

## COMMUNITY UPDATE

7 June 2023

### Additional option for SH1B Telephone Road rail crossing investigated

Waikato District Council and Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency are working together on a new potential option for the rail crossing on State Highway 1B Telephone Road, east of Hamilton, which has been closed since last year due to a derailment risk.

Since then, a detailed report was commissioned by Waka Kotahi to determine the best long-term solution for safety at the rail crossing, taking into account the opening of the Hamilton section of the Waikato Expressway and the intention to return SH1B to local road status.

The report took a thorough look at all the available solutions and found those that resolved all the safety concerns and kept the crossing open are estimated to cost between \$8 million and \$11 million. The report also included an option for permanent closure of the crossing. The full report is available to read at [nzta.govt.nz/projects/sh1b-telephone-road-rail-crossing](https://nzta.govt.nz/projects/sh1b-telephone-road-rail-crossing)

Since the report's release, Waikato District Council has approached Waka Kotahi with a new potential option; closing Holland Rd on the western side of the Telephone Road/Marshmeadow Road intersection and realigning Telephone Road so that it connects directly onto Marshmeadow Road. The level of all three roads near the crossing would be raised.

This potential option removes the risk of rail strike and the danger of vehicles stacking over the rail crossing caused by the right turn from Telephone Road into Holland Road. It also offers a potentially more affordable solution to keep the rail crossing open.



*This image, an amended version of Option 3 in the report, gives a rough indication of what is being proposed in this new potential option. **This is for indicative purposes only as no detailed design or artists impressions have been developed.***

This option had not previously been considered, as only options that kept all four roads at the intersection open were outlined in the report.

Following initial discussions, Waikato District Council and Waka Kotahi have agreed to do further work over the next couple of months to investigate and refine this potential option.

As this potential option has implications for both the community and the local road network, if it is deemed viable and put forward for funding, Waikato District Council and Waka Kotahi will run a formal process to seek feedback from the community.

This potential option has not been analysed in detail, however a rough estimate indicates a cost of between \$3 million and \$4 million.

Waka Kotahi does not have funding available during the current funding cycle (the 2021-24 National Land Transport Programme) for any potential solution at the rail crossing. However, we will put this project forward for consideration of all viable solutions in the 2024-2027 NLTP funding cycle.

This means that should any funding be secured for work at the Telephone Road rail crossing, it would not be available to use until the NLTP period begins in July 2024. For more about the NLTP process, see the Waka Kotahi [website](#).

While the process of determining the best path forward continues, the railway crossing itself will remain closed to traffic.