

## Submission to Waka Kotahi – NZ Transport Agency

### *Interim State Highway Speed Management Plan consultation*



9 December 2022

#### **Introduction**

1. Timaru District Council thanks Waka Kotahi for the opportunity to submit on the Interim State Highway Speed Management Plan ('the plan') consultation.
2. This submission is made by the Timaru District Council, 2 King George Place, Timaru. The submission has been endorsed by the Chair of the Infrastructure Committee.
3. The contact person regarding the submission content is Susannah Ratahi, Land Transport Manager, who can be contacted via [suzy.ratahi@timdc.govt.nz](mailto:suzy.ratahi@timdc.govt.nz).

#### **Road safety in the Timaru District**

4. The Timaru District Council (TDC) is a local authority in the South Island serving over 48,000 people in South Canterbury. The main settlement is Timaru, with other smaller settlements of Geraldine, Pleasant Point and Temuka.
5. The Land Transport Unit within TDC is responsible for the provision, operations, maintenance and development of roads in the Timaru District, except for roads that are part of the main State Highway network.
6. In alignment with Government's Road to Zero Strategy, along with key regional partners we are engaged in a Road Safety Action Plan for South Canterbury encompassing engineering, education and enforcement activities.
7. Timaru District Council is represented on the Regional Transport Committee and is preparing to consult with community on an interim speed management plan for local roads in 2023.
8. By way of context, approximately 21,000 vehicles travel every day on the 455km of state highways in South Canterbury (being the Timaru, Mackenzie and Waimate territorial authorities).
9. The Timaru District experiences a disproportionately high number of vehicle crashes and deaths. 2021 data indicates that 2.76% of fatal crashes and 1.33% of serious injury crashes occur on our roads, compared to having 1.16% of New Zealand's population.

## General comments

10. Council fully supports the intention of the proposal and the approach to speed management, in line with the Government's Road to Zero Strategy and Ministry of Transport targets for safe speeds at schools. The proposed changes will generally complement Council's own review of speed limits around schools, planned for 2023.
11. Council fully endorses what is proposed for three of the five schools included in the plan. Our views differ on the remaining two schools, and we strongly request the inclusion of an additional school in the proposal. This feedback is discussed in further detail below.
12. We further recommend additional speed limit changes in other areas of the District, also discussed below.
13. Council would be eager to understand any learnings from this consultation process to help inform our own approach next year. In particular, we are keen to understand any key differences in feedback between urban and rural communities.
14. We affirm our belief that local road authorities know their communities best and therefore encourage Waka Kotahi to actively seek feedback from all RCAs, and carefully consider their recommendations.

## Speed limits around schools

### *Roncalli College, Sacred Heart School and Geraldine Primary School*

15. We agree with the speed limit change proposals for Roncalli College, Sacred Heart School and Geraldine Primary School. We suggest that Waka Kotahi consider extending the speed limit change for Geraldine Primary School to the extent of Cox Street (between Hislop Street and Talbot Street) and Talbot Street (between Cox Street to Peel Street). Aside from being part of the wider school travel area, these roads are often busy with tourists and neighbour the popular Geraldine Holiday Park and Camping Ground. We suggest reducing speeds to 20km/hour or 30km/hour and request that Waka Kotahi also consider construction of a safer crossing point on Cox Street.

### *Winchester Rural School and Waihi School*

16. Council believes that the State Highway 1 speed limit should not change outside both Winchester Rural School and Waihi School, because the vast majority of students do not access these schools off State Highway 1.

17. Rather, these schools are predominately accessed (via vehicle, walking or biking) off Rise Road and Harrison Road, respectively. Council has recently invested in roading and parking infrastructure on Rise Road to adequately and safely accommodate this demand. We have no such concerns for the capacity of Harrison Road.
18. We consider that traffic flows in and around Winchester Rural School and Waihi School do not warrant a change to existing State Highway speed limits. We are doubtful that speed limit changes to such short stretches of road would be complied with by road users, and are concerned that the lowered speed limits could encourage road users to be indifferent toward other speed limits throughout the District. We recommend these speed limits are excluded from Waka Kotahi's interim speed management plan, but that the agency consider their inclusion in the 2024 regional Speed Management Plan, in consultation with community and with a view to consistency in speed limits across rural townships in Canterbury.
19. Further, we wish to bring to Waka Kotahi's attention a factual error in the consultation document – the existing State Highway 1 speed limit outside Waihi School is 100km/hour, not 80km/hour.

