

SH6/SH8B Cromwell Intersection Improvements

Frequently Asked Questions

Updated August 2022

Where will the walking and cycling underpass be located?

The developer funded pedestrian and cycle underpass will go from the Wooing Tree subdivision under State Highway 8B to a new footpath/cycleway near the big fruit carpark.



When will work start on the underpass and when will it open?

Work gets underway mid-September and take around six weeks. This section of road will need to be closed to carry out this work and detours will be in place. Please follow on-site signage.

Will there be a footpath/cycle path linking the underpass to Barry Avenue?

A new footpath/cycleway is being constructed from the new underpass alongside the Murray Terrace carpark (near the big fruit), to Murray Terrace. A footpath/cycleway is also being constructed to connect the underpass to Barry Avenue.

Will the tunnel entrance be landscaped?

The Cromwell side of the underpass will be grassed to tie into the existing grassed area. The underpass landscaping on the Wooing Tree side will be undertaken by the developer.

When will work resume on the roundabouts? When do you expect to finish construction?

Construction works are expected to resume from early September onwards with a full completion date in mid-December 2022.

Will there be detours during the spring works?

Yes, traffic detours will be in place. Traffic heading from Alexandra to Wanaka will be detoured via Shortcut Road. Traffic travelling from Cromwell to Queenstown will be detoured via Barry Ave/McNulty Road. Traffic going from Cromwell to Wanaka will be detoured via Murray Terrace and Sargood Road. These detours will need to change as works progress. We will do our best to let everyone know about these changes as early as possible. We appreciate your patience of locals and highway users as we work to complete this important safety project.

Murray Terrace is now part of the detour, why wasn't it part of the construction site detour that operated between February and the end of May?

We've had feedback asking us to look at ways of reducing traffic on Shortcut Road and from businesses around Murray Terrace and Sargood Road. We've taken this and similar feedback from our stakeholder engagement on board and looked at alternative detour options for this final stage of the project. We believe the detour changes we've made achieves this by reducing traffic on Shortcut Road and minimising disruptions to local businesses around Murray Terrace and Sargood Road.

What work is needed to complete the roundabouts?

- Road construction of the Queenstown and Wanaka approaches of the SH6 (vet corner) roundabout
- Construct a cycle and pedestrian under pass near the Barry Ave/SH8 intersection roundabout including the construction of footpaths through CODC reserves
- Landscaping to both roundabouts
- Road construction of SH8B between the SH6/SH8B and Wooing Tree/SH8B roundabouts

How did this safety improvement project come about?

Between 2010 and 2019 there have been 23 crashes at this intersection with one crash resulting in two fatalities. In about 2012 we added a separated left turn lane and reduced the speed limit from 100km/h to 80km/h to manage the safety risk at this intersection.

With crash numbers rising at this intersection, we considered further improvements and identified a roundabout treatment to improve safety. The project was subsequently put forwards for and obtained regional NZ Upgrade programme funding.

Why a roundabout to improve safety at this intersection?

Roundabouts are proven to be effective at reducing serious injury crashes at intersections due to the lower operating speeds and low angle impacts. Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency believes this roundabout will deliver positive road safety outcomes at this intersection.

What factors led to the decision to build a single rather two-lane roundabout?

The design of a roundabout is ultimately determined by factors such as traffic volumes and the surrounding road layout. Traffic volumes are required to exceed 20,000 vehicles per day before a second lane to increase the capacity of the roundabout is considered. Adding a second lane is also dependent on the surrounding road layout. Making a roundabout two-lane without enough traffic using it increases the likelihood of conflicts between vehicles as they circulate and exit the roundabout. The decision for a single lane roundabout in this case was based around traffic modelling that carefully considered traffic growth as well as the efficiency and safety benefits of one and two-lane roundabouts.

What are the traffic counts at the SH6/SH8B intersection?

Pre-Covid Waka Kotahi figures show 8491 vehicles a day used the leg of the intersection SH8B with large trucks making up 7.2% of this figure. The daily vehicle count on the SH6 Queenstown leg of the intersection was 5420, of which 9.7% were trucks, and 6006 on the Wanaka leg - 8.7% of them trucks. These figures represent the total estimated number of vehicles in both directions (of each leg) so traffic leaving one leg contributes to the volume on another. All these traffic volumes are well below the 20,000 vehicles needed to justify a two-lane roundabout.

Is the roundabout capable of managing major traffic volumes during busy holiday periods?

Note no road is designed to accommodate absolute peak traffic volumes during busy holiday periods such as Christmas-New Year and Easter. During these infrequent peak load times, traffic will inevitably back up.

What were the findings of the traffic modelling?

It showed a single-lane roundabout will provide the required levels of safety and efficiency at this intersection for many years to come. Even with 6% annual traffic growth, it would still take over 20 years for the SH6-SH8B intersection to reach the vehicle volumes to justify a two-lane roundabout.

How well will a single-lane roundabout cope with the large trucks and trailers?

We worked with the NZ Heavy Haulage Association to ensure the roundabout meets the needs of the trucking industry as much as possible. This single lane roundabout has been designed to comfortably accommodate quad semis, the largest truck and trailer units typically using this section of SH6.

Why was the location of the pedestrian underpass near the SH8B-Barry Avenue chosen?

We chose the location of the underpass to create the most direct link between Cromwell and the Wooing Tree subdivision. The subdivision plans to have a retail/commercial area, so this location connects to this and allows people to access Barry Avenue to reach areas such as schools and recreation facilities. The position of the underpass also supports the Cromwell Masterplan, creating a key pedestrian/cycling link across SH8B.

Who pays for the SH8B/Barry Avenue roundabout and pedestrian underpass?

This is fully funded by the developer.

Are there plans to address speeds and safety on Short Cut Road especially at the intersection with SH6?

This intersection is outside the scope of this project. However, in the medium term, Waka Kotahi we will be looking at highway safety improvements at this location as part of its wider speed management and infrastructure programme. Any work to improve safety or lower speeds on Shortcut Road is a decision for the Central Otago District Council who manage this local road.

What engagement has there been about this project?

We engaged directly with Central Otago District Council about this project over matters such as land requirements, road impacts and Three Waters services. We also had direct discussions with those directly affected, including the Heavy Haulage Association and a nearby vet practice.