
REPORT 2
(1215/52/IM)

PROPOSED SPEED LIMIT REDUCTION:

- HAPPY VALLEY ROAD / OHIRO ROAD
- HUTT ROAD / CENTENNIAL HIGHWAY
- TAKAPU ROAD /TAWA INTERCHANGE

1. Purpose of Report

To seek the Committee's approval to recommend to Council that it agree to lower the speed limit on parts of Happy Valley Road, Ohiro Road, Hutt Road, Centennial Highway, Takapu Road and the Tawa Interchange.

2. Executive Summary

For a number of years there have been requests from local communities, schools and affected businesses in Owhiro Bay, Hutt Road and Takapu Road, for a reduction in the speed limit in these areas.

The proposed new speed limits have been publicly advertised and consultation has taken place with local communities and other key stakeholders following the detailed procedural requirements of the Speed Limit Rule and the Council's Consolidated Bylaw: Part 14 (Speed Limits).

The result of public consultation and response from key stakeholders shows strong support for the proposed speed limit changes, which are now recommended to the Committee for approval.

3. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee:

1. *Receive the information.*
2. *Recommend to Council that it agree to make a resolution under clause 14.3.4 of the Wellington City Consolidated Bylaw to set the speed limits as stated in the tables below on the following sections of road; Happy Valley Road, Ohiro Road, Hutt Road, Centennial Highway and Takapu Road.*
3. *Recommend to the Transit New Zealand Board that they make a resolution to set the speed limits as proposed in Table 2 below.*

Table 1: Proposed speed limits under the jurisdiction of Wellington City Council for Happy Valley Road, Ohiro Road, Hutt Road, Centennial Highway and, Takapu Road.

Happy Valley Road	<i>From 137 Happy Valley Road to immediately north of sports field</i>	50km/h
Ohiro Road	<i>From a point south of 509 Ohiro Road to 463 Ohiro Road</i>	50km/h
Hutt Road	<i>From a point 100 metres north of Onslow Road to Johnsonville line rail bridge and Aotea Quay over bridge</i>	60km/h
Hutt Road	<i>From a point 100 metres north of Onslow Road to Centennial Highway</i>	80km/h
Centennial Highway	<i>From its intersection with Hutt Road and Jarden Mile northbound to Main Trunk rail bridge in Ngauranga Gorge</i>	80km/h
Takapu Road	<i>From Tawa interchange to 60 metres east of Woodburn Drive</i>	70km/h

Table 2: Proposed speed limits under the jurisdiction of Transit New Zealand for Centennial Highway, State Highway 2, Takapu Road and Tawa motorway on and off ramps.

State Highway 2 on-ramp	<i>From Centennial Highway to 300 metres north of State Highway 2 on-ramp.</i>	80km/h
Takapu Road	<i>From motorway northbound off-ramp to Main Road Tawa</i>	50km/h
Takapu Road	<i>From Main Road Tawa to motorway northbound on-ramp</i>	50km/h
Tawa interchange southbound on-ramp	<i>From western portal of the motorway underpass to Porirua urban motorway</i>	70km/h
Tawa interchange southbound off-ramp	<i>From Johnsonville to Porirua urban motorway to western portal of the motorway underpass</i>	70km/h

4. *Note the results of the public consultation process i.e. 86 submissions were received, of which 50 supported the proposal, 15 were opposed while 21 agreed to the lower limits with some modifications.*
5. *Note that the process to change a speed limit as described in both the Land Transport Rule: Setting of Speed Limits (2003) and Part 14 (Speed Limits) of the Wellington City Consolidated Bylaw, has been followed.*
6. *Note that in accordance with the Land Transport Rule: Setting of Speed Limits (2003) and Part 14 (Speed Limits) of the Wellington City*

Consolidated Bylaw, the resolution will be recorded in a Register of Speed Limits and the relevant speed limits on the Council's Speed Limit Plans cease to have effect.

4. Background

4.1 Setting Speed Limits

In February 2003 the Government introduced the Land Transport Rule: Setting of Speed Limits (2003). This Rule allows road controlling authorities to set enforceable speed limits.

In October 2004 a new speed limit setting Bylaw was approved by Wellington City Council. This was a requirement under the Rule and allows the Council to make amendments to speed limits by way of resolution on all roads under its control and in certain designated locations specified in the Bylaw.

