

MINISTERIAL BRIEFING NOTE

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| Subject | Nelson transport issues |
| Date | 8 May 2024 |
| Briefing number | BRI-3050 |

| Contact(s) for telephone discussion (if required) | | | | |
|--|--|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|
| Name | Position | Direct line | Cell phone | 1st contact |
| Brett Gliddon | Group General Manager, Transport Services | s 9(2)(a) | s 9(2)(a) | ✓ |
| Emma Speight | Director Regional Relationships, Greater Wellington & Top of the South | s 9(2)(a) | s 9(2)(a) | |

Action taken by Office of the Minister

- Noted**
- Seen by Minister**
- Agreed**
- Feedback provided**
- Forwarded to**
- Needs change [please specify]**
- Withdrawn**
- Overtaken by events**

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8 May 2024

Hon Simeon Brown – Minister of Transport

NELSON TRANSPORT ISSUES

Purpose

1. This briefing provides you with an update on the Nelson transport issues for the Prime Minister's upcoming visit to Nelson on Thursday 9 May 2024.
2. Your office has asked for a short briefing on any transport matters that may come up in the discussions as well as how projects will be considered for inclusion in the National Land Transport Programme (NLTP).

Nelson and Tasman Mayors are advocating for increased priority for the Hope Bypass

3. The Nelson and Tasman Mayors have expressed their disappointment that the NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi (NZTA) State Highway Investment Proposal (SHIP) has scheduled the Hope Bypass to start within the 10-year timeframe, but not to be completed.
4. We have advised them that the SHIP has considered the phasing of all of the Roads of National Significance (RoNS), and this large programme has required careful planning at the national level.
5. The recently completed Richmond Programme Business Case (PBC) had identified that there are a number of actions that should be taken to optimise the existing network before starting the Hope Bypass.
6. The Hope Bypass project is currently in a very early development phase. There is a lot of project development work needed to get to design/construction.

Nelson and Tasman Mayors are advocating for a change in scope for the Hope Bypass

7. The Hope Bypass has a designation over land that was previously a rail corridor and had been envisaged as a 2-lane road starting from the "Richmond Deviation" section of SH6 and continuing across SH60 and past Hope township.
8. The Mayors have asked that NZTA consider changing the scope and considering 4-laning SH6 from Quarantine Road (the road to the airport) in Nelson along the Whakatu Drive and Richmond Deviation sections, while ending the new road at SH60 (rather than continuing past Hope township). This is not aligned with the findings of the recent Richmond PBC.

SH6 Rocks Road is included in the draft RLTP as a future priority

9. The Nelson Future Access study (2021) was the latest look at the seawall and options for Rocks Road.

10. The Rocks Road project includes replacement of the seawall, widening of the state highway corridor in sections, a shared path atop the new seawall, and sections of priority lanes for congested sections of the corridor.
11. It has not been included in the NZTA SHIP.
12. It was previously a high priority for the region but is not being strongly advocated for by the local Councils.
13. Some local groups continue to advocate for a new State Highway (the Southern Link) being constructed on an inland route (on an old rail corridor, owned by NZTA). This was not identified as a priority in the Nelson Future Access Study, but the corridor has been retained as a very long-term future resilience option if Rocks Road was no longer able to be maintained in a major seismic event or sea level rise.

Nelson Mayor is advocating for an alternative local road connection between Nelson and Richmond (Hill St through Stoke)

14. SH6 Whakatu Drive between Nelson and Richmond is a route that is vulnerable to disruption, with no straightforward alternative route if it is closed for maintenance or because of an incident. The Nelson Mayor is advocating for a new parallel connection road to be built connecting Hill Street, through the back of Saxton Oval, to the Ridgeway. This has not been identified in any of the recent regional business cases.

Local concerns about the resilience of the Cook Strait connection for freight and tourism

15. The region recognises the importance of the Cook Strait connection and a reliable ferry service for both freight and tourism. They have raised concerns about the lack of certainty about the future of ferry services.

Public Transport (PT) funding for the new bus service

16. Nelson and Tasman introduced a new e-bus service in 2023, involving new routes, more services and a new fleet of mainly e-buses. The service has been very successful with a significant growth in patronage.
17. However, a number of factors are contributing to cost pressures for the service, including wage settlements, some changes to routes, future road user charges (RUC) changes for EV buses, new shelters and their maintenance. The Councils are considering deferring some expansions of the services and increasing some farebox recovery to contribute to managing these cost pressures.
18. Mayors may advocate for additional PT funding to support further growth of this service.

Other topics that may be raised

19. The local Councillors have indicated strong support for resilience funding in the region (particularly in Tasman).

20. In common with many regions there is a perception that the Top of the South does not receive a “fair share” of the National Land Transport Fund (NLTF) funding and major projects; however, it is not clear on what basis or analysis this claim is made.

It is recommended that you:

1. **Note** the contents of this briefing.
2. **Forward** this briefing to the Prime Minister.

Yes / No



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Brett Gliddon

Group General Manager, Transport Services

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Hon Simeon Brown, Minister of Transport

Date: 2024

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