

Report 15.37  
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Committee Council  
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## **Variations to the Wellington Regional Land Transport Programme 2012 – 2015: SH2/58 Intersection and SH2 Rimutaka Hill Guardrails**

### **1. Purpose**

To seek the Council's approval for two variations of the Wellington Regional Land Transport Programme 2012-15, to include the new activities 'SH2/58 Grade Separation' and 'SH2 Rimutaka Hill Guardrails', at the request of the NZ Transport Agency (NZTA).

### **2. Consideration by Committee**

The matters raised in this report were considered by the Regional Transport Committee at its meeting on 9 March 2015 (Report 15.14 and 15.15 refers). The recommendations that are contained in this report have been endorsed by the Committee, and are now provided for Council's consideration and decision.

### **3. Background**

#### **3.1 The Regional Land Transport Programme**

The current Regional Land Transport Programme 2012 – 2015 (RLTP) was prepared by the Committee, and subsequently approved by Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC) in June 2012.

The RLTP contains all the land transport activities proposed to be undertaken throughout the region over 3 financial years, the regional priority of those activities, indicative activities over the following 3 financial years, plus a 10 year financial forecast.

The activities in the RLTP are submitted by the NZTA and 'Approved Organisations' (including the eight territorial authorities and GWRC). The activities in the programme relate to passenger transport, walking and cycling, local roads, state highways, and the movement of freight.

## **4. Process for considering a variation**

The Land Transport Management Act 2003 (the Act)<sup>1</sup> includes provision for changes to some types of activities without the need for a variation to the RLTP. However, this provision does not apply to the proposed new activity outlined below. As a transitional provision the existing RLTP can be varied following the procedure as if it were a RLT Plan (refer section 156 of the Act). As such, the process for dealing with requests for variations must be followed.

Section 18D of the Act states that if a good reason exists to do so, the Regional Transport Committee may prepare a variation to its RLTP during the three years to which it applies. This can be at the request of an Approved Organisation or the NZTA, or on the Committee's own motion. In this case, the request has been made by an Approved Organisation and the NZTA.

Once the Regional Transport Committee has considered and endorsed the variation, it is then forwarded to Greater Wellington Regional Council for approval. As is the case with the programme itself, under the Land Transport Management Act Greater Wellington Regional Council must either accept the recommendation or it can refer the variation back to the Regional Transport Committee once with a request that it be reconsidered.

## **5. SH2/58 Intersection Improvement**

### **5.1 Proposed variation**

The proposed variation involves commencing construction of the 'SH2/58 Grade Separation' project within the final year of the current three year programme.

#### *Proposed activity*

The subject project is an upgrade of the existing SH2/58 intersection (a signalised T intersection) to a fully grade separated interchange.

The project will involve an elevated roundabout structure, improved local road connections, improved alignment of the SH58 approach to the interchange, new park and ride spaces (for Manor Park railway station) and enhanced pedestrian connections across SH2.

#### *Proposed timing and cash flow*

In the current RLTP 2012-15, the proposed project was not expected to commence within the three years from 2012-15 and was therefore not put forward by the Transport Agency for inclusion in the three year programme (refer Table 3 and 4 of the RLTP 2012-15). Instead it was identified in Table 5 of the RLTP 2012-15 which set out 'Other significant activities expected to commence within the next 10 years'.

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<sup>1</sup> As amended by the Land Transport Management Amendment Act 2013.

Funding has become available from the National Land Transport Fund, and because this project is construction ready, the Transport Agency is now in a position to commence construction in the 2014/15 financial year.

\$5.3M of the construction funding is now proposed to be spent in 2014/15 of the current programme, and the remainder in years 2015/16 and 2016/17 (in the next programme). The total cost of the grade separated interchange is estimated to be \$42M.

The project will be nationally funded and the NZ Transport Agency advises that it will not affect any other projects in the current NLTP.

Details of the proposed variation for inclusion in Table 3 of the existing RLTP are set out in **Attachment 1**.

## **5.2 Determination of Significance**

The Regional Transport Committee has assessed the significance of the proposed variation, for the purpose of consultation, against the RLTP significance policy. The significance policy is set out in section 7 (page 36 and 37) of the RLTP.

In making a determination of significance (against the criteria set out in section 7.3 of the RLTP), the following factors were considered:

- The proposed cost variation of \$5.3 million associated with bringing this activity forward into the current programme is not considered to materially change the overall balance of strategic investment in the context of the \$1.3 billion programme cost.
- The proposed variation relates to a project that will make a positive contribution towards the Government Policy Statement objectives as the subject activity will lead to construction of improvements that will have a significant contribution to road safety and efficiency.
- The proposed variation is not expected to affect the integrity of the RLTP or its overall affordability.
- The necessary designation and resource consents required for the project have been obtained. Alterations to the existing designation and resource consent may be required if any significant changes are made to the design as part of the 'design and build' contract.
- Six property parcels are affected. Five are already owned by the Transport Agency. The sixth property is owned by KiwiRail and the acquisition of this parcel is expected to be completed by start of construction.
- The subject project has been included in, and consulted on, as part of regional transport programmes and plans over the past 10 years as outlined below:
  - In the 2006/07 Regional Transport Programme the project 'SH2/58 Grade Separation' was identified in the 10-year Strategic Roading

Programme list, with construction timing indicatively estimated as 2009-2012.

