

Before a Board of Inquiry  
Transmission Gully  
Notices of Requirement and Consents

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*under:* the Resource Management Act 1991

*in the matter of:* Notices of requirement for designations and resource consent applications by the NZ Transport Agency, Porirua City Council and Transpower New Zealand Limited for the Transmission Gully Proposal

*between:* **NZ Transport Agency**  
*Requiring Authority and Applicant*

*and:* **Porirua City Council**  
*Local Authority and Applicant*

*and:* **Transpower New Zealand Limited**  
*Applicant*

Statement of evidence of Roderick Samuel James (Regional State Highway Manager) on behalf of the NZ Transport Agency

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Dated: 16 November 2011

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REFERENCE: John Hassan (john.hassan@chapmantripp.com)  
Nicky McIndoe (nicky.mcindoe@chapmantripp.com)

## **STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF RODERICK SAMUEL JAMES ON BEHALF OF THE NZ TRANSPORT AGENCY**

### **QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE**

- 1 My full name is Roderick Samuel James.
- 2 I am the NZ Transport Agency's (*the NZTA's*) Regional State Highway Manager for the Wellington region. I hold a Bachelor of Engineering (Civil) (Hons) from the University of Glamorgan, conferred in 1990 and a Masters in Business Administration from Massey University with specialist studies in tolling business models and Public Private Partnerships. Prior to joining the NZTA I was the New Zealand director of Hyder Consulting – a civil engineering company. I belong to the Institution of Professional Engineers New Zealand and I am a Chartered Professional Engineer (CPEng). I was president of the Intelligent Transport System New Zealand from 2004 to 2010 and a Board Member of the Intelligent Transport System Asia Pacific from 2005 – 2010.
- 3 My work experience over the past 15 years includes management and direction of major projects, including the planning and delivery of:
  - 3.1 Tauranga Eastern Link through the toll consultation process, funding and contract award;
  - 3.2 Wellington Inner-City Bypass - management through consents, Scheme Assessment Report, Environment Court and funding application stages;
  - 3.3 Kapiti Western Link Road - management through Notice of Requirement processes and hearings;
  - 3.4 Wellington ATMS<sup>1</sup> - management of development and delivery of first Wellington ATMS;
  - 3.5 Butetown Link (Cardiff UK) - management of transport operations and public partnering program GBP250M bridge and tunnel project through an inner city environment;
  - 3.6 Sydney Cross City Tunnel - management of independent verification of systems design and implementation;
  - 3.7 Millennium Stadium Cardiff - management of all transportation related elements; and

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<sup>1</sup> Advanced traffic management system.

3.8 Waikato Expressway economics and Waikato Inter-regional transport study.

- 4 On 15 August 2011 the NZTA and Porirua City Council (*PCC*) lodged Notices of Requirement (*NoRs*) and applications for resource consent with the Environmental Protection Authority (*EPA*) in relation to the Transmission Gully Project (*the Project* or *the TGP*).
- 5 The NZTA and PCC have worked in partnership to develop their respective aspects of the Project. The NZTA is responsible for the construction, operation and maintenance of the Main Alignment and the Kenepuru Link Road (this is referred to in my evidence as the *NZTA Project*), whilst PCC is responsible for the Porirua Link Roads, which will connect the Porirua suburbs of Waitangirua and Whitby to the Main Alignment.
- 6 Transpower New Zealand (*Transpower*) has also lodged resource consent applications relating to the relocation of parts of the PKK-TKR A 110kV electricity transmission line between MacKays Crossing and Pauatahanui Substation, which will allow for the construction of the Main Alignment. The NZTA has collaborated with Transpower in the development of these works.
- 7 I am familiar with the statehighway and local roading network in the vicinity of the Project and in general terms with the project area.
- 8 I am authorised to give this evidence on behalf of the NZTA.

**SCOPE OF EVIDENCE**

- 9 My evidence will deal with the following:
  - 9.1 My role with respect to the Project;
  - 9.2 The NZTA's statutory objectives and functions nationally;
  - 9.3 How the Project fits within the regional state highway network;
  - 9.4 Importance of the Project within the Wellington Roads of National Significance (*RoNS*);
  - 9.5 Project objectives and benefits;
  - 9.6 Future form and function of the existing State highway 1 (*SH1*);
  - 9.7 Response to submissions; and
  - 9.8 Conclusions.

## SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE

- 10 My evidence explains how the Project fits in with the NZTA's statutory role and function, and hence how the Project forms part of the Wellington RoNS, which is one of 7 RoNS in the Country. The RoNS form a critical plank to the Government's objective to achieve economic productivity and growth and accordingly the Project forms part of the delivery of this objective.
- 11 My evidence explains the Wellington RoNS and how it will lead to a significantly improved SH1. I explain how Transmission Gully fits into the overall RoNS project, which in itself, due to its scale, is being delivered through a number of connected projects over the next 10 years. This will entail an investment of more than \$2billion.
- 12 My evidence sets out the objectives of the Project and explains that it is a Project with a substantial history having been subject to substantial investigation and public consultation processes. As a consequence, the Project is generally supported by the public and this is reflected in the low numbers of submissions received (and within those received the high number that offer conditional or unconditional support). The National Land Transport Fund provides a 3 year programme of funding which runs to 2012, but the NZTA's long term programme (uncommitted) has construction of the Project programmed to commence in 2015.

## BACKGROUND AND ROLE

- 13 I took up my position as the Wellington Regional State Highway Manager in March 2011, having previously been Regional State Highway Manager for the Bay of Plenty region. I have overall responsibility for management of the state highway network within the Wellington, Nelson, Tasman and Marlborough local government regions. This responsibility includes the operation, maintenance and improvement of the state highway, together with a liaison role with local authorities relating to the operation of the local roading network over that area.
- 14 A key part of my role is delivering the Wellington RoNS, of which the Main Alignment of the TGP is part. The Wellington RoNS will provide a vastly improved State highway between Wellington Airport and Levin and is to be delivered in sections. The Wellington RoNS is one of the largest construction projects in New Zealand and will entail a very considerable investment (over \$2 billion for its combined sections) over the next 10 years (on current programme).
- 15 The day-to-day project management of the TGP is undertaken by **Mr Nicholson** and this is discussed further in his evidence. My role is to manage the overall development of the Wellington RoNS, to ensure that this work is being undertaken in accordance with the

NZTA's standards and specifications, and that the NZTA is working appropriately with local and regional authorities. Thus, I meet monthly with the chief executives and managers of each council (including Greater Wellington Regional Council) to address any strategic relationship and Project issues.

### **THE NZTA'S STATUTORY ROLE AND FUNCTIONS**

- 16 The NZTA was established on 1 August 2008 and is the statutory body charged with operating the State highway network under the Land Transport Management Act 2003 (*LTMA*). The NZTA is also approved as a Requiring Authority under section 167 of the Resource Management Act 1991 (*RMA*).

#### **Land Transport Management Act 2003**

- 17 The NZTA's statutory objective is to "... *undertake its functions in a way that contributes to an affordable, integrated, safe, responsive, and sustainable land transport system.*"<sup>2</sup>
- 18 The NZTA's statutory functions encompass those of its predecessors, Land Transport New Zealand and Transit New Zealand. The functions of the NZTA are defined in section 95(1) of the LTMA. Of relevance to this Project, the functions of the NZTA include:

"(a) *to promote an affordable, integrated, safe, responsive, and sustainable land transport system*"

"(c) *to manage the State highway system, including planning, funding, design, supervision, construction, and maintenance and operations, in accordance with this Act and the Government Roading Powers Act 1989...*"

- 19 In meeting its objective and undertaking these functions, the LTMA requires the NZTA to exhibit a sense of social and environmental responsibility including avoiding, to the extent reasonable in the circumstances, adverse effects on the environment, and to use revenue in a way that seeks value for money.<sup>3</sup>

#### **Government Policy Statement**

- 20 The LTMA requires the Minister of Transport to issue a Government Policy Statement (*GPS*) every 3 financial years.<sup>4</sup> The GPS enables the Minister to guide the NZTA and land transport sector on the outcomes and objectives and the short to medium term goals that the government wishes to achieve through the National Land

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<sup>2</sup> Section 94, LTMA.

<sup>3</sup> Section 96, LTMA.

<sup>4</sup> Sections 84 and 86, LTMA.

