

Request to vary the Regional Land Transport Plan for Taranaki 2015-2021	
Purpose:	To enable the Regional Transport Committee of the Taranaki Regional Council to consider a request for a variation to the <i>Regional Land Transport Plan for Taranaki 2015-21 (RLTP)</i> .
Requesting organisation:	New Plymouth District Council
Contact person/s:	Rui Leitao
Variation request:	Add new project – Coastal Pathway extension, Bell Block - Waitara
<p>Background to variation request</p> <p>The current (walking and cycling) active mode connectivity between Bell Block and Waitara is very limited and relies heavily on the very high risk State Highway 3 (SH3) corridor.</p> <p>This variation request is to enable the coastal pathway active mode network to be extended and link (New Plymouth and) Bell Block to the Waitara township, safely away from SH3.</p> <p>This is considered by the New Plymouth District Council as a priority project for progressing in the 2018/19 financial year.</p> <p>The indicative and detailed business case must occur as expediently as possible, with a view to a construction start in quarter 3, 2019.</p>	
<p>Details of variation request</p> <p>The Strategic Business Case [attached] for the pathway extension outlines the existing opportunities and the problems with active mode connectivity (walking and cycling focused) for the 12 km stretch between Bell Block and Waitara.</p> <p>An extension of the coastal pathway will encourage a greater active mode share (including mode shift), and increase the potential for cycling for work, as well as for education and recreational purposes. It is also highly likely to improve the cycle and walking safety environment for trips between New Plymouth and Waitara.</p> <p>The pathway extension will assist with issues of suppressed demand for walking and cycling due to the existing safety perceptions on SH3, current cyclist crash risk, inefficient or obstructed cycle transit, and improving the quality of the experience for commuter, and recreational cyclists.</p> <p>Wider consequential benefits exist in the form of providing low cost, healthy options to access work, greater access choices for education or social opportunities, and strengthened visitor/tourist offerings through an extended walking and cycling pathway with associated economic spinoff benefits.</p>	
Location:	Circa 12 km between Bell Block and Waitara
Scope and duration:	2018/19/20

<p>Estimated cost/s:</p>	<p>Stage 1 – Indicative and Detailed Business Case \$330,000 Stage 2 – Investigation, Design and Documentation phase \$825,000 Stage 3 – Construction phase \$7,500,000 (estimated)</p>
<p>Funding source/s:</p>	<p>N Funds (NZTA) and L Funds (NPDC). Will be requesting Targeted Enhanced FAR subject to the Investment Assessment Framework.</p>
<p>Links to Objectives & Policies of RLTP: <i>Refer to Table 2 on page 42 of the Plan</i></p>	<p>This project is aligned to four Objectives and Policies of the RLTP. They are: Objective 1 - An integrated and collaborative approach to transport and land use planning that maximises transport effectiveness, and particularly Policy ref I2. Objective 2 – A safe transport network increasingly free of death and serious injury, and in terms of Policy ref S3. Objective 3 – A people-focused, multi-modal land transport system that caters for the different and changing needs of transport users, connects communities and enables participation. This pertains to Policy ref A3. Objective 4 – An energy efficient and environmentally sustainable land transport system and described in Policy ref E1.</p>
<p>Impacts on RLTP:</p>	<p>The proposal does not negatively affect any other projects in the RLTP, nor affect the overall integrity/affordability of the Plan – with this project specifically coming under the Walking and Cycling Improvements Activity Class.</p>
<p>Relationship to the RLTP’s Significance policy on variations: <i>Refer to Section 7.4 on page 69 of Plan</i></p>	<p>The proposed change of adding this project to the RLTP does require a variation process to be undertaken. The variation does not trigger the Significance policy in terms of requiring that a new public consultation process is undertaken however. This project is part of NPDC’s Long Term Plan and is therefore part of the consultative and annual planning processes required through that. This project will assist the RLTP’s strategic goal for an increased provision of alternative modes, and improve the overall balance of activities to greater alignment with the revised GPS 2018.</p>
<p>Process for consideration and approval of variation requests</p> <p>The current RLTP for Taranaki was approved in April 2015 (then revised by a mid-term review in June 2018) and any significant new capital works that need to be included require a variation to the programme of activities component of the RLTP. A project must be included within the RLTP before it can be approved for funding from the National Land Transport Fund which the NZ Transport Agency (NZTA) distributes through the National Land Transport Programme.</p> <p>In accordance with the RLTP variation policy, any variation to the RLTP should be considered and supported by the Regional Transport Advisory Group (RTAG) before being forwarded to the Regional Transport Committee (RTC) for consideration and endorsement, then to the Taranaki Regional Council (TRC) for final approval. The NZTA is then notified of the varied Plan, per section 18D of the <i>Land Transport Management Act 2003</i>.</p>	

Timeframes for consideration of variation request

The following outlines the expected timeframes for processing this variation request. The organisation requesting the variation is responsible for outlining the proposal to the RTAG and RTC.

Consideration by RTAG	06 March 2019	<i>Progression to the following step will only occur if support of the variation request is given by the considering body.</i>
Consideration by RTC	27 March 2019	
Consideration by TRC	9 April 2019	
Forward to NZTA	10 April 2019	

Supporting attachments

Bell Block to Waitara Walkway Extension Strategic Case (Beca, 2018)

Report

Bell Block to Waitara Walkway Extension Strategic Case

Prepared for New Plymouth District Council

Prepared by Beca Limited

26 June 2018



Executive Summary

This Strategic Case evaluates the strategic context and available evidence base for an investment in the extension of the New Plymouth Coastal Walkway (the Walkway) from its current terminus at Hickford Park to Waitara. This investment would extend the Walkway from the eastern edge of New Plymouth approximately 7 kilometres to the satellite township of Waitara. How this connection might be achieved remains an open question to be explored.