4.2 Process

The process to change speed limits is defined in the Rule and Part 14 of the Bylaw. In summary, the process requires the following;

- A review of the area to determine the suitability of the proposed limits
- Consultation with affected parties and stakeholders
- Formal adoption by the road controlling authority, and
- Notification of the changes before the new limits take effect.

4.3 Setting Speed Limits

Wellington City Council has been working with New Zealand Police, Transit New Zealand, Land Transport New Zealand, The New Zealand Automobile Association Incorporated, Road Transport forum, schools, kindergartens, businesses and local communities to address concerns about excessive speed. The communities want more appropriate speed limits in their areas.

Speed related crashes are also occurring when drivers do not recognise road features that require them to slow down. Specific signs warning of the danger, including advisory speed signs, can be used. However, where a road continuously requires a driver to drive slower than the legal speed limit, a lower speed limit is more appropriate.

5. Discussion

5.1 Problem Definition

Over the past five years there have been steady increases in the number of reported crashes along all speed limit review areas;

- 17 reported crashes from 2002-2006 along Happy Valley/Ohiro Road
- 88 reported crashes from 2002-2006 along Hutt Road/Centennial Highway
- 22 reported crashes from 2002-2006 along Takapu Road/Tawa motorway on and off ramps.

Happy Valley Road/Ohiro Road:

Of these crashes 76% involved loss of control and rear end collision. Four crashes involved injuries.

Hutt Road/Centennial Highway:

Of the reported crashes 68% were caused by crossing/turning manoeuvres, 30 crashes involved injuries with three fatalities.

Takapu Road/Tawa motorway on and off ramps:

Of the reported crashes 66% involved loss of control and rear end collisions. Eight crashes involved injuries.

These statistics, together with persistent and long standing expressions of concern from the local communities, indicate that the current speed limits on these roads are too high for the road conditions.

Appendix 1 shows the reports on existing speeds and proposed speed limits. The reports show that 85% of drivers currently drive at a speed whereby they would be unaffected by the proposed limit.

5.2 Lowering the Operating Speed as a Critical Tool

Research shows that the more that operating speeds vary between the slowest and fastest vehicles, the higher the crash rate. By setting a speed limit to reflect the maximum speed of most drivers, and limiting the faster drivers, a reduction in crashes can be expected.

Investigations have shown that for every 1km/h vehicle speeds are reduced, a two to three percent reduction in the number of crashes can be expected.

Lowering the speed limit will be compatible with other planned reductions to speed limits being brought forward through the SaferRoads programme. The speed limit reduction proposal has received strong support from key stakeholders, including the New Zealand Police, Land Transport New Zealand and Transit New Zealand.

5.3 Proposal

Land Transport New Zealand staff and Council officers have worked together to develop a speed limit regime for the roads covered in this report. The proposed speed limits should meet the community needs and meet the criteria being trialled.

It is proposed to lower the speed limits as set out in Tables 1 and 2. They will apply to all vehicles at all times.

The roads affected by this proposal are:

Happy Valley Road/Ohiro Road under the jurisdiction of Wellington City Council as Road Controlling Authority.

Hutt Road under the jurisdiction of Wellington City Council as Road Controlling Authority.

Centennial Highway under the jurisdiction of Transit New Zealand as Road Controlling Authority.

Takapu Road under the jurisdiction of Wellington City Council as Road Controlling Authority.

Tawa motorway on and off ramps under the jurisdiction of Transit New Zealand as Road Controlling Authority.

5.4 Consultation

Consultation was carried out in accordance with clause 7.1 of the Setting of Speed Limits Rule. Consultation was carried out on behalf of Transit New Zealand by the City Council. A four week period of community consultation was carried out during March and April 2008. In total, 86 submissions were received, of which 50 supported the proposal, 15 were opposed while 21 agreed to a lower limit with some modifications.

The 21 submitters who agreed that the current speed limit needed to be reduced with modifications generally felt that a blanket 50km/h through Happy Valley Road to Ohiro Road would have greater safety benefits for cyclists and residential properties. Takapu Road speed limits onto the motorway on ramps should be 70km/h.

Copies of all public submissions are included in Appendix 3. The following tables 3 and 4 summarise the responses received:

- Do you believe the existing speed limits are appropriate?

Table 3: Response to the question “do you believe the existing speed limits are appropriate?”

