

PART A: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE PROJECT

1. Introduction

Overview

The NZTA and PCC are lodging NoRs and applications for resource consent ('the matters') for their respective components of the Transmission Gully Project, namely:

- the Main Alignment (the NZTA);
- the Kenepuru Link Road (the NZTA); and
- the Porirua Link Roads (PCC).

The Project is a proposal of national significance and the matters have been lodged with the EPA. The NZTA and PCC request that the Minister for the Environment makes a direction that the matters be referred to a Board of Inquiry for determination.

1.1 The requiring authorities / applicants

1.1.1 NZ Transport Agency

The NZ Transport Agency (the NZTA) is a Crown entity responsible for providing an integrated approach to transport planning, funding and delivery in New Zealand. 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". One of the NZTA's specific objectives is delivering the roads of national significance (RoNS) programme¹.

1.1.2 Porirua City Council

Porirua City Council (PCC) is a territorial authority under the Local Government Act 2002 (LGA).² Under the LGA, PCC must have particular regard to the contribution that network infrastructure (which includes roads) makes to its community.³

1. NZ Transport Agency, Statement of intent 2011 – 2014, p.6.

2. Under Part 2 of Schedule 2 of the LGA.

3. Sections 11A and 197 of the LGA.

1.2 Transmission Gully Project

The Transmission Gully Project (the Project) consists of three components:

- The Transmission Gully Main Alignment (the Main Alignment) involves the construction, operation and maintenance of a State highway formed to an expressway standard from Linden (Wellington City) to MacKays Crossing (Kapiti Coast). The NZTA is responsible for the Main Alignment.
- The Kenepuru Link Road involves the construction, operation and maintenance of a limited access State highway connecting the Main Alignment to the existing western Porirua road network. The NZTA is responsible for the Kenepuru Link Road.
- The Porirua Link Roads involves the construction, operation and maintenance of two local roads (the Whitby Link Road and the Waitangirua Link Road) connecting the Main Alignment to the existing eastern Porirua road network. PCC is responsible for the Porirua Link Roads.

These components are shown in Figure 1.1 and described in further detail below.

Under the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA), the respective components delivered by the NZTA and PCC are separate projects. This is relevant to some aspects of this report, particularly the various statutory assessments required under the RMA. For clarity:

- the 'NZTA Project' refers to the Main Alignment and Kenepuru Link Road; and
- the 'PCC Project' refers to the Porirua Link Roads.

