

# State Highway 2 Devil's Elbow

## Consultation feedback summary

Transport Rebuild East Coast



July 2024



Community Engagement session 19 March 2024, Putorino

**We've had great conversations about how to make SH2 Devil's Elbow safer and more resilient. Thanks to everyone who got involved.**

In March and April 2024, we held 11 community events across Hawke's Bay, Wairoa and Tairāwhiti to discuss potential rebuild projects on State Highway 2 and 5 in Eskdale, State Highway 2 around Devil's Elbow and on State Highway 35 through the Mangahauini Gorge.

We also gathered feedback online, via a 0800 number, email, and a paper feedback form and met with Treaty partners, councils and other key stakeholders.

This document is a short summary of the feedback captured about our ideas for SH2 Devil's Elbow.

### About TREC

The Transport Rebuild East Coast (TREC) alliance is the delivery organisation for NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi and KiwiRail. Along with repairing East Coast state highways and rail after Cyclone Gabrielle, TREC is looking at ways to provide a more resilient state highway network in the future.

It's about safer, more reliable roads for everyone.

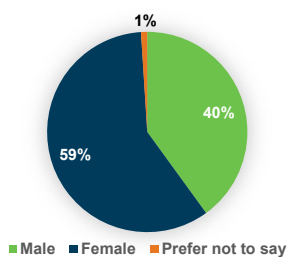
### By the numbers

- 11** community drop-ins
- 335** people came to the events
- 237** pieces of feedback were collected
- 710** website views during consultation
- 79** ideas captured by staff on post-it notes and notepads
- 132** people completed a digital survey
- 700** subscribers to our TREC Pānui
- 30** people filled out a feedback form or emailed us

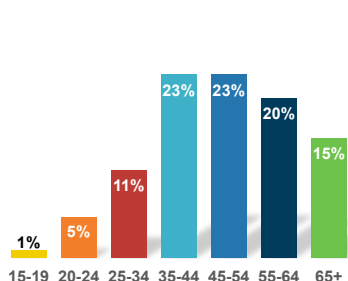


### Who we heard from

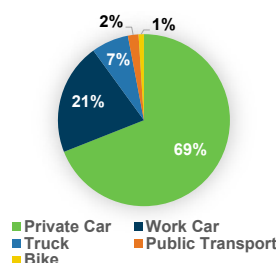
#### Gender



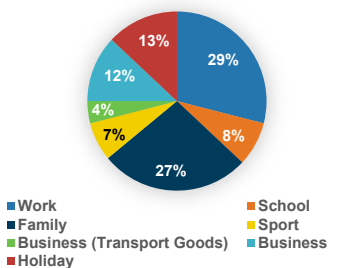
#### Age group



#### How do you travel?



#### Main reason for travel

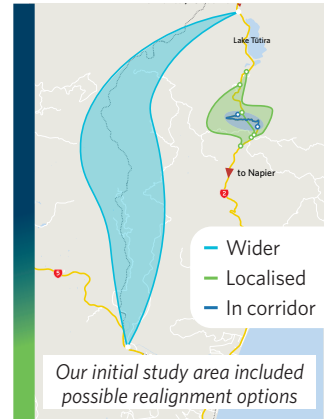


# Potential options for SH2 Devil's Elbow

Early on we explored bypassing this section of highway. The high costs, length of time to construct and complexity of the topography and geology saw the team focus on upgrades to the existing corridor instead.

We shared several ideas to upgrade this section of highway and reduce the risk of it being closed or down to one lane. Our options range from repairs to major works like widening the road (to allow crews to remove slip material without closing the highway) and realigning sections to avoid areas prone to slips and rockfalls.

We asked people what they thought and if there was anything we should know before we carry on with our technical investigation and work towards an emerging preferred option.



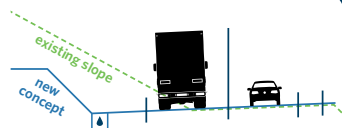
## A new bridge concept

Easing the sharp bend at Devil's Elbow to improve safety and manage water flows better.



