

**ENVIRONMENT COURT OF NEW ZEALAND
WELLINGTON REGISTRY**

**I MUA I TE KOOTI TAIAO O AOTEAROA
TE WHANGANUI-A-TARA**

ENV-2023-WLG-000005

Under the Resource Management Act 1991

In the matter of the direct referral of applications for resource consent and notices of requirement under sections 87G and 198E of the Act for the Ōtaki to North of Levin Project

By Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency

**STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF JOANNE PATRICIA HEALY
ON BEHALF OF WAKA KOTAHİ NZ TRANSPORT AGENCY**

SOCIAL IMPACT

Dated: 4 July 2023

BUDDLE FINDLAY

Barristers and Solicitors
Wellington

Solicitor Acting: **David Allen / Thaddeus Ryan**
Email: david.allen@buddlefindlay.com / thaddeus.ryan@buddlefindlay.com
Tel 64 4 044 620450 Fax 64 4 499 4141 PO Box 2694 DX SP20201 Wellington 6011

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INTRODUCTION

1. My full name is **Joanne Patricia Healy**.
2. I am a Planner and Social Impact Specialist with Beca Ltd, based in Auckland. I have been employed as a Planner and Social Impact Specialist with Beca Ltd since 2016. I currently hold the role of Associate Social Impact Specialist.
3. I was the lead author of Technical Assessment E: Social Impact (**Technical Assessment E**) lodged as part of Volume IV of the Assessment of Environmental Effects (**AEE**), which accompanied the application for resource consents and notices of requirement for designations (**NoRs**) lodged with Manawatū-Whanganui Regional Council (**Horizons**), Greater Wellington Regional Council (**GWRC**), Horowhenua District Council (**HDC**) and Kāpiti Coast District Council (**KCDC**) in November 2022 in respect of the Ōtaki to north of Levin highway Project (**Ō2NL Project** or **Project**).
4. My colleague, **Ms Amelia Linzey**, was the supporting author and technical reviewer of the Technical Assessment E (supported by the Beca social outcomes team).
5. My qualifications and experience are set out in paragraphs 28 to 29 of Technical Assessment E. My evidence is supplementary to Technical Assessment E.
6. In assisting with Technical Assessment E and preparing my evidence, I (or a member of the Beca social outcomes team):
 - (a) attended four site visits on 28 March 2018, 12 April 2021, 1 August 2020 and 9 August 2020 (the latter two were also attended by iwi partners)¹;
 - (b) prepared an online resident survey which was circulated in June to July 2020 (my role was reviewing the material);
 - (c) carried out 18 follow-up phone interviews to the June-July survey in August 2020, together with a social outcomes intermediate;

¹ My colleague Ms Linzey attended site visits on 28 March 2018 and 9 August 2020 and I attended the remainder of the site visits.

- (d) participated in stakeholder interviews² from July to August 2020 with the following organisations:
 - (i) Horowhenua District Council (strategic planners involved in the Ohau and Manakau Community Plans);
 - (ii) Fairfield School;
 - (iii) Levin East School;
 - (iv) Ōtaki School;
 - (v) Ōhau School;
 - (vi) Manakau School;
 - (vii) Manakau Residents and Ratepayers Association;
 - (viii) Horowhenua Ratepayers Association;
 - (e) undertook assessment and reporting work including analysis of specialist reports, local plans, communications records, literature review, demographic analysis and profiling of relevant communities;
 - (f) more generally, have provided advice on social impact matters related to the Project to Waka Kotahi since March 2018 and have attended meetings and workshops with council members, iwi partners and council specialists; and
 - (g) attended the public information day held in Levin on 28 January 2023.
7. I also assisted with the response to the section 92 further information requests from the Councils related to Technical Assessment E.

Code of conduct

8. I confirm that I have read the Code of Conduct for expert witnesses contained in section 9 of the Environment Court Practice Note 2023. This evidence has been prepared in compliance with that Code. In particular, unless I state otherwise, this evidence is within my area of expertise and I have not omitted to consider material facts known to me that might alter or detract from the opinions I express.

² Ms Linzey led the interview with Manakau Residents Association and participated in the Levin East School interview and I led the remainder.

Purpose and scope of the evidence

9. Technical Assessment E assesses the potential social impacts of the Project on a regional, local and sub-local level and recommends measures as appropriate to inform the resource consent applications for the Project.
10. My evidence does not repeat in detail the matters discussed in Technical Assessment E. Rather, in this evidence I:
 - (a) present the key findings of Technical Assessment E in an executive summary, updated to factor in the additional work carried out since lodgement;
 - (b) provide a more detailed description of the additional work carried out, information obtained, and discussions held since lodgement, and the implications for my assessment;
 - (c) comment on issues raised in submissions received in respect of the Project; and
 - (d) comment on the section 87F/198D reports prepared by Horizons, GWRC, HDC and KCDC (**council reports**).

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

11. As noted above, in this section of my evidence I summarise and update the key matters addressed in Technical Assessment E.