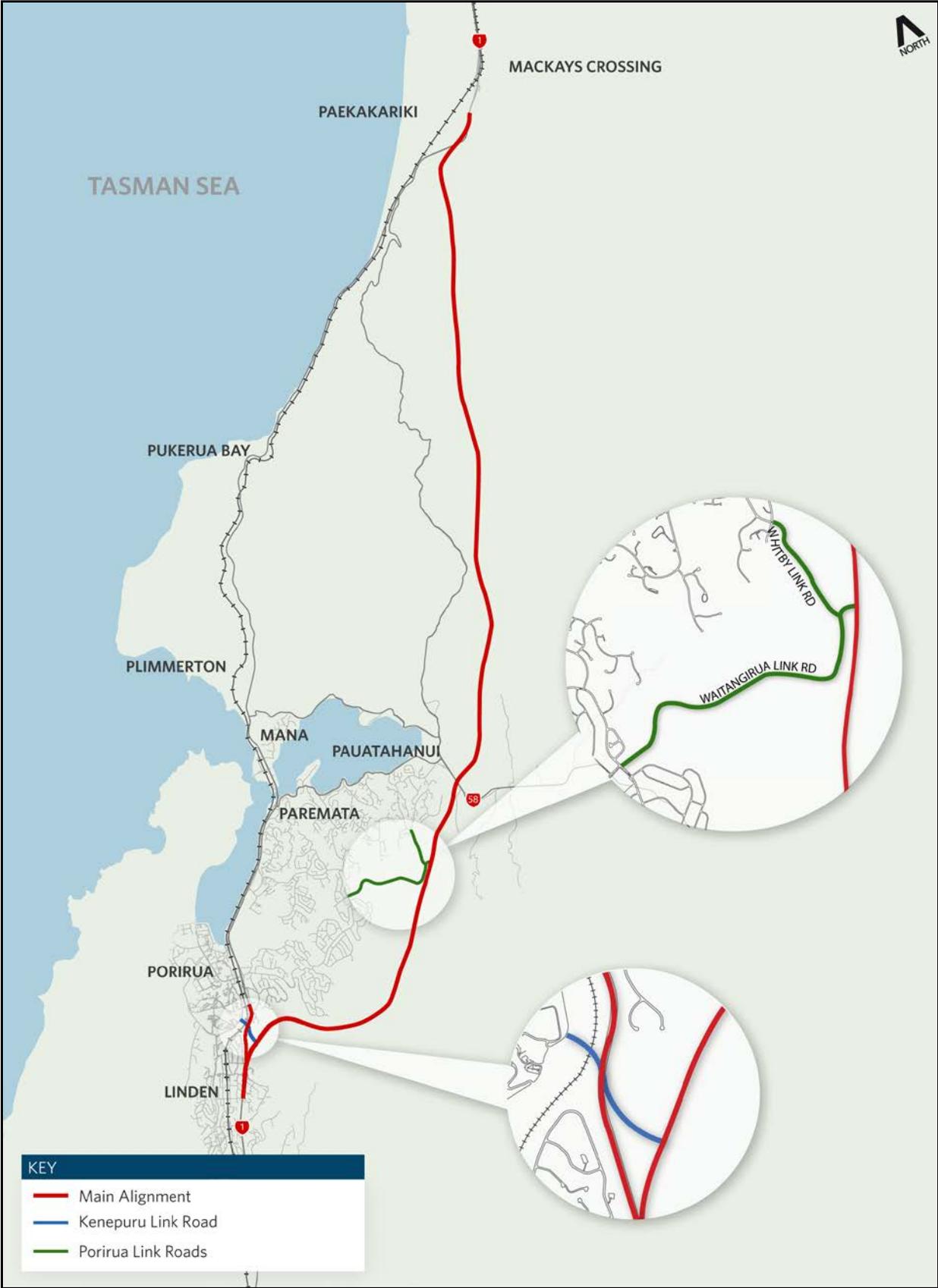


Figure 1.1: Components of the Project

1.2.1 Main Alignment

The Main Alignment will provide an inland State highway between Wellington City (Linden) and the Kapiti Coast (MacKays Crossing). Once completed, the Main Alignment will become part of State Highway 1. The Main Alignment is part of the Wellington Northern Corridor (Wellington to Levin) road of national significance (the Wellington RoNS) programme.

The proposed route is approximately 27 kilometres in length and requires land in four separate districts: Kapiti Coast District, Upper Hutt City, Porirua City and Wellington City⁴.

In accordance with the Wellington RoNS programme, the broad design objective for the Main Alignment is to construct a road to an expressway standard. The key design features of the Main Alignment are:

- four lanes (two lanes in each direction with continuous median barrier separation);
- rigid access control;
- grade separated interchanges;
- minimum horizontal and vertical design speeds of 100km/hr and 110km/hr respectively;
- maximum gradient of 8%; and
- crawler lanes in some steep gradient sections (both uphill and downhill) to account for the significant speed differences between heavy and light vehicles.

The Main Alignment will be declared a motorway⁵ and hence will not be available for use by cyclists, pedestrians or horse riders.

1.2.1.1 Tolling of the Main Alignment

At this stage no decision has been made as to whether or not the Main Alignment will be tolled.

For the purposes of the AEE preparation, it has been assumed that the Main Alignment will not be tolled. It is anticipated that if the Main Alignment were to be tolled, then there would be little, if any change, to the scale of effects reported in this assessment.

With respect to traffic effects, in general, tolling would be expected to result in a reduction in the number of vehicles using the Main Alignment. If the Main Alignment was tolled, tolls would be set at a level to balance revenue opportunities against the impact of traffic diversion to alternative routes.

Like the rest of the Project, the physical infrastructure required for tolling (such as gantries) would be subject to the outline plan process, as discussed in section 3.5 of this report.

4. Although the new length of State highway created by the Project will be approximately 27km, the total length of the designation required for the Main Alignment is approximately 28.1km. This additional 1,100m accounts for the designation of a small section of existing SH1 to provide for the works needed at the northern and southern tie-ins of the Main Alignment to existing SH1.

5. Under section 71 of the Government Roading Powers Act 1989.

1.2.2 Kenepuru Link Road

The Kenepuru Link Road will connect the Main Alignment to western Porirua. It will provide access from Kenepuru Drive to the Kenepuru Interchange. This road will be a State highway designed to the following standards:

- two lanes (one in each direction);
- design speeds of 50km/hr;
- maximum gradient of 10%;
- limited side access; and
- crawler lane.

The Kenepuru Link Road requires land in Porirua City and Wellington City.

