

How the Link Road fits in the wider network

We completed three transport studies to help inform our decisions on the Link Road. These studies considered the benefits of improvements to the existing highway routes of SH2 and SH58 and the potential of creating a new Seaview Link. A brief summary of these studies is listed below.



SH2 Petone to Ngauranga Six Laning

This study looked at the potential widening of SH2 between Petone and the Ngauranga Interchange, including potentially making the highway six lanes wide (three lanes in either direction). While widening this section of SH2 (via seaward reclamation) is feasible, it would be expensive. A better investment focus for the short to medium-term is a new Petone Interchange, which, when combined with our Ngauranga to Aotea Quay SH1 Improvements, will significantly improve congestion and travel times.



SH58 Efficiency Improvements

This study looked at SH58 efficiency upgrades from the future Pauatahanui Interchange (created by Transmission Gully) to the Haywards intersection with SH2. Efficiency upgrades to SH58 are not a suitable alternative to the new Link Road as they would deliver significantly fewer transport and economic benefits. With the new Link Road in place there will be no need to consider efficiency improvements to SH58 for quite some time. There is, however, a need to improve the safety of SH58. We are currently investigating safety improvements with a range of possible options being considered, including guardrails, realigning the road, better road marking, median wire rope barriers and widening the road.



Seaview to SH2 Transport Link

In conjunction with the Hutt City Council, we investigated improving the transport link between Seaview and SH2. We looked at a variety of options, including upgrades to the rail network and identified that roading upgrades were feasible, generating positive transport and economic benefits. We also identified that the new Link Road would not trigger the need for any improvements to the road network. The Council is now considering the outcomes of this study.

Tolling

An important issue we need to consider for the Link Road is how to fund its construction. At the moment, construction is planned from around 2019, but this would be subject to funding being available at that time.

One option we are considering is tolling the new Link Road. This could enable it being constructed earlier, realising the transport and wider economic benefits sooner.

Based on some early assessments, we believe this road could be a good tolling prospect because of the significant travel time savings and high traffic volumes expected to use it, particularly at peak times.

Before tolling is considered any further, we need to consult all the affected communities and stakeholders more widely on a detailed proposal that would include:

- The likely operational costs and economic benefits/impacts of tolling
- Potential impacts that tolling infrastructure (ie location of gantries) would have on the proposed road alignment, connections and interchanges, and
- Possible toll prices.

At this early stage, the key questions we would like your thoughts on about tolling as an option are:

Would you support a toll on the Link Road if it meant building it sooner?

What are your thoughts on the benefits of tolling the Link Road in order to help realise its benefits for the region?

