

Background to the project

In July 2012 we decided to take a staged approach to achieving our long-term goal of four-laning SH1 between Ōtaki and Levin. This initially focuses on improving safety and efficiency at key locations. It also follows on from previous work we did identifying constraints and asked for feedback on in 2011.

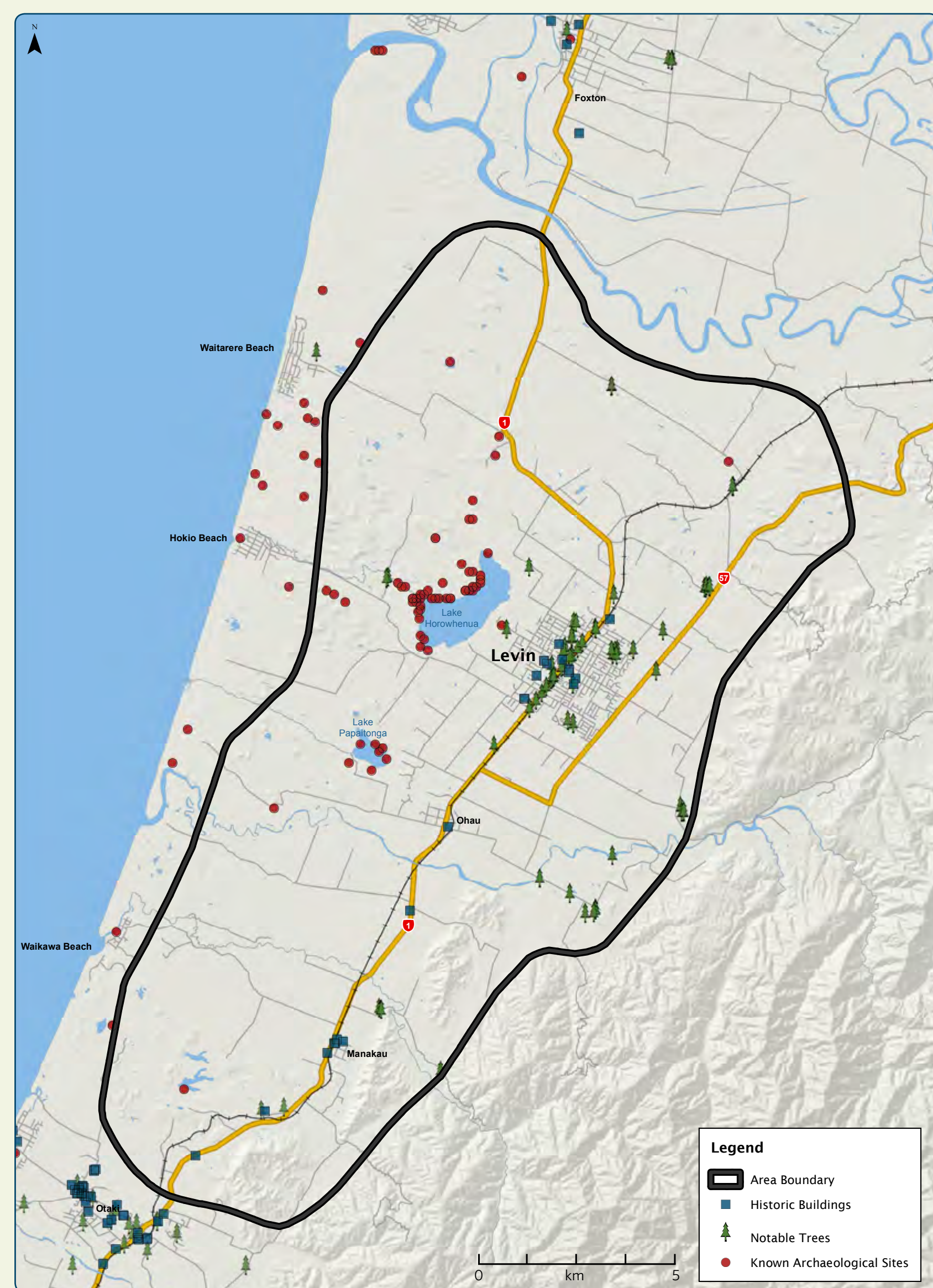
We showed a series of maps that identified potential areas we would want to avoid, such as areas of ecological significance, heritage value or importance, landscape/urban design constraints and areas significant to tangata whenua. Your local knowledge helped us understand the values of the areas, which in turn helped us to identify areas where it would be challenging to construct a road. We particularly noted that the area around Lake Horowhenua has many ecological and cultural values, along with geological constraints. This useful feedback helped shape our earlier investigations and informed our choice to concentrate on safety and efficiency improvements, generally to the existing SH1 alignment, as this offers better value for money than building a new expressway away from the existing road.

