



# IMPROVING THE SAFETY OF URBAN ACCESS IN KAIKŌURA

## PROPOSED DEVIATION ROUTE

### BACKGROUND

Kaikōura is home to 3,500 people who live, work and go to school in the township. It is also a key visitor destination in the South Island which is home to numerous attractions particularly around nature, wildlife and outdoor pursuits that support a growing tourism industry. Increasing numbers of visitors are expected to access the West End town centre and Whaleway Station Road.

The current state highway alignment with a downhill approach and tight curves intersects with three closely spaced local roads and that poses a safety risk. A recent investigation identified that many people feel unsafe using the intersections, particularly pedestrians trying to cross Ludstone Road to access schools.

The current highway layout has limited visibility, inadequate capacity for turning movements, and pedestrians crossing in challenging locations. Accordingly, drivers, cyclists and pedestrians (including school children) are at risk when travelling through this area.

State Highway 1 (SH1) is busy, carrying around 8000 vehicles per day, and this significantly increases during the peak visitor season in summer. The through traffic, especially heavy vehicles, reduces the amenity of the main street.

Kaikōura is growing as a tourist destination making it timely to address the above issues, to ensure a safe and accessible town centre which can be safely used by everyone.

The Government's priority is to restore the pre-earthquake transport links to Kaikōura and its surrounding communities, and ensure these vital links are resilient and safe long term. The Kaikōura access improvements are part of an NZ Transport Agency investment to improve the safety of the 60km section of SH1 between Clarence and Oaro. This signals the first step in ongoing improvements planned for SH1 between Picton and Christchurch over the next 30 years.

### PROBLEMS

#### SAFETY

There are numerous safety issues including limited visibility, closely spaced intersections, not enough space for multiple cars waiting to turn right from the main road, poor pedestrian crossing facilities and the speed of traffic coming down the hill.

**CUSTOMER INSIGHT:** 'People appearing out of nowhere' as you drive down the hill on Churchill St and approach the corner.

#### ACCESSIBILITY

This area is used by people accessing many different locations such as the commercial area and town centre on West End, Whaleway Station Road, the schools and residential area on Ludstone Road and the residential areas north and south of West End. However the pedestrian and cycle facilities are poor and do not encourage walking and cycling.

**CUSTOMER INSIGHT:** 'Not sure where everyone is turning' at the intersection, causing uncertainty when trying to cross the road.

#### TOURISM (OPPORTUNITY)

Kaikōura is one of the major visitor destinations in the South Island. However the current road network does not support simple access to key attractions. The presence of heavy vehicles and through traffic from Churchill Street to the southern end of Beach Road also reduces the amenity of this section of Kaikōura.

**CUSTOMER INSIGHT:** Visitors get confused at the intersection at the bottom of the hill, and stop in the middle of the road trying to figure out how to go to West End from SH1.

## OPTIONS CONSIDERED

The Transport Agency and Kaikōura District Council have worked together to identify the best way to address the issues. A number of different options were considered to resolve the safety problems at this location. These included roundabouts, traffic signals, realignments, improved pedestrian facilities and new overbridges.

However, many of these did not resolve the close spacing of intersections, created more safety issues or were not feasible and unlikely to be effective.

The recommended option is a deviation of SH1 which uses an existing designation for 'State Highway Purposes' in the Kaikōura District Plan. The deviation allows for significantly improved intersections to improve safety and accessibility.

## RECOMMENDED OPTION

SH1 (Churchill Street) would be realigned from the railway underpass to follow Lyell Creek before joining back onto Beach Road opposite the Holiday Park.

Ludstone Road would become a simple t-intersection with improved sight lines for drivers turning on and off the highway and for pedestrians crossing.

The northern access to Kaikōura town centre would be relocated to a new and improved t-intersection near the holiday park with increased space for turning vehicles.

Pedestrian crossing locations would have improved sight lines with larger central islands. The possibility of a pedestrian underpass from West End to Ludstone Road is being investigated. While this provides access separated from traffic there can be questions about personal security with such facilities.

## OUTCOMES

The recommended option would deliver the following benefits:

### SAFETY

- › Simplifies the Ludstone Road / SH1 / West End intersection, and alignment.
- › Removes through traffic from the intersections to West End and Whaleway Station Road.
- › Provides safer pedestrian facilities.

### ACCESSIBILITY

- › Improves turning facilities to local roads.
- › Better walking and cycling connections between key locations.

### AMENITY/TOURISM

- › Makes access for visitors to key destinations easier and safer.
- › Improves amenity in central Kaikōura by removing through traffic, especially heavy vehicles.
- › Provides opportunity for additional planting, street furniture alongside Lyell Creek, and development within the bypassed section of Beach Road.

## FEEDBACK

The NZ Transport Agency is very keen to hear your views on the recommended option. In particular:

- › Do you support the proposal?
- › Do you think this provides a safer solution?
- › Would you feel safe using a pedestrian underpass?
- › Is there anything you would change?

Please provide your feedback by 5pm Friday 25 August 2017, using the form provided, via online form at [www.nzta.govt.nz/picton2chch](http://www.nzta.govt.nz/picton2chch) or email to [KaikouraSHdeviation@nzta.govt.nz](mailto:KaikouraSHdeviation@nzta.govt.nz). If you have any queries please call Michael Blyleven, Design Portfolio Manager, NZ Transport Agency on **03 9642834**.

## NEXT STEPS

Following consultation, the North Canterbury Transport Infrastructure Recovery (NCTIR) alliance will develop the detailed design and deliver the improvement work, taking into account this consultation feedback.

Site investigations, flood modelling, safety audit, consenting and property acquisition will be undertaken prior to construction expected in 2018.