Methodology

12. The methodology employed for Technical Assessment E consisted of the following steps:
 - (a) Step 1 - Scoping and contextualisation: understanding the proposal and the 'social area of influence' of the Project.
 - (b) Step 2 - Information gathering: through desktop data analysis, site visits, and stakeholder and community engagement.
 - (c) Step 3 - Community Profiling: building a demographic profile of the regional, local, and sub-local communities located along the Project length using collated information from Step 2.
 - (d) Step 4 - Assessment of Effects: Reviewing collected information, technical assessments and confirming social domains of concern for

assessment. Determining the social impacts that will likely result from the Project through analysis (considering extent, severity, duration and likelihood of potential social impacts).

- (e) Step 5 - Recommendations: considering the requirements to avoid, remedy, or mitigate the identified negative impacts and making recommendations.

Existing Environment

- 13. The current SH1 traverses through the centre of Manakau, Ohau and Levin. It is the only roading connection between Ōtaki and Levin. State Highway 57 (**SH57**) is located along the eastern urban / rural periphery of Levin. SH1 and SH57 are two lane state highways. Currently, it is identified that there are resilience (lack of alternate routes, closure due to natural hazards and crashes) and safety issues along the corridor. Between 2017 - 2021, this stretch of road had 72 deaths and serious injuries (**DSIs**).
- 14. The Ō2NL Project traverses the urban / rural periphery of northeast and east Levin, the eastern rural sector of Ohau and Kuku, the eastern rural sector of North Manakau, the eastern periphery of Manakau Village, the partially established development of Manakau Heights, and the northern rural section of Ōtaki.

Assessment

Positive Impacts

- 15. The Ō2NL Project, including a shared use path (**SUP**) along the full Project extent, will provide improved safety, connectivity, and resilience. I assessed these benefits as having potentially moderate to high positive social impacts for the community (regional, local and sub-local communities) by helping respond to current social issues (such as safety, congestion, limited active transport modes, transport network resilience issues and connectivity) and future growth.
- 16. That, in turn, positively impacts how people live (in particular, those who live around the Project area), connect to each other, remain safe when travelling (using any/all modes of transport) and have active transport mode options.

17. By taking traffic away from the centres of Levin, Ohau, Kuku, Manakau, and North Ōtaki, the Project will improve the quality of the living environment and amenity of these community centres.
18. The Project will also positively contribute to the Horowhenua District's economy through the construction works and the resulting business and employment opportunities; in turn this positively affects the way in which people sustain themselves.
19. Overall, I anticipate that the Project will generate moderate to high positive social impacts.

Negative Impacts

20. There is a geographical concentration of potential negative impacts for both construction and operation. These are highest at the sub-local level (that is, the small sub-communities that exist within, or in close proximity to, the Project) and largely reduce with increased distance from the Project.

Planning (pre-construction)

21. Pre-construction, the planning effects are related to the route selection process, confirmation of property requirements, and assessment of impacts and mitigation.
22. Uncertainty of outcomes and the associated stress is a particular potential effect identified for the Project.
23. Some of these effects have already occurred during route selection and advanced property purchases – as of June 2023 there have been 59 advanced purchases and a further nine are either signed and awaiting settlement or have deferred settlement.
24. In terms of advanced property purchases, Waka Kotahi made offers to all affected landowners so that everyone would have an opportunity to proceed in the way that best suited them (for some this meant staying in their property as long as they could, for others it meant making the voluntary, early decision to move on). In this way, Waka Kotahi has been able to be sensitive to landowners' personal circumstances (including offering deferred settlement, where appropriate, to allow time for resettlement).
25. Other planning effects are ongoing due to continued property negotiations (including people waiting to understand partial acquisition impacts) and

people waiting to confirm or specifically identify the nature, extent and timing of property-specific mitigation proposed.³

26. On this basis and at a Project level, I have assessed the impacts as very-low to moderately negative depending on the extent of property acquisition and concentration within sub-local areas. As discussed later in this evidence, in making this assessment I acknowledge the individual impacts for some people / residents going through this process will be higher, but have also factored in the progress that has been made in advance purchasing properties (as noted above).

Construction

27. During construction I consider that the main social impacts will arise from changes to the environment and property acquisitions. These will mainly be experienced at a sub-local and, to a lesser degree, local, scale.

28. Potential negative impacts relate to:

(a) Way of life:

- (i) disruption to how people move around the area due to increased traffic and layout changes;
- (ii) disruption to activities at home due to noise, dust and access changes;
- (iii) changes to employment due to property acquisition of place of employment; and
- (iv) relocation due to property acquisition necessitating change to work, education and lifestyle.

(b) Community:

- (i) changes to the local and sub-local population and cohesion due to property acquisition.

(c) Health and wellbeing:

- (i) health and wellbeing impacts of environmental stressors (noise, traffic and dust); and

³ Property-specific mitigation will depend on the level of residual (post-mitigation) adverse effect felt by individual properties and therefore it is acknowledged that final certainty cannot be determined at this stage.