1.2.3 Porirua Link Roads

The Porirua Link Roads will connect eastern Porirua to the Main Alignment. The Whitby Link Road will provide access from James Cook Drive in Whitby, while the Waitangirua Link Road will provide access from Warspite Avenue in Waitangirua.

The Porirua Link Roads will be local roads designed to the following standards:

- two lanes (one in each direction);
- design speeds of 50km/hr;
- maximum gradient of 10%;
- some side accesses will be permitted;
- provision for cyclists; and
- provision for footpaths.

The Porirua Link Roads will be constructed, operated, and maintained by PCC.

1.3 Purpose and scope of this report

This report (and the supporting information contained in Volumes 3, 4 and 5) has been prepared in support of the Notices of Requirement for designations (NoR) and applications for resource consent (collectively referred to as 'matters') which would authorise, under the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA), the construction, operation and maintenance of the Project⁶. These matters are being lodged with the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) as being part of a proposal of national significance.

In total, eight (8) NoRs are being lodged by the NZTA and PCC for their respective components for the Project. These are listed in Table 1.1 and illustrated in Figure 1.2.

6. Enabling works to the existing electricity transmission line are covered separately in Volume 6.

Table 1.1: NoRs for the Project

Project	Component		District			
			Kapiti Coast District	Upper Hutt City	Porirua City	Wellington City
NZTA Project	Main Alignment		NoR 1	NoR 2	NoR 3	NoR 4
	Kenepuru Link Road		-	-	NoR 5	NoR 6
PCC Project	Porirua Link Roads	Whitby Link Road	-	-	NoR 7	-
		Waitangirua Link Road	-	-	NoR 8	

In addition to the eight notices, the NZTA and PCC are also lodging applications for the resource consents needed for their respective components of the Project. Specifically:

- the NZTA is lodging 16 applications for resource consent with the EPA (under section 145(1)(a) of the RMA) for activities required for the construction, operation and maintenance of the Main Alignment and the Kenepuru Link Road, which require resource consents under Wellington regional plans; and
- PCC is lodging four (4) applications for resource consent with the EPA (under section 145(1)(a) of the RMA) for activities required for the construction, operation and maintenance of the Porirua Link Roads, which require resource consents under Wellington regional plans.

Further information on the statutory context for the Project is provided in Part B of this report.

