

Te Ahu a Turanga: Manawatū Tararua Highway Project

New Lease of Life

It's out with the old and in with the new. With construction of the Te Ahu a Turanga: Manawatū Gorge project due to start in 2019, we've had a look at how such a huge construction project will affect you – whether you live here in Manawatū, Tararua District, Wairarapa, Hawke's Bay, Whanganui or further afield.

A social impact is a change you may experience as a result of any new development.

While NZ Transport Agency projects contribute to the economic and social prosperity of our regions they may also create impacts. We've taken a look at some of the good and not-so-good impacts of the construction and ongoing operation of the new road. Here's what we found.



IMPACTS

The project will create long-term benefits, while in the short to medium term (during construction) there will be positive and some not so positive impacts.

- ✓ Improved community cohesion, way of life and ability to provide for socio-economic wellbeing – improved resilience, reliability and journey times for travel across the Ruahine Ranges will provide better access to social services and facilities, education, healthcare, recreation and employment.
- ✓ Increased business activity and employment opportunities - these growth outcomes can have positive impacts on people's way of life and opportunities for residents to sustain themselves. While construction activity is likely to increase demand for rental and short-term accommodation, reviews indicate capacity is available.
- Impact on the Manawatū Gorge car park – disruption to parking during construction of the new bridge over the Manawatū River could restrict access to the Manawatū Gorge Scenic Reserve, impacting on recreation opportunities, so careful management will be required to maintain access throughout.
- Disruption and delays - the closure of the Manawatū Gorge route has already resulted in significant disruption to people's daily activities. During construction, increased construction traffic using Saddle Road could worsen the existing social impacts on people's way of life, on the ability for people to provide for economic wellbeing and for overall community social connectedness.
- ✓ Reduced negative impacts of injuries and deaths – reduction in road accidents due to improved safety performance of the new route along with improved safety of Saddle Road and Pahiatua Track due to reduced traffic volumes.
- Disruption – the landowners in the project area could experience disruption to daily lives and business operation.
- New road introduced into rural environment – potential impact by new road and associated traffic into what was previously a rural setting.

ASHHURST

- ✓ Increased retail activity - construction workers are likely to result in increased retail activity and use of services in Ashhurst.
- ✓ New business opportunities - new businesses establishing to support the construction activity could provide new opportunities.
- Community connectivity disrupted - connectivity further disrupted by construction-related vehicles travelling through Ashhurst. Connections to the east of the Ruahine Ranges impacted by congestion on the Saddle Road.
- ✓ Return to valued way of life - traffic will be diverted out of Ashhurst, with the valued way of life and quiet and peaceful character of the community reinstated.
- ✓ Improved connectivity - connectivity across Cambridge Avenue and Salisbury Street and across the Ruahine Ranges will improve.
- Community character, amenity and health affected – increased traffic could worsen current impacts.
- ✓ Safer commute - a wider safer commute area for those who are employed or run businesses elsewhere.
- Disruption and delays - heavy vehicles using Saddle Road could worsen disruption to getting around the community and could disrupt some businesses which rely on the road.
- Quieter retail environment - there may be reduced economic activity after the road is built compared to during construction.

WOODVILLE

- ✓ Increased retail activity - construction workers are likely to result in increased retail activity and use of services in Woodville.
- Disruption and delays – disruption including closures and slow travel times on Saddle Road could increase commute times and decrease reliability. Could disrupt some businesses that rely on the road.
- ✓ Improved connectivity – the completed route will provide a connection to the west that is safer, more efficient, resilient and reliable.
- ✓ Increased retail activity – increased traffic through Woodville could benefit local businesses and businesses which rely on a reliable journey to the west.
- Community connectivity disrupted – congestion and increased journey times may impact on connectivity with communities across the Ruahine Ranges.
- ✓ Greater commuting opportunities – a safer and more reliable journey across the Ruahine Ranges could provide greater commuting opportunities.
- ✓ New connection with the Ruahine Ranges - while not reinstating the experience of travelling through the Manawatū Gorge, the new route provides a new ability to connect and provides a safer and more resilient journey.
- ✓ Increased vibrancy and activity - greater activity in Vogel Street could increase vibrancy. This will be offset by potential negative impacts of increased traffic volumes.
- Community cohesion – increased traffic volumes on Vogel Street (SH 2/3) could impact on community connectedness.

WHAT CAN WE DO?

There are ways we can help ease the effects of the new road during construction and operation. The NZ Transport Agency will:

Continue to keep you well informed

- We'll continue to work with local communities, letting you know what's happening on the project and how it's progressing.

Work together on community concerns

- We'll establish a liaison group where we'll share project design information and address concerns, particularly regarding construction activities.

Be easy to get in touch with

- We'll ensure we have community liaison staff available throughout the project.

Manage issues methodically

- We'll manage an issues register and associated procedures, so people with complaints can see how they're being handled.

Maintain access to the Manawatū Gorge Walkway car park

- We'll plan how public access to the car park is maintained during construction and how it will be reinstated in partnership with the Department of Conservation, council and community representatives.