

MINISTERIAL BRIEFING NOTE

Subject	Hawke's Bay Expressway
Date	17 October 2024
Briefing number	BRI-3207

Contact(s) for telephone discussion (if required)				
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Action taken by Office of the Minister

- ☐ Noted
- ☐ Seen by Minister
- ☐ Agreed
- ☐ Feedback provided
- ☐ Forwarded to
- ☐ Needs change [please specify]
- ☐ Withdrawn
- ☐ Overtaken by events

17 October 2024

Hon Simeon Brown, Minister of Transport

HAWKE'S BAY EXPRESSWAY

Purpose

1. This briefing provides you with information about the Hawke's Bay Expressway Roads of National Significance (RoNS) project.

Hawke's Bay Expressway project summary

2. Key features of the Hawke's Bay Expressway:
 - The Hawke's Bay Expressway is an existing 27-kilometre, two-lane corridor on State Highway (SH2) with land designated for additional road alongside it.
 - It links communities travelling between Napier and Hastings and links the region to the wider Central North Island. It also provides lifeline connections to the regional hospital and airport, and forms part of the national freight corridor, linking people to Central North Island's largest port, Napier Port.
 - Four-laning the expressway will support national and regional economic growth and productivity by improving capacity, travel time, resilience and safety. It will provide a more efficient route to support intercity connectedness and residential growth, and help cater to our rural economy, which is heavily reliant on our roads, rail networks and access to the port.
 - The benefits of four-laning the Hawke's Bay Expressway in improving capacity, travel time and reliability, have been highlighted several times in reports such as the 2012 Heretaunga Plains Transport Study, the 2015 NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi (NZTA) Napier Port Access business case and others.

Project context

3. Due to the region's growing population and economy, the Hawke's Bay expressway is reaching capacity in the central section at peak times. Daily traffic has risen two percent each year over the past two decades, with up to 29,000 vehicles each day in the most congested section.
4. When the original state highway between Napier and Hastings was constructed in the 1970s, land was designated along much of the Hawke's Bay Expressway to allow for four lanes in the future. Bridges were located such that any duplication was possible, including the Kennedy Road overpass and Tutaekuri River Bridge.
5. The Hawke's Bay Expressway will involve adding two additional lanes to the existing SH2 corridor in stages. Planning and design work has begun on the first stage (Stage 1). s 9(2)(ba)
(ii)

6. This project is being delivered indicatively in four stages to allow for rapid delivery over a number of years, allowing for design of one section to occur in parallel to another section.
7. Planned stages and scope are as follows:
 - Stage 1: Taradale Road to Pakowhai Road.
 - Stage 2: Pakowhai Road to Omahu Road and Taradale Road to Prebensen Drive.
 - Stage 3 and 4: Watchman Road to Prebensen Drive and Omahu Road to Pakipaki.
8. Engagement with iwi and key stakeholders began in July 2024. Some landowner engagement is also underway. Overall, engagements to date have been positive and supportive of the project.
9. s 9(2)(ba)(ii)
10. The Hawke's Bay Expressway project is listed as a project to be included in Schedule 2 of the Fast-track Approvals Bill.

Kennedy Road off-ramp enabling works

11. Subject to an NZTA Board decision on Friday, 18 October, construction on enabling works for the Hawke's Bay Expressway will begin on a section of land adjacent to the Kennedy Road off-ramp from SH2 in October 2024.
12. Undertaking enabling work now allows NZTA to realise the benefits of the project 12-15 months earlier than initially programmed. It will also reduce the commercial risk around the new bridge structures.
13. These enabling works allow for the construction of this project to begin in the 2025/26 construction season. Pre-implementation (design and consenting) of the Stage 1 main works will commence in early 2025.
14. Ground improvements are required at this site as the ground is currently too soft to construct on immediately. The works will help prepare the land for four-laning, and for taking the permanent weight of the road. This work will take around three to four months to complete, dependent on weather.
15. The project team have looked for early opportunities to reduce costs and have worked with the Cyclone Gabrielle Silt Recovery taskforce to secure safe repurposed silt to raise the level of the land and create a wide, flat surface. The silt has been provided free of charge, benefitting both the taxpayer and the local rate payer.
16. The silt will be compacted into the ground, and then left for 12 months. This process speeds up the natural process of compaction, allowing the soil to settle and the sediment to consolidate prior to further construction works commencing.

17. Because there is still 12 months of design to undertake prior to construction starting at this location in late 2025, the project team have chosen to use this time to implement the most cost-efficient method of ground compaction instead of a structural solution (driven piles or similar) which would be more costly.



18. While the enabling works take place, the right-hand turning lane into Kennedy Road from the northbound Hawke's Bay Expressway offramp will be closed with a detour in place. The project team has used a barrier to delineate the offramp lane closure, rather than road cones.
19. While the work will take approximately three to four months to complete, there will be a break in work from 9 December 2024 to 13 January 2025 when the Kennedy Road offramp will be open as normal.
20. Vegetation clearance and the set-up of environmental controls at the Kennedy Road offramp enabling works site occurred during the week commencing 14 October. Wildlife monitoring has also been completed. Resource Consent (Discharge and Land Use Permit) for these works was granted to NZTA on 8 October 2024.
21. Other Stage 1 enabling works that will occur from early 2025 include further ground improvements at the Tutaekuri River Bridge in preparation for a new 280 metre bridge, 4km of vegetation and median barrier removal, and bulk utilities relocation. Enabling work is being

carried out this season so that contractors have an unimpeded state highway designation to commence main works construction in the near future.

