



## Eastern Hutt Road frequently asked questions

### ➤ What works are being carried out and what's the timeframe?

**Site C:** from 31 July to September 2023 (works at this site are now finished) -

- clearing the slope of vegetation and loose debris
- installing anchors
- laying erosion-control matting.

**Site B:** from late-August to end of March 2024 -

- clearing the slope of vegetation and loose debris
- removing the containers and installing temporary fencing at the roadside
- installing anchors onto the hillside to stabilise it
- laying erosion-control matting and applying anchored shotcrete (concrete) to reinforce the slope
- installing catch fencing.

*Note: the works required at this site are more complex than those needed for the other slip sites.*

**Site A:** from late 2023 to March 2024 -

- installing catch fencing.

### ➤ What works have been completed?

Immediately after the slips occurred, temporary measures were put in place to protect the road from further slips. In addition, the following have been completed:

- design of the remedial works for all three sites
- procurement of the contractors and materials to do the works
- application and approval of building consents
- site A - demolition of a dwelling, reprofiling the slope (i.e. changing its angle and depth to make it safer) and removing the roadside containers
- site B - clearing the slope of vegetation/loose debris, removal of roadside containers and the installation of temporary anchors onto the slope
- all works at site C.



### ➤ **What will the traffic impacts be while the works are carried out?**

For the duration of works, one lane southbound and one lane northbound are available for road users along Eastern Hutt Road between Stokes Valley and Pomare roundabouts.

The two exceptions are that:

- the second southbound lane from Pomare roundabout to 300m north of that intersection is now open, given works at site C are finished
- over the Christmas/New Year holiday period when works are paused, one of the southbound lanes will reopen so there will be two lanes for people travelling south.

The decision to have only one lane operating in each direction was not made lightly – we understand this is causing delays, however, it's required due to the nature of the works and the need to make Eastern Hutt Road safe for all users as quickly as possible.

### ➤ **What are you doing to manage traffic during the works?**

- During the busy morning traffic period, a temporary traffic light is operating for Upper Hutt traffic at the Stokes Valley roundabout (6/6.30am–9am) to manage the flow of traffic through that area.
- We've adjusted the traffic island at the Stokes Valley roundabout to provide two lanes leading up to the roundabout for Stokes Valley drivers, making it easier to turn left or right onto Eastern Hutt Road. This is helping to improve traffic flow.
- We are also limiting the movement of vehicles accessing and leaving the site.

### ➤ **Will the lane closures result in traffic delays?**

- We're advising people to expect delays at times, especially during peak traffic (7am–9am and 4pm–7pm) and acknowledge this will be an inconvenience for those who need to travel on Eastern Hutt Road.
- Having crew members dedicated to monitoring peak traffic will give us a better understanding of the impacts and how we could alter traffic management measures to improve flow.
- To help ease congestion, those travelling to/from Upper Hutt could consider using SH2 instead of Eastern Hutt Road.
- We ask people to be patient while we deliver this long-term solution for this vital arterial road.

### ➤ **What can people do to reduce the impact of traffic delays?**

- People travelling to/from Upper Hutt could consider using SH2 instead of Eastern Hutt Road if possible.
- People could consider taking the bus, car-pooling and/or travelling at off-peak times (9am–4pm) if possible.

- We recommend people plan for additional journey time before using this route.

➤ **Why can't you carry out the works at off-peak times?**

Unfortunately, working during off-peak hours would result in a longer time-frame for the project and even more community disruption due to:

- lane layouts and concrete protection barriers having to be set up/taken down on a daily basis (rather than staying in place for the duration of the project) which would take an estimated 8 hours per day – giving crews little time to do the actual works – and incur significant additional costs
- switching daily between two traffic management plans – requiring several road signs, barriers and other assets that are essential for maintaining safe roads – could result in confusion among road users, increasing the risk of incidents
- the requirement for significant resource to change the road layout each day
- fewer hours each day in which our crew could work.

However, we have several traffic management measures in place to help with traffic flow including:

- a temporary traffic light for Upper Hutt traffic at the Stokes Valley roundabout during morning peak traffic
- two lanes now available for Stokes Valley drivers at the Stokes Valley roundabout, making it easier to turn left or right onto Eastern Hutt Road
- limiting the movement of construction vehicles accessing and leaving the site.

➤ **Why can't you carry out the works at night?**

- For the safety of our workers, works on the slip sites at night will not be carried out (except for road resurfacing works at the end of the project).
- Night works can increase the risk of accidents and injuries due to reduced visibility and fatigue of workers.
- They also result in noise disruption at night for nearby residents.
- Resourcing of specialist contractors for night works is challenging.

