



City Future Committee Meeting Monday, 5 May 2025

SUPPLEMENTARY ATTACHMENT TO REPORT ITEM 9.1:

**Quarterly Update – Growth Land Use Planning
and Strategy Transport Projects May 2025**

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Further Attachment: Transport access studies to Welcome Bay / Ohauiti areas**Background**

In the Council meeting on 3 March 2025, staff were asked to report back on previous investigations/studies that discussed additional transport access between Welcome Bay, Ohauiti and neighbouring suburbs. This document provides a summary of all recent studies that investigated new transport routes.

In a general sense the Ohauiti and Welcome Bay areas were planned and developed quite some time ago. The landform is that of narrow plateaus where residential development is focused separate by a number of deep gullies. The existing development pattern and challenging topography make transport connectivity difficult and expensive. Nonetheless given the congestion experienced in that part of the City significant benefits would accrue from one or more additional access points.

There are also some land use options that may support improved transport outcomes in the area. These are summarised at the end of the document.

Transport Studies

The following studies have recently been undertaken and are addressed individually in further detail below.

- Welcome Bay and Ohauiti Planning Study
- Private Plan Change 39 (Upper Ohauiti)
- Rowsdale Dr / Pukemapu Rd Access Investigations
- UFTI & TSP
- Western Corridor Ring Road.

Welcome Bay and Ohauiti Planning Study (2020)

The Welcome Bay and Ohauiti Planning Study considered several options for improving east–west roading connectivity. The purpose of the study was to “better understand the infrastructure needs, options and costs to accommodate additional housing growth within the Welcome Bay and Ohauiti area”¹. Specifically, the study included an East-West Corridor Environmental Feasibility and Options Assessment. This assessment explored various routes and their potential environmental impacts to enhance connectivity between Welcome Bay, Ohauiti² and the city. The study investigated and modelled three network improvement scenarios to understand how they might each assist to improve performance.

- Option 1: Bypassing the most congested part of Welcome Bay Road (red);
- Option 2: Development of an east-west link road through the middle of the Study Area (blue and yellow); and
- Option 3: Development of a ring road around the south of the Study Area (green)

These options are shown in the Figure 1.

¹ Full report can be found on TCC website

<https://www.tauranga.govt.nz/Portals/0/data/future/growth/files/welcome-bay-ohauiti-planningstudy2020-finalreport.pdf>

² This is appendix 3 of the Welcome Bay & Ohauiti planning study. It can be found here

<https://www.tauranga.govt.nz/Portals/0/data/future/growth/files/appendix3-eastwest-corridor-env-feasibility.pdf>



Figure 1: Welcome Bay and Ohauiti Planning Study indicative alternative routes

The study highlighted that Option 2 (middle option, in yellow), being the option involving a new link road connecting Welcome Bay and Ohauiti via Poike Road, would provide the best performance in terms of reducing vehicle travel distances and travel times. Hence Option 2 was the preferred option, and a high-level feasibility and cost estimation was done for this. It is important to note that although best performing, the option 2 did not completely resolve congestion issues on the network.

For Option 2, the cost estimate for a new transport corridor which spans all three sections was reported as being between \$125M to \$241M, with a \$271M 95% risk-adjusted maximum cost (2020 values). The cost estimate was developed at a high level with significant uncertainties. It was considered to be cost prohibitive even if some of the cost could be recovered from additional housing enabled. It is also important to note that capital costs for roading infrastructure projects in New Zealand have increased significantly since 2020.

The study also concluded that all the assessed potential roading corridor options would generate multiple adverse effects, including land acquisition requirements, waters and ecological impacts. Considering these effects, uncertainty, risks, untested community opinion, significant cost estimates, and the fact that traffic congestion issues would continue to occur even if the link road were to be built, an east-west road connection was considered to be not feasible at the time and consequently Council made decisions not to release any new development areas in the Welcome Bay / Ohauiti area beyond already zoned areas and the relatively small Upper Ohauiti area.

