

PART A: INTRODUCTION

1 Introduction

Overview

The New Zealand Transport Agency ('the NZTA') is lodging a Notice of Requirement (NoR) and resource consent applications to construct, operate and maintain an Expressway between MacKays Crossing and Peka Peka ('the Project' or 'the Expressway') on the Kāpiti Coast.

The Project is one of eight to upgrade the State Highway 1 corridor between Levin and Wellington Airport which has been identified by the Government as a Road of National Significance (RoNS).

The Project is a proposal of national significance and the Notice of Requirement and resource consent applications ('Applications') have been lodged with the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA). The NZTA requests that the Minister for the Environment makes a direction that the Applications be referred to a Board of Inquiry (BoI).

1.1 The requiring authority / applicant

The NZTA is a Crown entity. The NZTA's objective, as set out in section 94 of the Land Transport Management Act 2003 (LTMA), is to "*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 system¹; and
- To manage the State highway system².

One of the NZTA's five strategic priorities, as defined in its Statement of Intent 2011 - 2014, is to plan and deliver the roads of national significance (RoNS).

¹ Section 95 (1)(a) of the LTMA 2003

² Section 95 (1)(c) of the LTMA 2003

1.2 The Project

The NZTA proposes to designate land and obtain resource consents to construct, operate and maintain a section of road, approximately 16km in length, between MacKays Crossing and Peka Peka, on the Kāpiti Coast.

The Project will provide for a MacKays to Peka Peka Expressway ('the Expressway') with two lanes of traffic in each direction, connections with local roads at four interchanges, new local roads and access roads to maintain local connectivity and an additional crossing of the Waikanae River.

It is proposed that once the proposed Expressway is completed it will become part of State Highway 1 (SH1) and that the existing section of SH1 between MacKays Crossing and Peka Peka will become a local arterial road. However, the power to declare roads to be State highways or revoke a State highway declaration resides with the Chief Executive of the Ministry of Transport, not with the NZTA.