➤ **Why do the lanes have to be closed off?**

- The lanes need to be closed due to the scope of the works we need to carry out and the equipment required, as well as the size and number of work vehicles involved.
- This will also ensure the safety of our workers and the public.

➤ **Why can't you shut off this route for Upper Hutt traffic?**

- We cannot close Eastern Hutt Road to Upper Hutt traffic as the road provides a critical alternate route to SH2 if there is a traffic incident.

- There are people travelling from Upper Hutt who work in Stokes Valley or nearby areas who need to take this more direct route.
  - Diverting Upper Hutt traffic to SH2 is a significant detour for those needing to get to Stokes Valley or nearby areas.
  - Closing that route would also impact on businesses and bus routes.
- **How will my children get to school on time if the buses are late due to traffic delays?**
- MetLink is one of the stakeholders that Council and Fulton Hogan are working with. We have also communicated with schools about the potential impact of delays.
- **What has Hutt City Council done to look into the local stormwater network located on part of Holborn Drive where a slip occurred in July 2022?**
- Following the slip event in July 2002, HCC and Wellington Water have investigated the stormwater network in the vicinity of Holborn Drive. This included CCTV footage. No blockages or problems with the serviceability of the network were identified.
  - The stormwater network in this area, like all stormwater networks, has a design capacity. During the heavier rainfall events, that design capacity could be exceeded, resulting in some overland flows. Council and Wellington Water will continue to monitor the network's performance, however Council is satisfied that a failure of the stormwater network was not the cause of the specific slip events in July 2022.
  - In the remediation of the slip faces currently underway, surface drainage measures (ie. for natural run-off) have been incorporated as part of the design of the works.
- **Is the stormwater sufficient on the part of Holborn Drive where there were slips?**
- Council and Wellington Water are not aware of capacity issues with the stormwater.
  - The drainage system on this part of Holborn Drive only has to cope with a small catchment runoff as it services a small part of the road and a small number of properties.
- **How can you legally carry out these works? They're in violation of the Local Government Act 2022 (clauses 78 and 82).**
- Remediating the slip sites above Eastern Hutt Road is a priority for Council and the community. This was clear in the feedback we received from the community when we consulted on the Annual Plan 2023-24. 65% of submitters agreed or strongly agreed with the proposal to invest in

improving the resilience of Eastern Hutt Road. This consultation met the requirements of the Local Government Act.

- Our priority is to get Eastern Hutt Road re-opened in the shortest time as possible with the least disruption. There will be traffic delays due to the nature of the work required including the use of heavy machinery, crews working at height and challenging activities on the hillside. We understand there will be frustration about the traffic delays resulting from the works. However, they have to take place to ensure the road is safe and they cannot be carried out off-peak (for reasons outlined in the 'Why can't you carry out the works at off-peak times' question above).

➤ **Can I get a rates rebate as a result of the slips?**

- We've been working with residents displaced from their homes due to landslips on rates remissions applications and the granting of these.
- Rates remissions don't apply to people still living in their house with access to household services (water and wastewater etc) i.e. they don't relate to the cost of petrol or lost income.
- If you're having any trouble making rates payments, please contact the rates team by emailing [rates@huttcity.govt.nz](mailto:rates@huttcity.govt.nz). We're keen to work closely with any ratepayers regards payment arrangements - we take individual circumstances into account and can look into options for assistance.
- More information:
  - <https://www.huttcity.govt.nz/property-and-building/rates-and-valuations/rates-remissions>
  - <https://www.huttcity.govt.nz/property-and-building/rates-and-valuations/support-for-rates-payments>

➤ **Where can I get more information about this project?**

- We have a webpage about this project which provides more details. Visit: [hutt.city/EHRupdate](http://hutt.city/EHRupdate)
- There is also information about the project at the Kōraunui Stokes Valley Hub.

## **New questions added 31 August 2023**

➤ **Is it possible to detour traffic from Upper Hutt in the morning peak up Stokes Valley Rd, making anyone who wants to head further south loop back north of Caltex and join the Stokes Valley Rd crew. This would mean no need to give way for traffic exiting Stokes Valley - much smoother flow. And a way of encouraging traffic from the north to consider using SH2.**

- Detouring traffic from Upper Hutt up Stokes Valley Road is not a feasible option, as it would increase congestion in that area.

- Traffic data is showing there's already been an increase in Upper Hutt traffic using State Highway 2 instead of Eastern Hutt Road, easing pressure on traffic leaving Stokes Valley.