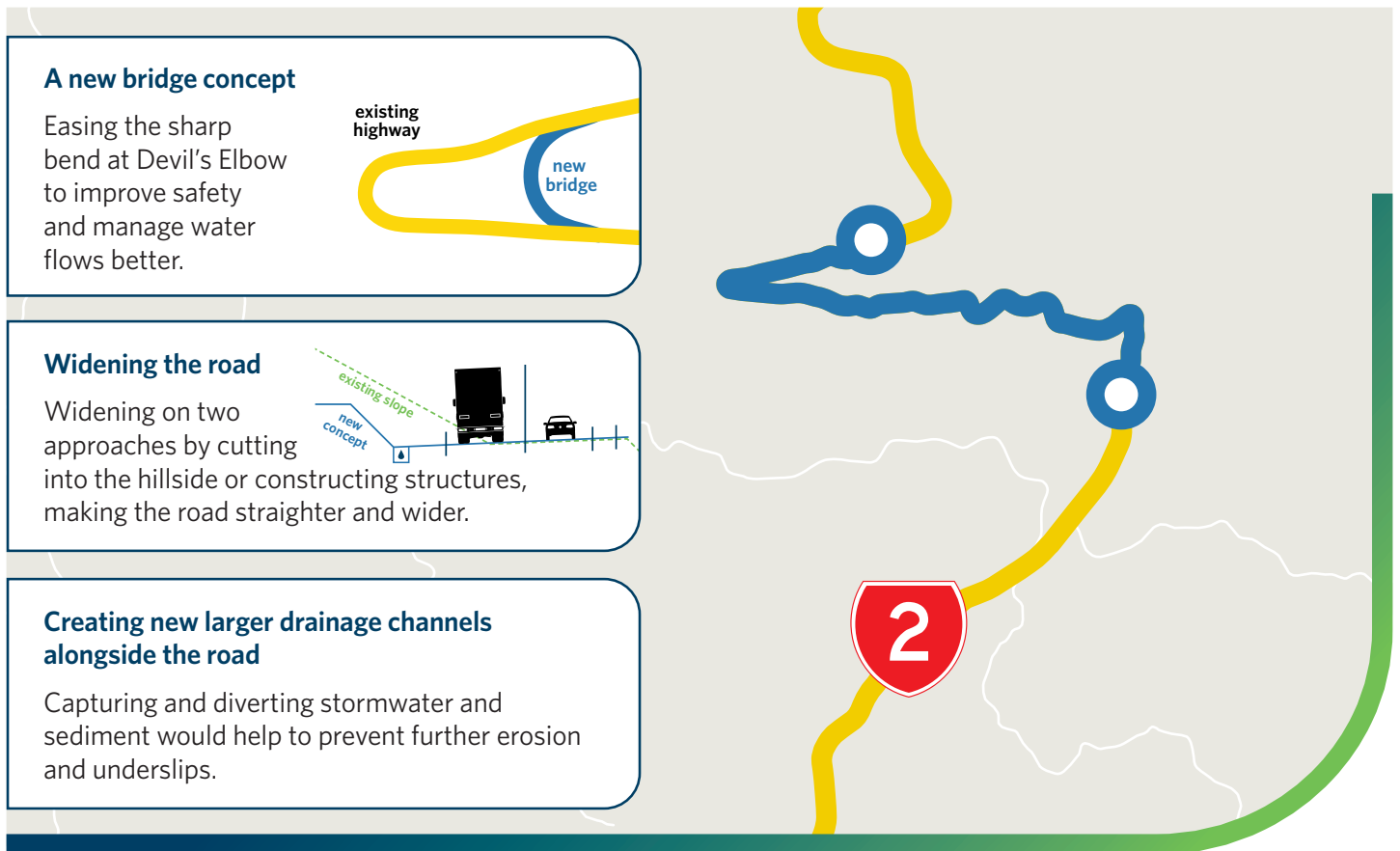
## Widening the road

Widening on two approaches by cutting into the hillside or constructing structures, making the road straighter and wider.



## Creating new larger drainage channels alongside the road

Capturing and diverting stormwater and sediment would help to prevent further erosion and underslips.



## What we heard

People want to see a balanced approach that considers both the immediate and long-term needs of the region.

Feedback highlighted the potential for improved economic and social ties across the region. Solutions that can withstand heavy rain events and other natural disasters are important.

While there is general support for the 'in corridor' option, some people questioned the long-term effectiveness of road widening and raised concerns about constructability, environmental impacts and delays during construction.

Many people asked about other options, including building tunnels and more bridges, passing lanes, rerouting the highway to bypass Devil's Elbow, or making it a toll road to pay for capital investment.

Others simply want the road repaired and back to normal quickly so they can get to where they need to go without construction delays.



## What you said

"Widening is a great concept. At least the road won't need to close if there is a rockfall."

"A new bridge and culvert sound expensive. Is it good value for money, given the geology and typography?"

"Will a new bridge last long? I'd prefer a new route to bypass this area."

"Bridges would be great."

"Every winter the Devil's Elbow gets closed at least 3-4 times due to slips."

"Anything that can help keep Wairoa connected to the rest of the world is a good thing."

"If widening the road will allow crews to clean debris while allowing vehicles to use the road, that would satisfy our requirements."

"As a log driver I support road widening and better drainage."

"Widening the road sounds like a lot less work, better than starting from scratch. Having additional passing lanes and large drainage would make this a great highway."

"I'm not sure widening would stop the slips and rocks falling."

"Rebuilding on the existing alignment provides an improvement to what was there before however this section will remain vulnerable to similar events."

"There are multiple corners both before and after that could be cut back too."

"If there is any intent to salvage the railway which is hugely important to the economic prosperity of the East Coast, the railway and roading should be considered along the existing railway route. The current SH2 is dangerous and has been a major concern for many years."



"We do not accept that proper evidence has been supplied for disbanding the re-routing approach."

"Devil's Elbow is a precarious drive at the best of times for road users. We have been constantly warned that because of climate change, rainfall will be heavier and destructive in the future. Someone needs to ensure better roading infrastructure."

"Re-look at alternatives to this road. We need a long-term, sustainable option."

"We were told after cyclone that the Elbow has no more give, what's going to happen to the road if we get more rain/ storms?"

"Having access to Napier in serious weather events is vital."

"Devil's Elbow corner isn't that bad, it's all the road leading to it that is slip and dropout prone. Dropouts being the biggest concern."

## Thank you

Thank you for your feedback, all comments and insights have been considered and used alongside our technical work to help refine our ideas.

We will develop recommendations that are subject to NZTA Board endorsement and funding.

We received feedback about delays caused by our work sites. Working with community representatives, we've made changes to our traffic management and how we communicate the traffic impact to see how we can improve things further and give people more certainty around travel times.

Work on the transport network is going to take time and there will be multiple sites. We appreciate your patience and understanding.

We'll keep listening and responding to your feedback. All information gathered is valuable to future works and our recovery projects.

Ngā mihi nui - thanks for your support.

## Whakapā mai ■ Get in touch

Visit our website  
[nzta.govt.nz/trec](https://nzta.govt.nz/trec)

Email us  
[info@trec.nz](mailto:info@trec.nz)

Call us  
0800 80 TREC (0800 80 8732)

Stay up to date  
Scan the QR code