Greerton–Windermere Connection parallel to SH29A (investigated as part of the Welcome Bay and Ohauiti planning study 2020)

The Welcome Bay and Ohauiti Planning study (2020), referred above, assessed two east-west roading connections to reduce congestion levels on existing roads on the western side of Welcome Bay, referred to as the Western Section. Route one (W1) looked at a connection from Windermere Drive to Oropi Road by bridging over the Waimapu Stream, south of the Toi Ohomai Institute of Technology Windermere campus. This link had been identified by previous

TCC studies (pre 2010). Route W2 assessed a potential upgrade of SH29A between Oropi Road and Poike Road³. Both W1 and W2 are shown in the Western Section in figure 2 below:

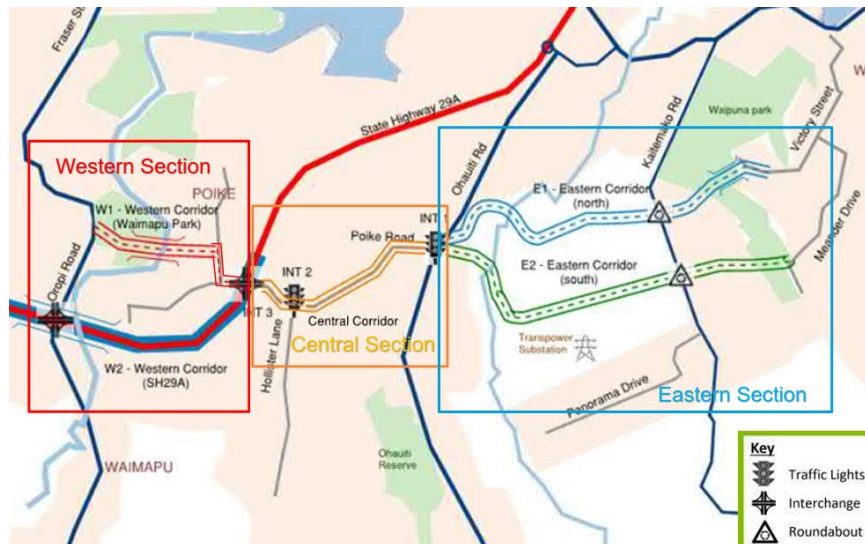


Figure 2: Indicative corridor concept layouts and intersection treatments, noting the Western Section (Source: Welcome Bay and Ohauiti Planning Study, 2020)

For the Western Section, the study notes that W1 would require the destruction of Significant Māori Areas and a Significant Ecological Area. The embankment and bridge across the Waimapu River and floodplain are likely to cause significant adverse effects (flooding) on properties surrounding the corridor. An alternative to upgrade SH29A (Corridor W2) appears feasible with lower environmental impacts, and marginally lower social impacts (recognising that Corridor W2 will require acquisition of property), but at a significant increase in cost. Cost estimates undertaken in 2020 suggest a \$31m for W1, and \$120m. It is noted that these numbers should be corrected for inflation to reflect 2025 figures.

None of the Welcome Bay and Ohauiti study options have been taken forward. However, it is relevant to note that the Transport System Plan (TSP) has since identified the upgrade of SH29A from Barks Corner towards BayPark (which incorporates Option W2). However, NZTA are not currently actively working on this project.

It should also be noted that the TSP Refresh 2023 report included the “Windermere to Oropi Road ‘green bridge’ for public transport, walking and cycling” connection across the Waimapu Stream, which then would connect in Poike Road and Ohauiti area. Although this project was projected for development of a Detailed Business Case (DBC), there is currently no funding allocated in the NLTP24-27. However, there is still potential for a DBC for this project to be funded in a future NLTP.

Private Plan Change 39 – Upper Ohauiti Land Rezoning (2025)

Council in its meeting on March 3, 2025, approved the Private Plan Change 39 (PPC39) – Upper Ohauiti Land Rezoning. PPC39 rezoned land at 120 and 125 Upper Ohauiti Road from

³ The full report has been published on TCC's website:
<https://www.tauranga.govt.nz/Portals/0/data/future/growth/files/appendix3-eastwest-corridor-env-feasibility.pdf>

Rural to Medium Density Residential Zone. This rezoning proposes the creation of a Medium Density Residential Zone (MDRZ) with a total area of approximately 23.5 hectares. This new residential zone is intended to enable the delivery of approximately 470 new homes in a staged manner over the next 10-15 years.

