



The Expert Panel – Fast-track Approvals Act application
Environmental Protection Authority
Waterloo Quay
Wellington

To the Expert Panel

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the substantive applications of State Highway 1 North Canterbury – Woodend Bypass (Belfast to Pegasus) (FTAA-2512-1157), Stella Passage Development Project (FTAA-2512-1158) and Downtown Carpark Redevelopment (Te Pūmanawa o Tāmaki) (FTAA-2512-1158), under section 53(2)(J) of the Fast-track Approvals Act (FTAA). My comments focus on whether these applications are likely to deliver economic benefits, based on the information provided by the applicant.

State Highway 1 North Canterbury – Woodend Bypass (Belfast to Pegasus), FTAA-2512-1157

The proposal involves constructing and operating a new four-lane section of State Highway 1 that bypasses Woodend township and upgrades a constrained segment of New Zealand's principal north–south freight and passenger corridor. The Project extends approximately 11 kilometres, from around 200 metres south of the Ohoka Road overbridge to approximately 700 metres north of the Pegasus Boulevard/Ravenwood Road intersection, and includes associated earthworks, structures, stormwater management and local road connections. Construction of the Project is expected to occur over an estimated six-to-seven-year period, reflecting the scale and complexity of the works.

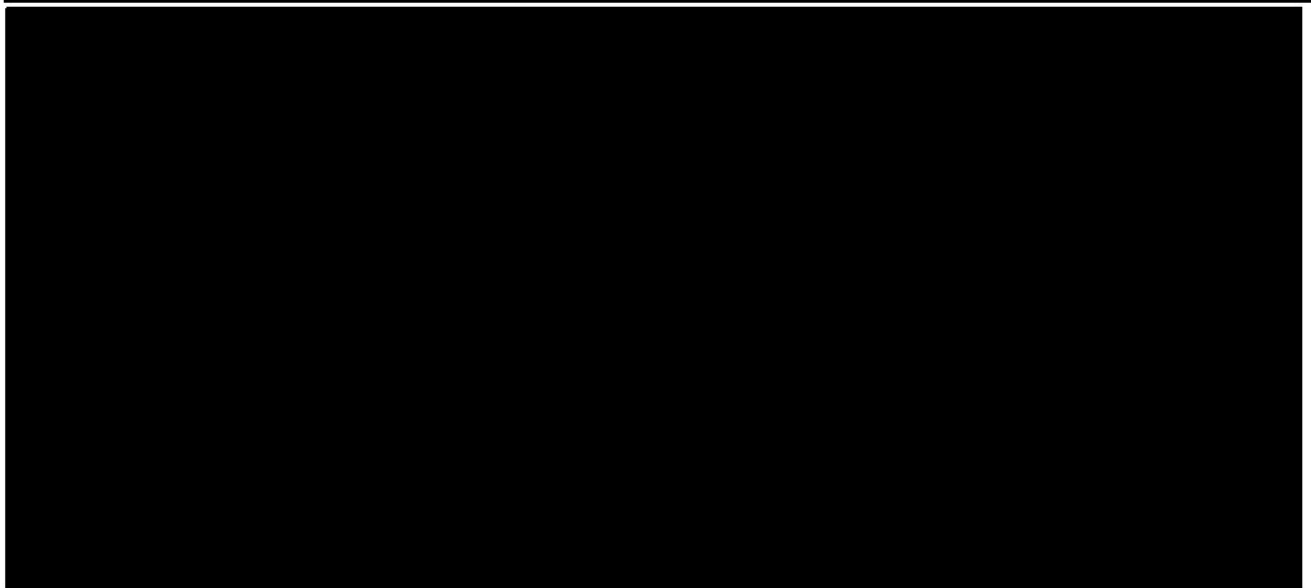
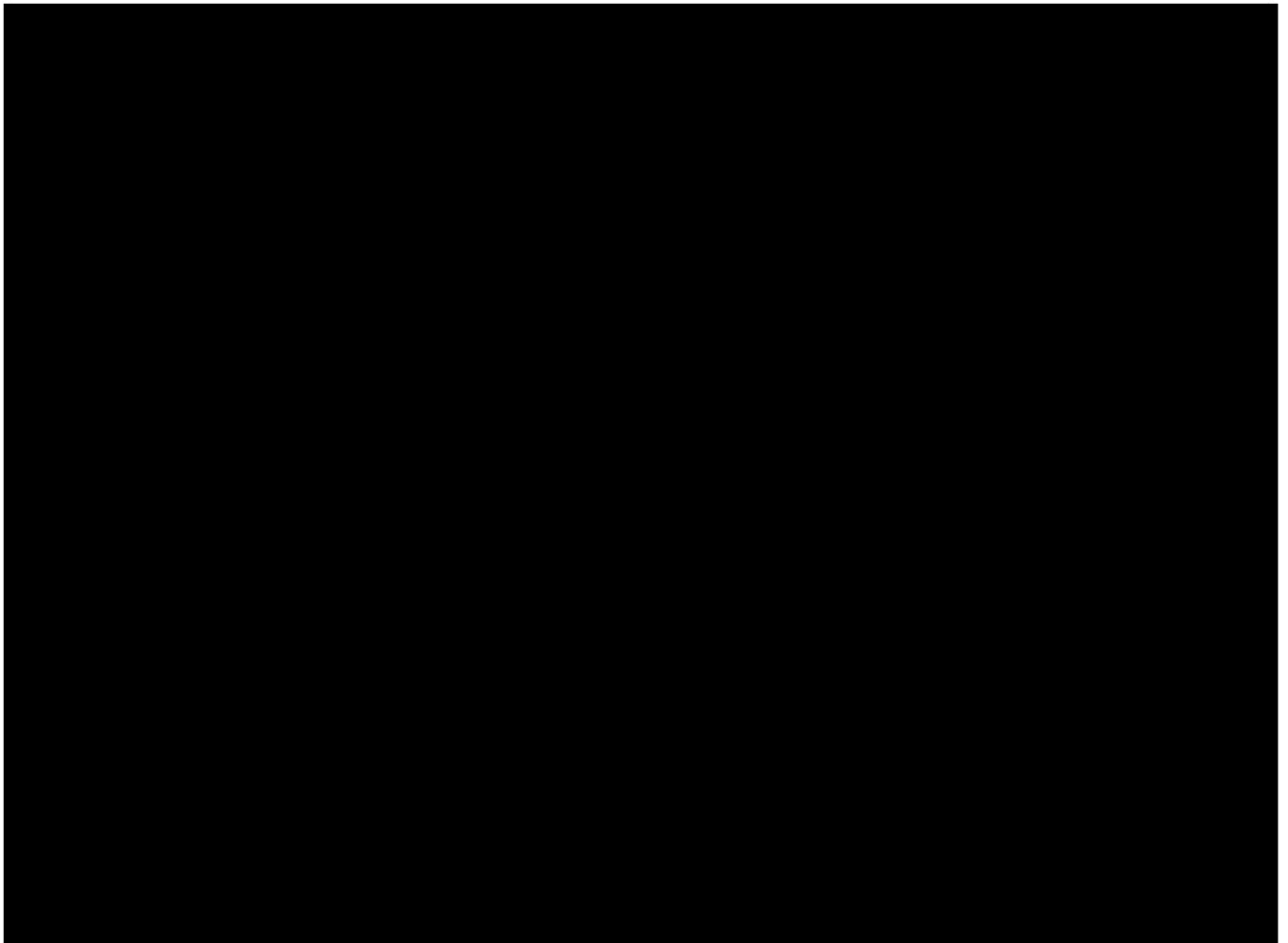
According to the economic assessment provided by the applicant, the estimated economic impact in the Canterbury region is estimated to have a total net present value between \$275 million and \$320 million over the development period. At its peak, the construction programme is expected to offer a regionally significant employment opportunity. Construction activity is estimated to support approximately 2,361 full-time equivalent (FTE) job-years across direct, indirect and induced activity over the construction period, equating on an annual average basis to approximately 146 direct roles and around 191 indirect and induced roles per year. These employment impacts are time-limited and relate solely to the construction phase.

Christchurch is the South Island's primary economic hub. Given the proposed roading development's location north of Christchurch, the Project is expected to offer ongoing economic benefit to the Canterbury region and the country by improving land-transport connectivity for industry operating across the region.

While the quantified economic benefits are largely concentrated during construction, the proposal's primary longer-term economic value arises from improved transport efficiency and network resilience on State Highway 1. By removing a recognised bottleneck at Woodend, the bypass would reduce congestion and freight delays, improve journey time reliability, safety,

and support the effective functioning of a nationally significant transport corridor. In the absence of the Project, increasing traffic volumes would continue to be accommodated through Woodend township, increasing network inefficiencies and associated economic costs over time.

In addition, given the Project's role in enabling the efficient movement of people and goods and supporting broader transport system performance, aspects of the proposal may be relevant to section 22(2)(a)(iii) of the Fast-track Approvals Act (supporting a well-functioning urban environment).



Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Nicola Willis', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Hon Nicola Willis
Minister for Economic Growth