Transport Programme (*NLTP*) and from the allocation of the National Land Transport Fund (*NLTF*).<sup>5</sup>

- 21 The LTMA provides that the NZTA must give effect to the GPS when carrying out its planning functions, including in preparing a NLTP.<sup>6</sup>

***The Roads of National Significance***

- 22 The current GPS 2009/10 – 2018/19 was published in May 2009.<sup>7</sup> In it the Government listed an initial seven RoNS.<sup>8</sup> The GPS describes the RoNS as seven of New Zealand’s most essential routes that require significant development to reduce congestion, improve safety and support economic growth. The GPS states that:<sup>9</sup>

*“The purpose of listing roads as nationally significant is to ensure these priority roading developments are taken fully into account when the NZTA develops the National Land Transport Programme.*

*Planning for the future development of the land transport network should reflect the importance of these roads from a national perspective and the need to advance them quickly.”*

- 23 One of the seven RoNS listed in the GPS is the Wellington Northern Corridor (Levin to Wellington) – SH1. The NZTA has a programme of projects planned which relate to the improvement of this corridor. The development of the Project’s Main Alignment is a key component of this. The following figure shows the location of the projects included in the Wellington RoNS:

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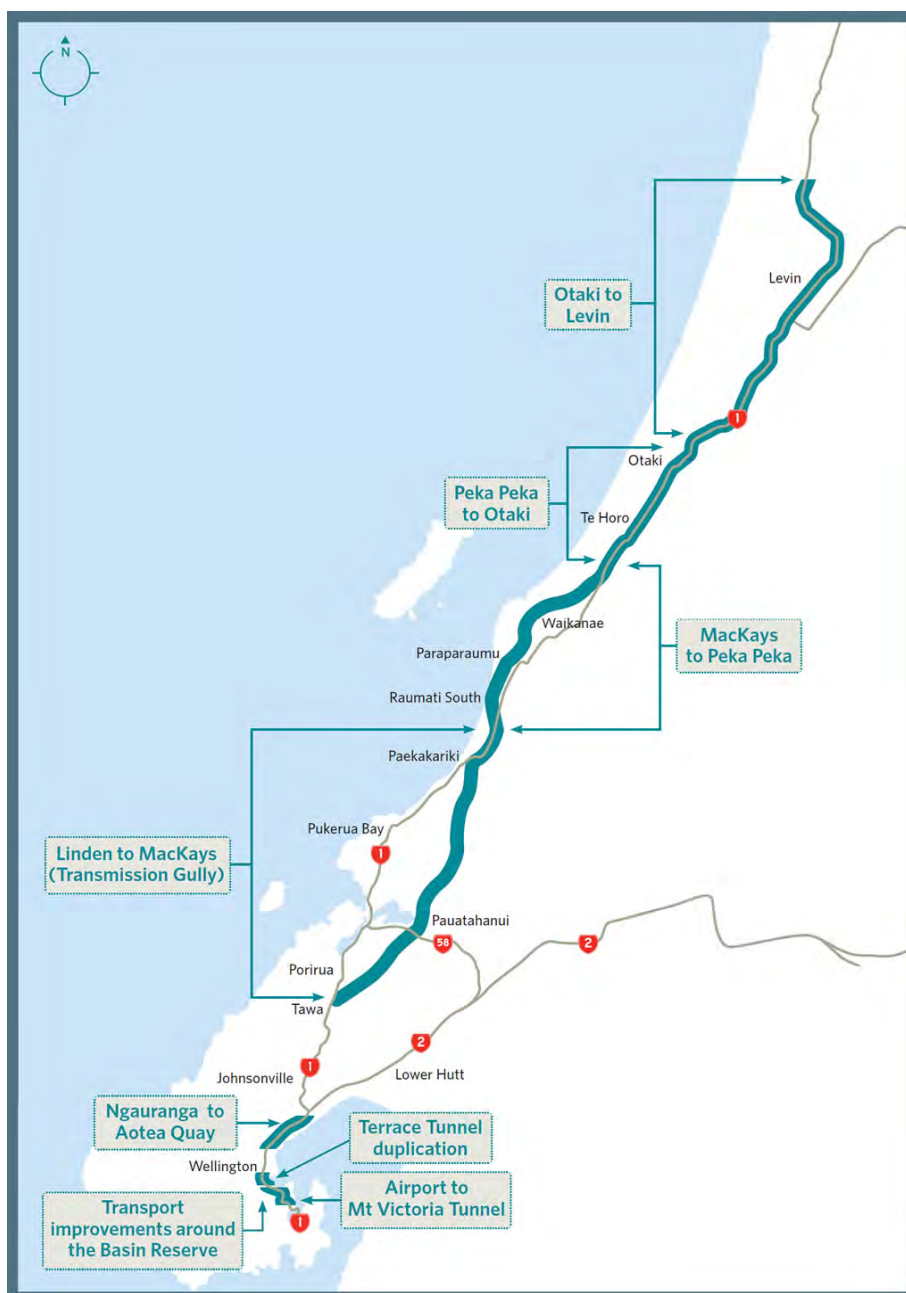
<sup>5</sup> Section 84, LTMA.