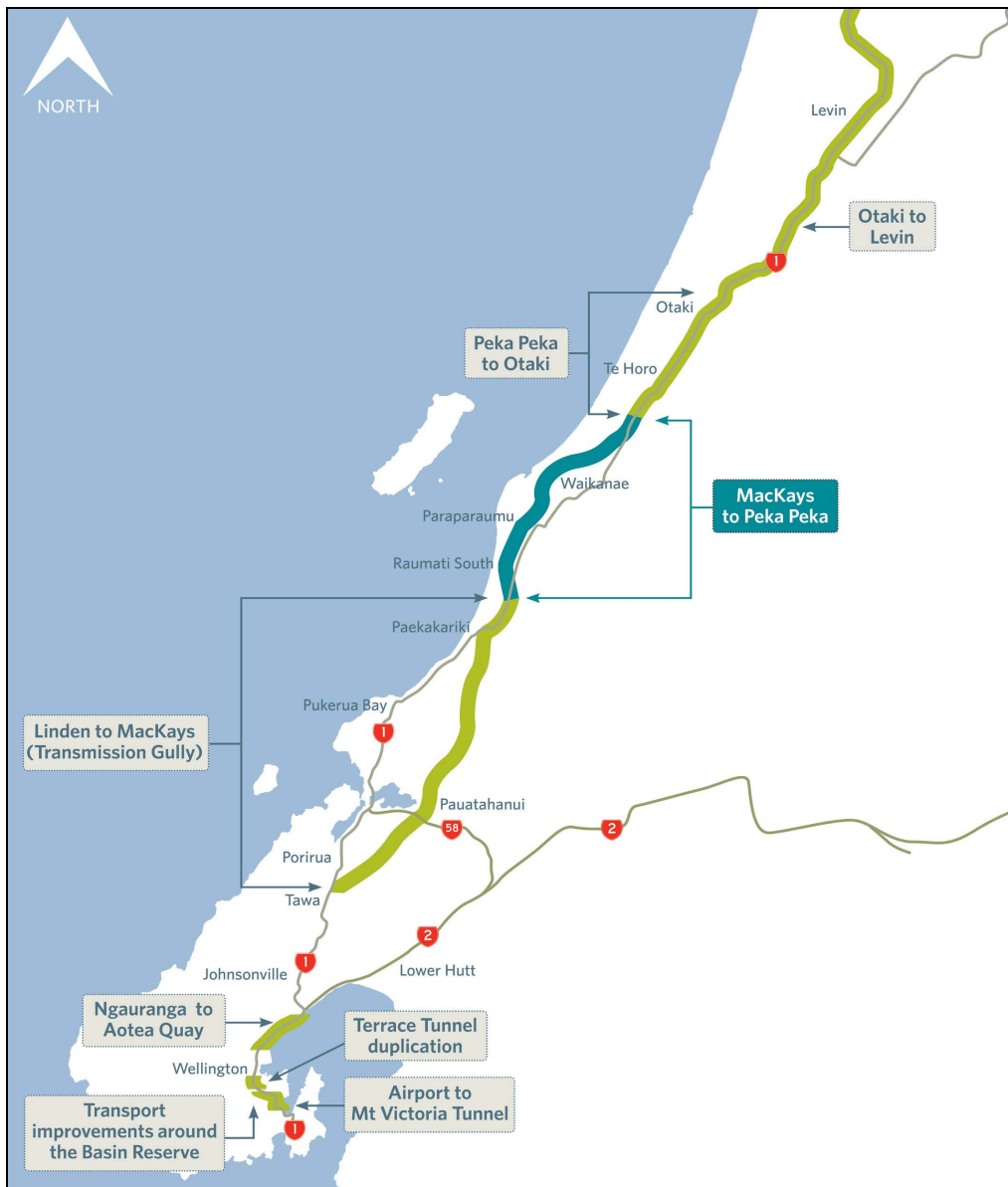


Figure 1.1: The Wellington Northern Corridor RoNS

1.3 MacKays to Peka Peka Expressway Alliance

An alliance is a collaborative way of working on major projects and involves the joint management of project challenges. It provides a different delivery approach from the more traditional forms of contracting and allows the NZTA to work more closely with partners.

An alliance model is considered to be the most suitable method for highly complex projects as it allows the partners to:

- work on a number of areas at once, overlap project phases and promote efficiencies through early contractor involvement
- deliver major projects with greater speed and innovation, and to
- work together to achieve the best transport and community outcomes.

In June 2010, the NZTA entered into an Alliance contract to facilitate the delivery of the Project. The MacKays to Peka Peka Expressway Alliance (“the Project team”) comprises Beca, Fletcher Construction, Higgins Group, Kāpiti Coast District Council (KCDC)³ and the NZTA. In addition, Goodmans Contractors, Incite and Boffa Miskell are subcontracted to the Alliance.

1.4 Purpose and scope of this report

This report (and the supporting information contained in Volumes 1, 3, 4 and 5) has been prepared in support of the NoR for a new designation and applications for resource consents which will authorise, under the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA), the construction, operation and maintenance of the Project.

In addition to the NoR to be prepared and lodged with the EPA (under section 145(3) of the RMA), the NZTA is lodging applications for regional resource consents under the relevant Regional Plans with the EPA (under section 145(1)(a) of the RMA) for activities required for the construction, operation and maintenance of the proposed Expressway. The NoR and the regional resource consent application forms are provided in Volume 1.

This report includes a comprehensive, integrated AEE which addresses all aspects relevant to the consideration and determination of the NoR 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 Part B, Chapter 3 to 5 of this report.

³ KCDC passed resolutions on 25 February 2010 that it intended to work constructively with the NZTA, and that they would be prepared to become a member of the Alliance proposed to design and build the proposed MacKays to Peka Peka Expressway. KCDC formally became a member of the Alliance in September 2010.

1.5 Integrated engineering and environmental assessment process

The information presented in this set of documents for the RMA authorisations is the culmination of an extensive design and environmental assessment exercise undertaken since the Project commenced in 2009.

The engineering and environmental assessment (E&EA) process for the Project has involved the close collaboration of the Project designers (i.e. engineering teams) with the environmental assessment teams. The close working relationship of the Project team has resulted in a high level of integration between the design and mitigation processes.

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 of the Project to avoid, or reduce to the extent practicable, potential adverse effects;
- Where avoidance of adverse effects was not possible, 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 possible to promote good environmental outcomes.

A further feature of the E&EA process has been the involvement of a wide range of stakeholders (i.e. wider than just the E&EA teams). In particular, KCDC in its role as an Alliance partner, have been involved throughout the Project development. Representatives of the Council have been involved in the Project Alliance Board, attended key workshops and meetings and acted in a review capacity, providing feedback to the Project team about various aspects of the Project.

