



greater WELLINGTON
THE REGIONAL COUNCIL

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Committee Regional Land Transport
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Hutt Corridor Plan - The Draft Decision

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The following is the draft decision of the Hutt Corridor Plan subcommittee regarding proposals for the Hutt Corridor Plan which are to be incorporated into the Wellington Regional Land Transport Strategy (RLTS).
- 1.2 The Hutt Corridor Plan was commissioned by the Regional Land Transport Committee in June 2000.
- 1.3 At the October 2002 meeting of the Regional Land Transport Committee the Regional Land Transport Committee approved the document "Which route for the Hutt?" as the basis of public consultation on the Hutt Corridor Plan. Submissions closed on the Hutt Corridor Plan on 20 December 2002.

2. The Hearing

- 2.1 The hearing of the submissions took place in the week of 7 to 10 April 2003. This was a three day period as 8 April 2003 was a rest day. The Hearing Subcommittee also met on 17 April 2003 and 9 May 2003 for deliberations and conducted a comprehensive site visit on 4 May 2003.
- 2.2 Prior to the hearing the subcommittee received the following technical documents:
- (i) Hutt Corridor Study Stage 1 by Beca Carter Hollings & Ferner Ltd, March 2002
 - (ii) Hutt Corridor Study Stage 2 by Beca Carter Hollings & Ferner Ltd, July 2002
 - (iii) Hutt Corridor Study Stage 3 by Beca Carter Hollings & Ferner Ltd, October 2002
 - (iv) Hutt Corridor Transport Study Economic Review by Opus International Consultants, October 2002

- (v) Hutt Corridor Transport Options – Economic Evaluation of Stage 1 by Opus International Consultants, April 2002
- (vi) Hutt Corridor Plan for the Transport Network – Sustainability of Road Link Options by Envirosolutions, June 2002
- (vii) Presentation to the RLTC – Key Issues by Transport Policy Department, WRC February 2002
- (viii) Presentation to the RLTC – Consideration of Options by Transport Policy Department, WRC, August 2002
- (ix) Terms of Reference (for the hearing subcommittee)

2.3 Prior to the hearing the subcommittee received a document of 45 pages in length titled “Hutt Corridor Plan Hearing 7-10 April 2003, Statement by Anthony William Brennand”. This was a document presented on behalf of the Technical Group which outlined for the Hutt Corridor Plan:

- the strategy context
- the scope
- the integrity of the analysis
- the issues
- demographic and economic context
- current travel patterns
- vision, objectives and key principals
- methodology and stage 1 analysis
- options in the stage 1 analysis
- comments on key assumptions and options
- findings from the first stage analysis
- second stage analysis
- performance of the packages
- impacts on Wellington City
- further comments on key proposals

The document was presented and discussed at the Hearing.

2.4 Prior to the hearing, the subcommittee received 104 written submissions with comments from officials. Twenty seven submissions were presented in person at the hearing.

3. Identified Needs and Issues

3.1 The identified needs and issues for the Hutt Corridor are presented below. These are:

- low population growth in the Hutt Valley
- continued employment in Wellington CBD for people living outside of Wellington City
- slow down in manufacturing regionally

- peak period road congestion
- inadequate peak frequency levels of passenger rail in the Hutt
- increase in freight movements across the Hutt Valley, particularly near or in residential areas
- increase in journeys for recreation and shopping
- poor local access in and out of the Hutt Valley
- lack of direct passenger rail access to the Lower Hutt Central area, and
- growing need for improved roads to meet increases in tourism.

3.2 These original needs and issues were confirmed by the key stakeholder agencies during the development of the Hutt Corridor Plan.

3.3 During the hearing a number of other issues were raised either by submitters, in the evidence of Mr Brennand or in the deliberations of the Subcommittee. These are identified below.

- despite low population growth and modest economic development in the Hutt Valley there is still significant traffic growth on the state highways in and out of the Hutt Valley
- there is a dependency on Wellington CBD employment for Hutt Valley residents coupled with low employment growth within the Hutt Valley
- there is a need to improve access to employment for Hutt Valley residents
- there is a need to provide for freight and other vehicle movement across the valley floor but also protect the amenity of the Petone Esplanade
- there remains poor interdistrict public transport access to the Hutt CBD
- there is a need to develop a regional sustainable growth strategy to provide a context for corridor plans
- there is a need for the completion and implementation of a Wellington Central corridor plan to integrate with the Hutt Corridor Plan
- proposals in the Hutt Corridor Plan need to integrate as part of a package so that benefits of synergies between proposals can be realised.