<sup>6</sup> In accordance with section 89(1) of the LTMA, the NZTA must give effect to the GPS when performing its functions under subpart 1 of Part 2 of the LTMA in respect of land transport planning and funding.

<sup>7</sup> On 26 July 2011 the Minister of Transport announced the release of the Government Policy Statement on Land Transport Funding 2012/13 – 2021/22. This will come into force on 1 July 2012. Until then, the current GPS remains in force.

<sup>8</sup> At paragraphs 21 to 24 of the GPS.

<sup>9</sup> At paragraphs 22 to 23 of the GPS.



**Figure 1 – The Wellington RoNS projects.**

- 24 Also of relevance to the RoNS and to the Project, the GPS notes the following:<sup>10</sup>

*"Well-targeted land transport investment will keep people in employment, improve productivity, and lay the groundwork for robust economic growth in the future."*

<sup>10</sup> At paragraphs 28 and 29 of the GPS.

*Investing in the State Highway network is important as there are significant constraints on its current capacity to efficiently move freight and people, leading to congestion in New Zealand's major cities. Unless investment in State Highways is addressed, congestion will continue to negatively impact on economic growth and productivity. Investment in State Highways will also make some of our busiest roads safer."*

**Government Policy on Land Transport Funding 2012/13-2021/22**

- 25 The 2012 GPS which will cover the period 2012/2013 – 2021/2022 was published in July 2011 and will come into effect in July 2012. The 2012 GPS is relevant because it will be in effect during the period when the Project is to be constructed. In it the Government continues to list the current seven RoNS<sup>11</sup>. The 2012 GPS describes the need to continue progress on the seven RoNS as being critical to economic and productivity growth and as being a significant part of the Government's National Infrastructure Plan<sup>12</sup>.
- 26 The 2012 GPS goes on to describe the RoNS as being important to addressing the needs of our key supply chains, as they will ease the most significant pressure points in the national network, by reducing congestion, improving safety and by linking our major sea and air ports more effectively into the state highway network.<sup>13</sup>
- 27 Also of relevance to the RoNS and to the Project, the 2012 GPS notes the following:<sup>14</sup>
- "This GPS continues and reinforces the focus on increasing economic growth and productivity as the primary objective for land transport expenditure. The expectation is that land transport funding will be directed into high quality projects and activities that will support improved productivity and economic growth, particularly in the export sector."*
- 28 The 2012 GPS<sup>15</sup> continues with the same themes as the current GPS and explains that the State highway network is key to the efficient movement of people and freight, is essential to the tourism sector, and provides critical economic links for New Zealand businesses. The GPS places particular importance on investing in the network (including RoNS) and goes onto explain that the RoNS programme is designed to address the major issues of high volumes of traffic at our major centres.

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<sup>11</sup> At paragraph 26 of the 2012 GPS.

<sup>12</sup> Paragraph 25 of the 2012 GPS

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> At paragraph 20 of the 2012 GPS.

<sup>15</sup> At paragraphs 21 to 24 of the 2012 GPS.



### **National Land Transport Programme**

- 29 The NLTP sets out the NZTA's planned land transport investments, including for New Zealand's State highways, in the next three years. Activities are not eligible for funding from the NLTF unless they are included in the NLTP.<sup>16</sup>
- 30 The current NLTP, which outlines the NZTA's investment programme between 2009 and 2012, gives effect to the GPS by setting out activities proposed for funding over that three year period. The current NLTP identifies that the Government considers that the RoNS projects are New Zealand's "most essential" routes requiring significant investment.<sup>17</sup> One of the priorities is planning for and delivering the RoNS:

*"The NZTA's Investment and Revenue Strategy (IRS) communicates the NZTA Board's investment intentions. It's a high-level direction-setting and prioritisation tool that helps the NZTA to balance competing priorities and select the best possible mix of activities for funding – all with the goal of advancing progress against the objectives of the Land Transport Management Act 2003 (LTMA) and the Government policy statement on land transport funding 2009/10 – 2018/19 (GPS).*