Project costs and funding

s 9(2)(ba)(ii)

Key messages

24. Key messages of the Hawke's Bay Expressway project include:

- NZTA is working to deliver on the Government's RoNS programme, outlined as a priority in the Government Policy Statement on land transport 2024–27. The Hawke's Bay Expressway is included in the RoNS programme.
- The Hawke's Bay Expressway is an existing 27-kilometre, two lane corridor on State Highway 2 SH2, with up to 29,000 vehicles daily. The Expressway is a critical link for the wider region, and due to the growing population and economy it is reaching its capacity in the central section at peak times.
- Four-laning the expressway will support national and regional economic growth and productivity by improving capacity, travel time, resilience and safety. It'll provide a more efficient route to support intercity connectedness and residential growth, and help cater to our rural economy, which is heavily reliant on our roads, rail networks and access to the port.
- The Hawke's Bay Expressway will involve adding two additional lanes to the existing SH2 corridor in stages. Planning and design work has begun on Stage 1. The NZTA Board is likely to receive the Investment Case for approval at the November Board meeting.
- Enabling works are scheduled to start in late October 2024 (subject to an NZTA Board decision). This work will take around three months to complete and will help prepare the land for 4-laning, and for taking the permanent weight of the road. We'll keep stakeholders and community updated on these plans.
- The Hawke's Bay Expressway will be assessed for tolling suitability. Following the assessment, if tolling is proposed for the expressway, we would publicly consult on this prior to a decision being made.

Phase 1 RoNS update

25. RoNS, a package of major transport projects, once completed will support economic growth and productivity, reduce congestion, improve safety, support housing development, and provide a more resilient roading network.
26. NZTA is driving value for money on the RoNS, programme by:

- Developing a suite of standardised designs for geometrics, pavements, major structures, geotechnical elements, seismic design, stormwater and urban design requirements.
 - Defining a 'no frills' approach to ensure we focus on primary transport objectives for existing and new projects taking into consideration economic growth and productivity, increased maintenance and resilience, safety and value for money.
 - Engaging suppliers and working with them to consider how best to build capacity and capability for the high volume of work ahead.
 - Submitting 12 RoNS for inclusion in the Fast Track Approvals (FTA) Bill to evaluate as a potential consenting pathway option once the Bill is passed into law by the end of 2024.
27. NZTA is also improving the business case process across project scoping, streamlining our approach to project development, and ensuring effective project initiation, funding, procurement, and assurance processes and working collaboratively with central and local government.



Northland Corridor – Warkworth to Te Hana section

28. The Northland Corridor is one of the largest infrastructure projects in New Zealand's history, designations and consents are already in place, all appeals have been resolved, and we're moving forward with property acquisitions.
29. An NZTA Board and subsequent Cabinet Decision on the Investment Case and delivery pathway is expected in November 2024.
30. For the next six months, NZTA will have teams undertaking a range of activities between Warkworth and Te Hana (phase 1) that include geotechnical drilling, mapping, and surveys.
31. Approximately 120 boreholes will be completed along the project route.
32. Information collected during these investigations will help develop a geological model of the area to establish a geotechnical baseline for the design, which will achieve improved cost certainty and help confirm alignment of the corridor.
33. We are working to minimise disruption to businesses and residents by undertaking investigations in discrete, safe locations.
34. Appropriate environmental and safety controls are also being established, including ground protection, fencing and safety barriers.

State Highway 1 (SH1) Cambridge to Piarere

35. SH1 Cambridge to Piarere is a 16km four-lane grade separated road which runs from the southern terminal of the Waikato Expressway south of Cambridge to the intersection of SH1 and SH29 at Piarere.
36. NZTA has lodged a Notice of Requirement for this project with the Ministry for the Environment using the existing fast track consenting process.
37. Physical works are planned to commence in late October 2024 to establish the bore/well for the water take trial at Lake Karapiro (Moana Reserve). Detailed design has begun.

State Highway 29 (SH29) Tauriko West (Omanawa Bridge)

38. This is a four-lane replacement for SH29 slightly offset to the northwest of the existing SH29 corridor. The first deliverable of this project is the replacement of the Omanawa Bridge (on the future alignment of the Tauriko project) with short sections of road linking back into the existing SH29.
39. The initial geotechnical work for the Omanawa Bridge (part of Tauriko West RoNS) is complete with test pits drilled nearby to the river and in the SH29 corridor during the Kaimai Range closure in September, so there was no disruption to traffic.
40. The information collected will help us understand the make-up of the ground conditions and this will inform the detailed design for the bridge foundations.
41. The project team are also working with landowners, exploring construction methodology and tendering for design resources. The detailed design is expected to be complete mid-2025 with a

contractor expected to be announced in August / September 2025 and construction of the bridge starting soon after.

Belfast to Pegasus Motorway and Woodend Bypass

- 42. A 9km, four-lane, extension to the Christchurch Northern Motorway. The project will begin where the motorway joins with the Western Belfast bypass and the Northern Corridor motorways, and will go through to Pegasus, bypassing Woodend. The project completed an early assessment and obtained a designation in 2014.
- 43. A geotechnical authority heritage strategy has been developed and tolling assessment is underway for the Belfast to Pegasus Motorway & Woodend Bypass.
- 44. The NZTA Board will receive the Investment Case on this project to in November 2024, including a tolling assessment.

Mill Road Stage 1

- 45. NZTA has commenced this project with a Board decision being planned for mid-2025.

Takitimu North Link Stage 2

- 46. The NZTA Board will confirm scope for the project at its October meeting This will enable confirmation of consenting pathway and lodgement of consents package.

It is recommended that you:

- 47. **Note** the contents of this briefing.



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Brett Gliddon,

Group General Manager – Transport Services

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Hon Simeon Brown, Minister of Transport

Date:

2024