

MEDIA RELEASE

Wednesday, 26 September 2012



Design Funding Approved for Ashley Bridge at Cones Road

As part of its National Land Transport Programme (NLTP) the New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA) have approved funding for the design of a replacement for the Ashley River Bridge at Cones Road in Rangiora. The decision does not include funding for construction of the bridge.

The NLTP Advisory Group met on 21 September and released their decision to the Waimakariri District Council yesterday. The group have approved the design funding of \$850,000 total cost of which the NZTA will subsidise \$510,000 (sixty per cent).

Design funding was considered a sensible step by the NLTP Advisory Group in order to better understand the project scope and costs. The design funding approval, however, does not imply a commitment to funding the construction of the bridge. That will be subject to a full assessment and determination of national priority ranking and funding availability at a later date – as yet to be determined.

The Council's Manager Utilities and Roading, Gerard Cleary, says that, while the approval of funding for design is pleasing, the advisory group has advised the Council that funding for the National Land Transport Programme is constrained and, based on current ranking, the

construction project may not be a priority and/or affordable in the 2014/15 period.

"Although it's not unreasonable for NZTA to expect to see the design and more certainty in terms of the cost estimates before they make any funding commitment to the construction of the project" he says, "we are hopeful that approval for construction funding will be given in due course. The challenges we face are the availability of funding, the ranking of the project against other projects that the NZTA has to consider at the national level and the maintenance costs of the current bridge should there be further significant delays".

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