

WARKWORTH TO WELLSFORD

The NZ Transport Agency is completing the necessary work to protect the land required for a new route, in the future, between Warkworth and Te Hana.

The Warkworth to Wellsford project is the second section of Ara Tūhono Pūhoi to Wellsford.

The Indicative Alignment is 26km long, includes an 850m long twin bore tunnel in the Dome Valley and three interchanges located at Warkworth, Wellsford and Te Hana.

Once constructed, Warkworth to Wellsford will provide a safer more resilient route, which will improve accessibility to Northland.

The project will deliver:

- A reduction in crashes (between 2012-2016 there were 204 reported crashes between Warkworth and Wellsford, including four fatal and 17 serious injury)
- A high quality, safe new route with improved geometrics and gradients
- Significant improvement in resilience with an alternative route to the Dome Valley removing the closures that occur due to weather events and crashes
- Efficient connections to the Warkworth, Wellsford and Te Hana town centres through well located and convenient interchanges. A 12% reduction in heavy and freight traffic on SH1 from Warkworth through the Dome Valley, Wellsford and Te Hana with the removal of nearly 1000 heavy vehicles per day
- Walking and cycling benefits within Wellsford and Te Hana townships due to lower through traffic, supporting safer journeys.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES:

- Improve safety and route quality (e.g. gradient, alignment, overtaking), improve freight movement and provide resilience in the wider state highway network.
- Improve travel time reliability and decrease travel times between Warkworth to Wellsford and Northland.
- Alleviate congestion at Warkworth and Wellsford by providing for through traffic.

BENEFITS

Improved safety

State Highway 1 through the Dome Valley has well known safety issues, with a high number of deaths and serious injuries from crashes.

The Indicative Alignment will improve safety for all road users providing a high quality alternative to the Dome Valley route. The new route will significantly reduce the likelihood of crashes by eliminating sharp bends, providing for safe passing and separating northbound and southbound traffic.

It will also remove regional freight traffic from town centres of Wellsford and Te Hana making it safer for communities currently severed by the state highway.

Better journeys

The Indicative Alignment will reduce congestion and travel times by bypassing town centres. Reduced congestion benefits all road users, enabling freight to reach key markets quicker and making journeys more reliable for commuters and holiday makers.

Trucks and towing vehicles struggle with the steep gradients common on sections of the state highway network. Slow and heavy vehicles create frustrations for motorists stuck behind them on hills, cause delays in getting freight to its destination and increase wear and tear on the road, which leads to higher maintenance costs. The Indicative Alignment has a maximum uphill gradient, meaning a flatter road enabling heavy vehicles to travel at more consistent speeds.

Transport choice

The Indicative Alignment provides an alternative route for travelling between Warkworth and Te Hana. With heavy vehicles and regional traffic expected to use the new route, traffic on the existing SH1 through the Dome Valley is expected to decrease. Lower traffic volumes will result in safer and more enjoyable journeys for Dome Valley residents, people walking Te Araroa (New Zealand's Trail) and people on bikes.