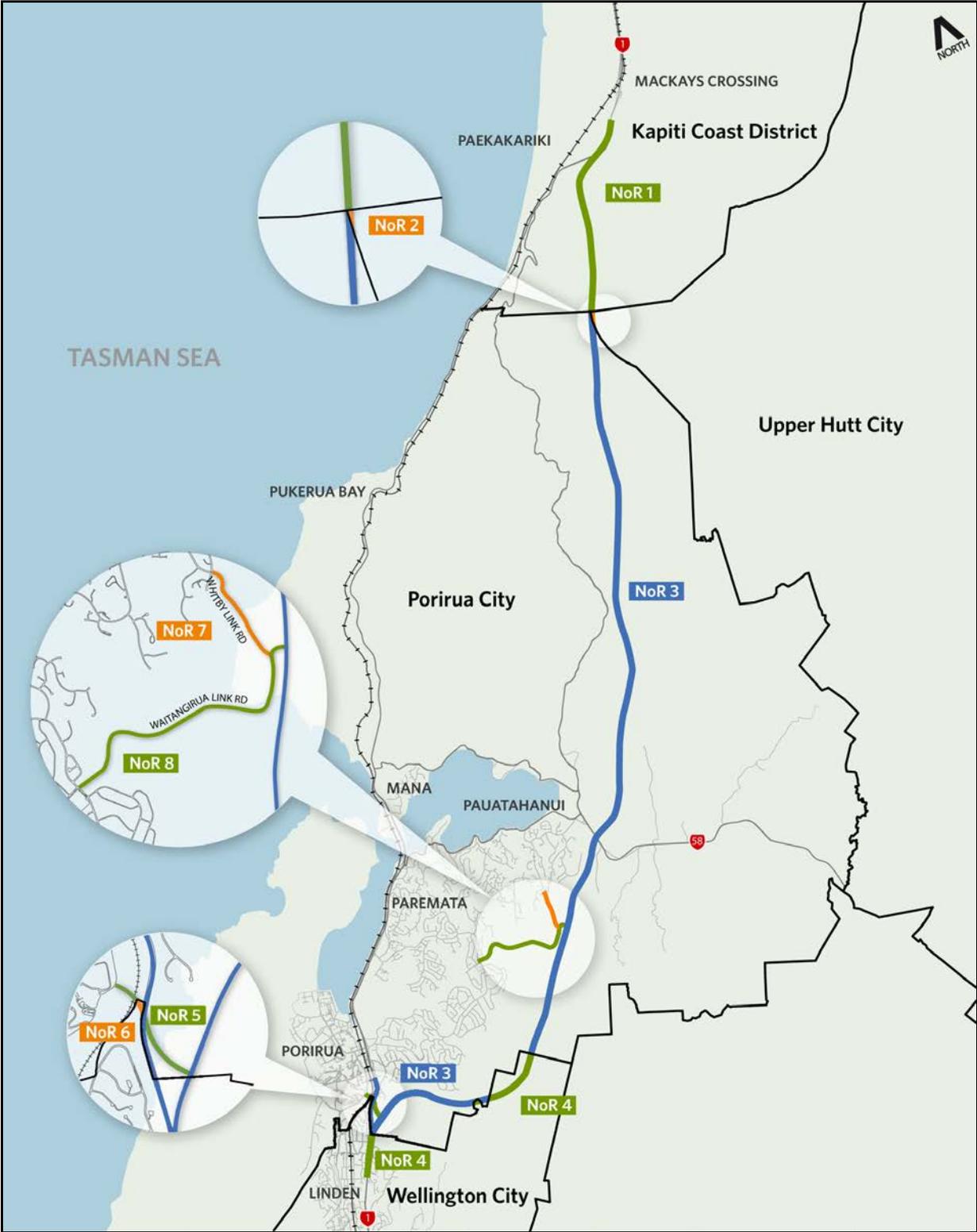


Figure 1.2: Notices of Requirement for the Project

1.4 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 2007. In particular the most recent phase (Engineering and environmental assessment, commencing in mid-2009) has involved the close integration of the Project designers (i.e. engineering teams) with the environmental assessment teams.

Throughout Phase 2, all the E&EA teams met together monthly and meetings between specific teams occurred more frequently, as required. This close working relationship 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, a Regulatory Authorities Technical Advisory Group (RATAG) comprising a representative from the five relevant local authorities met monthly with the Project team. The purpose of these regular meetings was to keep the local authorities informed of the preparation of the lodgement documentation. They also 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:

- local authorities⁷;
- network utility providers;
- tangata whenua;
- the Department of Conservation;
- the 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.

7. In addition to their RATAG role, local authorities were also involved in other capacities including as asset owners and operators, land owners and in terms of strategic and policy.

1.5 Structure of this report

This report (in conjunction with the technical reports and supporting information (Volume 3), the plans (Volume 4) and the draft management plans (Volume 5)) contains the information required in support of the matters lodged with the EPA⁸, including:

- a description of the existing environment, including a description of the receiving environment (as necessary);
- a description 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 designations and resource consents.

The structure of this report is set out in Table 1.2.

Table 1.2: Structure of this report

Part	Chapters	Name	Contents
A	1 - 2	INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE PROJECT	An introduction to the Project, including the strategic context, benefits and objectives of the Project.
B	3 - 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 - 8	DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT	A description of the operation (including maintenance) and construction of the Project.
E	9	CONSIDERATION OF ALTERNATIVES	An assessment of the alternatives considered in the development of the Project.

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

Part	Chapters	Name	Contents
F	10	CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT	Identification of the persons affected by the Project and details of the methods and outcomes of consultation undertaken for the Project.
G	11 - 27	ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTS ON THE ENVIRONMENT	An assessment of the effects on the environment of the Project.
H	28 - 30	MANAGEMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS	Details of proposed management and monitoring and proposed designation and resource consent conditions.
I	31 - 32	STATUTORY ASSESSMENT	An assessment of the Project against all relevant statutory considerations, including Part 2 of the RMA.

As has been explained above, although some components of the Project are to be funded and delivered by the NZTA (i.e. the NZTA Project) and some by PCC (i.e. the PCC Project), they have been developed as a holistic Project. However, this does not prevent components of the Transmission Gully Project being delivered separately, if necessary.

Similarly, 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 and / or jurisdictional areas; or
- the notices of requirement and / or applications for resource consent; or
- specific components of the Project.

The RMA forms (Volume 2) set out what information is relevant to specific statutory aspects.

1.6 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 is the requiring authority for the Main Alignment and the Kenepuru Link Road. The NZTA was approved under section 167(3) of the RMA 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 1994.⁹ A copy of this Gazette Notice is contained in **Appendix A** of this report.