PPC39 included a local road improvement to Ohauti Road in the immediate proximity to the plan change area and proposed roundabout providing access to the plan change area. However, a potential future road connection has also been indicated on the proposed internal road network within the western block. This connection could provide for a future linkage to land parcels to the south of the site and could potentially support a future new east-west link road from Ohauti Road to Pukemapu Road (which joins to Oropi Road) should one be pursued in the future. Although progressing this road connection beyond the plan change site may be challenging in terms topography and cost, providing for this option is supported as a way of ensuring future corridor options are retained and not built out by urban development.



Figure 3: Proposed outline plan, showing potential future road connection to the south

Staff are also aware of a potential rural residential development in the WBOP District further south of the Upper Ohauti area which, if it proceeds, may provide other route alignment options between Ohauti and Pukemapu Roads.

Rowesdale Drive / Pukemapu Road Access Investigation (2021)

This investigation included analysis of potential road access points to the residential zoned land at the end of Rowesdale Drive which had been 'landlocked' by previous subdivision. Fourteen potential access options were identified for investigation, and 12 options were assessed through multi-criteria analysis. Indicative concept diagrams of feasible access options were developed. The long list with indicative concept diagrams can be seen in Figure 4.

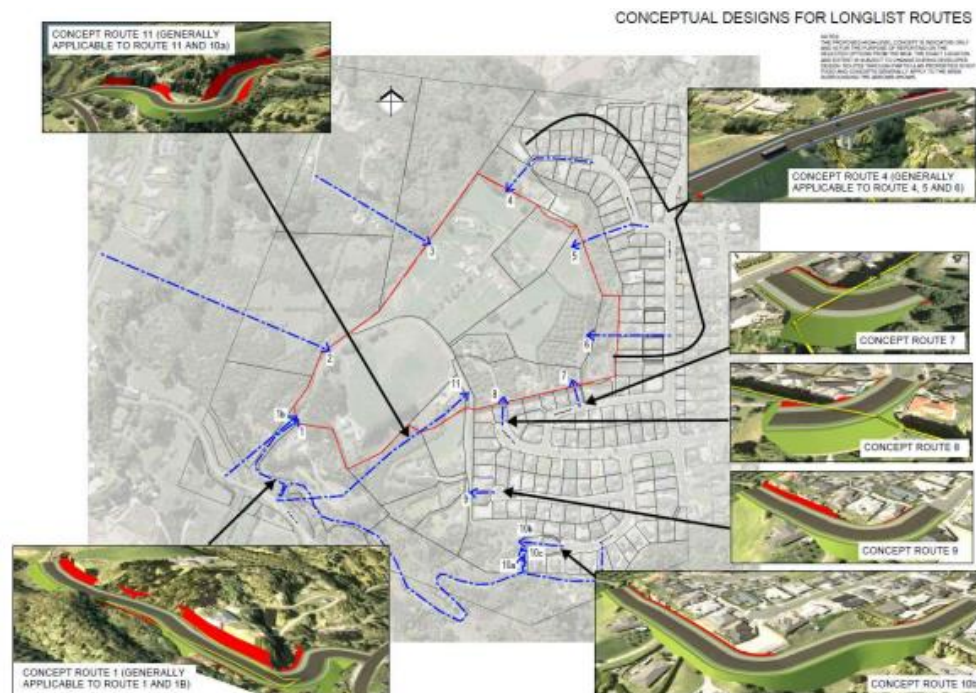


Figure 4: Conceptual designs for the long list options to access Pukemapu development

Access option number 8 (this option extends Rowsdale Drive into the residential zoned land) scored highest against the multi-criteria. Following the investigation, an issues and options paper was presented at the Council meeting for decision-making. The Council endorsed to proceed with an option to enable the access to the residential land via Rowsdale Drive (option number 8) which moving toward implementation.