The investment proposes to provide an active mode transport link between Waitara and New Plymouth. The most direct transport link between Waitara and New Plymouth is presently State Highway 3 (SH3). SH3 experiences high volume of annual average daily traffic (AADT) and particularly high volume of heavy vehicle AADT. This high traffic volume creates safety risk for cyclists and walkers, and is believed to suppress active transport mode choice.

An indicative benefit-cost ratio (BCR) ratio of 2.36 - 3.46 has been estimated, indicating the proposal is likely to have a strong economic case. This BCR is based on safety and health benefits of cycling, and does not yet include tourism and other wider economic benefits.

The investment proposal aligns well with New Plymouth District Council's (the Council) and the New Zealand Transport Agency's (NZTA) current transport and infrastructure strategies. Funding for the investment proposal has been identified in the Council Long Term Plan.

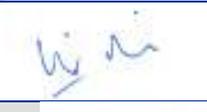
The investment proposal is within an area of cultural significance for Puketapu Hapu. Some possible options for locating a walkway give rise to major concerns for Puketapu, and include significant elements such as an Urupa (cemetery) that is located in the area. The investment needs to factor in Council's heritage strategy and consider whether route options and the mode of investment will negatively impact heritage and cultural values of the area, including those of Puketapu. The Puketapu Urupa is listed as a heritage site in the New Plymouth District Plan.

This Strategic Case evaluation concludes that there is a strong case for investment in further business case analysis. **We recommend that the investment proposal progress to a Single Stage Business Case.** This is an opportunity to identify a preferred investment option, assess the costs and benefits of a preferred investment option, and to develop a plan for a potential investment.

Revision History

Revision N°	Prepared By	Description	Date
1	Paul Melville	Draft report	26/02/2018

Document Acceptance

Action	Name	Signed	Date
Prepared by	Paul Melville		26/6/2018
Reviewed by	Krish Singh		26/6/2018
Approved by	Graham Spargo		27/6/2018
on behalf of	Beca Limited		

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Where Beca has been provided with information by New Plymouth District Council staff, or where another party has supplied information to Beca on behalf of New Plymouth District Council staff, we have not sought to independently verify such information unless expressly included in the scope. To the extent any of the information provided is inaccurate or incomplete, the opinions expressed by Beca in this report may no longer be valid and should be reviewed.

While Beca has used all reasonable skills of a professional consultant in providing this report, which may include opinions and recommendations, Beca does not guarantee or otherwise warrant any particular outcome as part of the Services.

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1 Context

1.1 Purpose

New Plymouth District Council has commissioned Beca to prepare a Strategic Case assessment on a proposed extension of the Walkway from Bell Block Beach to Waitara (the Waitara walkway extension).

The purpose of a Strategic Case, within the Treasury or New Zealand Transport Agency business case process, is to outline the initial justification for investment and to confirm all key stakeholders are aligned on the problem(s) to be addressed and the risks and benefits associated with the investment. The Strategic Case undertakes this exercise before investment has been made in investigating solutions, to avoid investment of time and money in investigating proposals that are not robust and / or aligned to organisational overarching strategic direction.

1.2 Asset Description

The New Plymouth Coastal Walkway (the Coastal Walkway) is a 12.7km pedestrian and cycle path that forms an extensive sea-edge promenade stretching from Pioneer Park at Port Taranaki to the eastern side of Bell Block Beach with numerous pedestrian access points along the way.

Construction of the Coastal Walkway began in 1999. The first segment was opened in December 2003, and a later extension to Bell Block was opened in December 2010. The Walkway is utilised for walking, running, cycling, skating, or sightseeing. It is proposed that the walkway be extended to the east, from Bell Block to Waitara. Depending on the chosen route, the proposed extension could increase the Walkway to 20km and extend it following the coast or following inland routes from Bell Block to Waitara (Figure 1).

The most recent section of the walkway through Hickford Park and along Bell Block Beach was the subject of high community interest and public consultation. Tangata whenua played an important role and assisted with a cultural and ecological impact assessment of the options. The end decision was to construct the Coastal Walkway extension on an inland route away from sensitive areas.



Figure 1: Bell Block to Waitara General Location Map

2 Strategic Context

This section outlines the existing organisational strategies in order to identify alignment of the investment proposal with the organisational strategic direction.

Overall, the investment proposal is highly aligned to Council plans and infrastructure strategies. There is potential for misalignment with the Council's heritage strategy.

2.1 Organisational Overview

The New Plymouth District is one of three districts within the Taranaki Region. It includes the city of New Plymouth and smaller towns including Inglewood, Oakura and Waitara. The district's population is estimated as 80,700 (2017). New Plymouth city is the main urban centre, home to approximately 60,000 residents. Waitara has approximately 6,000 residents. Four member Community boards are established for Waitara, Clifton, Inglewood and Kaitake.

2.2 Organisational Goals

2.2.1 New Plymouth District Council Long Term Plan 2018 - 2028

The New Plymouth District Council is responsible for providing services including: local roads and footpaths; water; sewerage system; rubbish, recycling and landfills; parks and sports fields; recreation centres, libraries and pools; and, civil defence. The New Plymouth District Council Long Term Plan (LTP) acts as the council's statement of intent for the ten years from 2018-2028. The LTP consists of the 'Building a Lifestyle Capital' vision which supports three key outcomes:

- Putting People First, Aroha ki te Tangata
- Caring for Our Place, Manaaki Whenua, Manaaki Tangata, Haere Whakamua
- Supporting a Prosperous Community, Awhi Mai, Awhi Atu, Tatou Katoa

The Vision is implemented by the New Plymouth District Blueprint, which outlines eight key Directions. The investment proposal is supported by one of these Directions in particular: "Strengthening and connecting local communities (ensures that they become successful, safe and liveable environments for residents)".