3.4 In the amended Hutt Corridor Plan statement, the needs and issues identified in the preceding paragraph shall be incorporated in the “Identified Needs and Issues” section.

4. Hutt Corridor Plan Objectives

4.1 Like the RLTS, the objectives of the Hutt Corridor Plan are to ensure:

- accessibility and economic development i.e. to provide a transport system that optimises access to and within the region
- economic efficiency – value for money

- affordability – recognises funding constraints and ability to pay
- safety
- sustainability – to provide a system that recognises the needs of the community, avoids or mitigates adverse effects, and uses resources efficiently.

As well, the RLTS identifies the importance of an integrated network with balance across all modes of travel.

5. Key Issues Consulted On

- 5.1 There were four key issues presented in the consultation document to the community for their consideration. The content of the consultation document is set out in **attachment 1**.

6. Preamble to the Decision

- 6.1 The subcommittee recognises that there were a number of critical issues that have a major bearing on the Hutt Corridor Plan. These issues have had a large influence on the conclusions that the subcommittee have drawn that underpin the shape of this decision. These critical issues are identified below.
- 6.2 The importance of thinking in terms of coherent integrated packages of projects rather than individual projects. The construction of such a package is designed to take advantage of synergies between projects that best achieve the objectives of the Hutt Corridor Plan and to best facilitate network balance.
- 6.3 To take account of the overall issue of affordability so that a package of major projects can be achieved within a five year horizon and another in a subsequent five year horizon.
- 6.4 The continuing growth in traffic despite modest population and economic growth. This is due to the fact that people travel more for a variety of reasons such as changes in lifestyle, work patterns, household structure, trip patterns and easier access to motor vehicles.
- 6.5 The importance of access to the Wellington CBD for employment purposes. It was noted that access to employment is particularly important to younger people.
- 6.6 Significant traffic volumes on the Petone-Ngauranga corridor, travelling between the Hutt Valley and Tawa, Porirua and further north.
- 6.7 To address increasing freight movements across the Hutt Valley but at the same time the need to consider the amenity value of Petone Esplanade.
- 6.8 The Hutt CBD has poor interdistrict passenger transport accessibility.
- 6.9 The significant financial impact on territorial authorities, particularly Hutt City, caused by the cost of funding east-west connector routes both through the hills and across the valley floor, which will be necessary before full benefit will be

realised of developing the Transmission Gully motorway and improving the Petone-Ngauranga corridor. It should be recognised that the Petone-Grenada and valley floor road links are regional strategic links rather than local access roads.

- 6.10 The importance of close working cooperation between Greater Wellington Regional Council, territorial authorities, Transit and Transfund in project planning, integration of roading, and cycleway initiatives and progressing other packages.
- 6.11 The importance of establishing an agreed land use and demographic context. This would require a region wide growth strategy to be developed in a co-operative manner by all the regions local authorities. This growth strategy would form the basis of the review of the Regional Policy Statement and a context for the review of the RLTS.

7. The Draft Decision

- 7.1 The subcommittee recommends that the time horizons for the Hutt Corridor Plan be 2003 to 2008 and beyond 2008 for the current RLTS. When the Land Transport Management Bill becomes law it may be appropriate to adopt the time horizons laid out in **attachment 2**.

Existing Road Projects 2003 to 2008

- 7.2 The Dowse-Korokoro project is confirmed as an urgent priority.
- 7.3 The subcommittee envisaged that such safety improvements do not require the immediate construction of four lanes from SH2 to the Transmission Gully motorway alignment. This view recognises the current shortage of money for construction projects and the synergy of SH58 with the proposed Transmission Gully motorway. It is envisaged that the four laning of SH58 from SH2 to the Transmission Gully motorway will occur when Transmission Gully is built.
- 7.4 The completion of consents to ensure that the required land is available for the construction of an interchange at SH58/SH2 when funding becomes available. The design should not prevent a possible future direct link by a new bridge across the Hutt River to Stokes Valley.
- 7.5 The subcommittee decided that proposals for the Rimutaka Hill Road should be referred to the Wairarapa Corridor Plan. It recommends that the proposal be “any future upgrade of the Rimutaka Hill Road should aim to achieve an overall standard of 70kph recognising that lesser standards (generally at least 50 kph) will be applied where it is impractical or uneconomic to apply a 70kph standard”.