- (ii) stress and anxiety relating to changes to environment.
 - (d) Quality of living environment:
 - (i) changes to quality of the living environment due to environmental stressors including noise, visual changes, traffic and dust.
29. Overall, without mitigation, potential negative social impacts from construction range from very-low to moderate.
30. There are some standard mitigation measures that have been proposed by the relevant specialists (including maintaining access, providing planting to address amenity issues and project and property-specific noise mitigation) that I consider will also address some social impacts identified. In particular, this is in relation to the change of environment experienced by residents and subsequent changes to way of life, health and wellbeing and community cohesion, including accessibility to amenities for the community.
31. In addition, and based on my experience in other similar major infrastructure projects, I recommend a communication plan be prepared that includes other measures such as on-going community meetings and processes to assure the community that any queries or complaints raised will be considered and responded to.
32. Establishing an ongoing feedback mechanism will provide an important opportunity for the community to respond to the Project and participate in mitigation and design planning, where relevant (e.g., where they may have specific issues and concerns that can be responded to in respect of construction activities).
33. Condition DCE4 and Schedule 5 in the conditions appended to the evidence of **Ms Ainsley McLeod** provide for such a plan. I have read these conditions, and am satisfied that they appropriately provide for the measures proposed to mitigate and address potential adverse social impacts.
34. With mitigation, I consider that the potential negative social impacts from construction will be very-low to low.

Operation

35. Potential negative social impacts in the operational phase of the Project relate to the social changes experienced from the operation of a new state highway within a residential, rural and greenfield environment. Many of the

potential impacts depend on proximity to the Project and therefore the highest degree of impact is at a sub-local scale (where people are located within closer proximity to the new state highway).

36. Potential negative impacts include:

(a) Way of life:

- (i) the way people move around the area;
- (ii) how people carry out work;
- (iii) recreation;
- (iv) lifestyle; and
- (v) sustaining oneself.

(b) Community:

- (i) loss of community connections;
- (ii) reduced sense of connectivity; and
- (iii) change of community character.

(c) Health and Wellbeing:

- (i) stress of change to acoustic and visual environment; and
- (ii) health and wellbeing impacts of changes to acoustic environment such as disruption to sleep.

(d) Quality of living environment:

- (i) loss of rural living environment;
- (ii) loss of quiet environment; and
- (iii) loss of nature outlook.

37. Overall, without mitigation I have assessed that potential negative social impacts from operation at a local scale will be low to very-low (on the basis that they are experienced by a smaller proportion of that 'local scale' community). However at a sub-local scale I have assessed that the potential adverse impacts will range from very-low through to high. There are

mitigation measures that will assist to reduce the potential negative social impacts identified.

38. Specific mitigation measures I support or recommend include:
 - (a) use of high-performance surfaces and barriers at noise sensitive locations; and
 - (b) landscaping provided along the corridor in keeping with the surrounding environment and providing screening where practicable.
39. Although, in my experience, the above measures provide effective mitigation for the potential social impacts identified, I further recommend that there is nomination of a Project contact person for the first three-six months of operation (i.e., the transitional period) to provide a clear 'point of contact' for members of the community to Waka Kotahi (the owner of the Project) and give them an avenue, or access, to raise any issues that arise. I am comfortable that condition DCE1(a), as amended, addresses this point sufficiently.
40. Noise and landscaping mitigation will reduce impacts associated with the Project including reducing road noise, the maintenance of the rural environment (an environment that the community values) and the visual presence, as discussed in the evidence of **Mr Michael Smith, Mr Gavin Lister and Mr Grant Eccles**. This will in turn reduce potential impacts on the way people live, community character, health and wellbeing and the quality of the living environment.
41. With mitigation, local scale impacts are assessed as potentially negligible to very-low negative social impacts. Sub-local scale social impacts are assessed as negligible to moderate.

Operational Impacts (without mitigation)⁴

Spatial Distribution	Impacts	Regional	Local			Sub-local			
Type of Impact			Levin	Ohau and Kuku	Manakau	East Levin sub-local	Ohau East, Kuku East and Muhunua East (Western portion)	Manakau sub-local	North Ōtaki sub local
Way of life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved resilience, safety, and efficiency of moving around the community Improved recreation opportunities - walking and cycling Traffic removed from town/village centres, improving ability to carry out daily activities 	Moderate positive	High Positive	Moderate positive	Moderate positive	High Positive	Moderate positive	Moderate positive	Moderate positive
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Way people move around the area Carry out work Recreate Lifestyle Sustaining oneself 	N/A	Very low to low negative	Very low negative	Low negative	Very low to low negative	Low negative	Low negative	Low Negative
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved active mode connections between communities Opportunities to revitalise the community 	Low Positive	Moderate to high positive	Moderate to high positive	Moderate to high positive	Moderate to high positive	Moderate to high positive	Moderate to high positive	Moderate to high positive

⁴ For all outcomes tables colour coding has been used to aid in visualisation of impacts: Positive impacts are green (the darker the colour the higher the positive impact). Negative Impact: Yellow (negligible to low negative impacts), Orange (in part or fully moderate negative impacts), Red (High negative impacts).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> by removing traffic from main street/SH1 Reduced community severance by removing traffic from main street/SH1 								
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loss of community connections Reduced sense of connectivity Change of community character 	N/A	Very low to negligible negative	Very low to low negative	Low negative	Low negative	Low to Moderate negative	Low to very-low negative	Low to Moderate negative
Health and Wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved safety of community Reduced incidents of road crashes causing deaths and serious injuries 	High Positive	High Positive	High Positive	High Positive	High Positive	High Positive	High Positive	High Positive
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stress of change of acoustic and visual environment 		Nil	Nil	Nil	Negligible to low negative	Low to very low negative	Low Negative	Very Low to Low Negative
Quality of living environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Town centre environment – reduced traffic Improved living environment resulting from reduced traffic on SH1/SH57 	N/A	High	Low to moderate positive	Low to moderate positive	Low to moderate positive	Low to moderate positive	Low to moderate positive	Low to moderate positive
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loss of rural living environment Loss of quiet environment Loss of nature outlook 		Nil	Very low negative	Low negative	Low to Moderate negative	Moderate negative	Moderate to high negative	Moderate negative

