

CONSULTATION

DRAFT SPEED MANAGEMENT PLAN

STATEMENT OF PROPOSAL

Summary

We're developing a Speed Management Plan for the district that aims to make our roads safer and work towards the national road safety strategy Road to Zero.

Localised Speed Management Plans are part of changes to the way we manage speeds throughout New Zealand. Rather than looking at speed limit changes on a street-by-street basis, the draft Speed Management Plan establishes principles for speed management in our district.

What is being proposed

We've developed an Interim Speed Management Plan that focuses on lowering speed limits and improving safety infrastructure around schools/kura, marae, town centres and some local roads of concern.

Changes to speed limits - The Speed Management Plan includes changes to speed limits on a number of local roads - particularly reducing speeds around schools (in line with new national rules).

It's important to note that this is a long term plan - we won't be changing these speed limits overnight. The implementation of these changes would start from later 2023, initially focusing on schools.

Safety infrastructure - there's more to safer speeds than just speed limits. The draft Speed Management Plan also identifies a significant number of infrastructure improvements like crossings, islands, road markings, signage and more.

Like the speed limits, these are improvements we'd look to implement over the next few years, focussing on schools first. Identifying them as part of this plan will help inform our forward planning - like future budgeting processes, and our funding agreements with Waka Kotahi.

Want to know more?

We encourage you to read this document alongside the Draft Speed Management Plan to inform your submission. More detailed information is available in the Technical Assessment document. These are all available on our website.

The national context

The Government and Waka Kotahi are promoting zero tolerance of road deaths and serious injuries. Waka Kotahi's strategy, known as 'Road to Zero', is a plan to work towards zero road deaths and serious injuries. The Government is committed to tackling unsafe speeds as part of this vision. The risk of a crash occurring, and the resulting severity of injury resulting from that crash, depends significantly on the speed of the vehicles involved. A key part of the work to support this vision is reviewing speed limits all over the country with a view to lowering them in high-risk areas.

Priority 1 – Reducing school speed limits

By 2027, we will be required to have made a reasonable effort to lower the speed limits in the vicinity of all schools in South Waikato District to a maximum of 30km/h in urban areas and 60km/h in rural areas. Where schools are located on no-exit roads or within residential neighbourhoods, we propose permanent speed limits be installed. For locations that are on through roads with higher speed limits, we propose utilising variable speed limits, as they protect pedestrian activity during high-use times while helping ensure driver acceptance and compliance.

A lower speed limit decreases the chance of crashes occurring and reduces the injury severity if it were to happen. This will reduce the risk for the students travelling to and from school. Research shows that speed limits in school zones are most effective between 300-500m long. Drivers tend to slow down if the zone is between these lengths. The maps we have prepared show what this would look like for all schools in the district, however, the interim plan will enable the actual zones to be adjusted by Council if required.

The following schools are proposed to have a permanent 30km/hr speed limit installed:

- Amisfield School
- Bishop Edward Gaines Catholic School
- Cargill Open Plan School
- David Henry School
- Putaruru College
- Putaruru Primary School
- St Mary's Catholic School
- Strathmore School
- Tainui Full Primary School
- Te Wharekura o Te Kaokaoroa o Patetere School
- TKKM o Te Hiringa
- Tokoroa Central School
- Tokoroa High School

The following schools are proposed to have a variable 30km/hr speed limit installed:

- Forest View High School
- Tokoroa North School
- Strathmore School
- Tokoroa Intermediate School

The following schools are proposed to have a variable 60km/hr speed limit installed:

- Kuranui Primary School
- Lichfield School

Te Waotu School is proposed to have a permanent 60km/hr speed limit installed:

Maps highlighting all the proposed changes are included in the Draft Speed Management Plan Technical Assessment document.

Priority 2 – Maraes speed limits and signage

South Waikato district has 7 marae, located in both urban and rural locations. Our assessments show that marae in the South Waikato District do not have sufficient signage that identify their locations to road users. Our proposed approach is to install advance and directional signage at each marae location.

Priority 3 – Town Centre speed limits

The speed limit in the centre of Tokoroa is proposed to be reduced as shown below.



Priority 4 – Roads of concern

A number of roads of concern have been identified in South Waikato district. We have assessed each of these roads of concern to determine what improvements are appropriate to lower the risk to road users. This includes safety improvements as well as changes to speed limits. Safety improvements for these roads include improved curve warning signage, widened centreline and edgeline markings, and using audio tactile profile road markings (rumble markings).

The following roads of concern are proposed to have changes in speed limit:

- Dumfries Road
- Horahora Road
- Kinleith Road
- Ngatira Road
- Pellikan Road
- Tapapa Road

Maps highlighting all the proposed changes are included in the Draft Speed Management Plan Technical Assessment document.

Have your say

We want to hear your views on this draft plan - simply click the button below to complete your submission. Submissions are open until **4.30pm on 31st May 2023**.

Q. Can I provide feedback on the speeds you are proposing for different roads?

A. You are welcome to provide comment on speeds but the speeds we are proposing align with Waka Kotahi guidance and reflect local knowledge and behaviour, including statistics around crashes. Details are set out in the technical assessment document.

Q. Speed isn't the problem, drivers are. Why aren't you focusing on them?

A. Even the most skilled drivers make mistakes. Most drivers understand that New Zealand's roads can be challenging. Good speed management gives drivers the cues they need to judge the safe and appropriate speed for the road they are on. The Council is also actively promoting road safety with school children and through public education campaigns.

Q. What is good speed management?

A. Good speed management is when technology, data, first-hand observation and local knowledge are used to inform interventions to make a road safer for drivers. This is why your feedback will help us understand if we have our proposals right or not.

Q. Aren't you just trying to lower speed limits?

A. No, we are using local knowledge and data to make sure we have done everything we can to make our roads safer. Our aim is to make sure that our local roads have travel speeds that minimise the risk.

Q. Does going a few kilometres per hour faster or slower actually make any difference to safety?

A. Yes, it does. Speed can be the difference between a correctable mistake and a fatal error. Every extra kilometre per hour increases the likelihood of someone being killed or injured in a crash. Regardless of what causes a crash, speed plays a part.

Q. Will slowing down mean that it will take longer to get anywhere?

A. Not necessarily. Research shows that going faster doesn't save as much time as we think. Waiting at intersections or for traffic to move means total travel times don't vary much, even if you drive 10 km/h slower.

Q. How do you make drivers slow down to the set speeds?

A. We are only responsible for setting the road speed limits; the policing of vehicle speeds is the responsibility of the NZ Police.

Q. What happens after Council agrees to change the interim speed management plan, is it just a case of changing the speed signs?

A. Once Council has adopted the speed management plan, the plan will be submitted to the Director of Land Transport for certification. Staff will then be able to start implementing the changes as agreed in the interim plan. New signs will be installed to inform the road users and the change will be recorded in the National Speed limit register. It will then be enforceable by NZ Police.