New Road Projects 2003 to 2008

- 7.6 The subcommittee heard from submitters on the need for an improved cycle facility between Petone and Wellington City and for this to be integrated with the overall cycling strategy. The Subcommittee proposes that a two-way cycle and pedestrian facility between Petone and Ngauranga be scoped, designed and

constructed on the seaward side of the rail line in conjunction with the relevant territorial authorities and Transit. This is a requirement before any improvement to SH2 (between Petone and Ngauranga) can proceed and is part of the SH2 improvement proposal. Such a facility should be integrated into possible similar facilities along the Petone foreshore and the Main Hutt Road.

- 7.7 The subcommittee are of the view that there exists a package of four interrelated proposals in the vicinity of Petone and the Dowse-Korokoro interchange on SH2. It is noted that the design of that project is currently committed, and the outstanding resource planning issues are being addressed. The impact of the completed Dowse-Korokoro interchange should be considered in determining the design, sequencing and priority of the projects in this package.
- 7.8 Investigate and construct a reversible HOT lane between Petone and Ngauranga. If the legislation does not permit HOT lanes at the time of the opening this lane then it should be opened as a HOV lane and converted to a HOT lane as the legislation permits.
- 7.9 Investigate and implement in conjunction with the relevant territorial authorities and Transit, the best practicable package to take advantage of the SH2 Dowse to Petone improvements; namely
- (a) Investigate, design and commence construction of a link road between the Petone Esplanade/Hutt Road/SH2 connection and the Grenada/SH1 intersection currently providing access to a landfill; and
 - (b) Concurrently investigate and implement improved vehicle access across the lower Hutt Valley, either by means of the best practical link with the proposed Dowse/SH2 interchange (the favoured option), or by means of improvements to the Petone Esplanade.
- 7.10 Monitor and investigate as a package the optimal connections of SH2 at SH58 and Silverstream intersections to the local road network. This investigation will involve significant inputs from Upper Hutt and Hutt City Councils to determine the merits of a direct link from the SH2/SH58 to Stokes Valley by a new bridge across the Hutt River or an upgrade of the SH2-Silverstream intersection. Construct the preferred option as funds are available.

Road Projects Beyond 2008

- 7.11 Investigate and evaluate a Kennedy Good bridge link to Transmission Gully for construction at, or as soon as practicable after, construction of the Transmission Gully motorway. The construction of this project is a package with, and needs to be preceded by, the construction of the Kennedy Good bridge-SH2 interchange. Investigate this option recognising the need to protect the designated Speedy's Bush Reserve and retain as much as possible the amenity value of bush area not currently designated as reserve.
- 7.12 After evaluating and determining, in conjunction with Hutt City Council and Transit:

- (a) the most appropriate connections between Hutt CBD and the public transport network; and
- (b) the need for and timing of a new Melling bridge;

design and construct an appropriate interchange at the Melling/SH2 intersection (accordingly reference to Melling and Kennedy Good Bridge intersections as now in the RLTS will be deleted). This project is important to residents of the Western Hills in order that they have improved road and public transport access to central Hutt and Wellington.