PCC is a requiring authority in accordance with section 166(b) of the RMA and is the requiring authority for the Porirua Link Roads.

1.7 Consideration of the Project as a proposal of national significance

On 10 September 2010 the Minister for the Environment made a direction that the Project is a proposal of national significance¹⁰. The Minister's reasons for his direction were that the Project:

- has aroused widespread public concern or interest regarding its actual or likely effect on the environment (including the global environment) (s142)(3)(a));
- involves or is likely to involve significant use of natural and physical resources (s142)(3)(b));
- affects or is likely to affect a structure, feature, place, or area of national significance (s142)(3)(c));
- results or is likely to result in or contribute to significant or irreversible changes to the environment (including the global environment) (s142)(3)(e));
- will assist the Crown in fulfilling its public health, welfare, security, or safety obligations or functions (s142)(3)(h));
- affects or is likely to affect more than 1 region or district (s142)(3)(i)); and
- relates to a network utility operation that extends or is proposed to extend to more than 1 district or region (s142)(3)(j)).

The NZTA and PCC request that the matters be directed to a Board of Inquiry made up of the same people as the Board of Inquiry which the NZTA's request for a change to the Regional Freshwater Plan was directed to.

1.8 Aspects not covered in this report

There are some aspects which are related to the Project which are not covered in this report. These are:

- the relocation of existing electricity transmission lines;
- the alteration or removal of existing designations;
- works to existing State highways¹¹;

9. 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.

10. Hon Dr Nick Smith, Ministerial direction to refer the New Zealand Transport Agency's request for a plan change to the Wellington Regional Freshwater Plan to a Board of Inquiry, 10 September 2010.

- a request by the NZTA for a change to the Regional Freshwater Plan for the Wellington Region; and
- authorisations required under other legislation.

1.8.1 Relocation of existing electricity transmission lines

The Transmission Gully Project is named as such because it generally follows the existing 110kV electricity transmission line between Takapu Road and Paekakariki. This line is part of the Nation Grid, owned and operated by Transpower New Zealand Limited (Transpower). In order to construct and operate the Project, some sections of this transmission line will need to be relocated (and/or existing towers strengthened). This work is referred to as the 'Transpower Line Relocation Project'.

The NZTA and Transpower have an ongoing Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the management of their respective assets across the country. Both organisations have agreed that it would be preferable to have a distinct set of documents specifically for the applications for resource consent for the Transpower Project (contained in Volume 6). The reasons for this are:

- Transpower (rather than the NZTA or PCC) is the applicant for the resource consents required for the Transpower Project;
- applications for the resource consents required for the Transpower Project will be made under the Resource Management (National Environmental Standards for Electricity Transmission Activities) Regulations 2009 (NES ET). The NES ET specifically provides for the relocation of existing lines but does not apply to the Project itself; and
- lodging a distinct set of documents for the Transpower Project will allow better differentiation between Transpower's dual roles as an applicant for the resource consents required for the transmission line relocation and as an affected party in relation to the Project; and
- the transmission line relocation (i.e. the Transpower Project) will largely be undertaken as a separate activity from the Project (but in conjunction with the enabling works for the Project).

Transpower is lodging its application with the EPA (under section 145(1)(a) of the RMA) as a matter that is part of a proposal of national significance. This is being done at the same time as the NZTA and PCC lodge its matters with the EPA for the Transmission Gully Project. The NZTA, PCC and Transpower believe these matters would best be heard by the same BoI, allowing them to be considered together.

1.8.2 Alteration or removal of existing designations

There are a number of designations already in the various district plans which relate to previous Transmission Gully alignments and associated link roads. There are also a number of designations for existing State highways. Table 1.3 contains the details of these existing designations.

11. Except as required for the northern and southern tie-ins with SH1 and for the proposed SH58 Interchange.

Table 1.3: Existing Transmission Gully, State highway and link road designations

Designation name	District plan [identifier]	Requiring authority
Kapiti Coast District		
State Highway 1	KCDP [D0101]	NZ Transport Agency
Transmission Gully Motorway	KCDP [D0103]	NZ Transport Agency
State Highway 1 (MacKays Crossing)	KCDP [D0104]	NZ Transport Agency
Upper Hutt City		
Transmission Gully Motorway	UHCDP [TNZ4] ¹²	NZ Transport Agency
Porirua City		
Motorway (State Highway 1)	PCDP [K0403]	NZ Transport Agency
Limited Access Road (State Highway 58)	PCDP [K0404]	NZ Transport Agency
Transmission Gully Motorway	PCDP [K0405]	NZ Transport Agency
Kenepuru Link Road	PCDP [K0406]	NZ Transport Agency
Warspite Avenue Link Road	PCDP [K1051] ¹³	Porirua City Council
Wellington City		
Transmission Gully Motorway	WCDP [H5]	NZ Transport Agency
Motorway (State Highway 1)	WCDP [H1]	NZ Transport Agency
Warspite Link Road and Interchange	WCDP [X1]	Porirua City Council

