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Committee Regional Transport Committee
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Proposed Petone to Grenada Link Road: Options north of Tawa

1. Purpose

To report on the investigations undertaken on options for the proposed Petone to Grenada Link Road (P2G Link Road), specifically the options north of Tawa.

2. Background

The proposed P2G Link Road forms part of an integrated package of proposed transport improvements to significantly improve connectivity and accessibility within the region and to support and drive economic growth.

The Regional Land Transport Plan 2015 (RLTP 2015) proposed for approval at this meeting, identifies an east-west link between Lower Hutt and Porirua/North Wellington as a key priority to better connect the two key road corridors through the region. The P2G Link Road is identified as the third ranked priority for the region's large new improvement projects.

The Regional Transport Committee (the Committee) on 9 March 2015 made a decision to support the P2G Link Road as part of an integrated package of transport improvements, including a new Wellington to Hutt Valley walking and cycling link, a significant safety upgrade of SH58, SH2 corridor improvements and a new Cross Valley Link between SH2 and Seaview.

The Committee also requested that the NZ Transport Agency prepare “*a detailed report on the results of the analysis undertaken over the last 6 months, focussing on the options north of the Tawa Interchange. This report should include information on the impact on public transport patronage, forecast levels of congestion and a comparison of the options*”.

This report outlines the technical transport information requested by the Committee.

2.1 Consultation on the options

In 2013 the NZ Transport Agency completed a detailed scoping report for the proposed P2G link road to look more closely at the benefits and to investigate potential routes in more detail. The conclusions of this scoping report and a series of options for the P2G Link Road were then the subject of public consultation during February to April 2014.

The consultation material included four route alignment options for the section between Petone to the Crest (options 1-4) and four route alignment options for the section between the Crest and Transmission Gully (options A-D).

The package of options for the P2G Link Road included proposals to increase roading capacity between Tawa and the future Transmission Gully Motorway interchange at Linden (to address a forecast increase in congestion on SH1 between Tawa and Linden). Options proposed were widening the existing SH1 from four to six lanes or a new two-lane link road through Takapu Valley.

The consultation resulted in over 1400 submissions, and the feedback was been summarised into an Engagement Report.

<http://www.nzta.govt.nz/projects/petone-grenada-link-road/docs/p2g-engagement-report-201408.pdf>

At its meeting on 13 May 2014, the Committee agreed a process to continue investigating the P2G Link Road options via a collaborative regional partnership between NZ Transport Agency and the region's councils, through a joint chief executives steering group. A report from the chief executives was considered by the Committee on 9 March 2015. During this process a third option was identified, a 'wait and see' approach, where traffic volumes and congestion levels are monitored and measures identified to address these if a problem eventuates.

2.2 Options north of Tawa

The options currently being considered north of Tawa (between the interchange of the P2G Link Road on SH1 and the future Transmission Gully Motorway Interchange) are as follows:

Option C: Widen SH1 between Tawa and the Transmission Gully Interchange by adding two additional lanes (a total of six lanes).

Option D: Construct a new Takapu Link through Takapu Valley joining to Transmission Gully Motorway. This would be a 2 lane road.

Option Wait and See: No construction of any additional north-south capacity. Monitoring would be undertaken after the construction of the P2G Link Road to check actual traffic flows and congestion levels and to determine if a longer-term response was required. A sub-option would be to place a designation on land for one of the increased roading capacity options to allow quicker implementation in the event of a need being established.

3. Analysis

3.1. Transport Modelling

A series of questions and answers have been developed jointly by GWRC and NZ Transport Agency officers (**Attachment 1**). This aims to assist the Committee to understand the complex technical modelling information and presents an agreed view of what the modelling says about the options north of Tawa.

A detailed technical report has been prepared by the NZ Transport Agency. This outlines the transport modelling analysis of the options north of Tawa (**Attachment 2**). It also includes analysis of the forecast impact on public transport prepared by GWRC.

3.2. Detailed route options and design

Concerns have been raised about detailed design aspects of the proposed P2G Link Road.

One particular issue brought up by the community has been the best location and design for any interchange with SH1. It is important that the location and design of any interchange maximises the efficiency of the P2G Link Road in connecting the lower Hutt Valley to North Wellington, Tawa, Porirua.

However it is considered that the detailed route alignment and the appropriate location and design of intersections are issues that are appropriately analysed as part of the next stages of investigation and design.

3.3. Analysis of other matters

It should be noted that the technical report focusses on the results of the transport modelling undertaken to this point of the project, as requested by the Committee.

There are a range of other matters which may be relevant to the final decision on the preferred option north of Tawa. These include matters relating to: resilience, environmental and social effects, and property impacts. A copy of the previous presentation to individual Councils is included at the end of Attachment 2, which provides a summary of these matters.

4. Committee consideration and next steps

It is important to note that a Committee decision on the options north of Tawa is not required at this stage, however the NZ Transport Agency has indicated that it would be helpful for the Committee to provide whatever feedback or direction it sees fit.

The NZ Transport Agency will be undertaking a Multi-Criteria Analysis of all of the options proposed for the P2G Link Road, evaluating all current and previously considered options (including the Wait and See option) against the project objectives. A range of technical specialists will consider the relative merits of each of the options and the combined feedback from these specialists will result in a recommendation for a preferred option for the P2G Link Road.

The NZ Transport Agency will then consider this recommendation alongside all of the feedback from this Committee, individual Councils, the public and stakeholders before making its decision as to which option to progress. At this stage it is intended to carry out this analysis in May and it is anticipated that a decision on a preferred option will be announced in July 2015.

A diagram has been developed to provide an overview of the project development process (**Attachment 3**).

5. 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 have 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.

5.1 Significance of the decision

Part 6 requires Greater Wellington Regional Council to consider the significance of the decision. The term 'significance' has a statutory definition set out in the Act.

Officers have considered the significance of the matter, taking the Council's significance policy and decision-making guidelines into account.

The proposals subject of this decision may have a large impact on a small number of residents and also have a history of generating public interest and debate within the region. However, this report involves the Committee providing direction and feedback to another organisation (NZ Transport Agency) who will make the final decisions in relation to the subject proposal.

Officers therefore recommend that the matter be considered to have low significance.

5.2 Engagement

As the proposed project is developed further, decisions about future consultation and engagement will be made by the NZ Transport Agency. The requirements of the Resource Management Act 1991 will apply in relation to consultation and notification of affected parties when the proposal reaches the consenting stage.

6. Recommendations

That the Committee:

1. **Receives** the report.
2. **Notes** the content of the report.
3. **Considers** what feedback to provide to the NZ Transport Agency on the P2G Link Road options north of Tawa.

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Attachment 1: P2G Link Road: Q and As on options north of Tawa

Attachment 2: P2G Link Road: Transport modelling of options north of Tawa

Attachment 3: P2G Link Road: Project development process