Public Transport Project 2003 to 2008

- 7.13 Allow additional direct commercial ferry services across the Wellington Harbour.
- 7.14 Continue with and monitor direct bus services between Porirua and Hutt and Upper Hutt CBDs.
- 7.15 Allow additional direct bus services implementing the Hutt bus review where these services are commercial and can be shown to attract more former car users rather than former train users. Monitor in the light of experience.
- 7.16 Investigate increasing Upper Hutt/Wellington rail frequency at peak from 20 minutes to 10 minutes and interpeak frequency from 30 minutes to 15 minutes and implement as appropriate.
- 7.17 Investigate increasing Melling link rail frequency at peak and interpeak periods, especially extending the evening peak service to a level that offers an appropriate level of service.
- 7.18 Investigate increasing Upper Hutt to Wellington rail operating speed.
- 7.19 Design and implement extension of electrification and services northward beyond Upper Hutt, including new stations at Timberlea and Cruickshank Road.
- 7.20 Investigate, in conjunction with Hutt City Council, the public transport improvements, related to the current Melling line, that best suit the future development and transport connections of the Hutt CBD and implement as soon as funds and development permits. This will involve a consideration of the timing of, and nature of, any improvements to the existing bridge at Melling, or any replacement of that bridge, relative to the possible use of the Ewen bridge or an addition thereto.

Other

- 7.21 All the proposals to improve rail services from 2003 onwards assume a continuous programme of improvements to rolling stock, park and ride, bus feeder services, integrated ticketing, real time information and other measures.

8. Communications

A press release will be issued identifying the key issues identified through the hearing process and the process from here on.

9. Recommendations

1. *That the report be received.*
2. *That the Committee recommend the report be sent to key financial stakeholders for their comment.*

Report prepared by:

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Chairman Hutt Corridor Plan Subcommittee

- Attachments:**
- 1 - Key Consultation Issues
 - 2 - Projects and Timing

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Key Consultation Issues

A1.1 Key issue – improving access south

State Highway 2 – Petone to Ngauranga options

This link experiences high and increasing traffic volumes, leading to congestion at peak times. Reports indicate there is room for a fifth lane between Petone and Ngauranga that could be reversible at peak periods (this may require a change in how cyclists are managed).

Options for the use of the fifth lane are:

- Do nothing/promote rail
- Construct general purpose traffic lane
 - Advantage*
 - Accessibility
 - Disadvantage*
 - High cost / does not promote environmental sustainability
 - Could congest road network south of Ngauranga at the Terrace Tunnel and the inner city street network
 - Could compromise rail operation
- Bus lane only (RLTS 1999/2004)
 - Advantage*
 - Better safety
 - Disadvantage*
 - Less accessibility for traffic overall
 - Could compromise passenger rail operation

The recommended option is

- HOT (High Occupancy Toll lane) for faster travel
 - Advantage*
 - Accessibility
 - Economic development
 - More efficient fuel use for existing traffic
 - High economic efficiency
 - Provides fast lane for those prepared to pay
 - Disadvantage*
 - Will require changes to cycle lane
 - Could compromise rail operation, but less so than other options
 - Will induce traffic growth, but this could be controlled by level of toll.

If built, a high-occupancy toll lane would be first of its type in New Zealand.

- Motorists use electronic or prepay methods of payment
 - Envisage less than \$2.00 per trip
- Revenue will pay for construction, including new cycling lane and enforcement
- Requires enactment of suitable legislation

A1.2 Key issue – improving access west

The existing routes west (SH58) can be upgraded but do not provide direct links to major population centres.

Options

- Do nothing/rely on existing connections
- New link Kennedy-Good Bridge – Porirua East – implied in RLTS 1999/2004

Recommended options

Investigate

- New link Melling – Porirua

Advantage

- Significant economic advantage for both Hutt Valley and Porirua
- Network flexibility
- Links Hutt City to Porirua City and provides access to the north via Transmission Gully

Disadvantage

- More expensive (est. \$60m), but economic analysis suggest viability as a toll road
- Compromises Belmont Regional Park (but also provides access for enhanced use)
- Affects local communities and physical environments

Investigate

- New link Petone – Grenada

Advantage

- Will attract 20% of traffic currently using Ngauranga Gorge or SH2 Petone to or from Ngauranga
- Cheaper, more easily constructed than other options
- Will not compromise Belmont Regional Park
- Accessibility
- Supports regional economic development (connects to Wellington City's northern growth area)

- More efficient fuel use for existing traffic
- Existing SH1 interchange can be used

Disadvantage

- May contribute to deterioration of Petone Esplanade
- Does not serve Porirua as well as the Belmont or Melling options
- Affects local communities and physical environments
- Interchange at Petone will be complex
- Increases pressure on Petone-Dowse section of SH2

A1.3 Key issue – improving access across Valley floor

This issue links directly to the western access options. Currently, frequent traffic heading SH1 – Seaview/Gracefield (east or west) concentrates on Petone esplanade.

