



**Submission on  
Draft Canterbury Regional  
Land Transport Strategy  
2008 - 2018**

20 December 2007

**From**  
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We do wish to be heard.  
Please email or phone advice on hearing to David Evans (SOC secretary)

SOC acknowledges the great deal of work that has gone into the RLTS and commends ECAN for this.

We agree with much of what is in the document.

The Key Result Area activities for Alternative modes (p 34) are very positive from our point of view, and we support them.

We also note that the recent ECAN Report UO7/71 on Peak Oil and Climate Change indicates that some of our concerns are already the subject of study within the organisation.

We have the following specific comments:

### 1. **Economics**

We have concerns about the "Key Result Areas" (page 26 section 4.2) assessments (marked by ticks in the table). In particular, the 3 ticks for *Economy* for the *Roads* column in our opinion is an assessment that goes well beyond what we believe is supportable from available economic and related information.

Specifically, we note that road freight transport uses 4 - 7 times more fuel than rail and about 9 times more than shipping. At a time when evidence for the imminence of Peak Oil is becoming ever more reliable, we do not think it credible that this (3 ticks) conclusion can be maintained, bearing in mind the serious increases in fuel prices and associated "knock-on" effects that are to be expected. A further point is the fast-increasing prices of land for major transport (including road) developments, which also impinges seriously on economics.

### 2. **Rail**

We warmly support the principles stated in Policy 1.5 "Support rail as an integral part of Canterbury's strategic land transport system". Physical links (actual railway tracks) presently exist for potential commuter services, namely Lyttelton and Ferrymead. The latter could work in conjunction with 'park and ride' from Sumner, Clifton, Redcliffs, etc. There is a spur line via Hornby which links to Prebbleton, part-way to Halswell. The northern line runs through the city's northern suburbs, which could also be connected to the Pegasus township by mini bus or spur. We would point out that ensuring passenger services for these and from the North (Rangiora etc) and from Rolleston by 2012 will require a transport hub for bus and train connections, in or near the Christchurch CBD. The present Railway Station is quite unsuitable for this purpose, being awkwardly situated, too far away. The "old" railway station is in a much better situation and warrants study of options for its revival, since the line remains and there is space for a station. We understand the Christchurch City Council is aware of this general issue, as part of its Project Central City, but feel there is a real level of urgency in planning for a well-situated central transport interchange hub, before options such as available land are lost.

As a further relevant town planning note, the move toward localisation should include consideration being given to proximity to potential railway nodes. In this context the removal of the Lyttelton ferry terminus from its present position takes away from the community a valuable ferry-to-rail -to-community connection. Environment Canterbury's attention should be drawn to this.

### 3. **Shipping**

We note that the RLTS has no comment about rationalising the Lyttelton and Timaru ports. In our opinion, and from information publicly available, neither port is fully utilised, and in a situation where the major items passing through the ports are either bulk (coal, timber) or containers, there appears to be a case for rationalisation. We understand that Lyttelton is better placed to be the single port, but are aware of management issues in that port. We believe all of these points should be addressed in the RLTS.

### 4 **General**

In our opinion, it is imperative that work start on issues such as these as soon as possible, while it can be afforded. When the next (and probably last) major oil shock hits us the economic “knock-on” effects will be such that major new capital works may be unaffordable. Other effects will also become manifest, such as the increasing difficulty outer-suburb commuters will experience in making their daily trip to work, when personal transport can no longer be afforded.

In addition to creating this problem in the past, the town planning process has, unfortunately, also donated to us a city which cannot be serviced effectively by buses alone. This being so, and given the inevitability of a progressive withdrawal from the presently widespread use of personal vehicles, we believe a genuinely efficient and effective public transportation system can best be provided by some form of rail system working in conjunction with a bus feeder system. However, sufficient railway track does exist to enable us to make a start with the introduction of at least an initial framework now.

We are of the opinion that Peak Oil should not be seen as a “doom and gloom” forecast. Indeed, we believe once its imminence is generally accepted (and the evidence for it is increasing by the day), people will see it not so much as a crisis, more an opportunity to build a more vigorous, creative and socially-coherent society. There is a strong argument for addressing the issue by intentionally making the energy transition an attractive proposition - by being creative and innovative and thereby making it fun to be involved with.

We are grateful for the opportunity to make these comments.