



13 Conclusion

The Project has been identified as being of national significance, and is intended to deliver the final motorway connection of the WRR RoNs being the link between the WRR and SH1. The Project will provide an alternative north-south motorway route to the current SH1 route through the Auckland Region for freight and commuters. It will also provide significant transportation and safety benefits, including reduced travel times to the Upper Harbour and North Shore communities and to the wider Auckland region. The physical works necessary to achieve this link include the construction of west and northbound motorway on-ramps connecting SH18 to SH1 together with capacity improvements to SH18 and SH1, including additional lanes and upgraded connections to the local roading network.

Additional elements of the Project include an extension of the existing Northern Busway from the current terminus at Constellation Bus Station to the Albany Bus Station and an upgrade of the Constellation Bus Station to enable it to be served by buses travelling north and south. A SUP is also proposed adjacent to the busway extension from the Constellation Bus Station to Oteha Valley Road and on the southern side of SH18 from the Albany Highway to the eastern side the SH18 - SH1 Interchange.

While the majority of the Project works will be contained within the existing State highway designations it has been necessary to seek alterations to enlarge the footprint of these existing designations and seek new designations to accommodate elements of the Project, and thus achieve the Project objectives.

In addition to the above alterations to existing designations and new designations, a number of resource consents are required to carry out the necessary works as detailed in Section 6. The activities subject of these resource consents range from controlled to non-complying. The “bundling” principle applied to the consideration of related applications with the presence of a non-complying activity has triggered the requirement for assessment against the non-complying activity tests of section 104D of the RMA.

Section 104D of the RMA requires that such applications pass through a “gateway” whereby applications for non-complying activities may only be granted if either the adverse effects of the activity on the environment will be minor; or the application is for an activity that would not be contrary to the objectives and policies of the relevant plans or proposed plans.

The Project will generate some adverse environmental effects, particularly during the construction stage. Where the adverse effects cannot be avoided or remedied through the design, mitigation has been identified to inform the suite of conditions that will accompany the designations and regional resource consents.

The Assessment of Construction Noise and Vibration Effects (**Technical Assessment 3**) establishes that these effects could be more than minor at certain locations adjacent to the works. While these effects may be mitigated through the use of construction techniques and the management of construction activities, the possibility remains that they may not be reduced to a level where they can be considered to be minor. For this reason, it is concluded that the test of 104D(1)(a) may not be met.

The Project has also been assessed against the relevant objectives and policies of the relevant planning instruments at **Section 11** where it is concluded that the activity is not contrary to the overall objectives and policies of these instruments and thus meets the test of section 104D(1)(b) and passes through the s104D “gateway”.

The activities have also been assessed with regard to the matters set out in section 104 of the RMA. Given the scale of the Project it is considered to have regional and project-wide effects that include



positive as well as adverse effects. Effects assessed in the appended Technical Assessments and in **Section 9** of this AEE include social, cultural, traffic and transport, landscape, visual, vegetation, archaeology, streams, avian ecology, herpetofauna ecology, freshwater ecology, emissions to air, noise, vibration, light, discharge of contaminants (stormwater) and contamination effects. Positive effects include the improved capacity and efficiency of the State highway network, enhanced public transport facilities, opportunities for walking and cycling and improved quality of stormwater discharges.

On balance, the conclusion of this assessment is that an holistic assessment of both the positive and negative effects of this Project together with the proposed measures to avoid, remedy and mitigate the adverse effects will ensure that on balance the Project will have positive effects.

Consideration has been given to alternative sites, routes and methods of undertaking the Project pursuant to section 171(1)(b) of the RMA. This is detailed in **Section 7**. This assessment has been undertaken notwithstanding that, as detailed in **Section 9 and 10**, the majority of any adverse effects of the Project have been avoided through the design of the Project or can be mitigated through the offered conditions. While at the time this proposal was lodged the NZ Transport Agency had acquired some of the land that is the subject of the NoRs, there is a substantial number of properties that it does not yet own. Accordingly, the assessment at **Section 7** includes consideration of alternatives where such properties are affected by the Project. The conclusion of this Section is that an adequate consideration has been given to alternatives such that the tests of section 171(1)(b) have been met.

Section 171(c) requires consideration of whether the work and designation are reasonably necessary for achieving the objectives of the requiring authority for which the designation is sought. In this regard, **Section 2** details the need for the Project and the reasons why, in order to meet the objectives, the Project must go beyond the existing designations.

In summary, it is considered that the assessments contained in this AEE clearly demonstrate the need for the Project and the benefits that it will bring. In doing so, the Project promotes the sustainable management of natural and physical resources and is consistent with the purpose and principles of the RMA. Accordingly, it is considered that the purpose of the RMA is achieved by the granting of the designations and resource consents sought.

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