



## **Sounds Future Access Study ( FAS )**

### **Summary of issues**

#### **Introduction**

Sounds ratepayers overwhelmingly want retention of a secure roading network. This applies to use by Emergency Services, essential services, residents, businesses, tourists, and other visitors. They are genuinely concerned over wellbeing, safety, security and property values. Users of the **Kenepuru road network** are no different in their objectives.

We acknowledge that the central government contribution to the longer term road recovery will be key to achieving these objectives. The path chosen to present the Sounds road recovery case has been via the Sounds Future Access Study (**FAS**) commissioned by Council.

#### **Summary of key points**

The significant impact on the Kenepuru road network by the storm events of July 2021 and August 2022 mean it is unlikely that the same level of service will be re-established across the entire network. In saying this, limited oneway sections, reduced speed limits etc. are all anticipated as being acceptable to road users in order to achieve a reasonable solution.

The **FAS report** attempts to chart a road recovery course.

However there appear to be various significant anomalies in the FAS calculations that adversely affect the current prescribed outcomes.

A key tool in the presentation and persuasive impact of any funding application will be the **Multi Criteria Analysis (MCA)** work by the FAS team.

We have some concerns here. The obvious ones are the significant difference in ratings between Queen Charlotte Drive and Kenepuru Rd. This is not just limited to the geological assessment, but also "Social & Community Impacts" ( Column 5) and "Improve Resilience of Transport Assets" ( Column 3 ). Both these ratings

are shown as polar opposites. This has had the unfortunate effect of pushing Kenepuru Rd away from a "Road Focus" to the lesser "Balanced Focus".

Another significant anomaly is the rating of Kenepuru Rd from Portage to the Heads. Putting this section of road in "Accommodate/Retreat" category is bewildering. Not only is this section somewhat more resilient than many other sections but effectively links the entire Outer Sounds to Portage and Linkwater.

Finally, the FAS analysis seems to overlook that road users quite rationally much prefer a recovery solution that is focused on overall transport efficacy - as opposed to the FAS approach of focusing only on discriminately selected factors, such as short term transport disruption.

The FAS report also does not consider one of the prime failure modes - **stormwater management**. It is accepted by all, that the extent of failures and ongoing issues are dominated by the lack of adequate stormwater management over time. Yet this and other engineering solutions are not taken into account.

The approach to **Option Costings** is also lacking in content and clarity. The current global assessments of faults and costs bears no resemblance to what is actually required on the ground. Despite requests no detail as to the scope, methodology and source of costing data used to date has been forthcoming. Objectively, this ongoing gap is best remedied in the usual best practice manner - by having the approach to scope, design and validity of the cost assumptions reviewed and challenged by experienced independent engineering professionals.

Short term, we can understand the Council's rapid decision to switch yet to be spent Kenepuru Rd recovery budget post the July 2021 event to provide interim remedial funding across all of Marlborough. However, the fact is of the \$20 million allocated to Kenepuru only \$5 million was spent on the road as at August 2022. That generates ongoing issues of **fairness and equity** which need to be acknowledged and addressed.

The now existing **marine infrastructure** for the Kenepuru is seen by the Association as useful emergency back up infrastructure - not an alternative. A concern is that the FAS in promoting marine transport as a viable alternative seems to overlook the impracticalities of marine transport and loss of connectivity for regular users of the Kenepuru road network.

Further, the FAS proposals to expand the investment in this area are lacking in detail and need further work and research to justify both their initial cost and significant ongoing maintenance costs.

### **Conclusion**

In short, after reviewing the bundle of FAS documents including the natural hazard report, the Proposed Business case, the MCA analysis and all other information provided, there is no sustainable basis made for any solution that would anticipate consigning parts of the Kenepuru network to marine access only. That would, in our view, simply be a step back in time that would absolutely be regretted in the future.

KCSRA has years of roading experience and local knowledge and would welcome the opportunity to discuss these issues further **before** the business case and application are set in stone. Too much rests on this for the Kenepuru, the Sounds and the Marlborough region generally for anything other than a rigorous and transparent assessment of the all important costings carried out by independent and experienced roading professionals.

**18 August 2023**

**Kenepuru and Central Sounds Residents ' Association**