Options

- Do nothing/rely on existing conditions
- Upgrade Petone Esplanade RLTS 1999/2007

Disadvantage

- Strong amenity and community arguments against concentrating traffic on Petone Esplanade

Recommended option

- Find another option
 - This would be a new road option, south of Hutt Central and north of Petone Esplanade
 - This is a local issue for which no specific proposal is identified
 - Significant problem, likely to increase over time
 - No consensus on various suggested east-west connections
 - New roads in built-up areas compromise local communities

A1.4 Key issue – Bus versus Rail, especially in the Western Hutt

Options

- Do nothing/rely on proposed level of service
- Base Western Hutt-Wellington services on buses (bus lanes, service to Courtenay Place)

Discussion

- WRC is currently reviewing bus services in Hutt Valley and proposing to upgrade in local bus services. Present difficulties in servicing the Western Hutt could be overcome if bus lanes were instituted on Hutt Rd to provide strong direct bus connections through to Wellington CBD. These will deal with issues of immediate concern, whereas the Corridor Plan will deal with issues of a longer term nature.

- Would undermine Melling rail line and possibly the long term goal of light rail loop.
- Reverses existing policy of using rail as the spine of the arterial network.

Recommended option

- Extend Melling line across the river to the Hutt CBD and Waterloo as prelude to light rail loop
 - Connects rail to Hutt City centre
 - Continues existing policy and establishes light rail potential

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Projects and Timing

Projects 2003 to 2008

Road Projects

- Construct SH2 Dowse – Korokoro Interchange.
- Complete consents for the SH2/SH58 interchange .
- Scope, design and construct a two-way cycle and pedestrian facility between Petone and Ngauranga on the seaward side of the rail line. This is a requirement before improvements on SH2 between Petone and Ngauranga can be completed.
- Investigate and construct a reversible HOT lane between Petone and Ngauranga. An HOV lane can be implemented until an HOT lane is legally permissible.
- Investigate, design and commence construction of a link road between Petone Esplanade/Hutt Road/SH2 connection and the Grenada/SH1 intersection.
- Concurrently investigate and implement improved vehicle access across the lower Hutt Valley either by the best practical link with the Dowse/SH2 interchange or by improvements to the Petone Esplanade.
- Monitor and investigate the optimal connections of SH2 at SH58 and Silverstream intersections to the local road network including a possible direct connection to Stokes Valley by a new bridge across the Hutt Valley. Construct the preferred option as funds are available.

Public Transport Projects

- Continue with and monitor direct bus services between Porirua and Hutt and Upper Hutt CBDs.
- Allow additional direct bus services from the Hutt Valley to Wellington CBD where these services are commercial and can be shown to attract more former car users rather than former train users.
- Investigate increasing Upper Hutt/Wellington rail frequency at peak from 20 minutes to 10 minutes and interpeak frequency from 30 minutes to 15 minutes and implement as appropriate.
- Investigate increasing Melling link rail frequency at peak and interpeak periods, especially extending the evening peak service.
- Investigate increasing Upper Hutt to Wellington rail operating speed.
- Design and implement extension of electrification and services northward beyond Upper Hutt, including new stations at Timberlea and Cruickshank Road.

All proposals to improve rail services from 2003 onwards assume a continuous programme of improvements to rolling stock, park and ride, bus feeder services, integrated ticketing, real time information and other measures.

Road Projects 2008 to 2013

- Investigate and evaluate a Kennedy Good link to Transmission Gully.
- Evaluate and determine in conjunction with Hutt City Council and Transit the most appropriate connections between Hutt CBD and the public transport network and need for and timing of a new Melling Bridge. Design and construct an appropriate interchange at the Melling/SH2 intersection.

Road Projects Beyond 2013

- Construct the Kennedy Good Bridge – SH2 interchange.
- Construct the Kennedy Good Bridge link to Transmission Gully.
- Construct an interchange at the Melling/SH2 intersection.

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