*The Investment and Revenue Strategy aims to ensure that the NLTP gives effect to the GPS in the short to medium term and, in the long term, that the NZTA's investment decisions and business priorities are aligned with the outcomes and impacts specified in:*

- *the LTMA;*
- *the NZTA's five strategic priorities, which are to: improve customer service and reduce compliance costs, improve road safety, freight efficiency and public transport effectiveness, and plan for and deliver roads of national significance.*<sup>18</sup>

- 31 The importance of and priority for the Wellington RoNS projects is succinctly outlined in the Wellington Regional Summary to the NLTP as follows:<sup>19</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Pursuant to section 20 of the LTMA, the NZTA may approve an activity or combination of activities as qualifying for payments from the NLTF. However, the NZTA must be satisfied that the activity is included in the NLTP to be eligible for funding.

<sup>17</sup> Page 12, NLTP.

<sup>18</sup> Page 6, NLTP.

<sup>19</sup> Page 7, NLTP Wellington Regional Summary.

*"In Wellington, the entire length of SH1 between Levin and Wellington Airport has been identified as a RoNS because of the need to provide a quality link to service Wellington, the Kapiti Coast, Levin, Palmerston North and the wider lower North Island. Currently this route is regularly congested and has a relatively poor safety record, which inhibits the flows of people and freight and restricts economic growth.*

*The Wellington RoNS development will be scheduled in segments and progressed with different timeframes in the next 10 years. In the 2009–2012 NLTP most of the RoNS improvement programme will focus on detailed investigations into key projects that will improve efficiency and reduce congestion on SH1. This will enable construction phases to be appropriately staged, and ensure most improvements can be completed within 10 years.*

*To ensure the full benefits of the RoNS are realised, the NZTA will work closely with local authorities and other agencies to integrate the programme with local road improvements and other transport connections."*

## **HOW THE PROJECT FITS WITHIN THE REGIONAL STATE HIGHWAY NETWORK**

- 32 The Board will be aware of the geographical context of the Wellington region's Strategic Transportation Network. This has been developed around two key corridors, one consisting of SH1 and the North Island Main Trunk rail line along the western coastline of the region, and the other consisting of State highway 2 (SH2) and the Wairarapa rail line extending north east from Wellington City into the Wairarapa. These two corridors join at the bottom of Ngauranga Gorge and are also connected by State highway 58 (SH58), which runs between the Hutt Valley and Porirua.
- 33 The SH1 corridor between Wellington Airport and north of Levin, being identified as one of the seven RoNS, is of strategic importance both nationally and regionally. It serves the country's capital and third largest economic centre, and is the primary route into and out of Wellington from the rest of the North Island. In addition, with Wellington being the point from which ferry journeys to the South Island are made, SH1 carries a significant volume of inter-island traffic.
- 34 SH1 is the backbone of the nation's and the region's State highway system, and is classified<sup>20</sup> as "National Strategic" in the NZTA's State highway classification system. For a State highway to be classified as a "National Strategic" route, it is required to meet

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<sup>20</sup> NZTA, State Highway Classification, June 2011.

threshold levels for at least three of seven specified functional criteria. To be classified in the high volume subset of "National Strategic" routes, a highway section must also meet one of two higher threshold levels for traffic volumes.

- 35 The Wellington RoNS (SH1) meets the threshold levels for six of the seven criteria, including both of the higher threshold levels for traffic volumes. Accordingly, it easily meets the conditions required in order to be classified in the high volume subset of "National Strategic" routes. The relevant criteria thresholds that the Wellington RoNS meets are:
- 35.1 Freight traffic volumes (more than 1,200 heavy commercial vehicles per day);
  - 35.2 Annual average daily traffic (more than 35,000 vehicles per day) (along part of the route);
  - 35.3 Centres of population (major city: more than 100,000);
  - 35.4 Port access for freight (more than 2 million tonnes or more than \$3 billion annually in value);
  - 35.5 Airport access for passengers (more than 3 million passengers annually); and
  - 35.6 International tourist flows (more than 60,000 travellers on route annually).
- 36 The Wellington Northern Corridor RoNS extends along SH1 from Wellington Airport to approximately 10km north of Levin and has a total length of approximately 110km. The Government's aspiration is to develop the RoNS as a four-lane expressway, thereby providing a range of regional and national benefits by improving the flow of people, goods and services along SH1 and throughout New Zealand.
- 37 The objectives<sup>21</sup> of the Wellington Northern Corridor RoNS package are:
- 37.1 To enhance inter-regional and national economic growth and productivity, by supporting a growing population and increasing freight volumes in the region;
  - 37.2 To improve access to Wellington's central business district, key industrial and employment centres, port, airport and hospital;

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<sup>21</sup> Wellington Northern Corridor Project Summary Statement, 21 December 2009, page 4.