Long Term Plan 2018 – 2028 has been adopted during the completion of this Strategic Case. 'Coastal Walkway Extension to Waitara' is listed in the LTP with a budget of \$8.5 million. This is made up of \$1.68 million in Financial Year 2019/20, and 6.87 million in Financial Year 2020/2021.

2.2.2 District Plan

New Plymouth's District Plan names several issues that are relevant to the strategic case for an extension to the Walkway. The proposal supports **Issue 20: Traffic and Transport**: "*Safety and efficiency on the road transportation network for pedestrians and cyclists can be achieved by reducing the potential for conflict, or by separating them completely. The provision of cycle lanes, ... [is one] of the options available to avoid or remedy hazards for pedestrians and cyclists. It is also important to consider how the design and construction of new roads and/or improvements to the existing network will provide for these potentially incompatible activities*".

The proposal must be planned and designed in such a way that it improves, rather than worsens, other existing issues such as:

- Issue 11: Degradation of Heritage Resources
- Issue 14: Natural Values
- Issue 18: Public Access
- Issue 19: Tangata whenua

The District Plan also identifies a number of Wāhi Taonga (sites of archaeological significance to Māori) and grants these sites development protections.

Figure 2 displays the New Plymouth District Plan for the area near the Waiongana Stream. New Plymouth Airport runways can be seen in grey and the airport is labelled L107. SH3 is marked in pink (Devon Road). Triangles on Figure 2 represent Wāhi Taonga. Site 493 is a Puketapu Urupa. Other Wāhi Taonga in the area are mainly historical Pā sites.



Figure 2: New Plymouth District Plan for area near Waiongana Stream

2.2.3 Annual Plan (Budget) 2017/18

The Annual Plan (Budget) 2017/18 allocates \$200,000 for scoping a route for a Coastal Walkway extension to Waitara.

2.3 Alignment with Existing Strategies

2.3.1 Infrastructure Strategy 2018-2048

A 2018-2048 Strategy has been completed during the completion of this Strategic Assessment. This strategy identifies an extension of the Coastal Walkway to Waitara in the period 2018-2023 and notes an anticipated cost of \$8.5 million.

2.3.2 Tapuae Roa Make Way for Taranaki (Taranaki Regional Economic Development Strategy August 2017)

The 2017 “Make Way” Strategy aims to define and accelerate the transition to a Taranaki economy based on sustainable growth, resilience and people. Its Vision is “Attractive lifestyles; talented people; high-value economy”. The Strategy names Transport and “Connection” as key enablers to support this economic growth, which align with the proposal under consideration.

2.3.3 Heritage Strategy

The New Plymouth District Council Heritage Strategy has a vision of supporting “A district that values, recognises and cares for its heritage resources”.

The following goals of the strategy have been developed to represent the dual understanding of heritage and taonga tuku iho and reflect the strategic goals of the Tangata Whenua Heritage Reference Group:

- **Identification** - heritage is identified and documented.
- **Protection** - heritage has a level of protection that is relative to its significance and importance.
- **Maintenance** - heritage and heritage information is maintained, is accessible to view and appreciate and the public are aware and have an understanding of the district’s heritage.
- **Conservation** - natural heritage has a level of conservation that is relative to its significance and importance.
- **Interpretation** - heritage should tell a story. Telling the story or history of an item provides its context and improves appreciation and understanding of the item.
- **Valued** - heritage is valued and celebrated to ensure it is kept alive and remembered from one generation to the next.

2.3.4 Coastal Strategy

This Strategy reflects how the New Plymouth District’s community and council wish to see the coastal environment protected, used and managed in the future. It recognises the role played by the coastal environment in providing people with diverse recreational, cultural and natural experiences, and the importance of access to the coastal environment by walkers and cyclists.

2.3.5 Open Space, Sport and Recreation Strategy 2015

Objective 1.1 of this strategy is focused on how open spaces create an attractive living environment: specific goals are to “support a secondary network of movement (walking and cycling) by providing open space that connects to places” and to “prioritise connections alongside rivers, streams, the coast and between existing open spaces.”

2.3.6 Area Q (Wills Road to Airport Drive)

Area Q is a future residential growth area located between Wills Road and Airport Drive. This area has recently been rezoned as residential, which will yield more than 1,000 residential sections. Neighbourhood

parks, to provide for the open space needs of the community, are proposed to be funded with an estimated cost of \$2 million (the Coastal Walkway is specifically excluded from this figure).

The proposed Walkway Extension will provide an active transport link between Area Q and the central city, and also Waitara. This would be an alternative to using State Highway 3 or new local roads to be built within Area Q, linking to Bell Block. It will also be a step towards meeting the open space needs of the future residents.

2.3.7 Regional Policy Statement for Taranaki

The purpose of the Regional Policy Statement for Taranaki (2010) is to achieve the purpose of the RMA by providing an overview of the resource management issues for Taranaki and policies and methods to achieve integrated management of the natural and physical resources of the whole region. Any future direction must be consistent with the sustainable management policies of the RPS such as “maintaining and enhancing public access to and along the coastal environment”.

2.3.8 Cycling Strategy 2007, Regional Walkways and Cycleways Strategy for Taranaki 2007

Regional and District Cycling Strategies were developed in 2007. These were instrumental in the development and success of the existing pathway. They are now out of date, with the District Strategy first developed in 2004 and the Bell Block walkway completed in 2010. However, the themes, benefits and priorities identified remain relevant.