These existing designations are noted for information purposes only. The NoRs given in this set of documents do not relate to the alteration or removal of any of the existing designations listed in Table 1.3. Where works within an existing State highway designation are required (at the northern and southern tie-ins with SH1 and the new interchange with SH58), these works have been provided for in the extent of the designations sought for the Project¹⁴. As such, no works for the Project will be undertaken pursuant to any of the existing designations listed in Table 1.3.

Once the Project has been constructed, the designations currently sought will be reviewed with a view to reducing the extent of the designations to only that required for the continued operation and maintenance of the Project.

1.8.3 Works to existing State highways

The Project will allow existing SH1 between Linden and MacKays Crossing and SH58 to the west of the Main Alignment to be developed into a safe multi-functional alternative route, in accordance with the Project objectives, 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 and the relevant section

12. On Rural Map 8 of the UHCDP, designation TNZ4 is labelled as 'State Highway 2'. Upper Hutt City Council has confirmed (telecommunication between P. McGimpsey (Beca) and M. Yu (Upper Hutt City Council), 2 March 2010) that this labelling is an error and this designation is for the 'Transmission Gully Motorway'. The schedule of designations (Chapter 36 of the UHCDP) lists designation TNZ4 for the 'Transmission Gully Motorway'.

13. Based on the PCDP available online (www.pcc.govt.nz), the requirement for designation K1051 has not been confirmed in the PCDP.

14. For the northern tie-in, this is within the designation sought by NoR 1 and for the southern tie-in, this is within the designations sought by NoR 4 and NoR 5.

of SH58, does not form part of the Project. Decisions about the redevelopment of existing SH1 and SH58 have not yet been made. These decisions will be made in the future in conjunction with local authorities and the community.

1.8.4 Request for a change to the Regional Freshwater Plan for the Wellington Region

On 6 September 2010, the NZTA lodged a request for a change to the Regional Freshwater Plan for the Wellington Region (the Request). The Request was lodged with the EPA (under section 145(1)(c) of the RMA) as a matter which is part of a proposal of national significance (i.e. the Transmission Gully Project). The Request seeks the addition of a new policy, changes to policies and two new definitions in the Regional Freshwater Plan (RFP). The objective of the Request is to allow greater flexibility for implementation of the Project, which will better align the RFP with the Proposed Wellington Regional Policy Statement and the Wellington Regional Land Transport Strategy. It also seeks to provide greater clarity regarding the management of environmental effects of activities in streams classified in the RFP as *'surface water to be managed for aquatic ecosystem purposes'*.

The Minister for the Environment directed the Request to a BoI on 10 September 2010. The Request was publically notified on 12 February 2011, with further submissions called for on 4 April 2011.

At the time of lodgement of the NoRs and applications for resource consent for the Project by the NZTA and PCC (August 2011), the BoI has heard the Request but has not released its final decision.

The provisions of the proposed plan change will not become operative until the BoI has released its final decision on the Request and (if their decision requires amendment of the RFP) the decision has been implemented by GWRC (in accordance with section 149W of the RMA). As such, for the purposes of the assessment of the Project (contained in Part I of this report), the Request is not relevant (under sections 104(1)(b)(vi) and 171(1)(a)(iv) of the RMA) as it is not part of a proposed plan¹⁵.

1.8.5 Authorisations required under other legislation

The construction, operation and maintenance of the Project will also require authorisations under other legislation, including:

- approval from the Minister of Conservation for the use and occupation of land classified as recreation reserve or scenic reserve under the Reserves Act 1977;
- an archaeological authorisation from the NZ Historic Places Trust under the Historic Places Act 1993; and
- approval from the Director-General of Conservation for the construction of culverts where the passage of fish would be impeded under the Freshwater Fisheries Regulations 1983.

This set of documents only pertains to the authorisations required under the RMA for the Project. Authorisations required under other legislation will be sought subsequently from the appropriate authorities.

15. The definition of 'proposed plan' under section 43AAC of the RMA does not include private plan change requests.