- 37.3 To provide relief from severe congestion on the state highway and local road networks;
- 37.4 To improve the journey time reliability of travel on the section of SH1 between Levin and Wellington Airport; and
- 37.5 To improve the safety of travel on State highways.

### **IMPORTANCE OF THE PROJECT WITHIN THE WELLINGTON RONS**

- 38 The Wellington RoNS is a significant construction project that is programmed to be advanced over the next 10 years. It entails both the construction of new road and works to parts of the existing state highway within different environments and urban contexts, across six local authority boundaries and within two regions. In order to effectively manage the investigation, design and then construction of the Wellington RoNS it has been necessary to split it into smaller 'projects', although each of these 'projects' are by themselves major construction exercises in their own right. This division of the RoNS into smaller projects (segments) allows the NZTA to more effectively investigate, understand and respond to issues appropriately.
- 39 A number of these segments entails the construction of new road off line from the existing state highway which, once complete, will become SH1. The Project is one such offline segment, its alignment having been selected following an assessment of alternatives and then options over a long period of time, firstly through the Parliamentary Commissioner examination process in 1990, the designation process in 1996 - 2003, then through the Western Corridor Plan and RLTS leading to the current consent applications. This process of selecting a preferred option is discussed in further detail in the evidence of **Mr Nicholson, Mr Edwards, Mr Brabhakaran** and **Ms Rickard**.
- 40 I have described above why the Wellington RoNS is of national importance and, therefore, why it is important that each segment is constructed. That is to not diminish the important benefits that are associated with each segment but rather to underline the benefits that would accrue with the completion of the whole RoNS project. These benefits are discussed in further detail in the evidence of **Mr Nicholson, Mr Copeland** and **Mr McCombs**.
- 41 The Project will provide an alternative strategic road link into and out of Wellington and thus improves regional network and route security. It will better connect the major urban areas in Kapiti, Porirua, Wellington, Hutt, and Upper Hutt districts, and is thus a vital part of the Wellington RoNS. Without this segment of the route the trip reliability and journey time savings sought to be achieved through the Wellington RoNS between these urban areas cannot be

realised. Therefore, the construction of the Main Alignment is a vital part of the Wellington RoNS.

### **NZTA'S PROJECT OBJECTIVES**

- 42 The NZTA's objectives for its (the NZTA) Project are:
- 42.1 To provide an alternative strategic link for Wellington that improves regional network security;
  - 42.2 To assist in remedying the safety concerns of, and projected capacity problems on, the existing State Highway 1 by providing a safe and reliable route between Linden and MacKays Crossing in an environmentally sustainable manner;
  - 42.3 To assist in enabling wider national economic development by providing a cost-optimised route that better provides for the through movement of freight and people; and
  - 42.4 To assist integration of the land transport system by enabling the existing State Highway 1 to be developed into a safe and multi-functional alternative to the proposed strategic link.
- 43 The NZTA considers that these objectives are achieved through the construction and then operation of the proposed (NZTA) Project. The above objectives fit in with the NZTA's objectives for the entire Wellington RoNS (see paragraph 37 above) and are tailored to suit the very specific requirements through this section.
- 44 In particular the objectives have been carefully cast to reflect the need to provide an alternative strategic link, rather than seek to allow yet another re-examination of the coastal route as an alternative. This is because the consideration of alternatives to the proposed route has already been subject to many studies and public processes. To re-examine these again, as part of the Project process, would be an inappropriate use of effort and resource. This is particularly the case given that the Project in my view provides the preferred cost optimised route and the NZTA has clearly examined alternatives (as explained above in paragraph 39) and has following that extensive process quite rightly set its mind on one. I set out other reasons why the proposed route is the best and preferred option of the NZTA below, in the following section.
- 45 I am also mindful of the benefits to communities that the Project will secure. In particular, the Project enables the existing route to be developed into a safe and multi-functional alternative. I discuss below how these benefits can be developed and enhanced by PCC (and the Kapiti Coast District Council) and how the NZTA will be involved in that process.