WORK SINCE LODGEMENT

42. Much of the questions and requests for information relating to social impacts were provided at the pre-lodgement stage (discussed above in my evidence) and therefore there has been little requirement for post-lodgement work.
43. However, since the application was lodged, I have continued to be available to answer questions and review community feedback (identifying if any further impact requires addressing) and as part of this I attended the community post-lodgement open day on 28 January 2023. No specific questions were directed to me, as most queries pertained to understanding the function and form of the corridor and/or were specific landowner queries directed at the relevant specialist with regards to anticipated environmental effects (including dust, noise and visual).

COMMENTS ON SUBMISSIONS

44. Where relevant I will address specific submissions or alternately themes that have arisen relevant to social impacts.

Potential positive social impacts

45. Submissions on the potential positive social impacts of the Project relate primarily to the operation of the corridor, while also touching on, to a lesser extent, the construction phase.
46. With regards to the construction phase, Ms McKay and Mr Hendrix of The Horowhenua Company Limited identify the social procurement, employment and business opportunities and economic benefits of the construction period for Horowhenua. I have reviewed the submission and the request for local involvement including continued engagement with this organisation during construction. The social impact assessment (Technical Assessment E) has identified that potential social procurement opportunities are likely to result in positive social impacts for the community during the construction phase. I

support these being actioned to realise these potential benefits of the Project during this phase.

47. Further I support the recommendation that these opportunities are locally sourced and that Waka Kotahi work with local stakeholders to maximise social benefits for the local community.

Potential negative social impacts

Health and wellbeing / quality of the living environment

48. Several submissions raise concerns with regard to the change in environment during construction and identify potential impacts on their health and wellbeing (e.g., due to noise and dust) and their enjoyment of the environment and way of life. **Mr Smith** and **Mr Andrew Curtis** provide property-specific responses regarding the physical changes during construction in their respective briefs of evidence, however there are also social impact components to these concerns that I wish to comment on.
49. In particular, I acknowledge the communities' concerns regarding the potential effects of these construction activities including on their social wellbeing and quality of living environment.
50. In addition to the mitigation measures proposed in respect of both site management and community engagement relating to construction activities, I recommend that this issue be further addressed through a specific session on noise management and a session on dust control. This would be held as part of the wider process of community engagement sessions (noting that these issues have already been the focus of previous engagement sessions pre-lodgement), and would enable interested parties to attend and talk to suitably qualified experts about the anticipated levels, monitoring and controls in respect of these potential impacts.
51. I further note that if expert participants in such a workshop can be available to answer questions and provide comparative case examples – for example

from similar construction projects, this could assist in the community's understanding of how such potential impacts will be managed.

52. This could occur during detailed design (once a constructor is on board but prior to construction) when more details are known and are able to be shared. This process is described in condition DCE2.
53. I consider that, as per the communication plan (Schedule 5 to the conditions), the proposed notification area for such an invitation for consultation (with dwellings within 100 metres of active construction activities) is appropriate. This would ensure that there is community-wide understanding and would prevent further social impacts that may be generated from uncertainty and anticipated impacts (even though these may not be realised).
54. Ms Miles⁵ raises concerns in her submission as to the social effects of the Project on Manakau Village, in particular on:
- (a) community values – village character;
 - (b) quality of living environment;
 - (c) loss of established community members; and
 - (d) changes to way of life – loss of current lifestyle.
55. These matters have been acknowledged and assessed in paragraphs 347 to 375 of the Social Impact Assessment (Technical Assessment E). The extent of these identified impacts will be largely those within, or in close proximity to, the Project designation (and to a lesser extent the local Manakau community). In terms of changes to community cohesion, this is more likely to arise as a result of those who have established relationships with residents leaving the community due to property acquisition.
56. In addition, screening, landscaping and noise management measures are recommended to reduce the potential social impacts for the community. Collectively these will minimise the presence of the Project and change of environment which in turn reduces the potential social impacts.
57. The submission from the Prouse Trust Partnership (Stephen and Karen Prouse) discusses individual property impacts. As noted in paragraphs 33 and 34 of Technical Assessment E, the assessment undertaken focusses

⁵ Of Mt Victoria, Wellington.

primarily on community level impacts and whilst I acknowledge the presence of property specific impacts these were not the focus of the social assessment (which sought to consider potential changes at a community level).

