Report to:	**Council**	
Date:	25 June 2025	
Subject:	Waiau Toa/Clarence Valley Access Update.	
Prepared by:	W Doughty – Chief Executive Officer	
Input sought from:	P Kearney, O Joensuu	
Authorised by:	W Doughty – Chief Executive Officer	

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with an update of the status of the project and to seek discussion and direction regarding some possible next steps.

2. SUMMARY

In May 2025 the NZTA Board made the decision not to support a KDC request for an extension of time and additional funding under emergency works for the bridge replacement project. In effect the emergency works funding subsidy ends at the end of June 2025. This decision was communicated to residents in early June and since then work has been undertaken to consider next steps both in the immediate and longer term. This paper provides an overview of the status and some possible courses of action for discussion.

3. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Council:

a) Receives this report and attachment
b) Provides some direction on the next steps for the project both in the immediate and longer- term.

4. BACKGROUND

4.1 Project status at time of decision.

The letter sent from the Mayor to the NZTA Board Chair in April 2025 summarised the status of the project and highlighted several potential issues should NZTA decide not to continue with the emergency works funding. A copy of the letter was circulated to elected members at the time and is included in the Appendix of this report. One further issue not highlighted at the time was the potential implication for the Whale Trail Project, which was relying on a bridge crossing in the Clarence to progress the inland walking and cycling track.

As outlined in the letter, work had progressed on the three major workstreams prior to the board decision, but the land acquisition process was going to determine the project critical path going forward. At the time of preparation of this report no formal response to the letter had been received from NZTA, [redacted]

4.2 Work being undertaken prior to funding deadline at the end of June 2025.

Elected members were briefed by NZTA officers on the NZTA Board decision at their meeting on the 28th of May. A meeting was held with affected residents as soon as possible in the valley on Tuesday the 3rd of June attended by the Mayor, CEO and NZTA representatives. The wider project team were notified on Wednesday the 4th of June and a media statement was released on Friday the 6th of June.

Several work streams have been agreed with NZTA to continue until the 30th of June 2025. These include the following:

Land Acquisition: [redacted]

Consents: Land use and resource consents have been lodged with both Environment Canterbury and Kaikōura District Council. Both authorities have been notified of the funding decision, but the consents remain active. Minor requests for information remain outstanding for the consents before a notification decision can be made. Our planning consultants will be completing this work in June so that a notification decision can be made. A decision will be required by KDC as to whether to progress with the consents beyond 1st July 2025.

Southern Access Route Minor Works: The Council roading team has worked with local contractors to develop a scope of minor works that can be achieved for the Southern Access route and be undertaken in June and into early July. The work is in the order of $300,000 which has been approved by NZTA.

Financials: The wider project team has been advised that all major work is required to stop at the end of June unless agreed by KDC. Invoices are to be submitted so that an accrual figure can be provided to NZTA. It is anticipated that the June Claim to NZTA will be in the order of $500,000 based on the above. The current life to date cost for the project at the end of May is $2,898,107.

The draft annual plan has been updated to reflect the project changes. As discussed at the May meeting, the NZTA component of the funding has been removed but the KDC local share of approximately $500,000 has been left in the annual plan for financial year 2025/26.

4.3 Immediate next steps post 1st July 2025 for discussion.

[redacted]

4.3.1 Land acquisition

[redacted]

Option 1: Progress with an agreement outside of the Public Works Act process.

[redacted]

Option 2: Compulsory acquisition

Our consultants recommend that Council does not proceed with a compulsory acquisition under the Public Works Act 1981 (PWA). [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

Option 3: Do not progress land acquisition further.

This would effectively stop all processes and remove the Public Works Notice from the landowner's title. This option is likely to have minimal cost implications in the immediate term.

4.3.2 Consents

There are two main options for the consents, as putting them on indefinite hold is neither recommended nor likely to be acceptable to either KDC or Environment Canterbury.

Option A: Progress with consents to approval stage.

As noted, work is progressing in June to get to the point that a notification decision can be made by the relevant authorities. [redacted] Once granted the maximum period for both the land use consent and construction consent would be five years. Amendments to the consents would also be required if an alternative bridge design were proposed.

Option B: Withdraw all consents.

All work on the consents would cease from the end of June and any new long-term proposal would need to commence from the beginning. There would be minimal time and cost implication for this.

4.3.3 Other items

[redacted]

4.4 Potential longer term next steps for discussion

Without NZTA emergency funding support at 95% the current bridge solution is outside of the financial reach of Kaikōura District Council. NZTA have indicated that KDC could initiate a new process and develop a business case for a new bridge (at KDC cost) that then gets considered and prioritised at both a regional and national level. [redacted]

Alternative funding streams such as private/public partnership, targeted rates, regional infrastructure fund or regional deals could also be investigated. [redacted]

Alternative solutions have been indicated by residents such as a footbridge across the Clarence or a revised southern access route along the old riverbed channel and a temporary bridge solution at the Wharakiri stream. [redacted]

Ongoing work will be required to maintain the Southern Access Route. General maintenance will continue to be subsidised at the standard funding support level through existing roading programmes. Any major emergency works from natural hazard events such as landslips or dropouts may also be eligible for separate emergency works funding. The legal road issue regarding SAR will also need to be resolved. [redacted]

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Council has indicated that the remaining local share for the project should be left in the annual plan for the fiscal year 25/26. This is approximately $500,000.

[redacted]

Funding will also be required to complete any additional minor works on the Southern Access Route as well as to resolve and legalise existing road issues.

Some limited investigations regarding alternative long-term options could be undertaken, but further funding allocation at 100% local share would be required in the next annual plan and long-term plan to progress this further.

[redacted]

6. COMMUNITY OUTCOMES SUPPORTED



Community
We communicate, engage and inform our community



Development
We promote and support the development of our economy



Services
Our services and infrastructure are cost effective, efficient and fit-for-purpose



Environment
We value and protect our environment



Future
We work with our community and our partners to create a better place for future generations

Appendix 1: Letter to the NZTA Board Chair regarding the Waiau Toa/ Clarence Valley Access project