## **BENEFITS OF THE PROJECT**

- 46 The Project will have numerous benefits. It will assist in remedying the projected capacity problems and current safety/expansion concerns on the existing SH1, which in turn provides for reduced travel times and improved travel time reliability. There will be health and safety benefits through reduced incidence of crashes both on the new road and on the existing routes through reduced traffic flows. These in combination result in social and economic benefits for the region, which are described more fully in the evidence of others, notably **Mr McCombs, Mr Kelly, Mr Rae** and **Mr Copeland**.
- 47 The Project will also provide a route that is more resilient to natural disasters (earthquakes, storms, tsunamis, etc.) than the existing coastal highway. This is explained in the evidence of **Mr Brabhakaran**, who explains that in the event of a significant local earthquake the coastal route will be closed for a period of several months in comparison to the Main Alignment, which will be closed for only days to weeks. There are currently very few alternative routes to the existing coastal route, and these alternatives (the SH2 Rimutaka Hill Road, Akatarawa Road and Paekakariki Hill Road) are themselves likely to be significantly damaged in a large earthquake. Accordingly, the Wellington Region will experience greatly enhanced route security as a result of the development of the Project as an alternative route, and to current engineering standards.
- 48 The Project will be welcomed by communities adjacent to the existing SH1, because it will reduce traffic on the existing coastal route, on SH58 (west of the Main Alignment) and on Grays Road around Pauatahanui Inlet. In addition to these community and social benefits, **Mr Rae** and **Ms Lawler** explains in their evidence that the Project will also lead to benefits for local communities alongside the existing SH1 route, including, in particular, reduced severance effects.
- 49 PCC is proposing roads that will link the urban areas of Waitangirua of Whitby to the Main Alignment. The objectives of these roads and their benefits are explained by **Mr Bailey, Mr McCombs, Mr Kelly, Mr Rae, Ms Lawler** and others. I can confirm that the NZTA supports those objectives and understands that these link roads will provide traffic and economic benefits to local communities in the eastern suburbs of the Porirua urban area.

## **FUTURE FORM AND FUNCTION OF THE EXISTING STATE HIGHWAY 1**

- 50 Once the Main Alignment is operational, a significant reduction in traffic is anticipated on the parts of the existing SH1 between Linden and MacKays Crossing and on SH58, west of the Main Alignment. This means that the NZTA will look to make these parts of the state highways into local roads. This process is known as revocation. The precise extent of road to be revoked is yet to be defined but in principle will apply to roads that parallel the new proposed state highway. Ultimately the decision on whether state highway status is revoked is made by the Chief Executive of the Ministry of Transport on the NZTA's recommendation, and thus this decision lies outside of the scope of these proceedings.
- 51 The NZTA is responsible for maintaining the existing State highways up until the point of revocation (if that is decided as being appropriate by the Chief Executive of the Ministry of Transport), at which point the responsibility of the road will be handed over to the relevant local authorities (in this case, PCC and Kapiti Coast District Council (*KCDC*)). This means that the NZTA will continue to seek to provide a good level of service on the existing state highways in accordance with its purposes, until that time.
- 52 The NZTA has been in preliminary discussions with PCC and KCDC about the future of the existing coastal state highway and the part of SH58 west of the proposed Main Alignment. For the purposes of the traffic assessments undertaken (Technical Report 4, page 17), the NZTA has assumed that some works (for example installation of signals at side roads in Pukerua Bay to incorporate pedestrian phases and to facilitate crossing the road, and a 80km/hr speed limit between Plimmerton roundabout and Pukerua Bay) would be undertaken to the state highway in response to reduced traffic levels. However, the ultimate future form and function of the road as a local road is a decision that will be made by the Councils (in consultation with local communities), rather than by the NZTA. This process may well entail consideration of adjacent land use change and or future land development opportunities.
- 53 The NZTA will continue to engage with Councils on this process to see how maintenance programmes can be practicably aligned with the desired form and function of the road. Councils may also seek to include projects that deliver their desired form and function of the local road within the regional land transport programme which would then attract NZTA funding.

## RESPONSE TO SUBMISSIONS

- 54 Overall there were 67 submissions received and for the NZTA it is pleasing to note that, as compared with other projects and recent consultation exercises, this is very low number. I note that just over half of the submissions received are either fully supportive or provide conditional support, i.e. they support the Project so long as some matters are resolved.
- 55 I believe the low number of submissions on the Project is indicative of the good consultation that has occurred with stakeholders, local councils, local communities through which the route passes and with affected land owners. The low number is I think also reflective of the support of the public that this Project has (this is explained in the evidence of **Mr Nicholson**).
- 56 The detailed matters raised by submitters are handled by the various technical experts in the NZTA team, who will advise on what they consider should be done in response. In my evidence I have only addressed strategic matters.