58. The amenity-specific issues raised by the Prouse Trust Partnership are assessed by the Landscape and Visual, Noise and Vibration, Transport and Air Quality experts, and I refer to and rely on their evidence for the assessment and recommended mitigation. Given their conclusions on amenity-related issues, I consider that the community's quality of environment (including this specific property) will be acceptable, albeit I acknowledge this property is in comparatively close proximity to the Project.
59. I understand that Waka Kotahi are in discussions with the landowners to enable continued access and use of the rear of the property. Whilst I acknowledge this may change how the property is able to be accessed, I consider addressing continued access is an appropriate mitigation, and it will allow for a continued way of life / use of the property as it stands.
60. While I reach this conclusion through a 'community level' social lens, I acknowledge that for some people, particularly residents with a long connection to place, such change can be felt at a more personal level and to a higher level of significance. For some people, changes of environment are largely a physical amenity issue but for others, particularly those with longstanding connections to the land or cultural / spiritual connections it is also an emotional and/or legacy loss.
61. As set out in the SIA report, the assessment undertaken is at a community level looking at the community scale of change and impact. Whilst this is a collective assessment it is recognised that individual circumstances will differ. I consider that submissions from these individuals provide an opportunity for their views and concerns to be heard.
62. Kāinga Ora raise concerns about maintaining the services and function of two affected community service sites. I note that since this submission the proposed designation has been rolled back from 96-98 Arapaepae Road so I will discuss that separately.
63. With regards to the residence at 242 Muhunoa East Road I understand that relocation is required and Waka Kotahi will need to work with Kāinga Ora to establish a suitable alternate residence that provides for the needs that are

currently served at this existing residence. This includes maintaining the community supports and connections that have been established. The residents of this property may have particular sensitivities to change and that will be carefully addressed through the acquisition process, whilst direct management and care of residents re preparation for change will be delivered by the appropriate care staff, it is recognised that there will need to be advanced notification of any planned relocation to give these staff adequate time to implement and change management strategies.

64. As this property is within the designation, there will ultimately be negotiations under the Public Works Act Process enabling Kāinga Ora and Waka Kotahi to develop targeted solutions that allow for the continued provision of this service to residents within the Levin community.
65. Regarding the residences at Arapaepae Road I rely on the evidence of **Mr Smith, Mr Lister and Mr Curtis** in terms of responding to acoustic, visual and dust concerns raised by Kāinga Ora. Relying on the information provided to date from the Kāinga Ora submission, and subsequent engagement between Waka Kotahi with Kainga Ora (including a site visit), I understand that the potential social impact concerns relate to privacy, potential disruption of daily activities and increased stress due to change of environment and potential disturbance during construction and operation.
66. In my opinion while there is an element of environmental change (from a rural environment at the rear of the property to a state highway) that cannot be avoided, this can be minimised and potential impacts mitigated. As the designation has been removed from the site, potential change has been minimised to those generated from environmental change adjacent to the property.
67. To address potential social impact during the construction phase I recommend that the CEMP (Schedule 2) include site specific mitigation that is developed in consultation with on-site staff/managers that will be carried forward during construction. I recommend that this include the following matters:
 - (a) communications – such as advanced notification (this needs to be a time frame that is agreed with site management) regarding potential noise disturbance to allow staff to plan for and prepare residents and provision of community liaison details;

- (b) construction matters – such as timing of higher noise and vibration generating activities and minimisation of night works;
 - (c) landscape and visual mitigation – including the consideration of early planting as addressed by **Mr Lister**;
 - (d) noise and vibration mitigation – aligned with **Mr Smith's** evidence and the relevant conditions; and
 - (e) dust management – aligned with **Mr Curtis'** evidence and the relevant conditions.
68. I have reviewed Schedule 2 of the conditions and am satisfied that it provides for the above recommendations and will assist in mitigating potential social impacts during the construction phase.
69. During operation the main change is the environment (rural to state highway) and although this may be within the permitted level, the residents are still likely to experience a change. This may be positive for the residents situated closer to SH57 (as they will experience less traffic noise) but may be negative for those dwellings located near the rural area currently.
70. I am satisfied that the conditions already recommended by **Mr Lister** (planting), **Mr Smith** (noise) and **Mr Curtis** (dust) will go some way to mitigating this. I recommend further discussion with site staff to address any other operational requirements and would be supportive of privacy fencing (as addressed in **Mr Lonnie Dalzell's** evidence) that would also provide additional noise, privacy and visual screening if this was supported by staff running the facility.

Way of life

71. There are several submissions⁶ on anticipated changes to way of life relating to the operation of the Project. These are largely at the property-specific level, pertaining to the specific way that person uses their property or anticipates/desires to use it in the future. I have reviewed these submissions, which reflect the scope of potential social impacts identified in the social impact assessment (Technical Assessment E) relating to potential impacts on the immediate community arising from the change of the local environment (e.g., the proximity of the new highway in relation to existing

⁶ Sjaan Henry, Bennik (Levin); Bill Hunt, (Ōtaki); Wendy McAlister-Miles (Ohau); Adam and Joanne McCallum (Ohau); Christine Wallis (Karioi); Glenys Anderson (Levin); Rochelle and Matthew Apatu (Levin); John and Jeny Brown (Levin); Prouse Trust Partnership; and Emma and Carl Chalmers (Levin).

residential dwellings). While I acknowledge that individuals will have specific concerns in relation to their properties, I am comfortable with the level of social mitigation proposed (particularly the processes for ongoing community communication at the commencement of operation of the Project) and consider it is sufficient to identify any issues or concerns at a community level.