Future strategic corridor link through the development

Staff have ensured that the developer's design and layout of their subdivision would support the ability for a potential future road connection between the Rowsdale development / Rowsdale Drive and Pukemapu Road (which connects to Oropi Road). This includes requiring a road reserve (to collector road standard) which terminates in a suitable position for it to be extended in future. It does not provide for the full road corridor to be secured now (which crosses other landowners) or the road to be constructed now. This outcome would satisfactorily ensure that the potential for a future potential connection is not precluded by the Rowsdale development.

The delivery of this connection would be a relatively large and expensive project and would create the need for significant upgrades to Pukemapu Rd (including to the current one lane bridge) and the intersection with Oropi Rd.

Western Corridor Ring Road

A ring road connecting SH29, SH36, and ultimately SH29A near Oropi Road, was first identified as the recommended option in the Tauriko Network Programme Business Case in 2016. The report can be found on NZTA's website: <https://www.nzta.govt.nz/assets/projects/tauriko->

[network-plan/Tauriko-Network-PBC-September-2016.pdf](#) The programme business case indicates this Local Ring Road would cater for local movements, separated from national/regional through-traffic), and would provide scope for multiple bus routes. While the proposed ring road would not connect into Ohauiti / Welcome Bay it would complement any future connection between Ohauiti and Oropi Road and increase benefits of that investment.



Figure 6: Local ring road, PT and SH capacity improvement as part of the Tauriko network programme business case

The Local Ring Road was identified in three sections:

1. The first stage from SH29 near Redwood Lane to the Tauriko Business Estate is currently under construction and expected to be connected to the new Tauriko West Enabling Works next year.
2. The next stage connecting the Tauriko Business Estate and SH36 was proposed to be investigated through 'Keenan Road Urban Growth Area Business Case'. However, this Business Case has halted at an Indicative Business Case level which focussed on internal infrastructure plus State Highway connections. As such this further stage has yet to be investigated and is anticipated to be considered via a future additional study.
3. A last stage would eventually connect SH36 towards Oropi Road. This section has been subject to engineering and consenting studies and is reasonably well understood. Council has acquired some properties in the vicinity of the cemetery roundabout (SH36/Pyes Pa Road) for both the potential road and cemetery expansion.

All three sections are anticipated in the final report of the [Urban Form + Transport Initiative \(UFTI\)](#). Section one and two are embedded in the Transport System Plan (TSP).

Technical Memo – Addendum to Ring Road Feasibility (Eastern Ring Road – Pyes Pa and Joyce Road Development) (2019)

The third section of the western corridor ring road (mentioned above), connecting SH36 towards Oropi Road, was further investigated by Aurecon through a technical memo as part of the Ring Road Feasibility study.

The report explored four options for the section between SH36 and Oropi Road as shown in Figure 7.

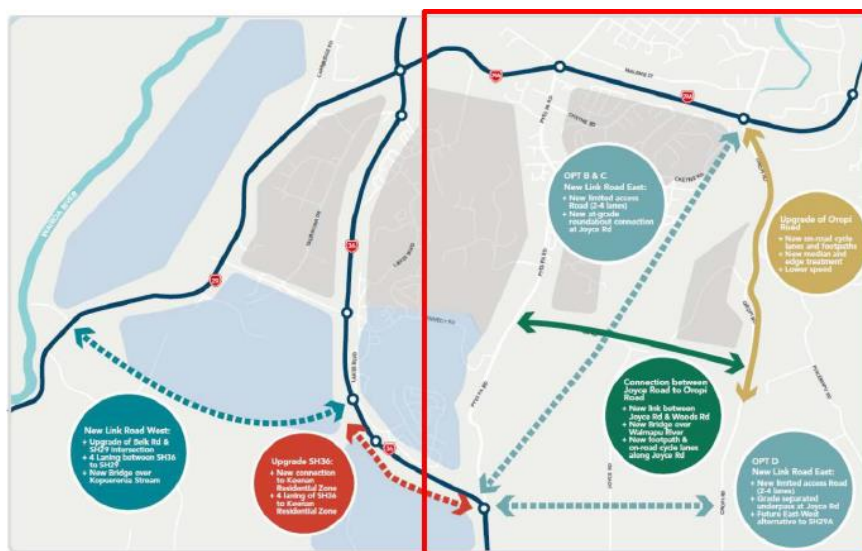


Figure 7: Western corridor options for the Tauriko West Network [The red box denotes area of interest of the technical addendum where the four options are depicted]

While this memo discussed the design options and layout development, particularly for the Option connecting SH36 – SH29A, no cost estimation was provided for any of the options.