### **How will the Project be funded? (submitters 03 and 24)**

- 57 **Mr Nicholson** confirms in his evidence that under current rules the Project will not be subject to tolling and that these rules would need to be amended in order for the road to be able to be further considered (advanced) for tolling. I can advise that the Project is currently intended to be funded through the National Land Transport Programme and on the long term programme construction will commence in 2015. In advance of these physical works the Project will firstly be let to a constructor and then the design will be finalised and all work needed to comply with conditions undertaken.

### **Will concurrent improvements to the network that provide access to SH2 also be provided? (submitter 11)**

- 58 The NZTA current programme includes further detailed investigation of a new link from Grenada to Petone, which follows on from a strategic study undertaken in 2009. Strategic studies were also recently completed of the SH58 and SH2 corridors respectively, and these provide advice on the improvements that will be needed to these roads.
- 59 Projects from all of these further studies will be prioritised and in time will be fed through the National Land Transport Fund. Currently only limited work on these routes is programmed but as additional work is completed on these projects, works with good strategic fit with the NZTA's objectives may well be advanced.



**What will happen to the existing state highway once the Project is operational? (submitters 23, 42 and 64)**

- 60 I have explained above the process for revocation of the state highway and how ultimately it will be up to individual councils to determine the form and function of the road should the Ministry of Transport decide that the SH should become a local road (see paragraphs 50 – 53).
- 61 **Mr Kelly** in his evidence (and in Technical Report 4) explains that no mitigation works on the existing SH are needed as part of this Project. I understand that this is because traffic volumes on the existing SHs reduce once the Project is opened and consequently the level of safety on these existing SH roads improves.
- 62 Submitter 42 refers to matters raised by my predecessor Mr Rendall, when he presented evidence (in August 2000) in relation to works proposed on the existing State Highway through Plimmerton and Mana. The concern of the local Residents Association was that the TG Project would not be constructed should improvement to the existing SH be advanced. The Association draw attention to the fact that Mr Rendall on behalf of Transit committed to demolishing the existing Paremata Bridge and to removing the clearways in conjunction with the opening of the TG Project.
- 63 Since that time things have obviously moved on, and as indicated above (paragraphs 50 – 53) the intention is to now revoke the existing state highway and to make it into a local road. My officers have discussed this with **Mr Bailey** of PCC who has indicated that the future form and function of the new local road is a decision that will be led by the Council in consultation with its communities, and mindful of development aspirations. This process of consultation on this matter is required by conditions that apply to the existing state highway through Mana and which relate to the opening Transmission Gully.

**Will an alternative local road be provided between Paekakariki and MacKay's Crossing? (submissions 23 and 28)**

- 64 The submissions by KCDC and Kapiti Grey Power both state that an alternative local road to the proposed SH needs to be provided between Paekakariki and MacKay's Crossing. The Project objectives include providing an alternative strategic route to Wellington to the one that currently exists (SH1). This does not mean that another alternative between Paekakariki and MacKay's Crossing needs to be provided as part of this Project or in order to meet that particular NZTA objective. I note that there is currently no alternative to the existing SH between Paekakariki and MacKays Crossing.
- 65 **Mr Nicholson's** evidence explains that KCDC officers (including the Chief Executive) were involved in the "Options Assessment Workshop" in 2008 in which the preferred route and ramp layout for

the section between MacKays Crossing and Paekakariki was selected. This workshop rejected other options, including one which provided an alternative parallel local road option.

### **CONCLUSIONS**

- 66 The Wellington RoNS is nationally important and is one of 7 projects listed in the GPS that are critical to economic productivity and growth.
- 67 The Transmission Gully Project is part the Wellington RoNS and as such its delivery is critical to the delivery of the overall Wellington RoNS project.
- 68 The Transmission Gully Project has a substantial history and has been subject to substantial investigation and public consultation processes. The Project is generally supported by the public and this is reflected in the low numbers of submissions received (and within those received the high number that offer conditional or unconditional support). The road is currently programmed for construction to commence in 2015.



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Roderick Samuel James  
16 November 2011