72. I note that potential social impacts arising from physical changes to the environment are specifically assessed and addressed by **Mr Phil Peet, Mr Lister and Mr Smith**. I note that properties are individually assessed, and mitigation to manage amenity effects are addressed. This includes communication with the landowners, which I support.
73. From a social impact perspective, I do not have any further recommended amendments to the management measures already proposed for the Project.

Recreation opportunities

74. There are 18 submissions⁷ requesting the addition of a bridle path as a part of the shared use path component of the Project. I have reviewed these submissions and note the following themes emerge in relation to social impacts:
- (a) health and wellbeing of local equestrian community;
 - (b) continuation of recreation opportunity provided for on Mackays to Peka Peka and Peka Peka to Ōtaki ; and
 - (c) provision of recreation opportunities.
75. As an initial point, I note that none of the submissions that touch on the bridle path raise any effects of the Project on existing equestrian facilities. Rather, it appears that what is being sought is an outcome rather than mitigation for an effect of the Project.
76. I have reviewed the local equestrian facilities, paths and services in the area in relation to the Project, none of which are directly impacted by the Project. The continued access via existing roads has been reviewed and remains intact, or there is a detour provided (in which case I defer to the evidence of

⁷ Horowhenua Equestrian Advocacy Group; Josien Reinalda (Foxton Beach); Beth Reille (Lower Hutt); Anita Jane Lenaghan, Riverbank Equine (Ōtaki); Kelly Henry, Herd by Horses NZ (Levin); Maggie Braddock (Foxton); Sharon Walker (Ōtaki); Ruth Halliday, KEAG (Paraparaumu); Lynne Moore (Palmerston North); Anita Jones (Porirua); Jacqui Lane (Owhiro Bay); Michael Braddock (Ōtaki); NZ Equestrian Advocacy Network (Ōtaki); Lynda Andrews (Paekakariki); Nicola Robinson (Peka Peka); Alan Jamieson (Porirua); Bronwen Holman (Levin); and Sarah De Geest (Te Horo).

Mr Peet for a transport analysis). These considerations were part of the Way of Life assessment for the local communities as a whole. I considered, and remain of the opinion, that there are no adverse effects on recreation facilities, or access to them.

77. With specific regards to the equestrian community I do not consider that there are specific adverse social impacts of the planning, construction or operation of the Project that would impact on the community's existing way of life. As such I do not consider there is an effect that requires mitigation through the provision of a bridle path.

COMMENTS ON THE COUNCIL REPORTS

78. The following responds to both outstanding matters identified and the impact rating of assessment as identified by **Ms Michala Lander** in the council report (Appendix D).

The existing social environment

79. I have reviewed the list of services and infrastructure provided by **Ms Lander** and note the following.
80. The methodology undertaken for this assessment is to screen community facilities and focusses on issues specific to the Project such as those services and facilities in proximity or likely to be adversely affected.
81. With regards to facilities within Levin identified by Ms Lander, I agree this might provide a more fulsome overview of the community infrastructure, however I do not consider it would change the outcome of the assessment (particularly in respect of potential adverse effects), noting this is acknowledged by Ms Lander. In particular:
- (a) Ōtaki local community was not included in the community baseline as it was considered outside the area of assessment for potential adverse social impacts (the North Ōtaki sub-local area was assessed).
 - (b) The scoping for the assessment did look at sensitive receivers within proximity of the Project, and it is noted that a number of services and social infrastructure identified by **Ms Lander** fall into this domain.
 - (i) For example, the closest service identified by **Ms Lander** is the Horowhenua Masonic Village. In the screening, I concluded that this site was west of SH57 and therefore not anticipated to be

adversely impacted by the operation of the Project, and any construction impacts in relation to traffic on SH57 would be managed by the construction traffic management plans.

- (ii) I note that these services and sites are likely to experience the positive social effects identified for the Project, but I maintain these are appropriately covered in the wider community assessment that has been undertaken.
- (c) With respect to emergency services, while these sites were considered in the social screening process, my assessment concluded that the operational effects on these services was largely a consideration of the transport impacts on these services.
 - (i) This assessment was undertaken by the transport expert witness (**Mr Peet**) and design team, who sought to ensure appropriate access was provided to service needs (this will be confirmed in the detailed design phase and I consider this is the appropriate time to address this).
 - (ii) I support the screening and conclusions of that assessment, noting in particular local road connections and property access are retained, improved network resilience and design changes at Manakau to retain same level of emergency vehicle access to Manakau Heights.

Approach to assessment

- 82. **Waka Kotahi SIA guidelines – Ms Lander** seeks that information from the social assessment be presented in the manner set out in the SIA guidelines. I consider that these tables are guidelines and as such a degree of discretion is needed to confirm appropriateness of their use in specific circumstances. In my opinion the way this has been approached through the Project better captures the spatial distribution of impacts across the distinct communities identified in the Project. It still takes into consideration the matters to assess such as likelihood, scale and consequence.
- 83. **Ms Lander** has suggested the SIA has not adequately considered matters that have been raised at a property specific level or during property acquisition.