Roads	Existing speed limit	Yes Same speed	No Lower speed	Location
Happy Valley Road	70km/h	11	25	From 137 Happy Valley Road to sports field
Ohiro Road	70km/h	14	22	From south of 509 Ohiro Road to 463 Ohiro Road
Hutt Road	70km/h	13	33	From 110 metres north of Onslow Road to Aotea over bridge
Hutt Road	100km/h	20	25	From 110 metres north of Onslow Road to Centennial Highway, Ngauranga Gorge
Centennial Highway	100km/h	15	26	From its intersection with Hutt Road and Jarden Mile northbound to Main Trunk rail bridge in Ngauranga Gorge

State Highway 2	100km/h	17	23	From Main Trunk rail over bridge in Ngauranga Gorge southbound to State Highway 2 on-ramp
Takapu Road	100km/h	3	19	From Tawa interchange to 60 metres east of Woodburn Drive
Takapu Road	100km/h	3	22	From State Highway 1 Tawa northbound off-ramp to Main Road Tawa
Takapu Road	100km/h	2	22	From Main Road Tawa to Johnsonville to Porirua urban motorway
Tawa interchange on-ramp	100km/h	9	16	From western portal of the motorway underpass to Porirua urban motorway
Tawa interchange off-ramp	100km/h	5	18	From Johnsonville to Porirua urban motorway to western portal of the motorway underpass

Table 4: Table showing speed limits proposed by submissions:

Road	From	To	Current speed limit	Proposed speed limit (wcc)	Proposed speed limit (submitters)					
					40km/h	50km/h	60km/h	70km/h	80km/h	100km/h
Happy Valley Road	137 Happy Valley Road	Immediately north of sports field	70 km/h	50km/h	2	19	0	9	0	0
Ohiro Road	South of 509 Ohiro Road	463 Ohiro Road	70 km/h	50km/h	1	20	0	8	0	0
Hutt Road	100m north of Onslow Road	Johnsonville line rail bridge and Aotea Quay over bridge	70km/h	60km/h	0	13	16	10	0	0
Hutt Road	100m north of Onslow Road	Centennial Highway	100km/h	80km/h	0	1	0	6	18	13
Centennial Highway	Hutt Road/Jarden Mile	Main Trunk rail bridge, Ngauranga Gorge	100km/h	80km/h	0	0	0	3	23	10
State Highway 2	Main Trunk rail bridge, Ngauranga Gorge	State Highway 2 on-ramp	100km/h	80km/h	0	0	0	4	21	12
Takapu Road	Tawa interchange	60m east of Woodburn Drive	100km/h	70km/h	1	1	0	14	3	2
Takapu Road	Motorway northbound off-ramp	Main Road Tawa	100km/h	50km/h	1	7	0	12	2	2
Takapu Road	Main Road Tawa	Motorway northbound on-ramp	100km/h	50km/h	1	7	0	12	2	2
Tawa interchange on-ramp	Western portal of the motorway underpass	Motorway	100km/h	70km/h	1	2	0	11	1	6
Tawa interchange off-ramp	Motorway	Western portal of the motorway underpass	100km/h	70km/h	1	2	0	13	2	4

The results demonstrate a strong community support for the proposed changes.

Submitters were also given an opportunity to have their submission heard and five chose to do so. Submissions were presented to the Strategy and Policy Committee on Thursday 15 May 2008:

- 1) Jerome Gunole on behalf of two businesses located in Ngauranga Gorge
- 2) Geoff Gunole on behalf of three businesses located in Ngauranga Gorge and as an individual
- 3) Paul Bodin on behalf of Placemakers, Kaiwharawhara
- 4) Francois Febvre on behalf of La Cloche Ltd, Kaiwharawhara
- 5) Geordie Glesson on behalf of The New Zealand Automobile Association.

Of the above five oral submitters one supported the proposal to lower the speed limits on Hutt Road, two opposed lowering the speed limits on Hutt Road, Centennial Highway and State Highway Two, one supported all of the proposed changes except for Centennial Highway and Hutt Road and proposed a 70km/h limit instead of the 50km/h limit on the Tawa Motorway on and off ramps and one had concerns over cycle safety outside their premises on Hutt Road.

Jerome Gunole would like to see the current speed limits on Hutt Road remain as they are. He mentioned that he and his staff are unaware of any great crash history on Hutt Road and they aren't confused with the current speed limit variations.

Geoff Gunole would like to see the current speed limits on Hutt Road remain as they are. He mentioned that he and his staff are unaware of any great crash history on Hutt Road and they aren't confused with the current speed limit variations.

Paul Bodin suggested that lowering the speed limits on Hutt Road wouldn't change the current dangerous situation of vehicles versus cyclists outside his premises Placemakers, Kaiwharawhara.