- In the 2009-2012 Regional Land Transport Programme the project 'SH2/58 Grade Separation' was included in the prioritised list of large new projects of the three year programme. It was given a 'High' priority ranking among the large new projects and an expected construction timing of 2009 to 2012.
- The project was consulted on as part of the Hutt Corridor Plan in 2011. The project received a high level of support through submissions to this process, particularly in relation to safer access to the Manor Park area. The Hutt Corridor Plan indicated the construction of this project was likely to commence during the 2012-15 period and be completed within the 2015-18 period. This indicative timing is consistent with what is now being proposed.
- In the 2012-15 Regional Land Transport Programme the project 'SH2/58 Grade Separation' was included in the list of large new projects expected to commence outside the three year programme, but within the next ten years.
- Community feedback was received on the need for the SH2/58 Intersection Improvement project by the Transport Agency as part of the recent engagement on the SH58 Safety Improvements project in November 2014.

Overall, the need for the project has been established and widely consulted on over many years. The timing now proposed is consistent with indicative timing initially identified through many of these earlier consultation processes.

Consideration has also been given to the likely consequences, costs and benefits of carrying out consultation in relation to the subject variation. Undertaking a public consultation process for the variation could impact on the ability to access available funding within the next 6 months and could see the project delayed by several years as part of the next RLTP/NLTP process. Given the extent of historic consultation in relation to this project, outlined above, the consequences of potential delays are considered to significantly outweigh the benefits of another round of public consultation.

As such, the Regional Transport Committee agreed that the proposed variation to the RLTP is not significant and would not trigger the requirement to carry out consultation on the subject variation.

## **6. SH2 Rimutaka Hill Guardrails**

### **6.1 Proposed variation**

The proposed variation is to commence construction of the 'SH2 Rimutaka Hill Guardrails' project within the final year of the current three year programme.

#### *Proposed activity*

It is proposed to install 2.1 km of roadside guardrails, with associated retaining wall construction, on the Wairarapa side of the SH2 Rimutaka Hill Road to reduce the risk of vehicle run off along this high risk section of SH2.

The NZ Transport Agency has already completed guardrail installation on the Upper Hutt side of the Rimutaka Hill.

#### *Proposed timing and cash flow*

In the current three year programme, only the investigation and design phases of this project are identified. The construction phase was not initially expected to commence within the three years from 2012-15.

Funding has become available from the National Land Transport Fund, and because this project is construction ready, the Transport Agency is now in a position to commence construction in the 2014/15 financial year.

The proposal involves bringing the construction phase forward into the final year of the current programme 2014/15. The cost associated with completing the guardrails project is \$1.3 million.

The project will be nationally funded and the NZ Transport Agency advises that it will not affect any other projects in the current NLTP.

Details of the proposed variation for inclusion in Table 3 of the existing RLTP are set out in **Attachment 1**.

## **6.2 Determination of Significance**

The Regional Transport Committee has assessed the significance of the proposed variation, for the purpose of consultation, against the RLTP significance policy. The significance policy is set out in section 7 (page 36 and 37) of the RLTP.

In making a determination of significance (against the criteria set out in section 7.3 of the RLTP), the following factors were considered:

- The proposed cost variation of \$1.3 million for the new activity is not considered to materially change the overall balance of strategic investment in the context of the \$1.3 billion programme cost.
- The proposed variation would make a positive contribution towards the Government Policy Statement objectives as the subject activity will lead to construction of improvements that will have a significant contribution to road safety.
- The proposed variation is not expected to affect the integrity of the RLTP or its overall affordability.
- The NZ Transport Agency has had ongoing discussions with the South Wairarapa community in relation to the need for the project, including with the recently formed Rimutaka Hill Road Committee. No project specific consultation has been undertaken.

Consideration has also been given to the likely consequences, costs and benefits of carrying out consultation in relation to the subject variation. The need for the project is well established and the cost of consulting on the

variation (ie. on bringing forward the construction timing) would significantly outweigh the benefits.

As such, the Regional Transport Committee agreed that the proposed variation to the RLTP is not significant and would not trigger the requirement to carry out consultation on the subject variation.

## **7. Next Steps**

Once the variations have been approved by GWRC, they are forwarded to the NZ Transport Agency for consideration for inclusion in the National Land Transport Programme (NLTP) for funding.

There is no obligation for the NZTA to vary the NLTP by including the new activity. However, it must give written reasons for any decision not to do so. In this case, the NZTA has made the request and has indicated that it will look to add the SH2/58 Intersection Improvements and SH2 Rimutaka Hill Guardrails projects to the current NLTP to utilise available funding.

## **8. The decision-making process and significance**

Officers recognise that the matters referenced in this report may have a high degree of importance to affected or interested parties.

The matters requiring decision in this report has been considered by officers against the requirements of Part 6 of the Local Government Act 2002 (the Act). Part 6 sets out the obligations of local authorities in relation to the making of decisions.

### **8.1 Significance of the decision**

The matters for decision in this report are subject to the legislative requirements of the Act. Section 18D(5) of the Act requires the Regional Transport Committee to determine if a proposed variation to the RLTP is significant, in accordance with its significance policy adopted under 106(2) and included in the programme.

An assessment of the two variations against the RLTP significance policy is set out in sections 5.2 and 6.2 of this report and concludes the matters do not trigger the requirement to carry out consultation.

## **9. Recommendations**

*That the Council:*

1. *Receives the report.*
2. *Notes the content of the report.*
3. *Agrees to adopt the variations to the Wellington Regional Land Transport Programme 2012 – 2015 as set out in **Attachment 1**.*

4. ***Agrees** to forward the adopted variations to the Regional Land Transport Programme 2012 – 2015 to the NZ Transport Agency, requesting that they be included in the National Land Transport Programme.*

Report prepared by:

Report approved by:

**Natasha Hayes**

Senior Transport Planner

**Fran Wilde**

Chair, Regional Transport Committee

**Attachment 1: Variation to Wellington Regional Land Transport Programme 2012 – 2015:  
'SH2/58 Intersection Improvement' and 'SH2 Rimutaka Hill Guardrails'**