environment, including a description of the receiving environment;
- a description of the operation and construction of the Project;
- an assessment of alternative sites, routes and methods (as necessary);
- identification of the parties affected by the Project, a description of consultation undertaken in the development of the Project and how this has influenced the design process;
- an assessment of the actual or potential effects on the environment of the construction, operation and maintenance of the Project, including a description of proposed mitigation measures;
- an assessment of the Project against relevant provisions of statutory policies and plans; and

- proposed conditions (including proposed management plans and monitoring) for the designation and resource consents.

The relevant documentation is contained within five volumes<sup>8</sup>:

- Volume 1: Resource Management Act Forms;
- Volume 2: Assessment of Environmental Effects;
- Volume 3: Technical Assessment Reports and Supporting Documents;
- Volume 4: Management Plans; and
- Volume 5: Plan Set.

### 1.3. Approvals sought

The NZTA is lodging three notices of requirement with the EPA for the designation of land required to undertake maintenance, operation, use and the improvement of a State highway and associated local roads:

1. NoR (1) to alter the existing designation for State highway 1 (Main South Road) and associated works to the local road network within the Selwyn District Plan;
2. NoR (2) for new State highway designation for CSM2 section and associated works to the local road network within the Selwyn District Plan; and
3. NoR (3) for new State highway designation for CSM2 and associated works to the local road network within the Christchurch City Plan.

The documentation provided in support of the NoRs for the designations contains all the information that would be required to be provided with an outline plan under section 176A RMA, therefore that information has been incorporated into the designations for the purposes of section 176A(2)(b) RMA. An outline plan will therefore not be required for the Project.

A series of regional resource consents are also sought for the Project, along with land use consents under the Resource Management (National Environmental Standard for Assessing and Managing Contaminants in Soil to Protect Human Health) Regulations 2011.

The regional consents required for the Project under the Canterbury Natural Resources Regional Plan (NRRP) and the Proposed Land and Water Regional Plan (PLWRP) are set out in Table 1 below and discussed in detail in Section 6.5 of this AEE.

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<sup>8</sup> In order to assist readers to familiarise themselves with the structure of the lodgement documentation and the key naming conventions used, a 'Guide to lodgement documentation' has been prepared.



**Table 1: Regional consents summary table**

<b>Regional consents summary:</b>			
<b>Activity</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>NRRP Summary</b>	<b>PLWRP Summary</b>
Land use consents (section 9)			
Excavation of land	Excavation over an unconfined or semi-confined aquifer where either deeper than 5m or deeper than the highest groundwater level and greater than 100m <sup>3</sup>	Non-Complying Activity in accordance with Rule WQL36	Discretionary Activity in accordance with Rule 5.156 and Non-Complying Activity in accordance with Rule 5.159
Deposition of fill	Deposition of more than 50m <sup>3</sup> over an unconfined or semi-confined aquifer where land is excavated to a depth of 5m or deeper and groundwater is less than 30m below ground level	Discretionary Activity in accordance with Rule WQL37	Discretionary Activity in accordance with Rule 5.161
The use of land to store or use hazardous substances	Hazardous substance storage and use during construction	Permitted Activity in accordance with Rule WQL 38A	Restricted Discretionary Activity in accordance with Rule 5.163
Construction and use of a bore	Investigation and monitoring bores Bore / infiltration facility related to Robinsons Rd overpass and Halswell Junction Road ponds Domestic and stockwater bore relocation	Restricted Discretionary Activity to construct in accordance with Rule WQL31	Permitted Activity to construct and use in accordance with Rules 5.78 and 5.79
Earthworks within riparian margins	Earthworks within riparian margin adjacent to Upper Knights Stream	Permitted Activity in accordance with Rule BLR8	Restricted Discretionary Activity Rule in accordance with Rule 5.149

<b>Regional consents summary:</b>			
<b>Activity</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>NRRP Summary</b>	<b>PLWRP Summary</b>
<b>Land use consent (section 13)</b>			
Land use consent for works within stream bed	Disturbance / reclamation of former stream bed	Restricted Discretionary Activity in accordance with Rule BRL5	Discretionary Activity in accordance with Rule 5.6
<b>Water permits (section 14)</b>			
Diversion and take of water	Diversion of water races	Restricted Discretionary Activity in accordance with Rule WQN4	Non-Complying Activity in accordance with Rule 5.100
Taking of groundwater	Taking of groundwater as required dependant on groundwater levels	Non-Complying Activity in over-allocated / no allocation limit zones in accordance with Rules WQN13 and WQN14	Discretionary Activity in accordance with Rule 5.106
<b>Discharge permits (section 15)</b>			
Discharge of stormwater to land during construction and operation	To discharge stormwater to land during construction and operation	Discretionary Activity in accordance with Rule WQL6	Restricted Discretionary Activity in accordance with Rule 5.71
Discharge of stormwater to water during construction and operation	To discharge stormwater from the stormwater treatment facilities to water during construction and operation	Discretionary Activity in accordance with Rule WQL48 for construction phase and Permitted Activity under Rule WQL7 once operational	Restricted Discretionary Activity in accordance with Rule 5.71 for construction and operation.
Discharge of water and contaminants to water associated with dewatering	Discharge of site dewatering to surface water during construction and operation	Discretionary Activity in accordance with Rule WQL48	Permitted Activity under Rules 5.92 and 5.77



Regional consents summary:			
Activity	Description	NRRP Summary	PLWRP Summary
Discharge of water and contaminants to land	Discharge to land at Robinsons Road, associated with operational dewatering	Permitted Activity under Rule WQL2	Discretionary Activity in accordance with Rule 5.6
Discharge of dust to air during construction	To discharge dust to air from earthworks and construction activities	Discretionary Activity in accordance with Rule AQL57	N/A

#### 1.4. Proposal of National Significance

It is considered that this Project meets the criteria to be a proposal of national significance under section 142(3) of the RMA because:

- the Project has attracted widespread public interest since it was announced as part of the Christchurch Southern Corridor, an identified RoNS in terms of the 2009 GPS. During consultation there has been a high level of public engagement and numerous submissions have been received throughout this process (section 142(3)(a)(i));
- the Project will involve the use of natural and physical resources. It is a roading Project that will result in the use of designated land for a State highway. This will be a significant change in the use of land from its current state, which supports numerous land uses such as rural activities, private residences, businesses and industries (section 142(3)(a)(ii));
- the Project will assist the Crown in fulfilling its safety functions by providing a safer upgraded route based on the latest safety roading practices. This includes a median and barrier separating the different directions of traffic and there will be restricted or no direct access to local roads and individual properties that currently have direct access (section 142(3)(a)(viii));
- the Project will result in irreversible changes to the environment where it will involve the addition of a motorway to the largely rural environment with large structural and elevated components (section 142(3)(a)(v)); and
- the Project relates to a network utility operation (the State highway) that will extend over more than one district (Christchurch and Selwyn Districts) (section 142(3)(a)(x)).

The NZTA is lodging the NoRs and associated resource consent applications for the Project with the EPA pursuant to section 145 of the RMA, requesting that the Project be directed to and determined by a Board of Inquiry (“BoI”) as a Proposal of National Significance.

The EPA will recommend a course of action to the Minister for the Environment (section 146 RMA). The Minister will make a decision pursuant to section 147, guided by the advice of the EPA

and taking into account the factors for determining whether proposals are of national significance under section 142 of the RMA.