#### *South School, Timaru*

20. South School has been omitted from the proposed plan, unjustifiably in our view. We strongly request that the plan be amended to include South School.
21. The State Highway 1 Craigie Avenue/ Queen Street intersection and pedestrian crossing adjacent to South School has very poor visibility and has been the subject of Council, Police and community concern for some time. Council has consistently lobbied Waka Kotahi for changes to this intersection, which we consider are vital for child safety.
22. We recommend the Craigie Avenue/Queen Street intersection be converted to a variable 30km/hour zone.

#### **Non-school amendments**

23. We note and support the proposed change to speed limits on State Highway 1 through Rakaia, in our neighbouring Ashburton District. We believe that communities in our district experience similar issues to Rakaia and also require speed limit amendments, as has been previously communicated to the Waka Kotahi Road Safety Team.
24. We recommend that Waka Kotahi include the following in the plan:
  - a) At the northern end of State Highway 1 in Temuka, the reduced speed limit zone of 50km/hr should be extended out from Lachlan Street to past Donald Street. The 100km/hour zone should also be reduced to at least 80km/hour from Donald Street

to Springfield Road. This is to support the multi-modal transport choices of people in the area. We note that the amount of active mode transport in this area has been increasing, reflected by Council installing a footpath. Further, a danger currently exists whereby vehicles enter and exit a busy local business off State Highway 1 in a 100km/hour zone.

- b) At the southern end of State Highway 1 in Temuka, the 50km/hour zone should be extended to the southern end of the Temuka River Bridge. This is due to regular excessive speeding, and to support the multi-modal transport choices of people who live in the area. It may be necessary to further extend the reduced speed zone due to the presence of a marae and school in this area. Council encourages Waka Kotahi to consult directly with Arowhenua regarding the Arowhenua Marae and Arowhenua Maori School, which are located directly off the existing 80km/hour zone on State Highway 1 in Temuka. We are aware that the highway is possibly traversed by students from the school to access an Arowhenua-owned nursery on Lamont Road.
- c) In Pareora on State Highway 1, the speed limit from the Pareora River Bridge to King Street should be reduced to 60km/hour or 80km/hour. We are conscious that this area experiences significant traffic surges at shift-change time, and has seen a large number of vehicle crashes and deaths. We note that a safety upgrade has been discussed but as yet is not scheduled. The reduction of speed limits in this area would be a prudent step in the interim.
- d) In Pleasant Point on State Highway 8, the current eastern 70km/hour speed limit should be reduced to 50km/hour due to the increased active mode usage of the area caused by the installation of a cycleway and proximity to the popular Domain reserve.

## Conclusion

25. We summarise our recommended amendments to the interim speed management plan in the table below:

Area	State Highway	Current speed limit	Proposed speed limit as per plan	TDC preferred speed limit
Timaru – Craigie Avenue/ Queen Street intersection	1	50km/hour	No change as not in plan	Variable 30km/hour
Winchester Rural School	1	50km/hour	50km/hour with a variable 30km/hour	50km/hour (no change to existing)
Waihi School	1	100km/hour	80km/hour with a variable 50km/hour	100km/hour (no change to existing)

Northern end of Temuka – from Lachlan Street to Donald Street	1	70km/hour	No change as not in plan	50km/ hour
Northern end of Temuka – from Donald Street to Springfield Road	1	100km/hour	No change as not in plan	80km/hour
Southern end of Temuka – 50km/hour zone to Temuka River Bridge	1	80km/hour	No change as not in plan	50km/hour
Pareora – from Pareora River Bridge to north of King Street	1	100km/hour	No change as not in plan	60km/hour or 80km/hour
Pleasant Point – from eastern 100km to 70km speed zone	8	70km/hour	No change as not in plan	50km/hour
Geraldine – from Talbot Street to Peel Street	79	50km/hour	No change as not in plan	20km/hour or 30km/hour

26. Speed limits are a key component in improving safety on our transport network, and a careful balancing act is required to manage consistency of speed limits on the national network, while responding to local needs. We are looking forward to working with Waka Kotahi and other RCAs on the 2024 Speed Management Plan and undertaking engagement with our communities.

27. Timaru District Council would again like to thank Waka Kotahi for the opportunity to provide feedback on this proposal. Please do not hesitate to contact Suzy Ratahi via [suzy.ratahi@timdc.govt.nz](mailto:suzy.ratahi@timdc.govt.nz) if you have any questions or wish to discuss aspects further.

Ngā mihi



**Susannah Ratahi**  
**Land Transport Manager**