A number of other stakeholders also provided input into the E&EA process, including:

- Greater Wellington Regional Council;
- tangata whenua;
- network utility providers;
- Department of Conservation;
- NZ Historic Places Trust;
- community organisations (e.g. public health, schools etc.);
- advocacy groups (e.g. environmental groups);
- directly affected landowners; and
- the general public.

1.6 Structure of this report

The documentation in relation to the NoR and resource consent applications is contained within five volumes⁴. These are:

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

This AEE report (in conjunction with supporting information within Volumes 1, 3, 4 and 5) has been prepared in support of the NoR for the Designation and the resource consent applications lodged with the EPA, including:

- A description of the existing environment, including a description of the receiving environment (as necessary);
- A description of the operation and construction of the Project;
- An assessment of alternative sites, routes and methods (as necessary);
- Identification of the persons affected by the Project and a description of consultation undertaken in the development of the Project;
- An assessment of the actual or potential effects on the environment of the construction, operation and maintenance of the Project including, where necessary, a description of proposed mitigation measures;
- An assessment of the Project against relevant provisions of policies and plans (both statutory and non-statutory); and
- Suggested conditions (including proposed management plans and monitoring) for the Designation and resource consents.

The structure of this AEE report is set out in Table 1.1.

⁴ 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 1.1: Structure of this AEE Report

Part	Chapters	Name	Contents
A	1 and 2	Introduction and Background to the Project	An introduction to the Project, including the strategic context, benefits and objectives of the Project
B	3, 4 and 5	Statutory Context	Details of the statutory matters relevant to the development and consideration of the Project
C	6	Description of the Environment	A description of the existing environment, including a description of the receiving environment as necessary
D	7 and 8	Description of the Project	A description of the construction and operation of the Project and the land required for the Project
E	9	Consideration of Alternatives	An assessment of the alternatives considered in the development of the Project
F	10	Consultation and Engagement	Identification of the persons affected by the Project and details of the methods and outcomes of consultation undertaken in relation to the Project
G	11 to 30	Assessment of Effects on the Environment	An assessment of the effects on the environment of the Project
H	31, 32 and 33	Management of Environmental Effects	Details of suggested mitigation and monitoring, including proposed management plans
I	34 and 35	Statutory Assessment	An assessment of the NOR and RCA's against all relevant statutory considerations, including Part 2 of the RMA

Although a single AEE report has been prepared covering all components of the Project, some aspects of the report will only be relevant to:

- specific geographical areas; or
- the NoR and/or applications for resource consent; or
- specific components of the Project.

The RMA forms (Volume 1) set out what information is relevant to specific statutory aspects.

1.7 RMA requiring authority status

A notice of requirement for a designation may only be issued 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 was approved as a requiring authority by the Resource Management (Approval of Transit New Zealand as Requiring Authority) Notice 1994, which was notified in the Gazette on 3 March 1994.⁵ A copy of this Gazette Notice is contained in Appendix B of this report.

1.8 Consideration of the Project as a Proposal of National Significance

The Project will upgrade part of the Wellington Northern Corridor (SH1 from Levin to Wellington Airport), an identified RoNS in terms of the Government Policy Statement⁶. The NZTA is lodging the NoR and associated resource consent applications for the Project with the EPA pursuant to section 145 RMA, requesting that the Project be directed to and determined by a Bol as a Proposal of National Significance. The EPA will recommend a course of action to the Minister for the Environment (section 146), who 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.

1.9 Aspects not covered in this report

There are some matters which are related to the Project which are not covered in this set of documents. These are:

- the alteration or removal of existing designations (refer to Chapter 3 of this report);
- authorisations required under other legislation (refer to Chapter 3 of this report); and
- Works to existing SH1⁷ (refer to Chapter 2 of this report).

1.9.1 The future of existing SH1

Building the proposed Expressway would allow existing SH1 between MacKays Crossing and Peka Peka to be modified and play a new role within Kapiti's urban and rural fabric. It would be able to provide a safe multi-functional alternative route, in accordance with the Project Objectives (refer to Chapter 2) and the benefits and effects of the Project have been assessed based on this assumption. It is emphasised however that any redevelopment of existing SH1 does not form part of the Project. Decisions about the redevelopment of existing SH1 have not yet been made. These decisions will be made in the future in conjunction with KCDC and the community.

⁵ Under clause 29 of Schedule 2 of the Land Transport Management Act 2008, the NZTA replaced Transit New Zealand as the requiring authority approved under this Gazette Notice

⁶ Government Policy Statement on Land Transport Funding 2009/2010-2018/2019

⁷ Except works required for the northern and southern tie-ins with the existing SH1