**Resilient access for Marlborough Sounds now and into the future**

Between July 2021 and August 2022 severe weather events significantly damaged Marlborough District Council’s roading network. Over 670km of roads were affected and over 5,000 faults were identified. Access in and out of the Marlborough Sounds was seriously impacted with a significant number of slips and dropouts making many roads impassable for long periods of time. Some roads are still under restrictions today.

In 2022 NZTA and MDC identified the need for a recovery plan. The purpose of the plan was to identify a *sustainable long-term solution for safe and resilient access to the Sounds* - now and into the future. Weather events in the Sounds regularly result in road closures leaving businesses and residents with limited or no access for prolonged periods, and sometimes with no feasible long term alternative access. In addition, many of the roads were not designed for their current level of use, with insufficient space for large vehicles creating an unsafe and challenging environment.

Stantec worked with MDC, NZTA, and communities to determine the preferred way forward and identify a hazard adaptation pathway for the long term. A key consideration was an assessment to understand future constraints on access, and how to work within these limits. Constraints considered included: underlying geological conditions, impacts of sea level rise and land subsidence, and changing rainfall patterns. The preferred option for the Sounds includes road repairs, road improvements, and marine improvements.

It was clear from the onset this project would be groundbreaking due to:

* Innovative approach to programme development and selection of preferred option.
* Identification of a Hazard Adaptation Pathway.
* Consideration of marine transport as a real alternative within the transport system
* A lack of guidelines or policies to assist in the process of accommodating climate forced adaptation.