

# TRANSPORT STUDY

## STATE HIGHWAY 1: BLENHEIM TO ASHLEY RIVER BRIDGE

### 1. INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1. Overview

SH 1 in the South Island is the key north south freight route providing long distance intra and inter-regional movement of goods and services as well as for general travel and tourists. This strategic study focuses on SH 1 between Blenheim and the Ashley River Bridge (on the northern edge of greater Christchurch) and is principally targeted at providing a safe, secure and reliable key strategic route while minimising any adverse environmental effects from transport. As in other locations this route is also experiencing increased traffic. The freight load is expected to double by 2020 and there is a continuing growth in tourist numbers, especially with the development of tourist activities focused around Kaikoura and viticulture development in Blenheim and Waipara.

The New Zealand Transportation Strategy (NZTS) and Government Policy Statement (GPS) have objectives and targets of increased use of rail and coastal shipping for freight. This will reduce the level of heavy vehicle growth along the corridor, but will not remove the need to investigate the issues that already exist, and will continue to exist on this critical route.

The KiwiRAP assessment for this section of SH 1 classifies the Collective Risk as medium and the Personal Risk as medium/high. With this route being the prime freight route in the South Island the demands of on time delivery and the difficult alignment along the Kaikoura Coast result in a number of crashes.

#### 1.2. Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study is to:

- identify route security, route reliability and safety issues that need to be managed to ensure an appropriate level of service for the next 30 years, and
- develop a management plan for the next ten years that is realistic in terms of the available funds and takes into account the direction emerging from the updated New Zealand Transportation Strategy and the Government Policy Statement.

#### 1.3. New Zealand Transport Agency's Obligations under the Land Transport Management Act

This Study positively contributes to the NZTS and evidence in support of the contribution will be an output of this Study through substantiation of the following high-level targets:

- more predictable travel times for all modes of transport,
- improved travel times on critical intra and inter-regional connections between Christchurch and Picton,
- reduced public health impacts of transport,
- reduced environmental effects through improved treatment with new design standards,

- improved safety standards on new infrastructure and reduced exposure on existing infrastructure.

#### **1.4. Canterbury Regional Land Transport Strategy**

The Canterbury Regional Land Transport Strategy (CRLTS) identifies SH 1 as a strategic road in the Canterbury Region network. The RLTS identifies a number of issues on this section of SH 1 that raise concerns over the long term security and reliability of this route. They are:

- route security around Kaikoura,
- the shingle fans north of the Clarence River,
- limited passing opportunities,
- cycle provision on the Ashley River Bridge.

A specific action on NZTA is to prepare corridor management plans for its strategic network by 2008.

#### **1.5. Marlborough Regional Land Transport Strategy**

The Marlborough Regional Land Transport Strategy (MRLTS) vision is to provide a sustainable land transport system that enables social and economical development to occur in balance with environmental and community needs. Noting that the transport infrastructure will come under continuing pressure from tourism, marine farming, forestry and viticulture.

The MRLTS has objectives and policies to:

- provide a road network to carry appropriate vehicle types and volumes,
- Mitigate decreasing levels of service,
- Recognise the strategic significance of the State Highway network,
- Assisting safety and personal security.

Amongst MRLTS implementation plans is a request to “develop Corridor Management Plans, as necessary for the State Highway network consistent with RLTS and LTCCP, District Plans and policies.”

#### **1.6. National State Highway Strategy**

The National State Highway Strategy categorises SH 1 as a “National” State Highway. Over the section in this study the NSHS does not identify a demand for major infrastructure improvements over the next 30 years. The key expectation is that there will be a need to develop passing and overtaking opportunities.

The principal issues are therefore to manage capacity for tourism and freight, operational efficiency and safety in a way that enables economic growth and is environmentally and socially sustainable.

## **2. Study Overview**

### **2.1. Project Description**

This Strategic Study is for the section of SH 1 from the southern end of the Riverlands passing lane (RP28/8.65) south of Blenheim to the south abutment of the Ashley River Bridge (RP311/0.36). The urban areas of Kaikoura and Amberley are excluded. NZTA already has, or is working on, management and access plans with these communities. SH 1 south of the Ashley River is included

in the development of transport strategies within the greater Christchurch Urban Development Strategy (UDS) area.

## **2.2. Study Objectives**

The Study objective is to deliver a robust and affordable Strategic Strategy that will describe how this section of SH 1 will be managed for the next 30 years and will also contain a recommended Implementation Plan for the next 10 years.

The study will principally identify capacity, potential mode transfer, route security, route reliability and safety issues that need to be managed to ensure an appropriate Level of Service for the next 30 years. Consultation will be undertaken with key stakeholders to understand the issues from their perspective. This consultation will be targeted at a strategic level rather than project level. The study outcomes will be reviewed against the transport strategies developed for the Kaikoura and Amberley urban areas for uniformity and consistency.

## **2.3. Scope of Study**

The scope of the Blenheim to Ashley River Bridge Strategic Study is to:

- Identify issues, constraints and opportunities that exist along the existing corridor,
- Estimate future travel demands along the corridor, consider various mode share options and assess the level of demand on the State Highway,
- Identify key destinations, areas of high travel demand and mode choice options,
- Consult with key stakeholders over issues (at a strategic level),
- Identify hazards (natural and lifeline) and assess their risks to the State Highway,
- Recommend cost effective management strategies to minimise the hazards (i.e. assess effectiveness and economic efficiency),
- Identify land development pressures that require an extension of the Limited Access Road network or other future route protection,
- Assess the demand for, and identify a passing opportunity plan for the corridor,
- Identify cycle pinch points and a plan to quantify and address the issues,
- Project scoping (incl. problem definition, objectives and rough order costs for future PFR proposals) for significant improvement projects,
- Recommend a Corridor Management Plan for the next 30 years,
- Recommend a 10 year implementation plan of cost effective measures.

## **2.4. Study Outputs**

The Study outputs include a report that:

- outlines the function, expected growth and demands on this section of Highway over the next 30 years,
- includes and recommends 30 year Corridor Management Plan,
- includes and recommends 10 year implementation plan, outlining Project scope and definition for significant improvement projects,

The final report is intended to identify what can be realistically achieved in improving SH 1, identify opportunities for modal shift and be a resource for all divisions in managing the route.