The broad issues identified in 2011 gave us the opportunity to identify a range of problems we need to resolve, such as managing traffic flow, safety and alignment issues with the existing highway, intersection improvements and managing connections with the state highway. Rather than consider improvements to the route as a whole, we have split the highway into smaller packages of work. This allows us the opportunity to prioritise different packages on the basis of need and seek funding for them sooner, once they have received consent.

The different proposals we have developed for these specific locations along SH1 and SH57 are explained in some detail across our information display boards. They will also let you know about how we're looking to consistently improve travel across the whole route, by including changes such as:

- installing more passing lanes on SH1
- widening the existing highway road edges to improve safety for all types of travel
- installing median barriers, such as wire rope barriers
- making road edges safer
- replacing old and narrow bridges
- changing intersection layouts, and
- improving walking and cycling opportunities.

For more information on these issues please view the board headed "A consistent approach to improving your travel".

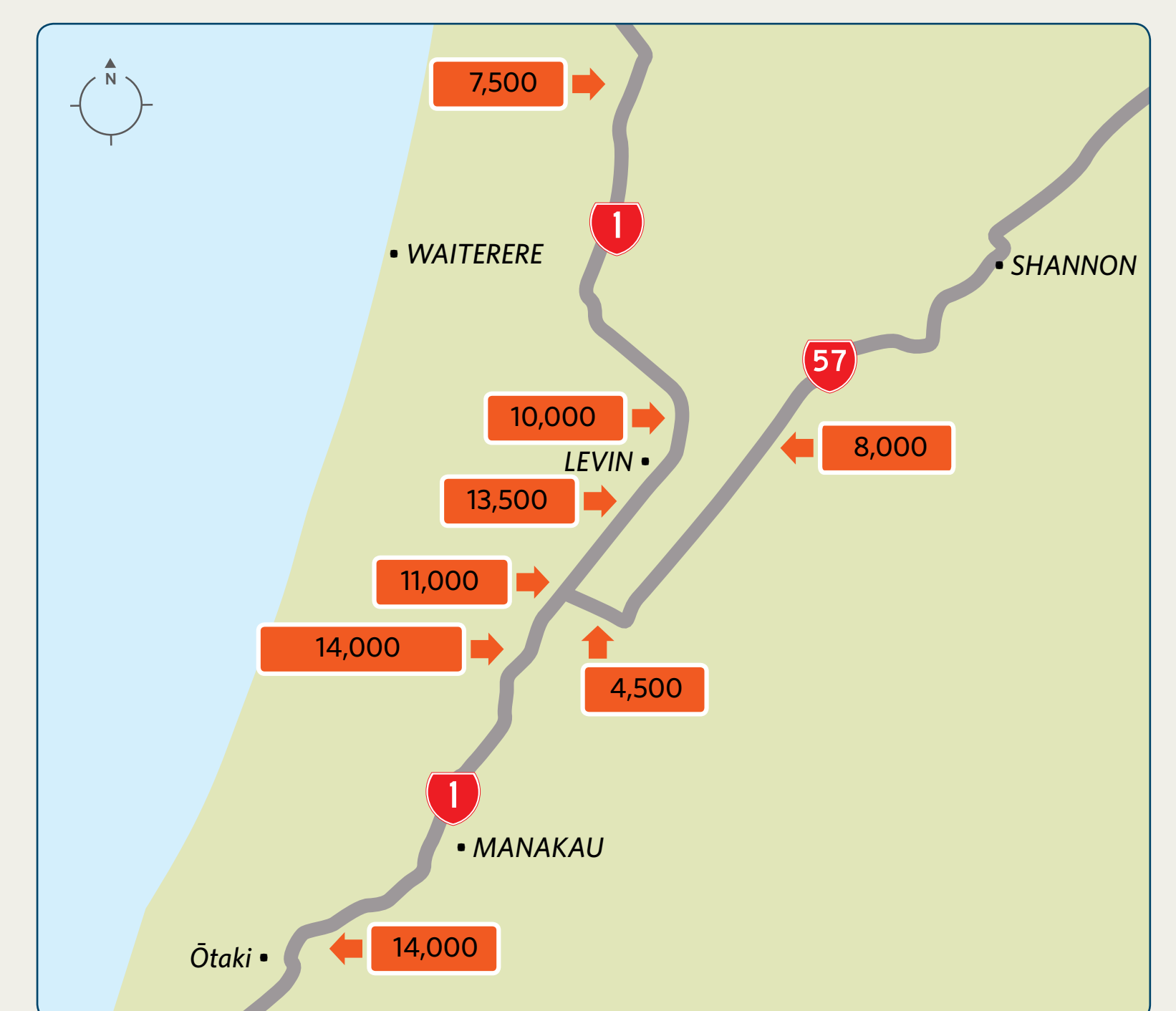


One of our constraints maps developed from consultation in 2011, showing heritage areas.