84. The SIA clarifies in assumption and exclusions (paragraphs 33 and 34) that:

"The assessment considers potential social impacts at the regional, local, and sub-local scales. Whilst we acknowledge that there will be potential social impacts experienced at an individual/household level, specific property impacts (and in particular, socio-economic impacts associated with property purchase) have not been the focus of this assessment.

Overall social impacts to the community including the effects of property acquisition and subsequent social changes have been assessed. Consultation with owners and occupiers within the Ō2NL Project footprint is being undertaken by Waka Kotahi. This is as part of the wider Public Works Act 1981 ("PWA") process for the acquisition / lease of directly impacted properties and takes into consideration property and site-specific issues and effects caused by the Project."

85. It is noted that the community impacts of property acquisition have been considered in the planning phase⁸ but it is assumed that during construction and operation impacts will have been realised. Therefore, the social assessment of operation impacts has focussed on the community that will remain to experience the operation of the Project. This approach does also include consideration of the change in the community experienced by people from the removal of those properties and residents directly impacted by the Project (e.g., the social connections that may be lost or altered as a result of people leaving that community).
86. In my experience on other major infrastructure projects, the individual impacts of property acquisition are likely to range from moderate to high (low in some cases of investment property or similar), for directly affected property owners.
87. This is a consequence of the required or 'forced' nature of the acquisition of people's property and homes, and the social changes that result for these people of needing to find alternative property and residences).
88. However, I also consider that a number of these effects and the management of these effects are considered as part of the PWA process, which is managed by separate legislative process. On this basis, these matters have not been the focus of the social assessment I have undertaken. I note that this approach is similar to other specialists' assessments, where effects are limited to those experienced by 'receivers' outside the proposed designation such as the Landscape and Visual Assessment and Noise and Vibration Assessment.

⁸ Paragraphs 215 to 220 in Technical Assessment E.

89. **Cumulative Impacts** – The approach to the SIA has been to consider the impacts of the Project within the specific communities it crosses for operational negative impacts and as appropriate to consider positive impacts. On several occasions⁹ **Ms Lander** has referred to the impact of the Project across the corridor in reference to cumulative impacts (I note one specific instance of this is in relation to productive land).
90. I acknowledge there are potential cumulative adverse social effects arising from projects – e.g., where the ‘sum of total effects’ are larger than the impacts of effects considered discretely. For example, the loss of small areas of recreation land on their own might be considered low or minor impact. However, when considered in the collective these are assessed as something that may change the way of life for a community because they reduce recreation choices the community may have or similar.
91. As part of the screening of social impacts for this Project, I did turn my mind to these potential impacts. However, due to the nature of impacts, the individual community contexts, and the scale of the communities where the impacts were experienced, I concluded that considering potential adverse impacts ‘in the whole’ or at a Project wide level would accurately reflect the spatial distribution of impacts relative to the individual communities and would more likely diminish the significance of effects (rather than expose cumulative impacts).
92. **Subject matters covered** – **Ms Lander** has noted the following matters that she considers are not covered and require assessment:
- (a) A specific recreation assessment (of horse riding in the region).
 - (b) A sense of place with regard to the connections that some families have to the land and the history of the place.
 - (c) Fears and aspirations within the impact category of “Quality of the living environment”.
 - (d) Health and wellbeing benefits associated with first responders being able to access all areas of the corridor.
 - (e) Specific assessment of resilience.

⁹ Paragraphs 48 and 56 in Technical Assessment E.

93. With regards to the provision of a recreation assessment I have discussed this above and conclude I do not consider potential recreation impacts warrant or necessitate a specific recreation assessment. As above, in my view there is no identified effect of the Project on existing equestrian facilities (and nor does any submission suggest otherwise) therefore the bridle path is a matter for Waka Kotahi in terms of their Project objectives.
94. I have considered the longstanding connections people leaving have with the community and the impacts on the community both with regard to property acquisition and fears in the planning phase¹⁰ and construction phase.¹¹ With regard to sense of place, I have considered community character and the potential impacts of changes to sites and places to community values, rather than at an individual property owner level. As discussed above, I do recognise that there will be individual impacts experienced.
95. Fears and aspirations have been assessed at a community level (local and sub-local assessments) in relation to operational negative impacts, specifically in the sections titled way of life, community and quality of living environment (with regard to values re rural environment, existing views and acoustic environment).
96. I acknowledge that there are health and wellbeing benefits associated with first responders being able to access all areas of the corridor (e.g., improving accessibility to existing communities along the corridor). I acknowledge this has not been specifically identified in Technical Assessment E as I consider they are assessed in the wider commentary on positive social impacts for the community arising from improvements to accessibility and resilience of access.
97. Again, I consider the Project provides accessibility resilience for the community. This has not been singled out as a separate positive social impact, but rather considered and assessed as part of way of life¹² which covers the consequential social impacts of a more resilient transport corridor.
98. On the basis of the above, I do not consider the matters specified by **Ms Lander** (listed above) require any additional and/or specific assessment.

¹⁰ Paragraphs 215 to 220 in Technical Assessment E.