➤ **Why was the community not consulted through the process as promised in the first meeting back in August 2022?**

- We needed specific expertise for the design of the remedial works (which are highly technical and complex), so carried out extensive consultation with engineers.
- The same goes for traffic management – being a specialised area, we consulted people with expertise in that area.
- Along with the community meeting we held last year which had a big turnout, we've held two public drop-in sessions at the Koraunui Stokes Valley Hub where people have been able to ask the project team questions.
- In addition, we're keeping people informed of the works via a range of channels including direct email updates to those on our distribution list, webpage updates, social media posts and information at the Koraunui Stokes Valley Hub.

➤ **Exactly how long will the works be stopped over the Christmas break in summer?**

- Works will finish for the year at the end of Thursday 21 December and start again on the morning of Monday 8 January (after peak traffic).

➤ **Can we look at workers continuing to work over the summer break, when there would be less traffic and impact on road users, and taking a break before summer instead? If the workers need a break over summer, will the March 2024 deadline be met?**

- Contractors will not be available over the Christmas break. They are the same contractors who have been working on other landslips in the region for a long time now. Just like workers in other industries, they will need a break over the Christmas period to spend time with their families.
- The Christmas break has been factored into our schedule i.e. the works are still scheduled to finish in March 2024, with workers taking a break over Christmas, unless weather or unforeseen circumstances cause delays.

➤ **Who is responsible or accountable if the work is not completed by March 2024?**

- We're working closely with our contracting partners to ensure the works will be completed in March 2024.
- Weather or unforeseen circumstances could cause delays, however we're working hard to meet this deadline.

- **Who has ultimate responsibility for this project? Who is in charge?**
  - Hutt City Council has overall responsibility for the project. However, our contractor is required to meet a number of contractual obligations.
  
- **Why have we received different information about the design? For example, Site B had hydro-seeding added? And why was this changed with no consultation?**
  - The design for site B works hasn't changed. Hydroseeding is part of the erosion-control matting stage.
  
- **When is there going to be a long-term plan to address a solution to the fact that there is only one way in and out of Stokes Valley? Comments were made about a bridge/road - where is the foresight and future planning?**
  - We're currently working on our next Long Term Plan (LTP) and as we go through this process, we're very mindful of the overall economic environment and cost of living pressures facing people and families. This is unlikely to substantially ease over the coming 12 months.
  - Some tough calls will need to be made between now and December on where to prioritise spending.
  - We will not be able to fund every project, initiative and idea – as this will be ultimately unaffordable for our residents.
  - The LTP will be out for consultation with the community early next year. We encourage you to have your say during this period.
  
- **How do we safeguard a means for Fire and Ambulance to get through traffic and congestion?**
  - Emergency services vehicles will get through the area in an incident just as they do on any other road where cars pull to the side to let them past. This has been working effectively.
  
- **Who is monitoring the updates many signed into? Some people say they've received no updates. And who is responding to email queries?**
  - Our team is monitoring the Eastern Hutt Road mailbox. Every email that has come into this mailbox has been responded to with more than 120 responses sent so far. If you have not had a response, please re-send your email or contact us on 04 570 6666 so we can check what has happened.
  - Everyone who has asked to be put on the distribution list has been added.

- **Two separate consultants have offered their services and equipment, why have they not been taken up on their offer? Why did council only engage a preferred supplier?**
  - Our project team was not approached directly by other suppliers.
  - We engaged the engineers and designers who were involved in the project at the recovery stage given their familiarity with the site complexities and the fact they could use their knowledge from that stage for the design phase.
  
- **Communication is not good enough and must improve.**
  - We appreciate this project has caused disruption and people want to be kept up to date on progress.
  - To date, we've primarily used regular email newsletter updates, social media posts, our website and information at the Kōraunui Stokes Valley Hub. We also placed ads in the newspaper ahead of the main remedial works.
  - In light of this feedback, we've made a number of changes to our communications including:
    - increasing the regularity of our updates, which come out fortnightly
    - disseminating mass communications to the whole area encouraging people to sign up to our newsletter
    - updating the information at the Kōraunui Stokes Valley Hub
    - holding two drop-in sessions at the hub.
  
- **In 2013 Opus wrote a report highlighting resilience issues with the Eastern Hutt Road corridor, particularly north of Stokes Valley. The report indicated a need for a high priority piece of work. Why was this budgeted work postponed by council in recent annual plans? What is being done with compromised areas heading south if there is a natural weather event?**
  - Council haven't had the funds to progress this work.
  - Resilience is a priority for our city and we're conscious of the impact severe weather events are having across the motu. Resilience is a key focus of our next Long Term Plan, however, some tough calls will need to be made between now and December on where to prioritise spending.
  - We will not be able to fund every project, initiative and idea – as this will be ultimately unaffordable for our residents.