The New Plymouth Cycling Strategy recognised that: “Cycling has the potential to make a significant contribution to an integrated and sustainable transport system”. Its objectives were to:

- Increase the attractiveness and role of cycling as a transport mode in order to reduce the use of, and dependence on, private cars.
- Promote cycling as a leisure activity.
- Increase awareness of the importance of cycling, and hence its adoption, among all sectors of the population with particular emphasis on trips to work, schools, shopping, cultural and leisure activities.
- Ensure that access and movement by cycle to all developments is as safe, secure, convenient and attractive as possible.
- Ensure that policies to increase cycling and meet the needs of cyclists are fully integrated into the District Plan, road safety strategies and into all complementary strategies (including transport, environment and leisure strategies).

The regional strategic framework outlined six key themes for implementation including ‘walking and cycling opportunities alongside Taranaki’s unique coastal environment (noting that these opportunities may be limited by access and topography)’ and “On-road and off-road cycle opportunities throughout the region”

2.4 New Zealand Transport Agency strategic aims

The NZTA is responsible for giving effect to the Government Policy Statement (GPS), which sets out the government’s strategic direction for investment in the land transport network. This role extends from planning and funding activities, supporting public transport, building the networks that connect communities, to ensuring the people and vehicles that use the system are safe to do so.

2.4.1 Current Government Policy Statement on Land Transport

The current GPS (2015) on land transport contains the following strategic priorities:

- Economic growth and productivity
- Road safety
- Value for money

2.4.2 Draft Government Policy Statement (14 March 2018)

The Government has indicated that transformation of the land transport system is a Government priority. The Government is currently reviewing and updating the GPS (which takes place on a 3-year cycle) and has released a draft GPS (GPS 2018) for consultation. This draft GPS is not presently government policy, but may be at the time of final investment approval for the investment proposal.

The draft GPS proposes four new strategic priorities:

- Safety
- Access
- Environment
- Value for money

Safety and access are the key strategic priorities for the Government. Access includes an objective of enabling transport choice and access. These key priorities are supported by the priorities of environment and value for money. Figure 3 provides an explanation of these draft priorities.



Figure 3 Strategic Direction of the draft Government Policy Statement on Land Transport 2018

2.4.3 Alignment with Government strategic priorities

The investment proposal aligns closely with strategic intent of the NZTA and the objectives outlined in the draft government policy statement:

- The investment would provide a safe alternative to State Highway 3 for active mode commuters
- The investment would enable greater transport choice for Waitara residents
- Initial assessments suggest the investment would provide good value for money
- Increased active mode transport will likely reduce the environmental impacts of transport

3 Strategic Assessment

3.1 Investment Logic Mapping Session

A series of workshops were held on 4th and 26th April 2018. These workshops were designed to understand the problems encountered locally, and enabled concerns or opportunities of a walkway extension to be raised. Stakeholders were identified as those who would be affected by a walkway extension. At the first workshop it became apparent that Iwi and Hapu stakeholders held concerns that investment in a walkway extension may result in negative cultural outcomes. The first workshop became an opportunity to discuss the history of the investment proposal, the concerns stakeholders had, and how the business case process works.

An accredited Investment Logic Mapping practitioner facilitated an Investment Logic Mapping (ILM) session with stakeholders on the 26th of April 2018. The following stakeholders were represented at the ILM session:

- New Plymouth District Council
- New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA)
- Waitara community board
- Te Ati Awa Iwi
- Puketapu Hapu
- New Plymouth Airport

The residents of Waitara were represented by the local Waitara Community Board. A copy of the ILM is attached in Appendix 1.

3.2 Defining the Problem / Opportunity

The problems identified during this process were as follows are contained in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Problem Definition

Description	Weighting
Problem 1: Poor route choice will unacceptably impact Puketapu heritage, natural resource & cultural values.	40%
Problem 2: Lack of safe, attractive walking / cycling routes hurts community & economic wellbeing.	25%
Problem 3: Legacy transport networks make walking & cycling unattractive, and for those that do, unsafe.	35%

A large amount of discussion at the workshops focussed on the strong desire of the group to avoid unacceptably impacting Puketapu cultural values and protection of hapu resources. Puketapu cultural assets include a Marae and Urupa (cemetery) near the Waiongana Stream, and other associations in the area. It is likely that the coastal routes would encroach on these sites and cause dis-benefits.

The problem being addressed by investment focussed on the lack of safe and attractive walking and cycling routes between Waitara and New Plymouth. Presently, the only walking and cycling options are along State Highway 3. This State Highway has low shoulder width in many places, including three bridges.

3.3 Benefits and dis-benefits of investment

The key benefits identified through the ILM process are contained in Table 2. Design of an investment option which minimises dis-benefits from investment to a level acceptable to all key stakeholders is viewed as a minimum standard for the investment.

Table 2: Benefits from investment

Description	KPIs	Weighting
Puketapu values upheld	1. Cultural impact is acceptable to all key stakeholders (potential dis-benefit)	20%
	2. Partnership strength improves	10%
	3. Public knowledge of Puketapu history improves	10%
Improved community & economic wellbeing	1. Wellbeing metrics increase (social, recreational, health)	15%
	2. Economy metrics increase (growth rates, property sales)	10%
Legacy transport networks make walking & cycling unattractive, and for those that do, unsafe	1. Improved safety for walking and cycling	15%
	2. Increased walking and cycling use	10%
	3. Increase in satisfaction survey	10%

3.4 Status of the evidence base

The evidence available suggests investment in an extension to the Coastal Walkway is likely to have a favourable benefit-cost ratio. This judgement relies on evaluation work by NZTA and individual councils as to the benefits accruing from walkways / cycleway facilities developed around New Zealand, and experience with other walkway sections in New Plymouth. Monitoring information is available for the New Plymouth context, however limitations are present around economic and other community benefit analysis. Further evidence will be required to more accurately define costs and benefits during the development of any later business case phases.

3.4.1 Current use of Walkway

The New Plymouth District Council operates pedestrian counters at three locations along the walkway, within a total of 28 counters across the district. These are at the Aquatic Centre (west walkway), the Te Henui Stream bridge (central walkway), and at Lake Rotomanu (east-central walkway).