In 2024 Tauranga City Council carried out a high-level investigation of the alignment and cost estimation for part of Option D (from Pyes Pa Road to Oropi Road via Joyce Road and Wood Road) in September 2024. The layout is shown in figure 8.

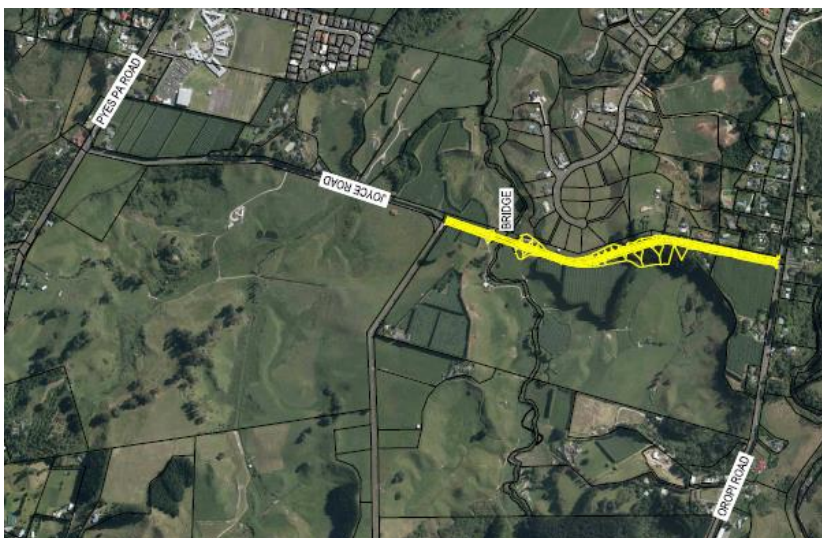


Figure 8: Pyes Pa Road to Oropi Road section [yellow section demonstrates the potential location of a new road and a bridge following existing paper road]

The high-level cost estimate for this option is outlined below:

Section	Length	Cost Estimate (\$million)
Pyes Pa Road to Joyce Road Bend	1050 metres	16.1
Joyce Road bend to Oropi Road	980 metres (including 50m bridge)	28.1
Total		44.2

Conclusion/Way Forward

The above studies highlight the general challenges of providing further connectivity in the Welcome Bay and Ohauiti areas. There are significant challenges associated with developing any new transport connection, e.g. difficult terrain, high cost, multiple owned Māori land, and lack of NZTA funding support.

However, there are also opportunities and benefits to enhancing connectivity. This would reduce pressure on the existing road network, leading to less congestion, improved resilience, and increased opportunities for housing and urban development.

In this context, the best available option might be the Rowsdale Connection to Pukemapu Road / Oropi Road. However, there is no cost estimates available at this stage. This route could then link to the future western corridor ring road, providing an alternative corridor to SH29A for local traffic.

There is no budget provided through the LTP to undertake any planning and assessment. This could be considered through an Annual Plan or LTP process. If further assessment was undertaken and viable project was identified it would be assessed against other investment priorities and needs in Tauranga and the Western Bay subregion through TSP and RLTP processes.

It should further be noted that there are potential land-use interventions that may reduce or shorten vehicle trips in the Welcome Bay / Ohauiti area that could improve overall transport outcomes and could be explored further. These include:

- Improved schooling options (particularly a primary school in Ohauiti and future proofing for a secondary school).
- Improved shopping and commercial service offering – particularly a local centre for Ohauiti and a supermarket somewhere in the Welcome Bay / Ohauiti area. A Ohauiti local centre will be considered through the commercial centres strategy work underway and via Plan Change 38 (Commercial / Industrial). Based on previous investigations there appear to be no suitable sites for a full-service supermarket in the wider area.