¹¹ Paragraphs 232 to 235 in Technical Assessment E.

¹² Paragraphs 270 to 278 in Technical Assessment E.

Specific technical matters raised

99. **Assessment of way of life** - In paragraph 48 of her evidence, **Ms Lander** expresses difficulty assessing the level of impact on local businesses' way of life as this has been analysed at a sub-local level and not cumulatively assessed with regard to the loss of productive land across the corridor.
100. I note that **Mr Lachlan Grant**, in Technical Assessment N: Productive land, has undertaken a specific assessment of potential impacts on productive land and provides a corridor-wide assessment of impacts.
101. Furthermore, **Mr Doug Fairgray** (Technical Assessment Ō: Economics and town centre impacts) provides assessment of the economic impacts of these impacts.
102. In respect of potential social impacts, I consider a local level assessment appropriate, recognising that each local community differs in terms of accessibility to employment opportunities. Given the scale of impacts identified by **Mr Grant**, I consider that assessing these effects at a wider community level (rather than local) would minimise the potential adverse effects experienced by these local communities (e.g., the access to employment for local residents).
103. **Rating of impact** - **Ms Lander** in paragraph 55 of her report states that a high severity impact should be recognised as having a high impact even when it is only experienced by a small proportion of people. In my opinion, and in accordance with Waka Kotahi guidance, there are several factors that are considered in the overall assessment of an impact. However, I consider for a social / community assessment it is appropriate to consider the severity of impact along with the duration of that impact, the extent (who experiences it), and the likelihood of the potential impact being realised. I remain of the opinion that all these factors need to be considered in the overall outcome and can appropriately reduce the overall outcome of a potential "high severity" impact in the assessment.
104. **Community Impact** - **Ms Lander** (paragraph 58) has raised concerns regarding the east-west connectivity within Tara-Ika. I understand that this plan change is currently proposed (i.e., is yet to be a confirmed change to the District Plan).
105. Notwithstanding the status of the proposed plan change, I have considered the potential social impacts in the context of this area being earmarked for

future growth (in the District Plan). On this basis, the social assessment did identify that this area, along with those already living east of the Project (i.e., between the new state highway and SH57) may feel isolated and this is an impact identified in the assessment. However, it is also noted that the Project does not sever existing east-west connections so there is no effect in that sense.

106. Furthermore, the Project does not preclude the development of this area for future 'growth'. It retains the existing east-west connection and the potential for an east-west connection can be constructed in the future, if that is needed to facilitate the specific urban growth planned in this area.
107. **Specific Recreation Assessment - Ms Lander** has recommended that an additional recreation assessment be undertaken. In my opinion such an assessment can at times be warranted to support a social impact assessment, however I do not consider this is needed in this instance.
108. For example, where there a direct impact on an existing recreation facility that will change the function/usability of the facility or where access to the recreational facilities or services was severed for part or all of the community it may be appropriate to undertaken specific recreation assessments. In this case, and relying on the evidence of **Mr Peet** in respect of the transport impacts of the Project, I consider that the Project does not have either of these potential impacts for the community.

Conditions

109. With regards to the condition recommended by **Ms Lander** (paragraph 90) regarding reuse of topsoil. I acknowledge that sites post-construction will be reinstated and then returned to landowners (section 4.7.6.9 of the Design and Construction Report).
110. I have reviewed the recommended alteration to conditions put forward by Ms Lander. With regards to DCE1 and a community liaison person being available for an additional six months post-construction, I am in support of this as I have previously recommended something similar, which was *"to continue local community meetings and have a Project contact person for the first three to six months to aid in the transition and provide opportunity for community members to contact if initial issues arise"*.¹³

¹³ Paragraph 404(a) in Technical Assessment E.

111. **Ms Lander** proposes amendments to Schedule 2 of Construction Noise and Management Plan and Construction Air Quality Management Plan. I agree it is appropriate to undertake communication with stakeholders/landowners in advance of construction. I consider this is implied in the Management Plan therefore no amendments are needed. However, I would support clarification to the extent that is needed.
112. **Ms Lander** proposes that Schedule 5 includes a regular programme of meetings with stakeholders. I note that in lieu of a community liaison group these meetings (similar to the pre-lodgement schedule of community meetings) could be continued to achieve the same outcomes in terms of informing, responding to and collaborating with the community during these phases of the project. Using these forums in this matter builds on the social capital established in the pre-lodgement phase and partnership with community can be furthered.
113. I have recommended that the community meetings and stakeholder engagement that has been initiated on the Project to date be continued through design, construction and into operation (these have been recognised to be helpful by the community for example the submission of Mr Gary Williams).
114. Therefore, I support the intent of her proposal - with regards to a regular programme of meetings with the community, stakeholders and affected landowners.
115. However, I consider it appropriate that there is some flexibility (to reduce frequency and combine) in the communication / engagement approach to be able to respond to the construction programme and the needs of the community, affected landowners and/or stakeholders (e.g., a regular ongoing programme of engagement may not be appropriate for the community if construction activity is intermittent in specific areas).
116. On this basis, I would be supportive of conditions requiring a regular programme of engagement - as requested and confirmed by the community needs and relative to the construction schedule.

Joanne Patricia Healy

4 July 2023