At around 1000 persons per day, the Te Henui Stream counter shows the highest count across all 28 pedestrian counters operated by the Council. The counter shows slightly more pedestrians than three rail crossing that are also monitored, and substantially more pedestrians than other walkway and park sites.

Figure 4 displays daily Coastal Walkway traffic volume by year. This image shows that traffic is steady since the walkway was completed, with a small trend for increased use observed. Traffic volumes are highest at Te Henui Stream.

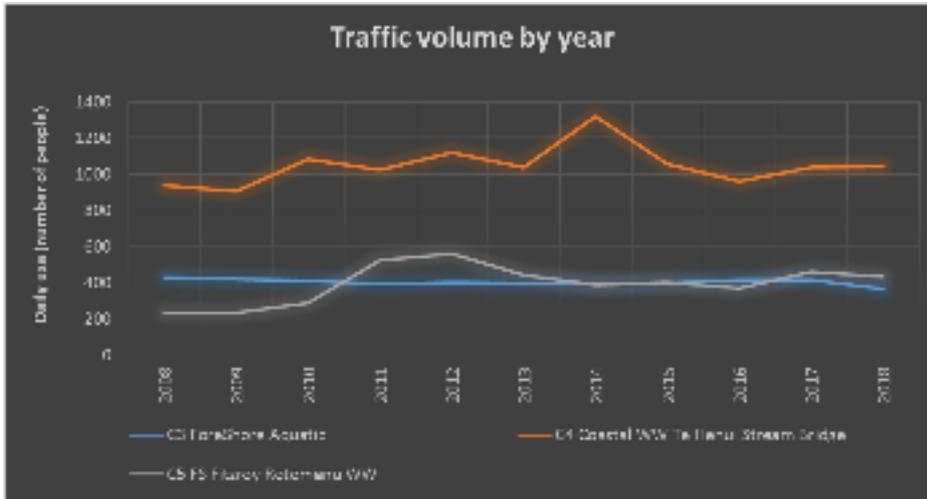


Figure 4: Coastal Walkway traffic volume by year

Figure 5 shows daily Coastal Walkway use by month. As could be expected, usage has a peak during the holiday months of December and January, and a trough in the wetter months May to September.

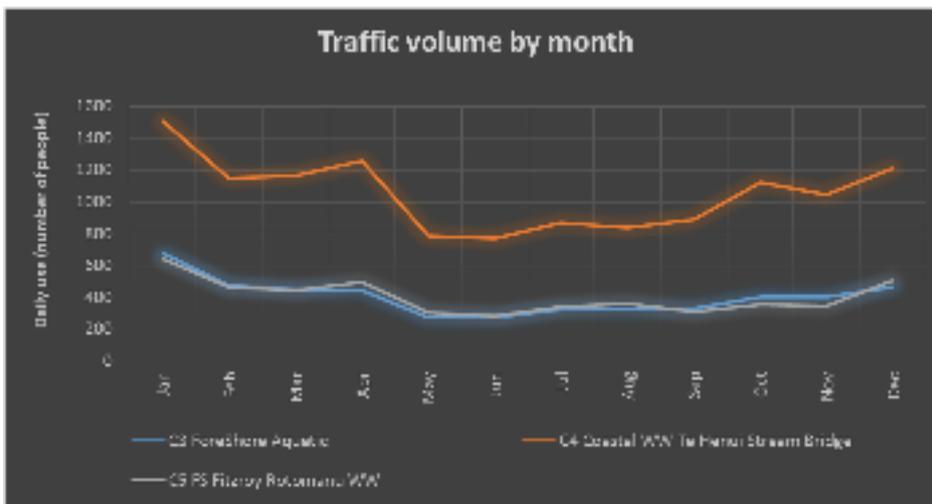


Figure 5: Coastal Walkway traffic volume by month

3.4.2 Reduced risk of death and injury, and increased access to active transport

The present primary connection between Waitara and New Plymouth is along State Highway 3 (SH3). Should a resident wish to cycle or walk between Waitara and New Plymouth, this is the most direct route.

SH3 between New Plymouth and Waitara is classified as a 'Regional Road' under the NZTA One Network Road Classification System (ONRC). This indicates a traffic volume of between 10,000 and 15,000 annual

average daily traffic (AADT). A 2017 traffic count on SH3 at Mahoetahi Road registered an AADT of 15,500 vehicles. 10% of the vehicle movements were 'heavy' vehicles. 1,500 heavy vehicle movements a day indicates the route is a highly significant national freight route.¹

Heavy vehicles can pose extra risk for walkers and cyclists. This is partly due to the increased difficulty sighting walkers and cyclists from higher vehicles.

NZTA assesses the level of service of New Zealand roads using the New Zealand Road Assessment Programme (KiwiRAP). KiwiRAP provides a consistent assessment of the infrastructure safety level of New Zealand roads. SH3 between New Plymouth and Waitara has a KiwiRAP rating of 2-stars. This indicates the road has limited infrastructure safety including low shoulder width, and fails to achieve the level of service required for a Regional road. This is likely to pose further safety risk for cyclists and walkers. Figure 6 displays regional KiwiRAP ratings for comparison.

Region	Proportion in each Star Rating				
	1-star	2-stars	3-stars	4-stars	5-stars
Taranaki	0%	59%	40%	1%	0%
Manawatu-Wanganui	0%	49%	51%	0%	0%
Wellington	0%	26%	38%	36%	0%
New Zealand	0%	39%	56%	5%	0%

Figure 6: KiwiRAP star ratings for Lower North Island

SH3 between Waitara and New Plymouth has a number of dangerous intersections which present risk for walking and cycling. The 2014 NZTA document "Top 100 High Risk Intersections" ranked intersections on this segment of road as the 8th, 18th and 64th most dangerous in New Zealand.² In addition to these intersections, there is also the major intersection between State Highway 3 and State Highway 3a.