Daily traffic flows

As you can see from the diagram to the right, the highest annual daily traffic counts on SH1 are south of Levin, and in particular south of the SH1/SH57 intersection. North of Levin, traffic flows are much lower.

Our information shows that the amount of traffic travelling on SH1 and SH57 has been growing between 1% and 2% every year (recently this growth has been slower). Traffic volumes are expected to increase at a similar rate, or even accelerate, in future as the population in the lower North Island continues to grow.



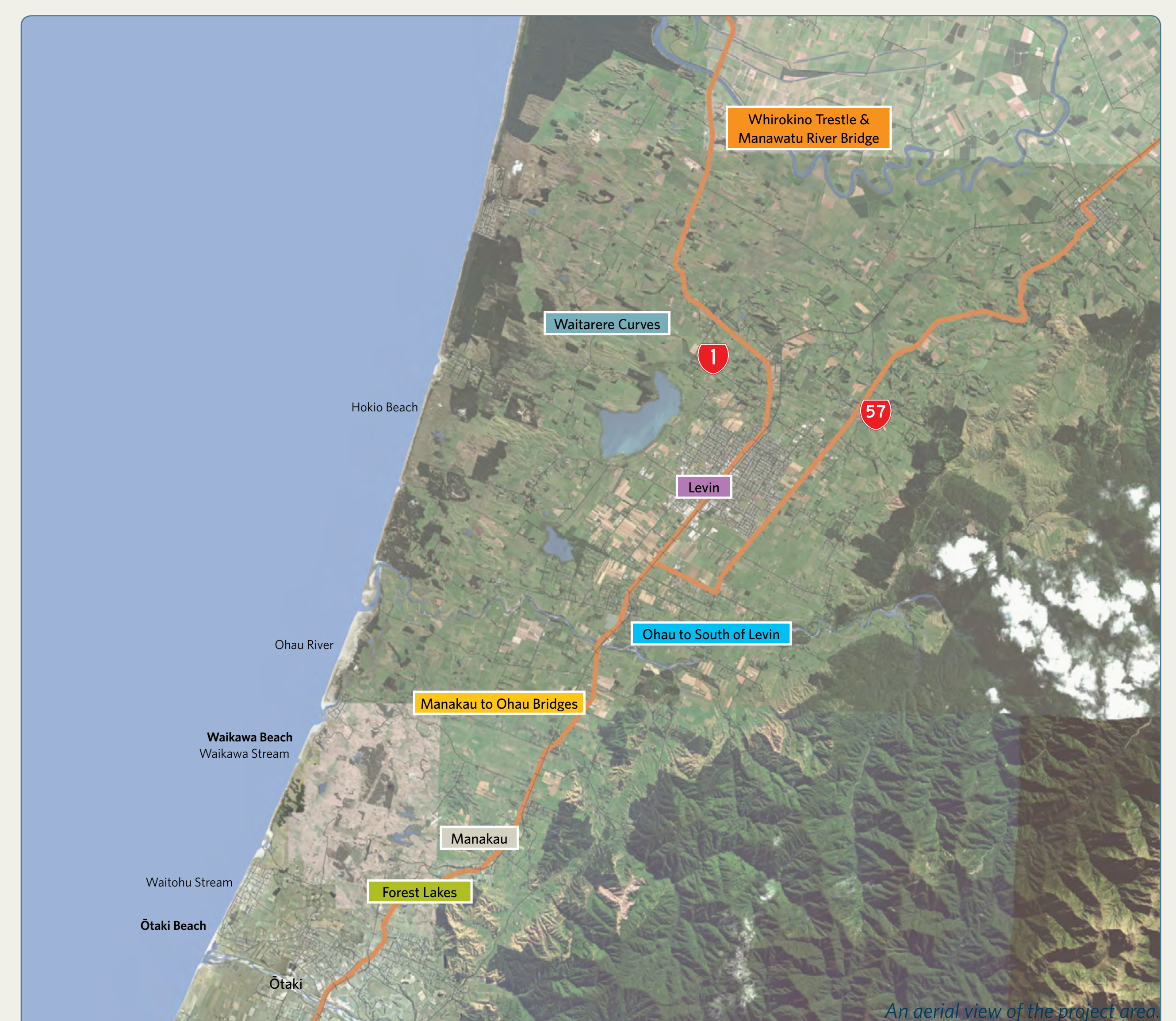
2012 Daily Vehicle Traffic counts on State Highways

The projects

Our proposed improvements are targeted in these different locations:

- Forest Lakes (Taylors Road to Pukehou Railway Bridge)
- Manakau
- Manakau to Ohau Bridges
- Ohau to south of Levin
- Levin
- Waitarere Curves
- Whirokino Trestle & Manawatu River Bridge

We have identified the needs and key safety and efficiency issues in these locations, what we are proposing and what needs to be considered further to refine our designs.



An aerial view of the project area