Francois Febvre supported lowering the current speed limits on Hutt Road. An increase in retail activity in Kaiwharawhara has led to more turning manoeuvres and vehicles are slowing down looking for available parking spaces. He has witnessed an increase in crashes over the past two years.

Geordie Glesson supported lowering the speed limits on Happy Valley Road and Ohiro Road, Takapu Road and the Tawa Interchange but didn't support the proposal to reduce the speed limit from 100km/h to 50km/h coming off the Tawa northbound off - ramp as it was felt this was too sudden and motorists required more time for transition. They do however support changing it to 70km/h.

The AA was opposed to lowering the speed limit on Hutt Road. Their reasons being; consistency of speed limits, the small crash rate compared to the number of vehicles using the road as only seven percent of crashes were related to speed, and longer travel times were mentioned in the oral submission.

All 50 submitters who agreed with the entire proposal felt that the proposed speeds would create a much safer environment for all road users.

The 15 submitters who objected to the proposal had a number of reasons. A common theme was that the new limits would be impossible to enforce and that most drivers already currently drive to the conditions. It was also expressed that the few that already speed will not change their driving behaviour anyway. Others felt that the reduction was not necessary and that more driver education is required.

In addition to the public consultation, Councils are required to consult with key stakeholders and this was undertaken during April 2008. As a result responses were received from, Land Transport New Zealand, New Zealand Police, Transit New Zealand and The New Zealand Automobile Association Incorporated.

Land Transport New Zealand is in support of all but one of the proposed speed limits.

New Zealand Police is in support of all of the proposed speed limits.

Transit New Zealand is in support of all of the proposed speed limits.

The New Zealand Automobile Association Incorporated were in support of the proposed speed limits excluding Centennial Highway and Hutt Road and believe a 70km/h limit would be more appropriate than a 50km/h limit on the Tawa motorway on and off ramps.

These submissions have been included in Appendix 2.

Officers do not believe the objections received are of sufficient substance or validity to justify not proceeding with the proposed speed limit changes.

5.5 Implementation

Subsequent to approval by Council, there are a number of procedural requirements to be followed before the new speed limits can be introduced. Before the speed limits take effect, Council must notify the Director of Land Transport New Zealand and the Commissioner of Police. A public awareness campaign explaining the change to the limits will also take place. Areas to which the Bylaw speed limit applies are required to be marked by notices and signs in accordance with the requirements of clause 14.3.7 of the Bylaw and as required by the Land Transport Rule: Setting of Speed Limits (2003).

These requirements are expected to take around four to six weeks once Council has resolved to change the speed limits under the Bylaw, and the new speed limits are expected to be operative by the end of August 2008.

The speed limits will continue to be enforced by the Police.

6. Conclusion

The benefits of lowering vehicle speeds to reduce the number of crashes in Owhiro Bay, Kaiwharawhara and Tawa, and to acknowledge the long standing safety concerns of the local communities, have been established.

The process for setting speed limits is defined in the Land Transport Rule: Setting of Speed Limits (2003), and in the Council's Bylaws: Part 14 (Speed Limits). This process has been followed throughout. The proposed speed limits satisfy the criteria set by the Rule.

Consultation with the public and key stakeholders shows strong support for the proposed speed limit changes. A change in the speed limits will be accompanied by a public awareness campaign before the new speed limits take effect.

The Committee is requested to recommend to Council and Transit New Zealand Board that it approve the proposed changes to the legal speed limits in Happy Valley Road, Ohiro Road, Hutt Road, Centennial Highway, State Highway 2, Takapu Road and Tawa Interchange.

Contact Officer: *Stuart Bullen – Transport Safety Engineer*

Supporting information

1) Strategic fit/Strategic outcome

The proposal supports **Outcome: 2.1 Safety**
To ensure that people in Wellington feel safe at all times.

2) LTCCP/Annual Plan reference and long term financial impact

CX171 – Minor Safety. The proposed changes to speed limits will be covered under current budgets.

3) Treaty of Waitangi considerations

None identified.

4) Decision making

This is not a significant decision. The consultation process showed that the majority of respondents were in favour of reducing the speed limits.

5) Consultation

There is a formal consultation process which was carried out for this project.

6) Legal implications

Changing a speed limit has significant legal implications for motorists. Consequently the Council is required to carry out a rigorous procedure to change a speed limit.

7) Consistency with existing policy

This report is consistent with existing policy.

APPENDIX 1

APPENDIX 2

APPENDIX 3