There have been 17 recorded incidents involving cyclists on State Highway 3 between New Plymouth and Waitara over the last 5 years (2013 – November 2017). This includes one fatality in 2017. This fatality resulted from a heavy vehicle colliding with a cyclist.

It is likely that cycling volumes are suppressed on this road due to safety perceptions. This stretch of road has been labelled "Notoriously dangerous" by local media.³

SH3 between Waitara and New Plymouth is the subject of a separate business case under the NZTA Safe Roads Alliance. This business case process may lead to investment in safety improvements, including cycle

¹ The NZTA ONRC guidance requires movements of greater than 20,000 total AADT and 1,200 heavy AADT for the classification 'National – High Volume', the highest volume classification within the guidance. SH3 is likely classified as a Regional road due to not fulfilling the population criteria of a National road (linking to a city of greater than 100,000 people). The traffic volumes reported nevertheless indicate a high traffic road by New Zealand standards.

² New Zealand Transport Agency. (2014). *Top 100 High Risk Intersections*. Retrieved 6-12-2017 from: <https://www.nzta.govt.nz/assets/resources/high-risk-intersections-guide/docs/high-risk-intersections.pdf>

³ Taranaki Daily News. (7-11-2017). *Person dead after ute and light truck collide on SH3 north of New Plymouth*. Retrieved 6-12-2017 from: <https://www.stuff.co.nz/taranaki-daily-news/news/98625883/car-and-cyclist-collide-on-sh3-north-of-new-plymouth>

facilities. A close dialogue is needed between the business case process for a Walkway Extension and the Safe Roads business case processes.⁴

3.4.3 Amenity value delivered to Waitara

New Plymouth Cycle Park (velodrome, enclosed road circuit, junior mini road circuit) and New Plymouth BMX club (and associated BMX track) are both located adjacent to the current terminus of the Walkway in Bell Block.

Extending the walkway to Waitara would provide active transport connectivity for these two cycle facilities to Waitara. This would provide Waitara users with a safe option for cycling to and from these facilities, and greater access to these sports facilities.

3.4.4 Connecting current Walkway to facilities in Waitara and surrounding area

The extension would bring visitors to Waitara's West Beach and Marine Park and link the Walkway to the existing Waitara River heritage trail (this trail is not a formal walkway, although a concept has been proposed, see Appendix 2).

This will provide benefits to users of the Walkway originating from New Plymouth to Bell Block, and potentially provide economic benefits to Waitara in the form of increased visitor numbers and spending.

3.4.5 Socio-economic benefits

Figure 7 displays socio-economic data for the communities along the extent of the proposed extension. Average New Plymouth District household income in the 2013 census was \$59,000. Waitara West household income is 35% lower than district average, and Waitara East is 25% lower. Māori ethnicity is strongly represented in Waitara.

There are likely to be socio-economic benefits by providing greater connectivity between the Waitara community and New Plymouth and greater access for the Waitara community to New Plymouth amenities and employment.

⁴ SH3 from Waitara to SH3/SH3A intersection is being delivered by Beca. SH3 from SH3/SH3A intersection to New Plymouth is being delivered by Stantec.

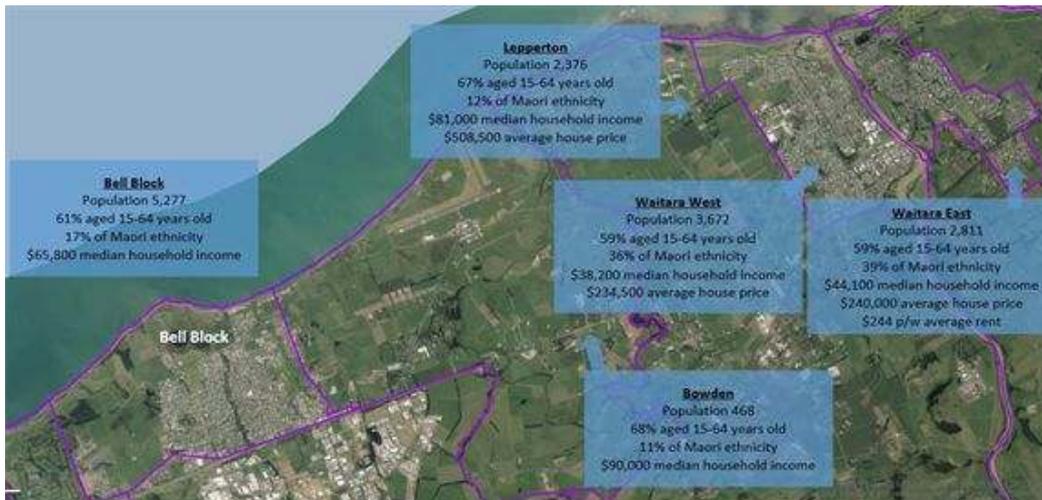


Figure 7: Demographic information for Corridor (Statistics New Zealand 2013, CoreLogic house price data)

At present, there are 5 daily buses from Waitara to New Plymouth, with the only service arriving in New Plymouth prior to 9am departing Waitara at 7:10am. A safer more attractive cycleway connection would provide greater employment access choice in particular for those without access to a private motor vehicle. At around 15km/hr a cyclist will take around 25 minutes to get from Waitara to Bell Block, suggesting active transport may be a viable option for Waitara residents.

3.4.6 Puketapu cultural values

The area has a rich cultural history. The area between Bell Block and Waitara is the rohe of Te Atiawa (Taranaki) iwi and the Puketapu hapu, and is believed to be the first area settled by Maori on this coast.⁵

This Strategic Assessment has identified Puketapu cultural values through direct consultation with Hapu representatives and material provided by the Council. These representatives have in particular emphasised the presence of an Urupa (cemetery) and Tangi ground in the area near Waiongana Stream.

