

30 November 2022

Matt Hampson
Reporter
Stuff
matthew.hampson@stuff.co.nz

REF: OIA-11282

Dear Matt

Request made under the Official Information Act 1982

Thank you for your email of 21 October 2022 requesting the following information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

I was wondering if Waka Kotahi were able to provide information regarding whether SH6 alternative routes from Nelson to Blenheim have been looked at, and if so, what alternative routes have been explored? (not including SH63).

Specifically, has Waka Kotahi explored the possibility of a road being built from Pelorus Bridge in Marlborough to Matai Valley in Nelson, near the Maungatapu Track?

I was also wondering if Waka Kotahi was able to provide some historical background on State Highway 6 between Blenheim and Nelson, such as when the road was built and why they decided to build the road along that route?

Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency is not aware of alternative routes to State Highway 6 (SH6) from Nelson to Blenheim being reviewed or investigated. Historically, the Maungatapu Track has always been seen as being unsuitable for public vehicle access and was previously only accessible to 4WD vehicles but has been closed to the public completely in recent years.

Realignment of the road at Whangamoia North and the Nelson side of Rai Saddle have been undertaken in 1996 and 2019 respectively. Realignment of Whangamoia South has been considered since 1987, with the assessment reviewed in 2000 and 2008. Realignment of this section of the corridor has not been progressed due to high costs associated with the realignment works.

Waka Kotahi has undertaken minor improvements to this corridor as funding has become available for improved alignment, slope improvements, retaining works, pavement strengthening, safety improvements and infrastructure such as barriers and signage. More recently, the speed limit along this corridor has been reduced to improve safety for all road users.

Victoria University of Wellington has published some further historical information regarding early uses of the road on its website which may be of interest to you. This information can be found at:
https://nzetc.victoria.ac.nz/tm/scholarly/tei-NHSJ02_06-t1-body1-d2-d21.html.

In line with Waka Kotahi policy, this response will soon be published on our website.

If you would like to discuss this reply with Waka Kotahi, please contact Felix Marwick, Media Manager, by email to felix.marwick@nzta.govt.nz.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Owen', with a long, sweeping underline.

Mark Owen

Regional Manager, Maintenance and Operations