New Plymouth District Council have commissioned a Cultural Values Statement expected for completion in September 2018. This Cultural Values Statement will also inform a potential future Single Stage Business Case (SSBC). The Problem Definition can be modified as required during the SSBC.

3.5 Risks of Investment

The key risk of investment is the potential to negatively impact cultural values in the area, in particular, values associated with key historical sites of Puketapu.

Route selection is the key variable that will prevent, or drive, negative cultural impacts and would be addressed in later phases of business case and statutory approvals assessment.

⁵ <https://www.stuff.co.nz/taranaki-daily-news/news/93754760/coastal-walkway-extension-from-bell-block-to-waitara-proposed> and see, <http://www.tkm.govt.nz/iwi/te-atiawa-taranaki/#>

Route selection risks were also highlighted by the airport.

3.5.1 Cultural sites

The extension of the Coastal Walkway to Waitara has the potential to impact Puketapu cultural values, depending on the route chosen and measures adopted to preserve Puketapu cultural sites and values.

As is the case with Resource Management Act related assessments, there is the strong possibility that cultural impacts and benefits will only partially be captured in a Benefit Cost assessment. A single stage detailed business case will need to carefully consider the cultural impacts of various investment options. We recommend that a multi-criteria analysis is used informed by the Cultural Assessment work.

Cultural impacts should be viewed as a 'gateway' within the assessment of different investment options. For example, options that have unacceptable cultural impacts should be excluded on this basis alone, prior to proceeding to assessment of other costs and benefits.

3.5.2 Fishery pressure

Puketapu Hapa expressed concern that a coastal track would increase access to the coast for fishing and diving, therefore placing increased pressure on the reef and local fishery. Hapu currently manage fishing by shifting between different reefs over time.

3.5.3 Environmental concerns

Environmental concerns have been raised in relation to the wider environmental impact of a coastal route, including litter and human waste, and impacts on the river bed and river banks from people swimming.

3.5.4 Impact on New Plymouth Airport

New Plymouth Airport has noted safety and security concerns to its daily operations with some route options.

3.5.5 Uncertainty in the likely usage of an extension to the Coastal Walkway

Present use of active transport on State Highway 3 and 3a between Waitara and New Plymouth is understood to be very low. Present use is understood to be suppressed by safety concerns associated with active transport on the State Highway 3 and 3a. Current use of active transport is likely to be a poor proxy of potential use, given the current safety concerns.

The existing Coastal Walkway receives between 400 – 1000 users per day, depending on location, as evidenced by the three counters in operation on the Walkway. This may be a more accurate proxy for potential usage of a Walkway Extension, however this also has a degree of uncertainty: it is unclear if the smaller population centre of Waitara will provide the same level of patronage, and there is also the potential for offsetting to occur whereby availability of a Bell Block to Waitara segment may reduce patronage on the existing segment.

Workshop participants noted investment risk over how the Walkway Extension location may impact patronage. Routes that were considerably inland, particularly if the route was adjacent to SH3, were perceived as likely to lead to a less attractive option for Walkway users, and be less likely to receive high patronage compared to routes closer to the coast. While this was the opinion of the workshop participants, more analysis is needed to confirm this assumption.

3.6 Cost of Investment

Initial estimates of the capital cost of this investment, including both land acquisition and construction, suggests an investment in the order of \$4.5 to \$6 million.

Maintenance costs are estimated in the order of \$100,000 to \$150,000 per annum. This estimate is based on extrapolating maintenance costs of the existing coastal walkway.

3.7 Indicative Benefit-Cost Ratio

An economic evaluation of walking and cycling in the New Plymouth district in 2015 calculated a Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) for the existing Coastal Walkway of 3.2 – 3.9.⁶ This included a present value of costs of \$16 million and a present value of benefits of between \$50 and \$62 million.

An indicative BCR of better than 2.3 for a Walkway extension is calculated by Beca utilising the NZTA Economic Evaluation tool. This BCR was based on an assumed minimum 100 cyclists per day using the Walkway Extension (noting the current Walkway has between 400 – 1000 walkers and cyclists per day at various locations). This BCR value is indicative only and will change as further analysis is undertaken and assumptions are validated. This initial BCR does indicate a high potential for favourable economic evaluation during a Single Stage Business Case.

⁶ Abley Transportation Consultants. (2015). *Districtwide Economic Evaluation of Walking and Cycling: New Plymouth District Council*.

4 Key Findings

This Strategic Case concludes that investment in a Coastal Walkway aligns closely with New Plymouth District Council and NZTA strategic goals. Progressing this investment will require care over potential for cultural impacts for local iwi, as well as security and operational needs of the Airport.

Further investigation on improvements to SH3 and the timelines would be included in the scope for the development of this case.

The investment provides a benefit-cost ratio likely to meet investor requirements, and to potentially be affordable in terms of Council and / or NZ Transport Agency assessment processes.

We recommend a **Single Stage Business Case** is conducted to further assess and develop a potential investment plan for a Coastal Walkway Extension.

Figure 8 outlines the potential phases and possible development paths of a business case.

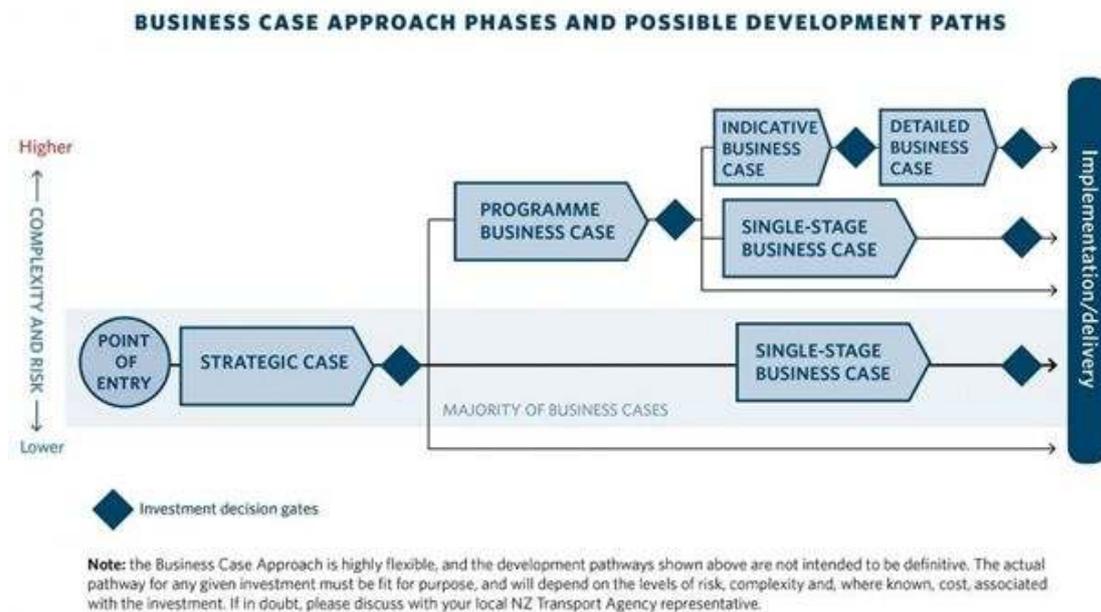
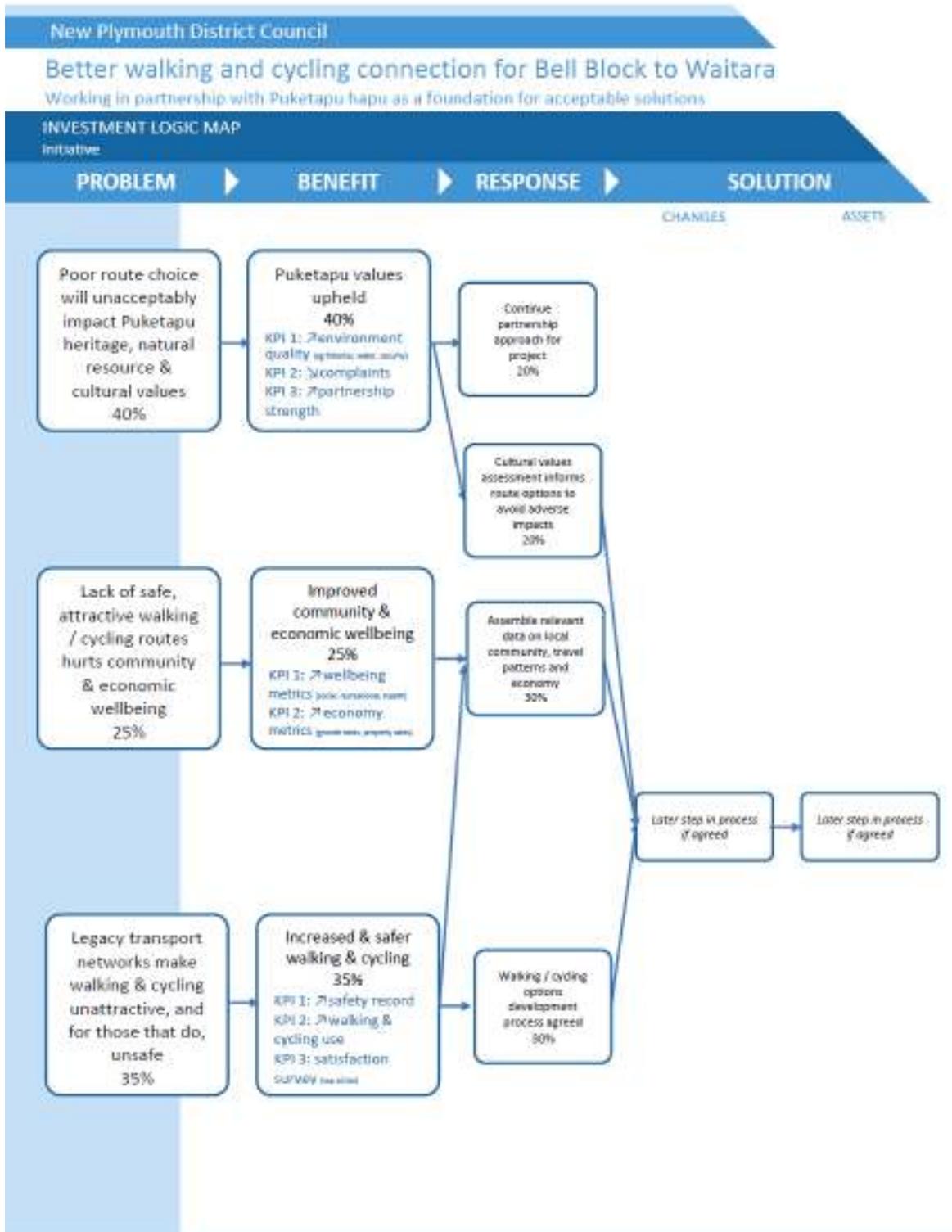


Figure 8: Potential paths for business case development (NZTA)

Appendix 1

Investment Logic Map





Investor: Juliet Johnson on behalf of New Plymouth District Council
 Facilitator: Graham Spargo
 Accredited Facilitator: Yes / No

Version no: 0.2
 Initial Workshop: 04/04/2018
 Last modified by: Graham Spargo 23/05/2018
 Template version: 6.0

Appendix 2

Waitara River Walk Concept



